

# TEACHER TEACHING STYLES IN INTRODUCING CONCEPT MAPPING STRATEGY IN READING COMPREHENSION ACTIVITY AT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN MEUREUDU, ACEH

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*Manuscript received March 15, 2019, revised May 11, 2019, first published May 31, 2019, and available online June 19, 2019. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22373/ej.v6i2.4548>*

## ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to learn how English teachers' teaching style at Senior High Schools (SMAs) in Meureudu in introducing *concept mapping* strategy in delivering reading comprehension lesson. In teaching Reading Comprehension, different teaching styles gives different students learning experience and output, and using concept mapping, students are stimulated to have better control over their comprehension. This study was conducted at SMA 1 Meureudu and SMA 2 Meureudu, a town located 123 kms from Banda Aceh, Indonesia. Very often, English classes in schools located far from the main cities in Aceh suffer from lack interesting activity The study was using qualitative approach through class activity observations and interviews. Concept mapping activities facilitated by the teachers at SMA 1 Meureudu used digital projector and paper handouts as the media for the group activities. The teacher of SMA 2 Meureudu used only handout paper as a medium and by pairing the students. The findings of this study showed that the teaching styles in delivering reading activity using the concept mapping activity used

by the teachers in both schools differ in the way how the teacher assign student to work on the task. The students were found to be more fully engaged in the reading activity with concept mapping compared to any past reading activities using translating line-by-line and answering questions. Assigning group reading task also help boost the students motivation and collaborative responsibility to learn.

**Keywords:** *concept mapping; teaching style; reading comprehension*

## INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the four language skills that is also considered a way to acquire knowledge. According to Charlton (2005), reading is meaning-making and problem solving activity that increases in power and flexibility the more it is practiced. In Aceh, Indonesia, many students are struggling with reading comprehension, especially in comprehending inferred meaning of reading (random information by senior high school students in 2017). Those senior high school students, are still confused when they read reading texts. Many students in that schools still could not find the main idea in reading comprehension after several times reading the text. One of the common reasons is due to the lack of vocabulary that impedes understanding of the text. Very often, they do not understand what the texts want to convey to them although they have managed to extract and find meanings of the details in the text.

To try to overcome this problem, it is suggested that teachers could develop a teaching strategy that would help students to identify the main messages of the texts. There are three popular ways to develop reading comprehension strategies especially for EFL students in senior high school in Aceh, Indonesia. The first strategy is identifying purpose of reading the text by asking "Why?" and "What?" The second strategy is capturing the details in the text using mind mapping and the third strategy is capturing reader reactions by using the strategy called "McDowell Grid" (Kaufman, 2008).

SMA Negeri 1 Meureudu and SMA Negeri 2 Meureudu are two senior high schools in Meureudu, a small town in Pidie Jaya district in Aceh, Indonesia. Both schools use K13 curriculum (2013 Indonesian School Curriculum) in process of design and teaching-learning. Based on the preliminary study conducted through a

simple interview with the teachers at both schools on the ways they teach English reading, it is common for teachers to use the *three phases' techniques*. Firstly, the teacher gives and explains a text. After giving the text, teacher reads each paragraph one by one and then the students were instructed to find difficult words (vocabulary) in the text and find their dictionary meaning. The students are instructed to use their dictionary if needed. The third phase is, whether individually or in groups, students are instructed to answer the comprehension questions activity tasks.

Ideally, the students should understand the text well. Although the students have been taught reading by using the three phases above, students are still finding difficulty to comprehend the text entirely. Therefore, based on the preliminary study at both schools, the following sets of problems were found:

1. Some of the students have very limited numbers of English vocabulary in performing reading comprehension activity in the class.
2. Some of the students are unable to identify the main idea in the text
3. Some of the students are unable to identify specific information in the text
4. Some of the students are unable to comprehend the inferential meaning in the text
5. Some of the students are unable to identify the language features in the text.

