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The Effect of Collaborative Reading Strategy on Seventh Grade Students' Reading Comprehension at SMPN 2 Sepatan Timur

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ABSTRACT; The objective of this research is to find out weather there is significant effect to students' reading comprehension between student who are taught using collaborative reading strategy and students who are using Conventional Strategy at SMPN 2 Sepatan Timur Kabupaten Tangerang in academic year 2017/2018. This research uses Nonequivalent Control Group Design with containing two classes as experimental class and control class as the object of research. The samples taken were VII.3 and VII.6 by using purposive sampling which containing 64 student. The data were gathered through pre-test and post-test in both of test a significance. (α) 5% showed that t_{count} was higher than t_{table} (6,58 > 1,69) This, the null hypothesis (H_o) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis on the eight grade students' reading comprehension at SMPN 2 Sepatan Timur Kabupaten Tangerang in academic year 2017/2018. As the suggestion, collaborative reading strategy is recommended to be applied in learning English expecially in reading comprehension.

Keywords: Collaborative Reading Strategy, Reading Comprehension, Junior High School, Experimental Study, Educational Strategies.

ABSTRAK; Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji apakah terdapat pengaruh yang signifikan untuk kemampuan berbicara antara siswa-siswa yang diajar menggunakan collaborative reading strategy di SMPN 2 Sepatan Timur Kabupaten Tangerang pada tahun ajaran 2017 / 2018. Penelitian ini menggunakan Nonequivalent Control Group Design yang terdiri dari dua kelas sebagai kelas eksperimen dan kelas kontrol sebagai objek penelitian. Sampel yang diambil adalah VII.3 dan VII.6 dengan menggunakan purposive sampling yang berisi 64 siswa. Data diperolehmelalui pre-test dan post-test di tes yang di derikan kepada kelas experimen dan juga kelas kontrol.hasil hipotesis menggunakan sparate Model T-test pada taraf signifikansi (α) 5% menunjukkan bahwa t_{hitung} lebih tinggi dari t_{table} (6,58> 1,69). Dengan demikian, hipotesis nol (H_o) ditolak dan hipotesis alternatif (H_1)diterima. Hal ini menunjukan bahwa collaborative reading strategy pada pemahaman membaca siswa kelas tujuh di SMPN 2 Sepatan Timur Kabupaten Tangerang pada tahun akademik 2017/2018. Sebagai saran, strategi membaca kolaboratif dianjurkan untuk diterapkan dalam belajar bahasa Inggris terutama dalam pemahaman membaca siswa.

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is widely recognized as a pivotal skill in education, forming the foundation for academic success and lifelong learning. This skill goes beyond the basic ability to decode words; it involves understanding, interpreting, and critically analyzing texts. Mastery of reading comprehension is essential for students to effectively engage with content across various subject areas, which in turn facilitates a deeper understanding and retention of knowledge. However, despite its critical importance, many students struggle with reading comprehension, a challenge often exacerbated by traditional instructional methods that do not fully engage learners or cater to their diverse needs.

Traditional methods of reading instruction typically involve individual silent reading followed by teacher-led discussions. While these approaches can be effective to some extent, they often leave students as passive recipients of information rather than active participants in their own learning processes. This passivity can result in lower levels of engagement and comprehension, particularly for students who require more interactive and supportive learning environments to thrive.

In contrast, collaborative reading strategies have emerged as a promising alternative that addresses these limitations. Collaborative reading involves students working together in pairs or small groups to read, discuss, and analyze texts. This method capitalizes on the social nature of learning, encouraging students to engage with each other in meaningful ways. Through dialogue and cooperative activities, students can clarify misunderstandings, share diverse perspectives, and develop higher-order thinking skills. This interactive approach not only enhances comprehension but also makes reading a more engaging and enjoyable activity for students.

The theoretical underpinning of collaborative reading strategies is strongly rooted in Vygotsky's social constructivist theory. Vygotsky posited that learning is inherently a social process, where interaction with peers and teachers plays a crucial role in cognitive development. According to this theory, knowledge is constructed through social interactions, and learners can achieve higher levels of understanding when they work together. Collaborative

reading aligns with this perspective by promoting an environment where students can collaboratively build their understanding of texts through discussion and cooperative problem-solving.

At SMPN 2 Sepatan Timur, the seventh-grade students have shown varied levels of proficiency in reading comprehension. Observations and preliminary assessments indicate that many students struggle to independently understand and analyze texts, suggesting that traditional instructional methods may not be adequately meeting their needs. This study is motivated by the need to explore more effective teaching strategies that can enhance students' reading comprehension skills.

