THE APPLICATION OF CHORAL AND REPEATED READING STRATEGY TO IMPROVE READING COMPREHENSION OF THE EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS AT SMP NEGERI 20 SIGI

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of choral and repeated reading strategies in improving the reading comprehension of eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 20 Sigi. Using a quasi-experimental design, 46 students were selected through cluster random sampling and divided into experimental and control groups. Data were collected through multiple-choice and essay tests administered before and after the intervention. The experimental group's mean pretest score was 45.96, increasing to 81.35 post-test, while the control group's mean rose from 50.30 to 76.04. Statistical analysis showed significant improvement, supported by a two-tailed significance value of 0.000 and a correlation coefficient of 0.696. These findings confirm that choral and repeated reading strategies positively impact students' reading comprehension.

Keywords: *Choral and repeated reading, Reading comprehension, Text narative, Short story*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is an indispensable proficiency in the acquisition of English, particularly within academic contexts. It constitutes a foundational skill that students must cultivate, given its pivotal role in both the pedagogical and learning frameworks. As articulated by Yang (2016), reading constitutes a fundamental conduit for the acquisition and internalization of knowledge and information derived from one's environment. In addition, Mardianti and Ohoiwutun (2014) accentuate the pivotal role of systematically organized reading instruction, as it substantially contributes to the advancement of learners' proficiency in deciphering and construing English texts. Through the active engagement with reading, learners can not only expand their lexical repertoire and grasp of syntactic structures but also fortify their proficiency in listening, speaking, and overall comprehension.

Reading comprehension refers to the intellectual capacity to interpret and extract meaning from written discourse, while simultaneously synthesizing this information with the reader's prior knowledge, thus fostering a more profound grasp of the content. Kirby (2014) defines reading comprehension as the process

through which we make sense of what we read. It serves as the main goal of reading and is essential for meaningful learning from written material. To successfully understand written texts, students must develop strong comprehension abilities and effective strategies, which help them avoid poor academic performance in other subjects that rely on reading skills. Weak comprehension skills in the early stages of schooling can continue to hinder students throughout their academic journey and even into their careers. When comparing effective comprehension with miscomprehension, it can be observed that misunderstanding tends to stem more from the content of the text rather than from language issues.

Basic Competency 3.1 of the 2013 Curriculum mandates that students develop the ability to read and comprehend both fictional and nonfiction texts. Accordingly, students are exposed to a wide range of text types, including short stories, articles, scientific reports, poetry, and more. They are expected to grasp the overall message, identify the main theme, infer the central idea, and extract specific information from the text. Based on the researcher's observations at SMP Negeri 20 Sigi, it was found that students encounter various difficulties in learning English, particularly in reading skills. These challenges include a low interest in reading English texts, improper reading pace and intonation, limited vocabulary, lack of overall reading fluency, and low self-confidence during reading activities. Therefore, to enhance students' reading comprehension and support effective instruction, educators need to apply creative and appropriate teaching strategies.

Therefore, the researcher sought an effective method to boost students' reading comprehension, selecting choral and repeated reading strategies as a potential solution. Choral and repeated reading is a great way to practice reading short stories, poems, rhymes and dialogues. It allows students to experiment with language and increase their sight vocabulary and oral language skills. Bean (2017) defines choral reading as an activity where multiple voices simultaneously read poetry or lyrical texts aloud. Brish and Cerreker (2018) highlight that repeated reading is one of the most effective methods to enhance word recognition, reading speed, accuracy, and fluency. Research has shown that choral reading contributes to improving students' fluency, understanding, confidence, and enthusiasm for reading (Septiawan, 2021). Similarly, repeated reading is acknowledged as an

effective technique for improving reading comprehension, fluency, precision, motivation, and self-assurance (Lee & Yoon, 2017). Building on the preceding results, the researcher intends to examine how choral and repeated reading strategies affect students' reading comprehension using short story texts as the medium. The study is titled: "The Use of Choral and Repeated Reading Strategies to Improve Reading Comprehension Among Eighth-Grade Students at SMP Negeri 20 Sigi."

MATERIALS AND METHOD

This research primarily concentrated on assessing literal reading comprehension. A quasi-experimental methodology was utilized, incorporating two separate groups: an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group completed a pre-test, received targeted instructional treatment, and then undertook a post-test. Conversely, the control group participated solely in the pre-test and post-test phases, without being exposed to any form of intervention or instructional treatment. Both groups followed identical procedures for administering the pre- and post-tests. A total of 46 eighth-grade students from SMP Negeri 20 Sigi participated in the study, with 23 students assigned to each group. Cluster random sampling was used to select participants for this study. As noted by Bida and Maryanti (2020), correlation research requires a minimum of 30 subjects.