There are some previous research studies that have been conducted regarding concept mapping strategy. The following are presented here as representative for those. A research conducted by Romli (2014) looked at the performance of English teachers and students of MTs Tarbiyatul Falah, Bogor, Indonesia in using concept mapping strategy. The researcher used observation, interview, and questionnaires to collect the data. The result revealed that the teachers performed the strategy well and the students could understand the reading material well and therefore their scores improved. Kinchin and Hay (2000) performed a research looking at the use of concept mapping strategy in collaborative groups to increase students' ability in reading comprehension. The finding stated that the students can understand the reading text clearly. A study conducted in Iran by Kalhor (2016) showed a positive impact of concept mapping

on the students' cognitive levels that help them improve their learning styles and academic scores.

While those studies focus on the use of concept mapping or mind mapping, his research focuses on the teacher style to help improve students' reading skills. Teachers' teaching style using different media and strategies in developing reading activity is suggested to alter and vary students reading experience. The aims of the present study is to see whether the teacher's teaching style in teaching reading comprehension by using concept mapping strategy suggests a different outcome and learning experience.

## DISCUSSION

In this research, the researcher used qualitative approach to analyze the data. The focus of qualitative research tends to be on understanding the meaning imbedded in participant experiences through an open-ended, unstructured and subjective approach (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Interview was conducted to the teachers of the two schools based on a set of main questions. In-depth interview sessions (Bungin, 2007) were done by addressing questions openly through face-to-face by not following the structure of the questions that have been prepared. The reason is to retrieve as much information from the teacher, which basically are the questions on the teachers' perceptions on how they understood, and used their knowledge regarding teaching reading comprehension to their students and how they would use concept mapping technique for reading comprehension lessons. Another data collection for this study was classroom observation for the two classes held by the teachers from the two schools. The teacher's behavior during teaching and learning using concept map in reading comprehension were noted by using observational checklist. In analyzing the data, the researcher used observations checklist for the observation, and Miles and Huberman (1994) analysis for the interview.

From the observation, the researcher found that the students of SMA 1 Meureudu, class XII IPA 1 shows positive attitudes toward the learning process. Relatively most of them showed eagerness and interest when learning English and there were few students who participated in the class actively. Most of the students

seemed to be passive but attentive, only certain students often shared their opinions during the learning process. When the teacher asked their opinion, some students remained silent. They are shy due to the presence of the researcher who they did not know much yet. Regarding the observation to the teacher, the teacher prepared and taught the class well. The teacher has prepared interesting and up-to-date topics to discuss and used the method of concept mapping.

The researcher also observed the class conducted an English reading enhancement activity. It was held at the first 15 minutes of the class period. In this activity, each student was encouraged to read available English texts and passages in the book. After the free reading activity the teaching learning process started by the teacher by delivering the lesson based on her prepared lesson plan. The teacher reviewed the past material and then continued the next material. The teachers prepared the projector and paper based handouts as media. At that particular lesson, the teacher provided the picture of world famous person, Erdogan, the president of Turkey, and then asked the student to describe the person in the picture. The students mentioned what they know about the president quite well. After that the teacher gave the students a picture of an Indonesian famous singer, Afgan, together with an article about him. Every student knew him. And the students tried to describe what they know of the pop singer. The researcher noted that the teacher prepared students' condition well.

It was also observed that the teacher's way in the presentation or delivering material in teaching learning process was considered unique. She used both Bahasa Indonesia and English interchangeably to make the students understood what she said. Most teachers would just shift to using Bahasa Indonesia throughout the lesson once they find students facing hard time to understand. The teacher gave the example using concept mapping in reading comprehension on the screen based on the students' answers about what they could think of Afgan, the popular singer in the picture. Almost all of the students understood how to use concept mapping in reading comprehension. The teacher divided the students into seven groups and gave the example of steps on how to use concept mapping, followed by an exercise.

Teacher gave pictures of a person and descriptive reading articles about the person along with step-by-step instruction in organizing the details into a concept map.

In the groups, the students shared everything they knew about the pictures and the articles. The students would share their opinion to others and received others' opinions in return to be added into the concept map. It could make the students more active and comprehend text better. After the students completed the exercise, the teacher posed some questions to the students about the exercises they were working on and other questions that students would like to have answers with. A few students asked the teacher questions and the teacher answered clearly.