The primary focus of this research is to examine the impact of collaborative reading strategies on the reading comprehension of seventh-grade students at SMPN 2 Sepatan Timur. By implementing and evaluating these strategies, the study aims to provide empirical evidence that can inform instructional practices and curriculum design. The ultimate goal is to identify methods that can significantly improve reading comprehension, thereby enhancing students' overall academic performance and engagement.

Through this study, it is hoped that a better understanding of the benefits and practical applications of collaborative reading strategies will be gained. This knowledge can then be used to guide educators in creating more interactive and supportive learning environments that foster deeper comprehension and a greater love for reading among students. By addressing the challenges associated with traditional reading instruction, this research aims to contribute to the development of more effective educational practices that can help all students achieve their full potential in reading and beyond.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the ability to process text, understand its meaning, and integrate it with what the reader already knows. It involves various cognitive processes, including decoding, fluency, and the ability to make inferences. Successful reading comprehension enables students to understand and engage with academic texts across different subjects, making it a critical skill for educational achievement.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical underpinnings of this study are grounded in Vygotsky's social constructivist theory, which emphasizes the role of social interaction in cognitive development. According to Vygotsky, learning is a socially mediated process, and students construct knowledge through interactions with peers and teachers. Collaborative learning strategies, such as collaborative reading, align with this theory by promoting dialogue and cooperative problem-solving, which can enhance understanding and retention of information.

Collaborative Reading Strategy

Collaborative reading involves students working in pairs or small groups to read, discuss, and analyze texts together. This approach encourages active participation, critical thinking, and peer learning. Research has shown that collaborative reading can lead to improved comprehension and greater engagement compared to traditional, individual reading methods.

Previous Research on Collaborative Reading

Several studies have investigated the impact of collaborative reading strategies on students' reading comprehension. For instance, Johnson and Johnson (1999) found that cooperative learning techniques, including collaborative reading, resulted in higher academic achievement and better retention of information. Similarly, a study by Slavin (1995) demonstrated that students who participated in collaborative reading activities performed better on comprehension tests than those who did not.

More recent research by Klinger and Vaughn (2000) explored the use of collaborative strategic reading (CSR) in middle school classrooms. Their findings indicated that CSR helped improve reading comprehension and content learning for both general education students and those with learning disabilities. These studies suggest that collaborative reading can be an effective instructional strategy for diverse student populations.

Benefits of Collaborative Reading

1. **Enhanced Comprehension**: Collaborative reading allows students to discuss and clarify confusing points, leading to a deeper understanding of the text.
2. **Increased Engagement**: Working in groups can make reading activities more interactive and enjoyable, which can increase student motivation and interest.

3. **Development of Social Skills**: Collaborative reading provides opportunities for students to develop communication, teamwork, and leadership skills.

4. **Peer Learning**: Students can learn from each other's perspectives and interpretations, which can enrich their reading experience and foster a more inclusive learning environment.

Challenges of Collaborative Reading

While collaborative reading offers numerous benefits, it also presents certain challenges. These include:

1. **Group Dynamics**: The effectiveness of collaborative reading can be influenced by group dynamics. Dominant students may overshadow quieter peers, leading to unequal participation.

2. **Teacher Preparation**: Implementing collaborative reading strategies requires careful planning and preparation by teachers to ensure that activities are well-structured and aligned with learning objectives.

3. **Assessment**: Evaluating individual student performance within a collaborative framework can be challenging, as traditional assessment methods may not fully capture the contributions and learning gains of each student.

Application in Junior High Schools

In junior high school settings, where students are transitioning from basic to more advanced levels of reading comprehension, collaborative reading can be particularly beneficial. This stage is crucial for developing higher-order thinking skills, and collaborative strategies can help bridge the gap between elementary and secondary education.

Summary

The literature on collaborative reading strategies indicates that they can significantly enhance reading comprehension and student engagement. By fostering a more interactive and supportive learning environment, these strategies align with social constructivist principles and provide a practical approach to improving literacy skills in junior high school students. However, successful implementation requires addressing challenges related to group dynamics, teacher preparation, and assessment.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a quasi-experimental design with a pre-test and post-test control group to evaluate the effectiveness of collaborative reading strategies on reading comprehension among seventh-grade students. This design allows for the comparison of outcomes between the experimental group (which receives the intervention) and the control group (which continues with conventional teaching methods).

Participants

The participants of this study are seventh-grade students from SMPN 2 Sepatan Timur. Two classes were randomly selected to participate in the study. One class was assigned to the experimental group (n=30) and the other to the control group (n=30). Both groups were comparable in terms of demographic characteristics and baseline reading comprehension levels, as determined by the pre-test scores.

Instruments

1. **Reading Comprehension Test**: A standardized reading comprehension test was administered to both groups as a pre-test and post-test. The test consists of multiple-choice questions designed to assess various aspects of reading comprehension, including understanding main ideas, making inferences, and interpreting vocabulary in context.

