The Implementation of Peer Teaching Technique in Reading Classes for Eight Grade Students at Junior High School

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Abstract

This study examines the implementation of the Peer Teaching technique in reading instruction for junior high school students. It was conducted in response to students' common challenges, such as low participation and limited comprehension. Peer Teaching is explored as a potential strategy because it allows students to learn collaboratively, which is expected to enhance their understanding and learning motivation. The aim of this research is to investigate how Peer Teaching is applied in English reading lessons and to describe the procedures, student involvement, and its potential contributions to learning motivation. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and documentation. The instruments used are observation sheets, interview guidelines, and documentation notes developed based on relevant indicators of peer teaching. For data analysis, this research uses Miles and Huberman's model, which involves data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings are expected to provide insights into the practical use of Peer Teaching and its implications for promoting student-centered and cooperative learning in junior secondary reading instruction level.

Keywords: Collaborative Learning; Peer Teaching; Reading Comprehension

Introduction

Despite the growing body of research on collaborative learning strategies in EFL contexts, studies focusing on the practical implementation of peer teaching in junior high school reading classes remain limited, especially within rural Indonesian settings such as Junior High School. Previous studies tend to emphasize primary or senior high school levels, creating a gap in understanding how peer

teaching works among second-grade (class 8F) junior high school students. Addressing this gap is essential, as classroom-based evidence is still scarce regarding how peer-led instruction can foster reading comprehension in this specific context.

Reading comprehension is a fundamental skill that significantly contributes to students' academic success, particularly in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms (Fitriani and Tarwana, 2020). However, many students at the junior high school level struggle with understanding English texts due to limited vocabulary, lack of motivation, and insufficient learning strategies (Khafidhoh & Abdullah, 2022). At Junior High School, preliminary observations suggest that second-grade students exhibit low participation and limited engagement during reading sessions, which results in poor reading comprehension outcomes.

These issues indicate a need for alternative instructional techniques that can foster more active learning environments and enhance students' reading abilities. Recent studies have explored various collaborative learning approaches to improve reading comprehension. For instance, Fitriani and Tarwana (2020) demonstrated that Peer Assisted Learning Strategies (PALS) effectively enhance students' understanding of texts through structured peer interactions. Similarly, Sulistami et al. (2018) found that PALS implementation in EFL contexts significantly improved students' reading skills and motivation.

Furthermore, Safitri and Rahmawati (2023) highlighted the benefits of peer teaching in early reading classrooms, noting increased student engagement and mutual support among learners. Additionally, Parker et al. (2023) investigated the effectiveness of peer tutoring as a method of enhancing English language learning among young learners, revealing significant improvements in students' English language skills and increased self-confidence. Susanti et al. (2020) reported that the use of classwide peer tutoring (CWPT) also led to improved reading comprehension in junior high schools. Another study by Utama et al. (2019) showed that peer-assisted learning helped students understand English reading materials better.

Budiyanto (2019) concluded that peer-assisted learning strategies positively influenced students' reading comprehension skills in analytical exposition texts. Khotimah et al. (2022) found that peer-assisted learning strategies (PALS) had a significant positive effect on students' reading comprehension in a secondary school setting. Piator and Villocino (2024) found that peer-assisted learning strategies significantly enhanced reading comprehension in English language classrooms, especially in quasi-experimental settings.

According to Ifrianti (2014), applying interactive strategies such as the jigsaw technique can significantly enhance students' reading comprehension by encouraging active participation and peer collaboration in processing the text. This finding supports the idea that peer-based instructional methods, including Peer Teaching, can foster deeper understanding through structured student interaction.

While these studies validate the use of peer-based methods in improving reading outcomes, most of them focus on primary or senior high school levels and are often conducted outside of the Indonesian educational context.

Furthermore, the implementation of Peer Teaching at the junior high school level in Indonesia remains under-explored, especially in the context of rural or suburban schools such as Junior High School. Although previous research has established the benefits of Peer Teaching in general, there is still a lack of studies that describe how this strategy is applied in actual classroom practice, particularly in EFL reading classes for second-grade students. This gap suggests a need for contextualized research that captures the real implementation process, challenges, and dynamics involved in Peer Teaching within Indonesian junior secondary education.

Based on the above discussion, this study aims to investigate how Peer Teaching is implemented in reading classes for second-grade students at Junior High School class 8F. To explore the effectiveness of peer teaching in enhancing reading skills among eighth-grade students, this study draws on several key educational theories. First, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory highlights the critical role of social interaction, including peer collaboration, in cognitive development through the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

Second, Grabe and Stoller's theory underscores that reading is not merely a decoding process but an active cognitive activity that integrates schema, reading strategies, and the reader's purpose. Third, Cooperative Learning Theory emphasizes the value of group-based learning in improving reading comprehension by encouraging collaborative work. Fourth, the Reciprocal Teaching Theory by Palincsar and Brown advocates for the use of strategies like summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting, which can be enhanced through peer interaction.