From the observation conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Meureudu, it could be concluded that the teaching learning target of English teacher of the classroom was achieved. Allowing the students to work and exchange ideas by questioning their friends and the teacher helps them gained a lot more information on the subject, in which also helps them understand the reading article. In addition, having the students to work to be freely interact in groups allow them to become more critical in organizing the components from the reading. The teacher was successful to make students understand or comprehend how to use concept mapping in the reading comprehension.

Table below summarized the teacher's preparation, her teaching presentation and teaching method.

Table 1

*Observation result of SMA Negeri 1 Meureudu – The Preparation*

No	Observation Aspect	Yes	No	Researchers/observer's comment
1	Teacher prepared lesson plan	√		The teacher prepared class based on lesson plan
2	The goal of teaching in the lesson plan was clear	√		Teaching learning is clear and understandable. The student understand about the materials
3	Teacher prepared teaching media	√		The teacher used laptop and projector as a media to show examples of concept map and how to organize the map
4	Teacher prepared setting of the classroom	√		Teacher set the classroom before doing teaching learning. Students

	for teaching		are grouped but they are allowed to work and interact freely within the group and with members of other groups
5	Teacher prepared the students' condition well	√	This school conducted 15 minute-reading enhancement prior to teaching learning process to stimulate reading interest

Table 2  
Observation result of SMA Negeri 1 Meureudu – The Presentation

No	Observation Aspect	Yes	No	Researchers/observer's comment
1	Teacher told the target of teaching which should be achieved		√	Teacher do not tell the target of teaching to student for that day, but the target was achieved
2	Teacher motivated students, engaged student's attention to join teaching process well	√		Teacher motivated student using pictures of president of Turkey (Erdogan) and Indonesian pop singer (Afgan), so students felt interested to pay attention and study more actively
3	Teacher explained the lesson using certain techniques to make it clearer and easier to understand	√		Teacher explains the material clear. Teacher used concept mapping as a technique to make student easier to comprehend reading. She taught based on concept mapping guideline
4	Teaching process was based on logical steps	√		Teaching learning was based on the steps of concept mapping strategy
5	While teaching learning process, the teacher made time to ask some questions to the students	√		During the class, the teacher asked some questions based on the materials to check students' comprehension
6	The teacher answered student's question clearly	√		The teacher answered the question asked by the students clearly
7	Teacher asked the students to conclude lesson at the end of the class	√		The teacher asked some students to show their mind map to others and conclude by giving reflection toward the lesson at the end of class.

Table 3  
*Observation result of SMA Negeri 1 Meureudu – Teaching Process (Method)*

No	Observation Aspect	Yes	No	Researchers/observer's comment
1	Teaching was done valiantly as long as the time location allowed, not classical and not boring	✓		The class was not boring but active because students work in groups and teacher used good media
2	Material was based on the purposes of the teaching	✓		The material was prepared and selected based on the purpose of teaching that was prepared in a form of lesson-plan
3	During teaching learning process, the teacher gave the student reinforcement positively	✓		Sometimes, during teaching learning, teacher gave the reinforcement positively to students to maintain their eagerness and positive feeling towards the learning activities
4	Illustration and examples were chosen carefully, so those could be effective and easy to understand	✓		Student found it easy to understand what the teacher explained to and they responded the teacher using English language

The second observation took place in SMA 2 Meureudu, The school is located in Jalan Medan-Banda Aceh. The student number was smaller than that of SMA Negeri 1 Meureudu compared to the other school. In the observation, there were a few students who participated in the class actively. Most of the students seemed to be passive at first, only certain students often shared their opinions during the learning process. Right before the teaching learning process, the class was found rather messy and students seats are not well organised, showing that the students were not ready to study. The teacher started the class by ordering the students to organise the seats and thus prepared the students to take their seats for the lesson. Students say prayers before studying in the class and it was part of the lesson plan. Apart of the contrary, the class is known as the highest achiever in SMA 2 Meureudu which was class 1 IPA 1. The Teacher teaching was based on the lesson plan and the teacher reviewed the past material for couple of minutes by giving some pop

quiz to the students. Some students could answer that question, and a few students were just silent when the teacher asked about the past material.