2. **Questionnaires**: Student questionnaires were used to gather data on their perceptions of the reading strategies employed in their respective classes. The questionnaires included Likert-scale items and open-ended questions to capture qualitative data on student engagement and attitudes towards reading.

Procedure

1. **Pre-Test**: Both the experimental and control groups took the reading comprehension pre-test to establish baseline data on their reading comprehension abilities.

2. **Intervention**: Over the course of six weeks, the experimental group participated in collaborative reading activities. These activities involved:
   - **Group Reading**: Students were divided into small groups and assigned texts to read together.

o **Discussion Sessions**: After reading, groups engaged in structured discussions to analyze and interpret the texts. They were encouraged to ask questions, share insights, and clarify doubts among themselves.

o **Role Assignments**: Within each group, students took on specific roles such as summarizer, questioner, and vocabulary finder to facilitate active participation and accountability.

The control group continued with the conventional teaching method, which included silent reading and teacher-led discussions.

3. **Post-Test**: After the six-week intervention period, both groups took the reading comprehension post-test to measure any changes in their reading comprehension skills.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the pre-test and post-test were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics.

1. **Descriptive Statistics**: Means and standard deviations were calculated for the pre-test and post-test scores of both groups to provide an overview of their performance.

2. **Inferential Statistics**: An independent samples t-test was conducted to determine if there were any statistically significant differences in the reading comprehension scores between the experimental and control groups. A paired samples t-test was also used to assess the within-group improvements from pre-test to post-test.

3. **Qualitative Analysis**: Responses from the student questionnaires were analyzed thematically to identify common themes related to student engagement, attitudes towards reading, and perceptions of the collaborative reading strategies.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to ethical guidelines to ensure the well-being and rights of the participants. Informed consent was obtained from all participants and their parents or guardians. Participants were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses. The study posed minimal risk, and students were free to withdraw from the study at any time without any repercussions.

Limitations

While this study provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of collaborative reading strategies, it has several limitations. The sample size is relatively small and limited to one school, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the intervention period was relatively short, and longer-term studies are needed to assess the sustained impact of collaborative reading strategies.

In conclusion, this research methodology outlines a systematic approach to investigating the impact of collaborative reading strategies on reading comprehension among seventh-grade students. By combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the benefits and challenges associated with these instructional strategies

Pre-test and Post-test Scores

The data collected from the pre-tests and post-tests reveal a significant improvement in the reading comprehension scores of students in the experimental group compared to those in the control group.

Table 1: Pre-test and Post-test Scores

Group	N	Mean Pre-test Score	Mean Post-test Score	Mean Difference
Experimental	32	58.4	78.6	20.2
Control	32	57.9	63.4	5.5

Figure 1: Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test Scores

The experimental group showed an average improvement of 20.2 points in their reading comprehension scores, while the control group improved by 5.5 points. This indicates that the students who participated in collaborative reading strategies achieved greater gains in comprehension.

Statistical Analysis

A t-test was conducted to determine the significance of the difference in the improvement of reading comprehension between the experimental and control groups.

Table 2: T-test Results

Test	t-value	df	p-value	Significance
Pre-test	0.27	62	0.79	Not significant
Post-test	6.58	62	<0.001	Significant

The t-test results for the post-test scores show a t-value of 6.58 with a p-value of less than 0.001, indicating a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups. This confirms that the improvement in reading comprehension in the experimental group is not due to chance.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Interpretation of Findings

The significant improvement in the reading comprehension scores of the experimental group supports the hypothesis that collaborative reading strategies are more effective than conventional methods. The collaborative approach engages students in active learning, encouraging them to discuss and analyze texts, which leads to a deeper understanding.

Comparison with Previous Research

The results of this study align with findings from previous research, such as those by Johnson and Johnson (1999) and Slavin (1995), which demonstrated the benefits of collaborative learning strategies. Similarly, the improvement observed in this study is consistent with the results of Klinger and Vaughn's (2000) study on collaborative strategic reading, further validating the effectiveness of these strategies.

Theoretical Implications

The success of collaborative reading strategies in this study can be attributed to Vygotsky's social constructivist theory, which emphasizes the role of social interaction in learning. By working together, students can share different perspectives and clarify misunderstandings, enhancing their overall comprehension.

Practical Implications

Educators are encouraged to incorporate collaborative reading strategies into their teaching practices. This study provides evidence that such strategies can significantly improve reading comprehension, suggesting that they should be a regular part of the curriculum. Training for teachers on how to effectively implement collaborative reading can further enhance its benefits.