This research was conducted on 15 May 2024 at SMP Negeri 20 Sigi, which is located in Marawola sub-district, Sigi district. This location has quite limited access to the city centre and has never been studied before in an educational context. Therefore, the researcher chose to conduct research there to reveal facts related to education in the area. This sample was chosen because it was considered appropriate to the research topic and covered material relevant to the curriculum. The data for this study were collected from the test outcomes and subsequently subjected to statistical analysis utilizing SPSS V23.

RESULTS

A pre-test was administered to both the experimental and control groups on May 15th, 2024, to evaluate their initial reading comprehension abilities prior to the commencement of the intervention.

Table 1 presents the outcomes of the pre-test administered to both cohorts. Within the experimental group, student scores ranged from a minimum of 33 to a maximum of 66. In contrast, the control group exhibited a slightly narrower range, with scores spanning from 36 to 63. The mean score achieved by the experimental group was 45.96, whereas the control group demonstrated a moderately superior average of 50.30.clearly,can be seen in the table below:

Table 1. Scoring Range Pretest Experimental Group

Classification		Score	Frequency	Percent
Valid	Very Good	90-100	-	-
	Good	80-89	-	-
	Fair	70-79	-	-
	Very Poor	40-69	18	78.3
	Poor	0-39	5	21.7
	Total	0	23	100.0

Table 2 Scoring Range Pre-test Control Group

Classification		Score	Frequency	Percent
Valid	Very Good	90-100	-	-
	Good	80-89	-	-
	Fair	70-79	-	-
	Poor	40-69	21	91.3
	Very poor	0-39	2	8.7
	Total	0	23	100.0

The table outlines the pre-test and post-test performance of the experimental group, consisting of 23 participants. The mean score for the pre-test was 45.96, which falls under the "poor" classification. Individual scores ranged from a low of 33 to a high of 66, resulting in an aggregate score of 1,057. In terms of score distribution, 18 students (78.3%) earned marks within the 40–69 range, categorizing

them as "poor," while the remaining 5 students (21.7%) scored between 0–39, indicating a "very poor" level of comprehension. Notably, no student attained scores within the "fair," "good," or "very good" categories at this stage.

The table shows the control group's pretest results, consisting of 23 students. They achieved an average score of 50.30, which still falls under the "poor" category. The scores ranged from a low of 36 to a high of 63, with a total score accumulation of 1,157. Based on the frequency of scores, 21 students (91.3%) scored between 40 and 69, placing them in the "poor" category, while 2 students (8.7%) scored between 0 and 39, falling into the "very poor" category. None of the students reached the "fair," "good," or "very good" categories.

The post-test was administered to both the experimental and control cohorts on June 1st, 2024. This evaluation aimed to gauge the students' reading

Table 3. The mean Score of Students' in Post-test

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean
Post test experimental	23	66	96	1871	81.35
Post test control	23	69	90	1749	76.04
Valid N (listwise)	23				

comprehension following the intervention and to ascertain whether the implemented instructional strategy yielded a favorable impact on their academic performance.

Table 3 outlines the post-test performance of the participants. Within the experimental group, individual scores spanned from a minimum of 66 to a maximum of 96. In contrast, the control group exhibited a score range between 69 and 90. The mean score attained by the experimental group was 81.35, surpassing the control group's average score of 76.04, thereby indicating a comparatively higher level of reading comprehension achievement among the students who received the treatment.

Table 4. Scoring Range Post-test Experimental Group

Classification		Score	Frequency	Percent
Valid	Very Good	90-100	4	17.4
	Good	80-89	11	47.8
	Fair	70-79	7	30.4
	Very Poor	40-69	1	4.3
	Poor	0-39	-	-
	Total	0	23	100.0

The table delineates the post-test outcomes for the experimental group, evidencing a marked advancement in their reading comprehension proficiency. The 23 students achieved an average score of 81.35, which is classified as "good." The scores ranged from a low of 66 to a high of 96, with a total of 1,871 points. Among the students, 4 (17.4%) scored between 90 and 100, placing them in the "very good" category, 11 (47.8%) scored between 80 and 89, categorized as "good," and 7 students (30.4%) scored between 70 and 79, which is considered "fair." One student (4.4%) scored between 40 and 69, falling into the "very poor" categoryAll experimental group students scored above "poor," with their average rising from 45.96 to 81.35, surpassing the passing grade of 70

Table 5. Scoring Range Posttest Control Group

Classification		Score	Frequency	Percent
Valid	Very Good	90-100	2	8.7
	Good	80-89	5	21.7
	Fair	70-79	14	60.9
	Very Poor	40-69	2	8.7
	Poor	0-39	-	-
	Total	0	23	100.0

The table indicates a significant progress in students' reading comprehension, as shown by the post-test results. The average score among the 23 students was 76.04, which is categorized as "fair." The scores ranged from 69 to 90, with a total accumulated score of 1,749. Based on the post-test score distribution, 2 students (8.7%) scored between 90 and 100, placing them in the "very good" category. Five students (21.7%) earned scores between 80 and 89, categorized as "good," while 14 students (60.9%) achieved scores in the "fair" category.