In the observed class, the teacher used concept mapping in teaching reading narrative texts. The teacher started the lesson by giving explanation about the material, and explained the structure of a narrative text to the students. The teacher used only paper handout to support the activity. The researcher observed that when the teacher explained the material some students were having conversations and were not pay full attention to the teacher's explanation. The teacher used the story of *Malin Kundang*, an Indonesian famous folklore, as an example of narrative text to use concept mapping. Student found it too easy to understand because the students knew the story beforehand. The researcher found that the teacher was not aware that some famous and well known story would not be a great example for teaching reading comprehension. The students often refer to their background knowledge or their past experiences with the reading/topic, not challenging themselves to comprehend the English text that they are currently reading. However, the teacher then gave an exercise to use concept mapping with the narrative text passage from the textbook and the students applied concept mapping from the text without any considerable difficulty.

The teachers grouped the students in pairs. No detailed instructions were given but almost all the students understood the process and able to map the details from the reading material. The students found that the technique is easy to apply and does not really require much explanation. The only way the student complete the task is by sharing what they knew from the reading with their partner. Unlike the students from the other school, according to the teacher, diving them in larger groups will not make them as productive as in pairs, as they might just talked a lot. When the students did the exercise, the teacher asked questions to the students about the exercise or asked them to post questions. A few students asked some questions to the teacher and the teacher answered them clearly. The students finished the exercise to make concept mapping based on the reading about the legend of Minos, King of Crete.

From the observation conducted, it can be seen that the English teacher of SMA Negeri 1 Meureudu achieved the target of teaching learning in the classroom by introducing concept mapping to comprehend a narrative passage. The teacher succeeded to make students understand or comprehend on how to use concept mapping in the reading comprehension effectively.

The table below is a compiled data displaying the classroom’s observation of SMA Negeri 2 Meureudu.

Table 4  
*Observation result of SMA Negeri 2 Meureudu – Preparation*

No	Observation Aspect	Yes	No	Researchers/observer’s comment
1	Teacher prepared lesson plan	√		Teacher teaching based on lesson plan
2	The goal of teaching in the lesson plan was clear	√		The goal of teaching based on the lesson plan, and was clearly mentioned
3	Teacher prepared teaching media	√		The teacher used paper as a media
4	Teacher prepared setting of the classroom for teaching	√		Teacher set classroom before teaching learning
5	Teacher prepared the students’ condition well	√		Teacher prepared students’ condition, by asking some questions like: “Are you ready to study?”

Table 5  
*Observation result of SMA Negeri 2 Meureudu – Presentation*

No	Observation Aspect	Yes	No	Researchers/observer’s comment
1	Teacher told the target of teaching that should be achieved for that day		√	Teacher did not tell the target of teaching to students, but the target was achieved
2	Teacher motivated students, took student’s attention to join teaching process well	√		Teacher motivated student to pay attention to study. That was to support teaching process
3	Teacher explained the	√		Teacher explained the material

	lesson using certain technique to make it clearer and easier to understand		well and clear. Teacher used concept mapping as a method to make it easier to comprehend the reading. Teacher taught based on concept mapping guideline
4	Teaching process was based on logical steps	√	The process teaching learning was based on the steps of the strategy concept mapping
5	While teaching learning process, the teacher made time to ask some questions to the students	√	In teaching learning process the teacher asked some questions to students
6	The teacher answered student's question clearly	√	The teacher answered the question of students clearly
7	Teacher asked the students to conclude lesson at the end of the class	√	The teacher asked the students to conclude the material in the end of class and they did it well

