



# The Use of Partner Reading Strategy in Improving Reading Comprehension of The Eighth Grade Students of Junior High School at Sigi

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## Abstract

The research aims to prove if the use of partner reading strategy can improve reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 20 Sigi. This research uses a quasi-experimental research design. The population of this research was class VIII students at SMP Negeri 20 Sigi consisting of 66 students from three classes. The sample was class VIII A as the experimental group and class VIII B as the control group. Sample selection was carried out randomly. Data was collected through a reading test administiry as a pre-test and post-test. By applying a significance level of 0.05, the researchers found that the sig value obtained (p) was lower than alpha (a) ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). It means that the hypothesis is accepted or the use of partner reading strategy can improve the reading comprehension of class VIII students at SMP Negeri 20 Sigi.

**Keywords:** *Comprehension, Improving, Partner Reading, Reading*

## Introduction

Reading is one of the important skills that students must have. By reading they can obtain information, knowledge, and also increase intelligence. According to Tarigan in Harianto (2020), reading is a process used and carried out by readers to obtain messages conveyed by the author through the medium of words for written language. It can be concluded that, reading is a language skill that has benefits so that students can improve their language. Thus, students who have good reading skills will get several benefits in language learning. In addition to improving reading and writing skills, reading can also increase vocabulary, understand grammar, and can also broaden horizons and creativity in English. Furthermore, reading also always has to be related to a meaning process called comprehension.

Reading comprehension is an activity of reading to understand the meaning of the content of reading or text as a whole. Klingner et al (2007) state that reading comprehension includes more than the reader's response to a text. Reading comprehension is a multi-component, highly complex process involving many interactions between the reader and what they bring to the text and related variables in the text; an important thing in reading activities is to achieve the purpose of reading, especially in understanding the text.

Therefore, when students read a text, they will find new words that build understanding of the text. The importance of reading can help students become better readers in the future. The purpose of teaching reading is to understand general information about the text, and to be able to summarize using their own words. Thus, students are expected to achieve all these goals. Most students can read the text well, but have difficulty in understanding the reading text.

However, many students do not have enough vocabulary to support they're to comprehension of a reading text. Most of them have difficulty finding the main idea because they read slowly. As a result, students do not know the meaning of sentences and find reading a boring activity. Another problem is that some English teachers still use fairly traditional methods in teaching reading. In conducting teaching activities, teachers often only ask students to read. After reading the text, students answer the comprehension questions provided in the textbook, after which the teacher asks the students about some difficulties that students have experienced in doing the task.

According to Melanie (2008), partner reading is a fun and effective pedagogical strategy to encourage reading development. From previous successful research, partner reading is effective for several reasons. First; students benefit from practicing reading interconnected text, and this approach ensures that students spend a lot of time reading aloud or following their partner. Partner reading allows students to read the text repeatedly, which supports their partner during reading. They can practice reading texts that they cannot read independently (Astuti, 2013). Referring to previous research, research design is pre-experimental design and true experimental design.

Based on the explanation above, the researchers conducted a research to prove if using of partner reading strategy can improve the reading comprehension of the eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 20 Sigi.

## **Method**

In this research, the researchers used a quasi-experimental research design. The researchers gave a pre-test and post-test to prove if the use of partner reading strategy can improve students reading comprehension. The experimental class received a pre-test, experimental treatments using partner reading strategy, and a post-test. The control class received a pre-test, treatments using conventional methods in teaching (traditional learning methods or lectures; teachers deliver

material orally to students), and also received a post-test.

The population of this research was eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 20 Sigi, consist of 66 individuals. In this research, the researchers used a cluster random sampling technique. Researchers chose two classes as samples for this research.

Data collection instruments in this research include tests and treatments. The tests consist of a pre-test and post-test, in the form of multiple choice and essay. Treatment is used by researchers as an opportunity to apply techniques to achieve research objectives. The researchers conducted treatment on the experimental group for 6 meetings. The researchers apply the partner reading strategy to improve student's comprehension in reading descriptive text.

