

Enhancing Students' Reading Comprehension Through Selected Reading Techniques at SMP Islam 2 Kota Ternate

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to improve the reading comprehension of the second-grade students of SMP Islam 2 Kota Ternate through the use of the Reading technique. Reading is a fundamental language skill essential for students' academic success, yet many Indonesian learners continue to struggle with comprehension, vocabulary, and motivation. Initial observations at SMP Islam 2 Kota Ternate revealed that students had limited vocabulary mastery, relied heavily on word-by-word translation, and showed low interest in reading activities. To address these issues, this study implemented Reading technique, a strategy designed to improve fluency, automaticity, and comprehension through multiple exposures to the same text. This classroom action research was conducted in two cycles, each consisting of two meetings. The participants were 28 students from Class IIB, selected because they demonstrated the lowest reading comprehension scores based on pre-observation and interviews. Data were collected through tests, observations, and interviews. The pre-test results indicated that only 10.71% of students achieved the passing grade (75), with an average score of 46.75, showing significant difficulties in understanding texts. After the implementation of the Repeated Reading technique across two cycles, the post-test results showed substantial improvement. A total of 89.7% of the students successfully reached or exceeded the minimum passing grade, and the class average increased to 80.07. Students also demonstrated higher confidence, better vocabulary recognition, improved fluency, and greater engagement during reading activities.

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the important skills that must be learned by every student from elementary school to university. According to (Harmer J. , 1989) there are four basic language skills in studying English, they are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Based on the four language skills, listening and reading skills are regarded as receptive skills while speaking and writing skills are considered to be productive skills. However, students have to mastering the language skills. And when English subject has become compulsory subject in Indonesia, the students have to mastering reading skills to get a lot of knowledge. And the teachers also have to be more creative to make their students enthusiast in learning English. (Brown H. D., 2004) says reading is a process of negotiating meaning. Emphasizing that reading is not a passive activity where readers simply absorb information from a text. Instead, reading is an active and dynamic interaction between the reader and the text, where meaning is constructed through interpretation, prior knowledge, and contextual understanding.

(Alderson, 2000) claims that reading is a relationship between the reader and the text. It can be concluded that reading is the process of getting meaning from the text that has been read by combining information. Reading is a cognitive challenge for readers to engage in text-based conversations with writers . (Zare, 2013) Reading basically involves many things, not just memorizing written words, but also involves thinking, psycholinguistic, and cognitive activities. Reading is very important for students when learning English. The importance of reading

comprehension is to find out information and or new knowledge. Reading skills can help students to understand some English vocabularies that they do not know the meaning of.

Reading plays an important role because it is an essential activity in our daily lives, enabling us to obtain information and knowledge from printed texts. Therefore, students should develop strong reading skills. These skills are particularly necessary for students who wish to advance their studies, especially at the secondary level. Good reading skills are essential for acquiring knowledge and learning new information. According to (Odwan, 2012) Reading is a complex cognitive process, and mastering all aspects of reading is crucial for academic success and achievement. The ability to recognize words and comprehend their meaning is the key to effective reading. By practicing reading continuously, students can improve their skills and become better readers.

In reading, many students think that reading skill is not interesting and makes them boring. Most of the students feel the difficulties to comprehend the text. Incomprehensible text, difficult words, vocabulary, and length of the text are the cause of their difficulties (Zasrianita, 2016) According to Johnson and Pearson in (Syamsia, 2025) students' reading comprehension can be affected by internal and external factor. Internal factor consists of language skill, motivation, interested, and the reader's ability. Meanwhile, the external factor consists of elements of reading and the reading environment. Elements of reading include organization and the difficulty of the text. The reading environment includes teacher's preparation, during and after reading lessons in the class. Therefore, the students need motivation, background knowledge and some strategies to make them interested in reading.

As an educator, the teacher has an important role in teaching students in the class. It makes a language teacher must be able to select appropriate method or uses a different technique in teaching English which is appropriate to be applied and needed by students. Actually, the students not only need the appropriate technique that be used but also the teacher should give motivation to the students in teaching learning process. It is done to make the students interested in studying English, especially in reading text. The teacher should also cheer the students up to comprehend the given materials.