1. The Normality Test

Table 6. Tests of Normality used Shapiro-Wilk

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
The Pre-test Result Experiment Group	.168	23	.093	.938	23	.160
The Post-test Result Experimental Group	.148	23	.200[*]	.970	23	.696
The Pre-test Result Control Group	.186	23	.038	.926	23	.089
The Post-test Result Control Group	.206	23	.013	.876	23	.008

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Subsequent to gathering the descriptive statistical data for both the experimental and control cohorts, the analysis proceeded with an assessment of the normality of their respective mean scores. To conduct this evaluation, the Shapiro-Wilk test was utilized, applying a significance threshold set at 0.05.

Based on the SPSS output in the Shapiro-Wilk column using a sample size of 46, the results show that the significance value (sig.) for the experimental group's pretest was 0.160, which is higher than the alpha level of 0.05. This suggests that the students in the experimental pretest group are likely from a normally distributed population. All significance values for the experimental post-test (0.696), the control pre-test (0.89), and the control post-test (0.08) exceed the 0.05 threshold, indicating that both groups' scores are likely drawn from normally distributed populations.

Table 7. Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair The Pre-test and Post test	-35.391	13.803	2.878	-41.360	-29.422	-12.297	22	.000

The investigation utilized a Paired-Samples t-test, establishing the alpha level at 0.05. SPSS version 23 output yielded a two-tailed p-value of 0.000, which falls below the designated threshold. With degrees of freedom calculated as 22 (N–1, where N equals 23), the resulting t-statistic was 12.297. These results substantiate a statistically significant difference between the paired data sets.

Accordingly, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis (H_1), thereby evidencing a statistically significant enhancement in the students' mean reading comprehension scores from the pre-test to the post-test following the implementation of choral and repeated reading strategies using short story texts. Based on these outcomes, the researcher formulated the following hypothesis:

H_1: The implementation of choral and repeated reading methodologies effectively augments the reading comprehension abilities of eighth-grade learners at SMP Negeri 20 Sigi when engaging with short story texts.

DISCUSSION

Subsequent to the findings, the researcher undertook an examination of how the observed outcomes aligned with the central research question. During the first session, the students' pre-test outcomes were reviewed, revealing that their reading comprehension was still underdeveloped, with most learners receiving scores classified as "very poor." Students frequently hesitated while reading and had difficulty identifying English words, which led to incorrect readings and an inability to understand the text. Hasibuan (2021) suggested that this may stem from structural differences between English and the students' first language. Moreover, Irwanto (2017) pointed out that factors such as student motivation, access to reading resources, and the classroom environment also influence reading comprehension. Confronted with these obstacles, the researcher adopted choral and repeated reading methodologies to fortify the students' reading comprehension abilities.

Thus, choral and repeated reading students were able to determine the right speed and intonation when reading the text, began to understand the vocabulary, and fluently read the text in its entirety. Moreover, during the treatment phase, the researcher deployed the choral and repeated reading approach in a highly interactive and participatory manner. This approach involved having students read unique,

simple, and easy-to-understand short stories individually or simultaneously with other students, followed by interventions from the researcher to facilitate choral reading and repetition. This method was not only enjoyable but also helped students experiment with language, expand their sight vocabulary, enhance their spoken language skills, and gain confidence in reading English. It also encouraged active participation among students in English lessons. Zorella (2017) demonstrated that the choral reading strategy worked effectively in improving students' reading comprehension and made reading more interesting and enjoyable.

In summation, the implementation of choral and repeated reading techniques demonstrated substantial efficacy in augmenting students' reading comprehension abilities. Empirical evidence revealed that a significant proportion of learners within the experimental cohort attained scores categorized as "good" on the post-assessment. The marked enhancement in their performance suggests a heightened capacity to grasp and interpret the reading material. Moreover, these instructional strategies contributed to elevated levels of student engagement, bolstered self-assurance, and enhanced fluency in reading English texts. These findings are congruent with prior research. Nurhamdani (2023) ascertained that such methodologies effectively improved reading comprehension among seventh-grade students at UPT SMPN 1 Cempa Pinrang. Likewise, Sari (2018) corroborated the positive influence of choral reading on reading comprehension among first-year students at SMK Taruna Satria Pekanbaru.

Moreover, the implementation of the choral and repeated reading strategy led to several outcomes that positively influenced both students and teachers during the learning process. Students showed improved comprehension of the reading material and became more willing to engage by answering the teacher's questions.

CONCLUSION

The comparative analysis of the mean, minimum, and maximum scores between the experimental and control groups reveals a discernible disparity. The experimental group, which employed choral and repeated reading strategies, attained a superior average score of 83.35. In contrast, the control group, which relied on conventional instructional approaches devoid of these strategies, recorded

a lower mean score of 76.04. This variance underscores the effectiveness of the choral and repeated reading approach in enhancing students' comprehension of short story texts.

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