

## ENHANCING YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE TO IMPROVE READING ABILITY

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### Abstract

Reading is the manner of grasping the content of a paragraph of text. Nonetheless, some students are fighting to strengthen reading comprehension. This study proposed to confirm whether Young Adult literature improved students' reading ability in narrative text. The design of that research was used quasi-experimental. Participants were eight grade students of SMP N 1 Inderalaya Selatan Ogan Ilir South Sumatera. The instrument used was a written test that included 25 questions in multiple-choice form. T-test was used to examine the data. Independent samples t-test analysis revealed that  $p_{\text{value}}$  (0.001) was lower than  $\alpha_{\text{value}}$  (0.05). This study was indicated that learners who were encouraged to read narrative literature through Young Adult Literature improved significantly. In conclusion, the students improved their reading ability better by reading extensively through Young Adult Literature.

**Keywords:** Narrative text, reading ability, young adult literature

## INTRODUCTION

Reading is a crucial ability to master in linguistics acquisition, and it signifies the required of all English Foreign Language (EFL) students. Students need to use this skill to extract some inferred and stated information from the text by analyzing or interpreting the phrases to comprehend the topics. Students will learn a variety of skills and information through reading and comprehending the text.

Nonetheless, reading to understand the content of a text is challenging and hard for students. It has been discovered that previous analyses and researches on poor reading comprehension among EFL students from Thailand, Indonesia, also Vietnam have been administered (Chandran & Shah, 2019). Some students find it hard to concentrate on long passages because they are bored and do not find reading engaging, which makes them poor readers. They also find it very tough to comprehend the passage's meaning since they lack of vocabulary (Sapitri et al., 2020).

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In addition, students have problems discovering the main idea and comprehending the text's content. The students expressed their dissatisfaction with the fact that they had to study hard in order to recall what they had just read (Satriani, 2018). Merga (2020) clarified that reading comprehension is affected by secondary language students' low reading abilities, making it harder for them to make sense of literature. Students may face a variety of challenges when reading, including unfamiliar terminology, unfamiliar content, sentence patterns, background knowledge, and incorrect or different structure patterns, as well as inadequate reading skills that promote comprehension (Hassan & Dweik, 2021). Albdour (2015) stated that students have a limited understanding of the reader's underlying knowledge, as well as an inability to integrate new information with existing knowledge and a limited vocabulary. (Ganie et al., 2019) reported that the most of the students did not comprehend the purpose of the passage they read. They also were unfamiliar with the language used in the manuscript.

Meanwhile, Young Adult Literature (YAL) can be promoted to overcome students' problems in learning reading skill. Young Adult Literature is defined as works featuring central teenagers' personalities, a distinctly teen voice in the narration, and topics including issues that are typical of the teenagers' background (Miller, 2017). Young Adult Literature is designed to provide additional aspects to young adults. It is written specifically for young adults (YAs) to assist them in identifying themselves and the world around them (Yassin & Saed, 2021). YAL is a type of creative activity that has the potential to foster enjoyment, empathy, creativity, and linguistic abilities (Ee, 2016). YAL as a forming style echoes for youngsters, allowing pupils to learn the accurate and fictional terms, allowing students to obtain readings by their backgrounds and viewpoints (Ayan, 2017). Young Adult Literature has come to admit as effective for supporting the improvement of literary perception, assisting the students describing something they read, thus, encouraging them to engage in thorough reading and writing (Chakrabarty, 2020).

Besides, YAL literature can be found in children's sections, popular adult text elements, and mixed in with traditional canon sections in the library. Hays (2016) argued that Young Adult Literature (YAL) has a contemporary narrative style that tends to attract adults who are meaning-makers, interested in and engaged with emotional topics such as relationship problems, identity formation, fellowship, adore first, attempting to make policy actions, university, and more than increase motivation to read, share common issues, and learn a new language of teenagers. Students were able to employ essential class readings that allowed them to read narratives through YAL (Miller et al., 2020). Students can generate more understanding of the knowledge enclosing what it intends to be a teenager, as well as

being exposed to circumstances that may influence them and those around them through reading young adult literature (Sell, 2021). YAL is a framework for students to join with texts and for teachers to assess students' knowledge and improvement toward learning goals (Donovan, 2018).

In addition, the teachers apply YAL to generate answers from students by analyzing, summarizing, and interpreting the stories, topics, and characters in YAL (Nagayar et al., 2015). The application of young adult literature empowers students to read and write in various genre (Rybakova, Katie and Roccanti, 2016). YAL gives a relevant and essential method for facilitating those discussions in more accurate procedures (Cook, 2016). Yassin & Saed (2021) clarified that Some English teachers are expected to incorporate YA reading into their programs so that teachers can help students build necessary competencies within literature and real-life situations.

Miller (2017) explored that Young Adult Literature represents a type of value of YAL in classrooms. Allowing a series of young adult privileges to learners for autonomous, self-selected text can boost commitment and potential for sharp interpretation. Interdisciplinary units using young adult literature to promote content preparation might strengthen students' comprehension of content range thoughts. Young adult literature can also be studied for its purpose, employing students toward present concerns.

Consequently, this research investigation assigns to assist in filling the gap in evidence about using Young Adult Literature as one inherent strategy for joining junior school students in reading, hence improving students' reading achievement. Further, Young Adult literature can be present in junior high school to support reading narrative text. Thus, this study explored Young Adult Literature in improving students' reading comprehension of the narrative text. The focus of this research was to examine the research question: "Is there any evidence that YAL helps SMP N 1 South Inderalaya students improve their reading skills?"

