

## **ENHANCING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION THROUGH DISCOVERY LEARNING METHOD AT THE SEVENTH GRADE OF SMP HARAPAN 3 DELI SERDANG**

**Nurmahyuni Asrul**

Universitas Prima Indonesia, Medan  
email: [nurmahyuniasrul@unprimdn.ac.id](mailto:nurmahyuniasrul@unprimdn.ac.id)

### **ABSTRAK**

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk meningkatkan pemahaman membaca siswa kelas tujuh di sekolah menengah pertama melalui penerapan metode pembelajaran discovery. Penelitian ini melibatkan guru-guru bahasa Inggris, kepala sekolah, dan siswa kelas tujuh dari SMP Harapan 3 Deli Serdang. Studi ini melibatkan total 30 peserta, terdiri dari 10 anak laki-laki dan 20 anak perempuan. Dengan pendekatan penelitian tindakan kelas, penelitian ini dilakukan dalam dua siklus yang berbeda setelah dilakukan pre-test. Bekerja sama erat dengan guru-guru bahasa Inggris, para peneliti melakukan Tindakan Pedagogis (PTK) dengan populasi siswa sebanyak 30 orang. Analisis data dari Cycle I dan Cycle II menghasilkan temuan sebagai berikut: selama pre-test, 10 siswa mencapai tingkat keberhasilan sebesar 33,5%, sementara 20 siswa meraih tingkat yang lebih rendah yaitu 66,5%. Pada Siklus 1, tingkat keberhasilan meningkat menjadi 43,5% untuk 13 siswa, dengan tingkat kegagalan yang sesuai sebesar 56,5% di antara 17 siswa. Pada Siklus II, tingkat keberhasilan semakin meningkat, dimana 22 siswa mencapai tingkat 73,5%, sementara 8 siswa mengalami tingkat kegagalan sebesar 26,5%. Secara keseluruhan, studi ini menunjukkan peningkatan yang konsisten dalam skor siswa, yang menegaskan efektivitas metode pembelajaran penemuan dalam meningkatkan pemahaman membaca di kalangan siswa kelas tujuh di SMP Harapan 3 Deli Serdang. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa metode ini memiliki potensi besar bagi pendidik yang berdedikasi untuk meningkatkan kemampuan membaca siswa.

**Kata kunci:** Peningkatan, Pemahaman Membaca, Metode Pembelajaran Discovery.

### **ABSTRACT**

*The objective of this study was to enhance the reading comprehension of seventh-grade junior high school students through the implementation of the discovery learning method. The research engaged English teachers, school principals, and seventh-grade students from SMP Harapan 3 Deli Serdang. The study encompassed a total of 30 participants, comprising 10 boys and 20 girls. Employing a classroom action research approach, the investigation was executed in two distinct cycles following a pre-test. Collaborating closely with English teachers, the researchers conducted the Pedagogical Action (PTK) with a student population of 30. Analysis of the data from both Cycle I and Cycle II led to the following findings: during the pre-test, 10 students achieved a success rate of 33.5%, while 20 students scored a lower rate of 66.5%. In Cycle 1, the success rate increased to 43.5% for 13 students, with a corresponding failure rate of 56.5% among 17 students. In Cycle II, the success rate further improved, as 22 students attained a rate of 73.5%, whereas 8 students encountered a failure rate of 26.5%. In conclusion, this study demonstrates a consistent elevation in student scores, underscoring the effectiveness of the discovery learning method in enhancing reading comprehension among seventh-grade students at SMP Harapan 3 Deli Serdang. The findings indicate that this method holds substantial promise for educators dedicated to nurturing the reading proficiency of their students.*

**Keywords:** *Enhancing, Reading Comprehension, Discovery Learning Method*

### **INTRODUCTION**

English holds a significant global status, spoken by over three hundred and seventy million individuals worldwide. Recognizing its importance, the Indonesian government

has incorporated English not only into secondary and senior high school curricula but also within universities and institutes. As a foreign language, English encompasses four core language skills: reading, listening,

speaking, and writing, with reading forming a foundational cornerstone.