In fact, based on the result of pre observation, the students of SMP Islam 2 Kota Ternate have some problems in reading. They got lacks in vocabulary mastery, missed understanding, and they still translate word by word. Furthermore, their motivation to learn English and improve their reading comprehension is still low. They also find difficulties in comprehending text and finding the main idea of a text. The problems appeared because the method or the technique that is used does not make the students interested and they feel bored when they are learning English especially in reading skill. As a result, there is no improvement in the students' reading comprehension. Meanwhile, reading skill is one of the skills that always appear in a test and seek students' concentration more in comprehending the content of the text.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher want to solve the students' problems in reading comprehension, the researcher will conducted the use of repeated reading technique in order to improve students' reading comprehension. Repeated reading technique is a reading strategy designed to improve students' fluency, comprehension, and overall reading skills. It involves reading the same text multiple times until the reader achieves a certain level of fluency and accuracy. This technique is widely used, especially for struggling readers and language learners, to enhance their reading proficiency.

The Concept of Reading

Reading is a complex process that takes several years to learn, and then or advance aspects of reading, such as analysis or synthesis of ideas, take several years. Readers come from multiply city of background with divergent levels of knowledge, verbal skill, motivation and reasoning abilities. How could there be a single method of instruction that would make every child be a successful reader. (Siegel, 1994).

Reading in the English language involves a complex set of processes and ability. Several cognitive processes are assumed to be imperative to the development of reading, particularly the reading of words. Postulate five processes to be significant in the acquisition of reading.

The first involves phonology, the association of sound with letters and expectations to the basic sound-letter correspondence rules being one of the most important skills necessary to develop in this category. Second, understanding of syntax, or the way in which words are put together to form phrases, it also thought to be an important process in reading. The third process, working memory, refers to the ability to hold information in the short-term memory. Semantics or the comprehension of meaning is the fourth process thought to be important in reading. Last, orthography or the understanding of reading comprehension rules and knowledge of spelling is hypothesized to be integral to the reading process.

Reading is really crucial our knowledge is usually broadened and inform by reading activities, and the activity of reading can be found in the internet, book, etc. Students should practice their reading more and more, so that their reading ability and their reading experience will be improved. They may find difficulty and frustrating, but if they keep practicing, they will have a good sense of English and will help them to grasp the total meaning of the words.

Another thing should be remembered in reading that students should not open a dictionary too often because it will slow down their reading rate and can make them bored. If they find new words, they should try to guess the meanings by trying to find out any clue words according to the context in the passages.

Specific abilities necessary for reading include word identification, phonemic awareness, comprehension, reading fluency, and vocabulary (Valencia, 2002). Capable readers draw on these various abilities, ranging from low-level processing skill such as recognizing individual words, to high-order processing skill, such as bringing together information from different sources into “meaningful representation of text” and then relating the text back to prior knowledge. This reading involves several levels of processes and skill that must be combined to make meaning of written text.

Reading Technique

To improve students' reading skills, especially comprehension, various reading techniques have been introduced and practiced in the classroom. Reading techniques are specific strategies or methods used by teachers or learners to make the reading process more effective and meaningful.

(Harmer J. , 2001) Notes that reading techniques should match the readers' purpose. For example, when students read for general understanding, they may use skimming; when they read for detail, they may use scanning or intensive reading. Below are some commonly used reading techniques:

a. Skimming

Skimming is a reading technique used to get the general idea of the text. The reader moves quickly through the text to get the gist or overall message without reading every word (Brown, 2001).

b. Scanning

Scanning is used when readers look for specific information or keywords in a text. This technique is effective for locating facts, dates, names, or specific points.

c. Extensive Reading

Extensive reading involves reading longer texts for pleasure or general understanding. It helps learners improve their reading speed, vocabulary, and overall language exposure (Day, 1998)

d. Intensive Reading

Intensive reading involves close reading of a short passage to analyze grammar, vocabulary, and meaning in detail. It focuses on developing precise reading skills and deep comprehension.

Next according to Stanley L. Samuels is best known for introducing the Repeated Reading technique, a method that has been widely used to improve reading fluency and comprehension, especially among struggling readers and second language learners.

Samuels (1979) defines Repeated Reading as: “The oral reading of a passage several times until a satisfactory level of fluency is achieved.”