Table 6  
*Observation result of SMA Negeri 2 Meureudu – Result*

No	Observation Aspect	Yes	No	Researchers/observer's comment
1	Teaching was done valiantly as long as the time location possible, not classical and boring	√		The class was not boring, but some students in the class just talked too much
2	Material was based on the purpose of the teaching	√		Material was based on the purpose mentioned in the lesson-plan
3	During teaching learning process, the teacher gave the student reinforcement positively	√		Yes, the teacher gave students reinforcement, for example the teacher asked one to one of the students in the class
4	Illustration and example were chosen carefully, so those could be effective and easy to understand	√		Student found it easy to understand what the teacher explained to them, and they responded the teacher using Indonesian language

Both teachers had different ways to apply the concept mapping in reading comprehension. Teacher of SMA 1 Meureudu used concept mapping in descriptive text and students worked in groups. The teacher also used a projector and paper handout as a media for the reading activity. The teacher worked hard to give explanation and providing examples on how to use concept mapping to comprehensively identify important text details. On the other hand, the teacher of SMA 2 Meureudu used concept mapping in narrative text and students worked in pairs, but the teacher only used blank piece of paper as media for the activity. Both schools used different teaching styles.

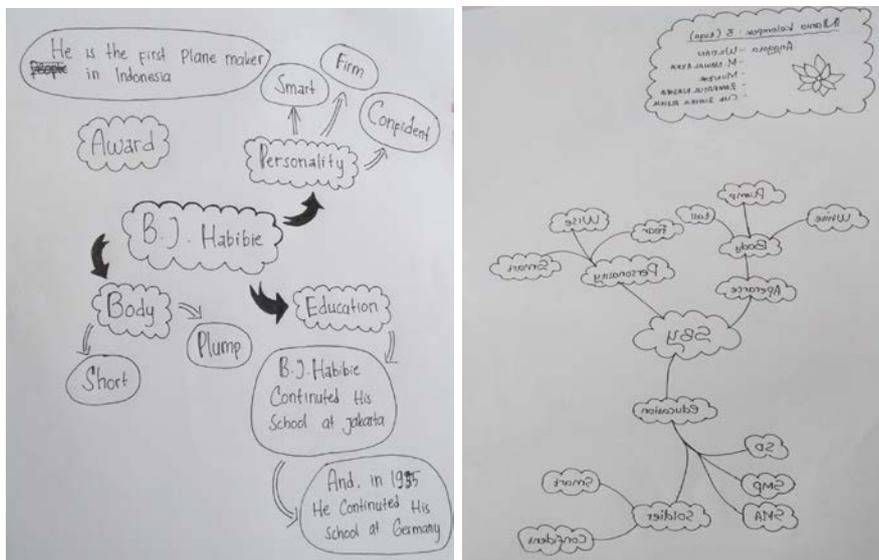


Figure 1. Students' concept map from the reading

Styles in delivering the reading activity using concept mapping was seen as not very influential for effective result. Concept mapping is fairly less challenging to do, however, the researcher found that the students consider concept mapping a new technique for them to learn reading comprehension, and the technique can be easily applied with different types of text. The only issue is that concept mapping is not used very often or even introduced to these students.

The researcher used the interview to support the data collection in this research. The result for both schools were differences. The following was from the interview session with the English teacher from SMA Negeri 1 Meureudu.

Table 7  
Interview result of SMA Negeri 1 Meureudu

No	List of interview Qs	Teacher's responds
1	How do you teach using concept mapping in reading comprehension?	I teach concept mapping based on steps. To make students interested I use pictures to support strategy concept mapping.
2	How do you prepare for teaching reading comprehension using concept mapping?	The first one I prepare the material to teach learning. The second, I use the media to support teaching learning in the classroom. The third, I divide students into groups. Students could work together and share anything in the groups.
3	How do you make sure you meet the needs of your students with concept mapping?	This strategy is so important to make students understand about reading, because concept mapping one of strategies to improve reading comprehension. So student needs this strategy.
4	After using concept mapping, can students improve reading skills?	Yes, after using concept mapping I as a teacher can see scores of students high. It means, it improves.
5	What are your thoughts on teaching learning using concept mapping to students in group work?	I think if students work in groups, they can share with other friends, and can ask if they do not understand on certain materials. So, work in groups are more effective for this strategy.
6	Do you find it difficult when you teach reading comprehension using concept mapping?	Of course not. The strategy is good.
7	Do you often give this strategy to your students	Not really, sometimes