## **METHOD**

### **Respondents**

The samples were eight grade students of SMP N 1 Inderalaya Selatan Ogan Ilir South Sumatera. Purposive sampling was selected to obtain samples that met the requirements: (1) students tutored by the same teacher; (2) students did not engage in English courses; (3) students with an English score of 60-80 from the following class. In selecting a sample, there were three steps as follows: First, grades VIII.1, VIII.2, and VIII.3 were selected because they were taught by the teacher the same one. Second, the students who did not take the English course were taken. Finally, taken students who scored in

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English ranged from 60-80 in the last semester. A dice was used to determine the experimental class and control group. Students who got the odd number were put into the experimental class, while students who got even numbers were put in the control class.

### **Instruments**

The instrument used a written test that included 25 questions in multiple-choice form. The test consisted of about seven texts while each text was followed by three or four questions. The indicator of the reading test consisted namely: main ideas, details, conclusions, vocabulary, and cause and effect.

### **Procedures**

The method to be used was a quasi-experimental method of research. According to (Creswell, 2012), there were two groups in this study, namely: experimental and control groups. Young Adult Literature, particularly short stories, was used for students in an experimental group. The experimental and control classes were assigned a pre-test and a post-test.

### **Data analysis**

After the necessary data has been collected, both from the class experimental and control classes, the data were analyzed. To see the influence of Young Adult Literature (YAL), a t-test was used.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The finding of paired sample t-test from experimental class proved that the average pretest score was 33.20, while the standard deviation was 9.18. The average score of the posttest was 55.45, while the standard deviation was 12.11. Since  $p_{\text{value}}$  (0.000) was lower than  $\alpha_{\text{value}}$  (0.05), this study confirmed progress in learning the narrative text by Young Adult Literature. The students admitted reading the short story as part of Young Adult Literature. They enlarged their vocabulary when reading using young adult literature so that they understood the content of the story. They could also draw a correlation between characters in stories to learn a moral value. It was supported by Toscano (2012) reported that Young adult literature provides students with reading material that is relevant to their lives as well as opportunity to learn about people who are different from them and Young adult literature can be used in multicultural classrooms to help students improve their reading and comprehension skills.

**Table 1. The Results of Paired Samples Test**

Variables	Experimental Group		Control Group	
	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
<b>DF</b>	20	20	20	20
<b>Mean</b>	33,20	55,45	11,80	44,35
<b>SD</b>	9,18	12,11	1,94	5,11
<b>Sig.</b>	0.000		0.000	

From the control group's paired sample statistics estimate, the average score pretest was 11.80, while the standard deviation was 1.94. The average score from the posttest was 44.35, while the standard deviation was 5.11. Since  $p_{\text{value}}$  (0.000) was lower than  $\alpha_{\text{value}}$  (0.05), this study found that after being taught without Young Adult Literature, students improved their reading skills. Even though the control group students did not teach reading through Young Adult Literature, they improved their comprehension skills because they were motivated and maintained to read.

**Table 2. Result of Independent Samples Test**

Variable	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
<b>Postexperimental-postcontrol</b>	3,776	38	0.001

Furthermore, the independent samples t-test analysis confirmed that  $p_{\text{value}}$  (0.001) was lower than  $\alpha_{\text{value}}$  (0.05),  $p < 0.05$  at the significance level, and degree freedom (df) 38. It was claimed that learners who were encouraged to read narrative literature through Young Adult Literature improved significantly. By exploring Young Adult Literature, particularly short stories, students can enhance their comprehension and language skills while learning to read narrative content. They could associate stories to their prior knowledge and experiences as they were reading them. It was in lined with Grice et al., (2017), claimed that YAL fueled EFL class discussions by allowing students' personal connections to the text to be shared.

In addition, young adult literature genres improved students' grasp of narrative elements. Students noticed that while using YAL, their reading capacity and skills had increased (Irion, 2018). Based on Yassin & Saed (2021), EFL students who had the opportunity to read some English YA narratives during the course were able to explore the uniqueness of the human condition regardless of ability, heritage, discourse, or faith; they were also able to develop strong bonds with YAL and the personalities inside them while also enhancing their English proficiency. As students read literary works, they become more aware of the language employed. They grasp the meaning of the words and gain a better

knowledge of English as a whole. Reading English YA tales encouraged learners to extend vocabulary, which led them to generate other literary works and grammar.

By using YAL, students explored characters and events, assessed characters' performances, presented criticisms, interchanged beliefs, and augmented perception by addressing the short story. They were also practicing shifts, listening, and recording notes. Miller (2017) revealed that the students were able to identify a recurring theme in the narrative and examine what the characters acquire and grasp about it over the course of the story. The students' reading of the text switched back and forth across efferent-aesthetic continuum as they worked through the topic idea analysis, exhibiting and improving their reading competency. Nagayar et al., (2015) claimed that the students were sharp in their interpretation of the stories based on their perspectives. Some students were able to endure the characters and embed themselves in their shoes.

Besides, students thoroughly liked narrative stories, and the YAL approach could help them avoid boredom. Students expressed enthusiasm for young adult literature and a desire to see it used in the lesson (Miller, 2017). Conner (2019) stated the students certainly enjoy YAL. YAL is a way to make reading more enjoyable as well as understandable.

Moreover, teenagers were more likely to read extensively by using YAL. Nagayar et al., (2015) explained that YAL plays a key role in boosting them to read extensively. Extensive reading of YA fiction is one of the effective procedures for growing their English linguistics professions (Yassin & Saed, 2021). It meant that students could improve their reading skill especially narrative text by reading YAL extensively. It can be concluded that young adult literature can be implemented in secondary school to boost students' reading ability.

## CONCLUSION

The findings explored that students who were prompted to read narrative stories through Young Adult Literature increased significantly. Consequently, YAL accurately can connect with students through the awareness and judgment of applying to specific themes in YA fictions. The students were able to enhance their learning of English vocabulary and structure because they were a positive manner to read extensively.

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