In this technique, students read a short, meaningful passage multiple times. The goal is to increase reading speed, accuracy, and comprehension through practice and familiarity. Repeated reading is grounded in the idea that practice leads to automaticity, which in turn improves fluency and understanding.

Repeated Reading

Repeated Reading is a reading strategy designed to enhance students' reading fluency, accuracy, and comprehension by having them read the same text multiple times. This technique, introduced by (Samuels, 1979), is particularly effective for struggling readers and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. The fundamental principle of repeated reading is that repeated exposure to the same text improves automaticity, leading to better reading performance.

Repeated reading is an instructional strategy originally developed by Dahl and Samuels. The aim of the strategy is to help non-fluent readers build automatic word identification skills. The repeated reading method consists of a non-fluent student orally reading a passage several times. With this method, students are instructed not to proceed to the next section of the text, or next passage, until the desired level of fluency is achieved.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a Pre test and Post test Design to measure the effectiveness of the intervention on students' reading comprehension. A pre-test was administered to determine students' initial abilities, followed by the implementation of the Repeated Reading technique as the treatment. After the intervention, a post-test was conducted to assess improvements in students' comprehension. This design allowed direct comparison between students' scores before and after the treatment, providing clear evidence of the technique's impact on their reading achievement.

The population of this research consisted of all 180 students of SMP Islam 2 Kota Ternate, distributed across six classes with 30 students in each class. The sample was class IIB from the second grade, comprising 30 students. This class was selected based on pre-observation and an interview with the English teacher, which indicated that class IIB had lower reading comprehension scores compared to class IIA. Thus, class IIB was chosen as the focus of the study. The data collection techniques used in this research includes tests, observations and interviews. the data analysis technique was carried out by calculating the average score of the students in pre test and post test.

FINDINGS

These classroom action research conducted in two cycle, every cycle consist of two meetings.

a. Pre Test Result

Prior to the implementation of the Repeated Reading technique, a pre-test was administered to all 28 students to assess their initial level of reading comprehension. The test was designed to evaluate various aspects of comprehension, such as identifying main ideas, understanding details, vocabulary knowledge, and making inferences. The passing grade for the pre-test was set at 75.

Pre test demonstrated that although the teacher implemented the repeated reading procedure properly, students' engagement, fluency, and comprehension were still below expectations. Several issues including low confidence, vocabulary difficulties, classroom distractions, and lack of familiarity with the method hindered students' performance. These observations suggested the need for better classroom management, more structured feedback, and additional support in the next cycle to improve students' motivation and comprehension outcomes.

While based on the analysis of the students' reading comprehension scores, the implementation of the learning process had not met the criteria of success yet. In this research, the criterion of success is set if at least 65% of the students are able to reach the minimum passing grade, which is 75. If this percentage is achieved, it means the implementation of the reading

technique is considered successful. However, based on the result of the students' reading test, only 3 students, or approximately 10.71% of the class, reached or exceeded the passing grade, while the remaining 25 students, or about 89.29%, scored below 75. This indicates that the majority of students still experienced difficulties in understanding the reading materials and did not meet the expected comprehension level. For that reason, the researcher and the collaborator decided to continue the implementation of the study to the second cycle by applying the repeated reading technique with improvements. It is expected that through repeated exposure to the same reading texts, students will gradually improve their fluency and comprehension, which may help increase the number of students achieving the passing grade in the next cycle. It can be seen on the table followed:

Table 1: Students' Score in pre test

NO	NAME OF STUDENTS	SCORE	RESULT
1	AZ	28	Unsuccess
2	IS	46	Unsuccess
3	AI	50	Unsuccess
4	IAF	86	Success
5	SMS	32	Unsuccess
6	MAS	84	Success
7	MI	38	Unsuccess
8	AR IK	52	Unsuccess
9	INR	40	Unsuccess
10	ISM	36	Unsuccess
11	JAI	56	Unsuccess
12	ND	36	Unsuccess
13	NST	24	Unsuccess
14	NRA	26	Unsuccess
15	VG	62	Unsuccess
16	MFRD	56	Unsuccess
17	RD	42	Unsuccess
18	RR	52	Unsuccess
19	RI	30	Unsuccess
20	NII	40	Unsuccess
21	SN	77	Success
22	AS	35	Unsuccess
23	JT	42	Unsuccess
24	IM	56	Unsuccess
25	SH	66	Unsuccess
26	RT	32	Unsuccess
27	RW	26	Unsuccess
28	NN	59	Unsuccess
TOTAL		1309	
MEAN SCORE		46,75	