Data analysis is the statistical process of utilizing and evaluating research data. After all data processing was completed, student test results before and after treatment were evaluated. Students pre-test and post-test data were analyzed using SPSS version 23 software. The results of this analysis were used to determine whether or not the use of partner reading strategies was effective in improving students reading comprehension.

## Results

### *Results of the Pre-test and Post-test Experimental and Control Group*

*Table 1. The Pre-test and Post-test Experimental and Control Group*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean
The Pre-test of Experimental Group	22	30	76	1087	49.41
The Post-test of Experimental Group	22	70	96	1831	83.23
The Pre-test of Control Group	22	30	59	940	42.73
The Post-test of Control Group	22	66	90	1611	73.23
Valid N (listwise)	22				

*Table 2. Scoring Range Pre-test Experimental Group*

	Classification	Score	Frequency	Percent
Valid	Very Good	90-100	-	
	Good	80-89	-	
	Fair	70-79	1	4.5
	Very Poor	40-69	19	86.4
	Poor	0-39	2	9.1
	Total	0	22	100.0

*Table 3. Scoring Range of Post-test Experimental Group*

	Classification	Score	Frequency	Percent
Valid	Very Good	90-100	5	22.7
	Good	80-89	12	54.5
	Fair	70-79	5	22.7
	Very Poor	40-69		
	Poor			
	Total		22	100.0

Table 1 shows the pre-test and post-test data for the experimental group. In the experimental group, the number of students was 22 people. The average pre-test score for the experimental group was 49.41 in the very poor category. The highest score achieved was 76, while the lowest score was 30. Based on the pre-test assessment range, there was one student who reached the completeness standard, namely (4.5%) in the sufficient category. Nineteen students (86.4%) were in the very poor and underachieving category, and two students (9.1%) were in the failing category. This shows that the level of students reading comprehension is still relatively low. This means that the average reading comprehension score for some students is still below the school's standard passing score.

When compared with the post-test of the experimental group, there was a significant increase in the average score of students reading comprehension to 83.23 in the good category. The highest score is 96, while the lowest score is 70. Based on the assessment range, seventeen students in the good and very good categories are above the KKM score, while five students are in the sufficient KKM category. Students who achieve graduation standards. The school completion standard (KKM) is 70, meaning that the experimental group's score on the post-test increased thirty-three percent from the 49.41 very bad category to 83.23 in the good category.

*Table 4. Scoring Range Pre-test Control Group*

	Classification	Score	Frequency	Percent
Valid	Very Good	90-100	-	
	Good	80-89	-	
	Fair	70-79	-	
	Very Poor	40-69	16	72.7
	Poor	0-39	6	27.3
	Total	0	22	100.0

*Table 5. Scoring Range Post-test Control*

	Classification	Score	Frequency	Percent
Valid	Very Good	90-100	1	4.5
	Good	80-89	1	4.5
	Fair	70-79	17	77.3
	Very Poor	40-69	3	13.6
	Poor	0-39		
	Total	0	22	100.0

Tables 4 and 5 show data pre-test and post-test of the control group. The total number of students is 27. The mean score for the pre-test control group is 71,48 category fairs. The highest achieved score was 94, while the lowest score was 31. Regarding the scoring range pre-test, twenty-one students achieved the passing standard. One student (3,7%) categorized very good, eight students (29,6%) categorized good, twelve students (44%) categorized fair, and six students did not achieve. Five students (18,5%) category very poor, and one student (3,7%). This indicated that the students reading comprehension level was still under the standard passing score of the school.

Furthermore, the result showed that in the post-test there was also a significant increase student reading comprehension mean score to 79,74 category fair. The highest score was 94, while the lowest score was 50. Regarding the scoring range, twenty-three students achieved the passing standard. Seven students (25,9%) category very good, eleven students (40,7%) category good, five students (18,5%) category fair, and four students did not achieve 14,8 categories very poor. The standard passing score of the school was 70. This means that the score of the control group in the post-test was improved by eight percent in the 71,48-category fair to 79,74 fairs.