Based on table, the interview result of SMA Negeri 1 Meureudu, the researcher saw the teacher could take a charge about concept mapping strategy. The teacher also understood the steps on how to teach using concept mapping strategy. This strategy would help the teacher improve reading skills of students while also create an interesting collaborative learning experience. The English teacher of SMA Negeri 1 Meureudu considered that she has successfully introduced concept mapping as a strategy in teaching reading comprehension.

Concept mapping can be used in all types of reading, narrative, descriptive, and others. However, the English teacher of SMA 1 Meureudu considered that only descriptive text can be used concept mapping, and it helped the teacher a lot to teach the learning materials in the classroom. The students did the exercise well using concept mapping. It made students more interested in study, because concept

mapping did not make them bored but instead students became more active in teaching learning.

Table 8  
*Interview result of SMA Negeri 2 Meureudu*

No.	List of interview Qs	Teacher's responds
1	How do you teach to use concept mapping in reading comprehension?	I teach concept mapping based on step how to use concept mapping in reading comprehension; it can make students easy or fast to understand about reading.
2	How do you prepare students for teaching reading comprehension using concept mapping?	The first one I prepared the material to teaching learning; then I use good examples to use concept mapping in order to interest the students.
3	How do you make sure you meet the needs of a student with concept mapping?	This strategy is so important to help students to understand the reading, because many students not comprehend what reading tells. So that way this strategy is so important and students need this strategy
4	After using concept mapping, students can improve reading skill or not?	Yes, after using concept mapping the students increase their scores
5	Do you use concept mapping to other reading material of different text types	Only descriptive. But maybe it can be applied to others too.
6	What are your thoughts on teaching learning using concept mapping to students in group work?	I think if students work in groups, they do not work well but they talk a lot, like a chatterbox. So I do not divide them into the group but make them work in pairs
7	Do you find it difficult when you teach reading comprehension using concept mapping?	Of course not, using strategy concept mapping makes it easier for the students to understand/comprehend the reading

From the notes from the interview session with the teacher from SMA Negeri 2 Meureudu, the researcher saw the teacher could take a charge about concept mapping strategy. The teacher also understood the steps by using concept mapping strategy. This strategy would help the teacher to improve reading skills of students. The answers from the English teacher of SMA Negeri 2 Meureudu, showed that the

teacher found that the students enjoyed using concept mapping as a strategy in learning reading comprehension.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the observations and the interviews, there are few conclusions that can be made. First is that both teachers from the schools were not frequently introducing or using concept mapping in reading comprehension activity. They often just used reading and translating the lines to answer the comprehension question in the textbook. Students often found that translating lines of text to answer comprehension questions is not interesting. Very often teachers are the ones who provide the answer while students are passive waiting for the final answer given by the teacher. Concept mapping in reading comprehension class was considered new by some of the students from the two schools. The researcher observed that they were fully engaged throughout the lesson. They were 'locked' to the activity as if they were solving puzzle, which was quite interesting to watch. The teachers from both schools were excited seeing their students engaged to completing the task and muttered why would not they used concept mapping before looking at their students very active.

Styles of delivering lesson using concept mapping is not very important. Concept mapping is relatively easy to apply and students who are new to the technique would know how to apply it without any issues. Using digital projector only would give better presentation when the teacher explains the steps. Nevertheless, without digital projector teacher could easily introduce the strategy to the students.

Assigning students to develop a concept map from the reading in groups (both in pairs or groups with more than 2 members) will boost the students' confidence in completing the task. Students were seen more motivated and responsible when they were given the opportunity to freely work in groups in this activity for the task that they know how to complete. In line with this, the teachers from both schools were also concluded that the reading activity using concept mapping showed great improvement in keeping the students engaged with the task along with delivering satisfactory results.

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