Reading an essential facet of English education, involves the cognitive process of extracting information from written material, as highlighted by Dalman (2017: 5). It serves as a mental endeavor to comprehend textual content, bearing substantial significance in the learning journey. Abidin, Tita, & Hana (2018: 160) expound that reading is an indispensable linguistic skill, fostering literacy and enabling students to grasp, engage with, and reflect upon diverse text types with the ultimate goal of knowledge and skill development.

At the core of reading lies reading comprehension – the aptitude to apprehend information conveyed through written text. Successful comprehension demands an adept understanding of the material, a notion underlined by Budiarti & Haryanto (2016: 2). Reading comprehension is two-fold, encompassing mechanical reading skills and the ability to grasp the essence of the content. A holistic learning process necessitates an effective approach to reading comprehension, ensuring a proficient understanding of the text's message or intent. This proficiency not only supports successful learning but also serves as a gateway to expanded knowledge.

While the value of reading is evident, several factors contribute to students' aversion to English lessons, as discussed by Valeria Sumiyati in a recent CNN Student interview. Among these factors are teacher disposition, teaching methodology, and classroom environment. A nurturing versus stern teacher the adoption of suitable teaching methods, and a respectful classroom atmosphere all influence

students' attitudes towards English. Creating a conducive environment and employing effective methods can alleviate students' apprehension and encourage their engagement with the language.

An empirical assessment conducted in the seventh grade of SMP Harapan 3 Deli Serdang revealed a deficiency in students' reading comprehension skills, particularly when handling English texts. Many students perceive English as complex, uninteresting, and intimidating due to linguistic disparities. To address this, teachers must devise innovative strategies to unlock textual concepts and foster interaction with the material. Among these approaches, the Discovery Learning Method stands out, as it empowers students to engage meaningfully with the text.

In light of the aforementioned factors, the title "Enhancing Student Reading Comprehension by Using the Discovery Learning Method in Seventh Grade of SMP Harapan 3 Deli Serdang" emerges as a compelling research direction.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

Classroom Action Research (CAR) served as the foundational methodology for this study, drawing inspiration from Kemmis (2006). This approach follows a cyclical framework known as the "Planning, Action, Observe, and Reflection" (PAOR) cycle. In this research, two distinct cycles were executed, each delving into the enhancement of reading comprehension through the Discovery Learning method. The research encompassed two cycles, with the initial cycle revealing the limited improvement in students' reading

comprehension despite the application of the Discovery Learning Method. In this phase, some students struggled to achieve passing scores on the test. The second cycle was subsequently conducted to assess improvements, resulting in higher scores and enhanced reading comprehension among all students.

The study was conducted at SMP Harapan III Deli Serdang, North Sumatera, focusing on Grade VII comprising 30 students. Both researchers and the English teacher assumed the roles of observers, capturing the dynamics and outcomes of reading comprehension lessons using the Discovery Learning method.

A diverse array of data collection instruments was employed, including observation sheets, interviews, documentation, and field notes. Observation sheets gauged student attitudes toward the phonetic method, while interviews captured student testimonials on the method's impact. Additionally, the English teacher was interviewed to offer insights into the classroom experience.

The research adhered to the PAOR cycle framework. The planning phase involved meticulous preparation, including securing permissions, observing subjects, and gathering preliminary data on students' reading comprehension and teaching strategies. The Discovery Learning method, was introduced and aligned with the curriculum. During the action phase, researchers collaborated with the teacher to implement the Discovery Learning method in the classroom.

In the first stage, researchers have prepared or made a combination of planned learning strategies before conducting classroom

action research, then the next action researchers also prepare learning equipment that will be used such as lesson plans, structured student work sheets, and observation sheets. There are evaluation instruments used in the classroom action research cycle to measure and assess the success of a program. At this stage, researchers have begun to implement or take action on students thoroughly and gradually in accordance with the RPP that has been designed. Students are given treatment, namely diagnostic-test to determine the initial ability of students followed by learning using the discovering learning model, which is in which there are activities where students analyze the content of the text in the form of dialogue suggestions.