### **The Normality Test**

In this research, the researchers used the Shapiro-Wilk normality test using the SPSS application to determine whether the data was normally distributed or not.

*Table 6. Test of Normality used Shapiro-Wilk*

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
The Pre-test Result Experimental Group	176	22	.075	.950	22	.321
The Post-test Result Experimental Group	107	22	.200*	.986	22	.982
The Pre-test Result Control Group	122	22	.200*	.968	22	.666
The Post-test Result Control Group	200	22	.023	.844	22	.003

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

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Based on the results of normality testing with the Shapiro-Wilk test, it is known that the significance value (2-tailed) is lower than 0.05, indicating that the data in the 003-control pre-test does not have a normal distribution. Therefore, the Mann-Whitney test was used instead.

### **Testing Hypothesis**

*Table 7. Mann-Whitney*

	Experiment	
	al	Control
Mann-Whitney U	3.000	.000
Wilcoxon W	256.000	253.000
Z	-5.623	-5.701
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
a. Grouping Variable:	Experimental and Control	

Based on the results of the Mann-Whitney test calculation, the asymptotic significance value (2-tailed) obtained is 0.000, which is smaller than the previously set alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) is accepted, indicating that there is a significant effect. This means that there is a difference in the average learning of the experimental group between the pre-test and post-test before and after using the partner reading strategy in improving students reading comprehension.

## Discussion

This research examines the effectiveness of the partner reading strategy in class VIII students at SMP Negeri 20 Sigi. In this research, the experimental group was treated with partner reading strategies for six meetings, while the control group was taught traditional techniques. The pretest result showed that both groups had low reading comprehension, with an average pre-test score of the experimental group of 49.41 and the control group of 42.73. In addition, most students scored low, indicating that they were still confused in understanding the meaning of the text and the content of the paragraphs due to a lack of vocabulary.

To solve these problems, the researchers used the partner reading strategy in the experimental group. This strategy ensures that students spend a lot of time reading aloud or following their partner, partner reading allows students to read the text repeatedly, and students also get correction and support from their partner during reading. Meanwhile, in the control group, the researchers did not use the partner reading strategy as a comparison to compare with the experimental group that used the partner reading strategy.

After conducting the treatment, the researchers gave a post-test to determine the effectiveness of the partner reading strategy in improving students reading comprehension. The researchers found that students understanding of the text was better than before the treatment, as evidenced by the post-test results. The post-test result showed a significant improvement in the experimental group with an average score of 83.23, compared to the control group which achieved an average of 73.23. When viewed in comparison between the experimental and control groups, the experimental group experienced a significant increase, this was due to the use of the partner reading strategy. This shows that the partner reading strategy is effective in improving students reading comprehension.

This research is in line with previous research by Zoharo (2019) and Nurafni (2022), which showed that the partner reading strategy was more effective than conventional methods. This strategy helps students relax, focus, and understand the text better through correction and support from their reading partners. Overall, these strategies not only improve students reading comprehension, but also create an active and positive classroom atmosphere, and support constructive interactions between researchers and students.

Based on the above explanation, the partner reading strategy has proven to be successful in improving students reading comprehension. This, it is clear that the acceptance of the hypothesis prove proved that the treatment given was successful. This fact relates to previous research by Puspadewi (2022), that the partner reading strategy improves reading comprehension. Likewise, research conducted by Luh Putu (20w0) that partner reading strategy works and can improve students reading ability.

## Conclusion

Based on the research results, the researchers concluded that the partner reading strategy significantly improved students reading comprehension. This is evident from the test data which shows that students who use this strategy have a better understanding of the text compared to students who do not use it. Interaction between students in this strategy also helps them share ideas, correct misunderstandings, and improve analytical skills. This research proves that the partner reading strategy is effective for class VIII students at SMP Negeri 20 Sigi and has important implications in educational practice, especially in developing students' literacy skills through collaborative teaching methods.

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