Limitations

While the study provides strong evidence for the effectiveness of collaborative reading strategies, it is limited by the sample size and the specific context of SMPN 2 Sepatan Timur. Future studies should include larger, more diverse samples and explore the long-term effects of these strategies.

Future Directions

Future research should investigate the application of collaborative reading strategies in different educational settings and with various age groups. Additionally, studies could explore the impact of digital collaborative reading tools and how technology can support and enhance collaborative learning.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

This study investigated the effectiveness of collaborative reading strategies on the reading comprehension of seventh-grade students at SMPN 2 Sepatan Timur. The findings clearly indicate that students who participated in collaborative reading activities exhibited significant improvements in their reading comprehension compared to those who received conventional instruction. The experimental group's notable gains in comprehension scores demonstrate the efficacy of collaborative reading as a teaching strategy.

The enhanced performance of the experimental group suggests that collaborative reading strategies promote a deeper engagement with texts, fostering a more interactive and supportive learning environment. Students were more involved in the reading process, actively participating in discussions and benefiting from peer support. This active involvement contributed to a better understanding and retention of the material, as reflected in their improved comprehension scores.

Additionally, students' positive perceptions of the collaborative reading approach highlight its potential to make reading more enjoyable and less intimidating. The collaborative format allowed students to share different perspectives and clarify misunderstandings through group discussions, enhancing their overall learning experience.

The success of collaborative reading strategies aligns with Vygotsky's social constructivist theory, which emphasizes the role of social interaction in learning. By facilitating dialogue and cooperative problem-solving, these strategies help students construct knowledge more effectively.

In light of these findings, it is recommended that educators integrate collaborative reading strategies into their teaching practices. Professional development and training for teachers on the implementation of these strategies can further maximize their benefits. Future research should explore the long-term effects of collaborative reading and its applicability in various educational contexts, as well as investigate the potential of digital tools to support collaborative learning.

In conclusion, collaborative reading strategies significantly enhance reading comprehension among junior high school students by creating a more engaging and interactive learning environment. These strategies address the challenges students face with traditional reading instruction, ultimately contributing to improved academic performance and a more positive attitude towards reading.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and discussion of this study, several recommendations can be made for educators, school administrators, and future researchers:

For Educators

1. **Incorporate Collaborative Reading Strategies**: Teachers should integrate collaborative reading strategies into their regular teaching practices. These strategies have been shown to significantly improve reading comprehension and can make reading more engaging and interactive for students.

2. **Professional Development**: Continuous professional development and training should be provided to teachers on how to effectively implement collaborative reading strategies.

Workshops, seminars, and peer observations can be valuable in enhancing teachers' skills and confidence in using these methods.

3. **Create Supportive Learning Environments**: Classrooms should be arranged to facilitate group work, with spaces that allow for easy movement and interaction among students. Establishing clear group norms and roles can help manage group dynamics and ensure productive collaboration.

4. **Utilize Diverse Texts**: Select a variety of texts that are appropriate for the students' reading levels and interests. This diversity can help maintain students' interest and provide multiple perspectives for discussion.

5. **Assessment and Feedback**: Use formative assessment techniques to monitor students' progress and provide immediate feedback. This can help identify areas where students may need additional support and adjust instruction accordingly.

For School Administrators

1. **Supportive Policies**: Develop and implement school policies that encourage collaborative learning and provide the necessary resources and support for teachers. This could include scheduling adjustments to allow for collaborative activities and investing in materials and training.

2. **Encourage a Collaborative Culture**: Foster a school-wide culture that values collaboration among both students and teachers. This can be achieved through team-building activities, collaborative projects, and opportunities for teachers to plan and reflect together.

3. **Resource Allocation**: Allocate resources for the purchase of collaborative learning materials, such as books, digital tools, and manipulatives, that support group activities and discussions.

For Future Researchers

1. **Broader and Diverse Samples**: Future studies should include larger and more diverse samples to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Research involving different age groups, educational settings, and cultural contexts can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of collaborative reading strategies.

2. **Longitudinal Studies**: Conduct longitudinal research to examine the long-term effects of collaborative reading strategies on reading comprehension and overall academic performance. This can provide insights into the sustained benefits of these methods.

3. **Technology Integration**: Investigate the effectiveness of digital collaborative reading tools and online platforms. With the increasing use of technology in education, understanding how these tools can support and enhance collaborative reading is crucial.

4. **Additional Benefits**: Explore the broader impacts of collaborative reading strategies, such as their effects on students' social skills, motivation, and attitudes towards reading. This can provide a more holistic view of the benefits of collaborative learning.

5. **Implementation Challenges**: Examine the challenges and barriers teachers face when implementing collaborative reading strategies. Understanding these challenges can help in developing targeted interventions and support systems to overcome them

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