Just like cycle 1, in the second cycle researchers prepare learning tools that will be used, namely lesson plans, media teaching materials, and student worksheets. Before the second treatment, students are given a cycle one test to find out the results of the cycle one test. Furthermore, the second treatment is given, namely by learning using the discovering learning model, in which there are activities where students analyze the content of reading texts in the form of dialogues about opinions, in accordance with the RPP that has been prepared. After collecting the data, the researcher evaluates the teaching and learning process. Then reflection is carried out by looking at the results of observations, whether the learning process of reading comprehension with the discovery learning method achieves the success criteria based on the results of the second action test. In this second cycle, the observer concluded that the application of the discovery learning method could improve students' reading comprehension in the seventh

grade students of SMP Harapan III Deli Serdang.

In summary, the reflection phase saw students engaging in presentations, comparing their progress in reading comprehension between the two cycles.

**FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

The preliminary research was conducted at SMP Harapan III Deli Serdang to collect information regarding the challenges faced by teachers and students in teaching and learning English, specifically focusing on reading comprehension. The researcher identified several issues within the classroom environment. The primary concern was the class size, consisting of 30 students, which made it challenging for teachers to maintain control. Additionally, students exhibited a lack of enthusiasm and engagement in reading comprehension.

The second issue revolved around students' inadequate comprehension of reading materials. To assess this, the researcher administered an evaluation to identify students who struggled with comprehending reading passages. Prior to commencing the Classroom Action Research (CAR) activities, a pre-test was administered to gauge the students' grasp of the subject matter. This pre-test allowed students to indicate the areas they found most challenging.

The assessment method employed involved using the Discovery Learning approach, specifically focusing on reading comprehension, with seventh-grade students at SMP Harapan 3 Deli Serdang. The findings included a diagnostic test of students'

reading abilities. The application of Discovery Learning demonstrated its effectiveness in enhancing the comprehension of word meanings.

**Table 1.** The percentage of pre cycle.

| No    | category   | Value range | frequency | %    |
|-------|------------|-------------|-----------|------|
| 1     | Very good  | 80-100      | 5         | 16,6 |
| 2     | Good       | 75-79       | 5         | 16,6 |
| 3     | Sufficient | 60-74       | 8         | 26,6 |
| 4     | Poor       | 50-59       | 7         | 23,3 |
| 5     | Very poor  | 0-49        | 5         | 16,6 |
| total |            |             | 30        | 100  |

Referring to the data presented in Table 1, among the total of 30 students, it is evident that 5 students (16%) fall under the classification of 'very good'; another 5 students (16%) fall within the 'good' category, while 8 students (26%) demonstrate a 'sufficient' level of proficiency. Furthermore, 7 students (23%) exhibit performance categorized as 'less good' and an additional 5 students (16%) are placed in the 'very bad' category. Regrettably, a mere 16.6 % of the student cohort appears to have successfully cleared the initial assessment, underscoring the necessity for the researcher to proceed with Cycle 1. Consequently, focused endeavors are imperative to enhance students' capacity to grasp reading comprehension concepts.

**Tabel 2** Comparison of students' skill in reading comprehension in pre-cycle, cycle 1, and cycle 2

| No | Research | category   | frequency | %    |
|----|----------|------------|-----------|------|
| 1  | Pre test | Complete   | 10        | 33,5 |
|    |          | Incomplete | 20        | 66,5 |
| 2  | Cycle 1  | Complete   | 13        | 43,5 |

| No | Research | category   | freque<br>ncy | %    |
|----|----------|------------|---------------|------|
|    |          | Incomplete | 17            | 56,5 |

The data presented in Table 2 demonstrates a rise in the percentage of student scores across the pre-cycle, cycle I, and cycle II categories. At the outset, merely 24% of students fulfilled the prerequisites of the pre-cycle stage, signifying a deficiency in comprehending effective reading. Nevertheless, this figure escalated to 76% during the initial cycle and rapidly ascended to 92% in the subsequent cycle. This illustrates a noteworthy enhancement in students' speaking proficiency when contrasting the pre-cycle phase with the implementation of the using Discovery Learning Method.