Table 2: The Frequency Distribution

No	Criteria	Frequency
1	Beluw KKM (Score <75)	25
2	Pass KKM (Score >75-80)	1
3	Pass KKM (Score >80)	2

The frequency distribution of table above presents the students' reading comprehension scores in Pre Test after the implementation of the Repeated Reading technique. The results indicate that 25 students still scored below the Minimum Passing Criteria (KKM), which is set at 75. This means that the majority of students (approximately 89.3%) were still struggling with reading comprehension at this stage. Only 1 student managed to score in the 75–80 range, showing a minimal achievement of the passing standard, while 2 students scored above 80, reflecting an excellent level of comprehension. These results suggest that although some progress was made compared to the pre-test, the improvement in Pretest was still limited, and further refinement and reinforcement of the teaching strategy were needed in the next cycle.\

a. Post Test Result

In post test showed a consistent pattern with the previous test, focusing on analyzing all aspects of the teaching and learning activities that occurred. Both the researcher and the English teacher expressed satisfaction with the outcomes achieved through their collaborative efforts in applying the repeated reading technique to improve students' reading comprehension in narrative texts. The implementation of the technique had positively impacted the students' understanding; they were able to grasp how to construct narrative texts and express their ideas more fluently, although the paragraph incorrectly mentions "repeated reading technique," which seems to be a slip and should refer back to the repeated reading technique based on the research title.

Table 3: Students' Score in post test

NO	NAME OF STUDENTS	SCORE	RESULT
1	AZ	72	Unsuccess
2	IS	76	Success
3	AI	78	Success
4	IAF	98	Success
5	SMS	76	Success
6	MAS	98	Success
7	MI	76	Success
8	AR IK	82	Success
9	INR	78	Success
10	ISM	76	Success
11	JAI	80	Success
12	ND	56	Unsuccess
13	NST	77	Success
14	NRA	82	Success
15	VG	88	Success
16	MFRD	85	Success
17	RD	78	Success
18	RR	83	Success

19	RI	83	Success
20	NII	77	Success
21	SN	90	Success
22	AS	75	Success
23	JT	80	Success
24	IM	82	Success
25	SH	88	Success
26	RT	70	Unsuccess
27	RW	76	Success
28	NN	82	Success
TOTAL		2242	
MEAN			
SCORE		80,07	

Based on the table provided, which presents the names of students, their scores, the passing grade, and their results, a detailed description and analysis can be formulated as follows: The data shows that the passing grade for the reading comprehension test is set at 75. Out of 29 students, 26 students (approximately 89.7%) successfully achieved the minimum passing grade or higher, while only 3 students (about 10.3%) did not meet the required score and were therefore categorized as unsuccessful.

The successful students scored between 75 and 98, indicating a strong overall performance. Several students achieved very high scores, with IAF and MAS scoring the highest (98), followed closely by SN and SH (90 and 88 respectively). This suggests that not only did the majority of the class meet the standard, but many of them performed well above it, demonstrating high levels of reading comprehension.

On the other hand, the three students who were categorized as "Unsuccess" are: AZ, who scored 72 (just 3 points below the passing grade), ND, who scored 56 (the lowest in the class), and RT, who scored 70.

While these students did not reach the minimum requirement, two of them were relatively close to the threshold. This implies that with a bit more support or repetition, they may be able to pass in the next cycle.

The total accumulated score of all students is 2,242, which if averaged across 29 students, yields a mean score of approximately 77.3. This average is above the passing grade, which indicates that; overall, the students' reading comprehension performance was satisfactory.

The final evaluation between the researcher and the teacher confirmed that the implementation of the repeated reading technique was conducted according to the instructional plan that had been collaboratively designed earlier. This consistency between planning and execution reflects a successful collaboration and indicates that the applied technique was suitable for addressing the students' learning difficulties in reading comprehension.