In this section, the writer aims to discuss the findings of the study. The discussion is focused on describing students' reading comprehension, specifically targeting the literal details, information, and word meanings through the utilization of Discovery Learning. The enhancement of students' achievement in Reading Comprehension through the application of discovery learning is addressed.

Upon analyzing student achievement, the researchers observed a noteworthy increase in students' primary scores for literal comprehension through the implementation of discovery learning. The students' average score in the pre-test was (63). In the first cycle, the students' average score improved to (67), and in the second cycle, it further elevated to (75). These details reflect a clear trajectory of progress. This trend is reinforced by the reading test results, which displayed a significant difference between the outcomes of cycle I and cycle II.

The utilization of Discovery Learning to enhance students' literal

| No | Research | category   | freque<br>ncy | %    |
|----|----------|------------|---------------|------|
| 3  | Cycle 2  | Complete   | 22            | 73,5 |
|    |          | Incomplete | 8             | 26,5 |

understanding substantiates its effectiveness in assessing student achievement in terms of word comprehension. This assertion is once again supported by the reading test results, highlighting a notable distinction between the results of cycle I and cycle II.

Based on these findings, the researcher concludes that the observation of students' active engagement in the teaching and learning process exhibited a significant increase through the implementation of Discovery Learning, leading to an enhancement in students' reading comprehension. This is evident from the rise in the average level of student activity from cycle I to cycle II.

### **CONCLUSSION AND SUGGESTION**

The study aimed to enhance students' reading comprehension through the application of the Discovery Learning method in the seventh grade of SMP Harapan 3 Deli Serdang. The research involved two cycles, each revealing significant improvement in students' reading comprehension scores. The implementation of the Discovery Learning method resulted in consistent enhancements in students' reading abilities. The data showed a remarkable increase in the percentage of students who achieved satisfactory scores from pre-cycle to cycle I and cycle II. This indicates that the Discovery Learning method effectively enhance students' reading comprehension skills.

The findings of this study, conducted within a limited timeframe, highlight the need for further exploration. It is recommended that future researchers continue this investigation to gather more precise and comprehensive data, thus contributing to a deeper understanding of the

subject. Teachers are encouraged to acclimate themselves to the integration of the discovery learning model in their classroom practices, particularly in the context of English instruction. This approach has the potential to enhance students' academic achievements. Furthermore, the ongoing enhancement of diverse pedagogical approaches is advised, with a focus on fostering engaging, purposeful, and enjoyable learning experiences

W.W, I., & Suparno, S. (2019). Using Phonetic Methods for Children's Reading Ability Development in Kindergarten. 296 (Icsie 2018), 263–266. <https://doi.org/10.2991/icsie-18.2019.47>

#### REFERENCES

- Abidin, Z., Tita, L., & Hana, W. (2018). The role of reading in language learning and development. *Journal of language and Linguistics*, 12 (2), 160-175.
- Asrul, N., & Husda, A. (2022). Enhancing Pronunciation Skills through Phonetic Method. *Al-Ishlah: Jurnal Pendidikan* 14(3),4167-4176.
- Budiarti, E. D., & Haryanto, A. (2016). Enhancing reading comprehension through effective strategies. *Education Journal*, 25 (1), 1-15.
- Dalman, A. (2017). Understanding reading: A psycholinguistic analysis of reading and learning to read. Publisher.
- Kemmis, S. (2006). Participatory action research and the public sphere. *Educational Action Research*, 14 (4), 459-476.
- Linse, C. (2005). *Practical English Language Teaching Young Learners*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Permendikbud. (2014). *Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan No. 103, Pasal 2 ayat 7 dan 8 tentang Pembelajaran Pada Pendidikan Dasar*.