Table 4: The Frequency Distribution

No	Criteria	Frequency
1	Below KKM (Score <75)	3
2	Pass KKM (Score >75-80)	14
3	Pass KKM (Score >80)	11

Or in other words like the table displays the frequency distribution of students' reading comprehension scores after a given intervention, categorized based on the Minimum Passing Criteria (KKM), which is set at 75. The results show a significant improvement compared to the pre-test. Only 3 students remained in the "Below KKM" category (score < 75), indicating a

marked decrease in the number of students who failed to meet the standard. Meanwhile, 14 students scored between 75 and 80, showing that the majority of students successfully met the minimum requirement. Furthermore, 11 students achieved scores above 80, demonstrating not only mastery of the material but also excellent reading comprehension performance. This distribution reflects the positive impact of the applied technique Repeated Reading on students' ability to understand texts and reach higher academic outcomes

The post test was designed in response to the weaknesses and challenges identified during the pre test. Through reflection and analysis, the researcher identified several areas that required improvement, including (insert specific weaknesses found in Pretest, e.g., lack of student engagement, limited vocabulary use, misunderstanding of instructions, etc.). These issues became the basis for revising the strategy in Pretest.

The findings of this research indicate that the implementation of the repeated reading technique was effective in improving the students' reading comprehension, particularly in understanding narrative texts. This conclusion is based on the progressive improvement in students' pretest and posttest scores.

The Students Improvment in Reading Comprehension

In pretest, only 3 out of 28 students (about 10.71%) achieved the minimum passing grade (KKM: 75), with a mean score of 46.75. This result showed that the students were still struggling with vocabulary, sentence construction, and overall comprehension despite being introduced to the repeated reading technique. These difficulties could be attributed to the students' lack of familiarity with the method, insufficient practice, and limited motivation during the initial implementation.

In posttest, significant improvements were observed. After the researcher revised the instructional plan and addressed the weaknesses identified in pretest, 26 out of 28 students (about 89.7%) successfully reached or exceeded the KKM, with a mean score of 80.07. This suggests that students became more engaged, confident, and proficient in reading comprehension when they were given more opportunities to practice reading the same text multiple times, both individually and collaboratively.

These results support the theoretical framework presented, where Samuels (1979) and Therrien (2004) emphasized that repeated reading increases fluency, accuracy, and comprehension by providing students with repeated exposure to the same text. Through this iterative practice, students could better recognize vocabulary, understand sentence structure, and construct meaning from the text, leading to better comprehension.

Furthermore, the findings align with Zasrianita (2016) and Johnson & Pearson in (Zuchdi, 2008), who pointed out that both internal (e.g., motivation, interest, ability) and external factors (e.g., text difficulty, classroom environment) affect reading comprehension. In this study, students' motivation and interest improved as they became more comfortable and confident with the repeated reading technique, and the texts chosen were appropriate to their level, which reduced frustration and enhanced engagement.

The collaborative efforts between the teacher and researcher, as well as the supportive classroom environment, also contributed to the students' success. The use of pre-reading activities, guided questions, and group discussions encouraged students to actively participate and helped them construct meaning beyond literal understanding.

However, despite the overall success, a few students (about 10.3%) still failed to reach the KKM. This indicates that further support, such as individualized feedback, vocabulary enrichment, and additional practice, may be needed to help all students succeed.

The discussion highlights that the repeated reading technique, when implemented systematically and adaptively, is an effective strategy for improving students' reading comprehension. It not only enhances students' fluency and understanding but also fosters their confidence, motivation, and active engagement in reading activities.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of this classroom action research, it can be concluded that the Repeated Reading technique effectively improved students' reading comprehension. In the pre-test, only 3 out of 28 students (10.71%) achieved the minimum passing grade; with a low mean score of 46.75, indicating that most students struggled with identifying main ideas, understanding details, vocabulary, and overall comprehension. These weaknesses highlighted the need for better instructional strategies.

After revising the teaching approach and strengthening the implementation in the next cycle, the post-test results demonstrated significant improvement. A total of 26 students (89.7%) successfully reached the passing grade, and the mean score increased to 80.07. The frequency distribution also showed a substantial shift, with most students achieving scores above 75 and many exceeding 80.

Overall, the findings confirm that Repeated Reading is an effective technique for enhancing reading fluency, accuracy, and comprehension. Through multiple exposures to the same text and improved classroom support, students became more confident, motivated, and better able to understand narrative texts. Although a few students still required additional assistance, the technique proved successful in raising the class's overall reading achievement.

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