Finally, Scaffolding Theory stresses the importance of providing temporary support to learners in understanding complex texts, with the support being gradually reduced as they become more independent. These theories collectively provide the foundation for the study, explaining how peer teaching can effectively improve the reading skills of students. The research question addressed in this study is: How is the Peer Teaching technique implemented in English reading classes for 2nd-grade students? The objective of the study is to describe the procedures, teacher roles, student involvement, and classroom interaction patterns during the implementation of Peer Teaching.

The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the real classroom practices of Peer Teaching in an Indonesian junior high school context, using a qualitative descriptive approach to capture rich, detailed insights from both teachers and students.

Method

This research employed a qualitative case study design to explore the implementation of the Peer Teaching technique in English reading classes at Junior High School, specifically in class 8F. The qualitative case study approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to obtain an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of real-life classroom contexts without manipulating any variables. Through this design, the researcher could thoroughly investigate how Peer Teaching was implemented, including the classroom dynamics, challenges, and student engagement during the process.

The participants of this study consisted of one English teacher and thirty-two (32) students from class 8F. The participants were selected using purposive sampling, focusing on individuals directly involved in reading sessions that utilized the Peer Teaching technique. The English teacher had prior experience in applying this method, and the selected students were those who actively participated in the related classroom activities. This sampling strategy ensured that the collected data were rich, relevant, and closely aligned with the objectives of the qualitative case study.

The data collection techniques used in this study were observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted during classroom sessions to record the teaching-learning process, students' participation, peer interactions, and teacher guidance. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the teacher and selected students to gain in-depth insights into their experiences and perceptions of Peer Teaching. Documentation, including lesson plans, student worksheets, and photos of classroom activities, was used to support and enrich the qualitative data.

To ensure the validity and credibility of the research, several steps were undertaken. First, the observatio and interview questions were developed based on indicators identified from previous studies by Fitriani & Tarwana (2020), Safitri & Rahmawati (2023), and Baltzersen (2023), focusing on the structure of peer groups, teacher roles, student collaboration, and reading engagement. These instruments were validated through expert judgment involving three EFL educators experienced in peer teaching and reading instruction, who assessed the clarity and relevance of the items.

To ensure trustworthiness, data triangulation was applied by cross-verifying information from multiple sources (observation, interviews, and documentation). Furthermore, member checking was conducted by presenting initial findings to the teacher and selected students to confirm the accuracy of interpretations. Peer debriefing with fellow researchers was also used to minimize bias and ensure that conclusions were drawn objectively. The data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

During the data reduction phase, transcripts were reviewed and coded based on emerging themes such as peer interaction, teacher facilitation, and student

engagement. The data were then organized and displayed using descriptive summaries and tables to visualize patterns. Finally, the researcher drew conclusions by comparing data across sources and verifying findings through member checking and peer debriefing, thereby ensuring the study's credibility and trustworthiness.

Results
The Implementation of Peer Teaching in Reading Classes

This section describes the findings of the study regarding the implementation of peer teaching in reading classes at Junior High School. The data were obtained from observation, interviews, and documentation. The results showed that students were actively involved in reading activities, asking questions, and explaining difficult words to each other. The teacher guided the process but allowed students to take responsibility for their learning.

Table 1. Observation Results of Peer Teaching Implementation

Aspect	Indicator	Rating (0–3)	Notes
Active Engagement	Students ask or answer at least once during reading tasks	3	Most students actively discussed vocabulary and text meaning
Role Switching	Students act as tutor and learner	3	Each student took turns explaining the text
Collaborative Responsibility	Students help peers complete reading tasks	3	Groups shared understanding effectively
Peer Feedback	Students provide correction and suggestion	2	Some feedback occurred, but not consistently
Shared Meaning-Making	Students discuss ideas and meanings	3	Groups agreed on main ideas and interpretations
Negative Indicators	Domination or passive members	1	Some students were less active, but overall balanced

Fiqure 1. Students' Interaction During Peer Teaching

Discussion
Relation to Previous Studies

The findings of this study align with previous research demonstrating that peer teaching improves students' reading comprehension and motivation. Fitriani and Tarwana (2020) and Safitri and Rahmawati (2023) reported that peer-assisted learning strategies foster collaborative engagement and active learning. Similarly, Khotimah et al. (2022) emphasized that peer learning enhances students' comprehension and self-confidence in EFL contexts. These results are consistent with the present study, which found that students actively interacted, asked questions, and shared ideas during reading activities.

Moreover, the present study extends previous findings by illustrating how peer teaching works effectively in an Indonesian junior high school context, particularly in a rural setting. It provides practical evidence that structured peer tutoring can create a supportive environment where students learn from one another and develop responsibility for their learning.

Students' Responses Toward Peer Teaching

Based on the interview results with five students, it was found that most of them gave positive responses toward the implementation of the Peer Teaching technique in reading classes. The students expressed that learning with peers was enjoyable, motivating, and easier to understand compared to learning individually or only from the teacher.

Several students mentioned that they liked *Peer Teaching* because it allowed them to discuss and help each other when facing difficulties. They felt that the learning atmosphere became more lively and less stressful. For instance, Student 1 stated that learning with friends was more interesting because they could share

ideas and support one another. Similarly, Student 2 emphasized that peer learning made reading activities more interactive and fun, while Student 3 and 4 noted that they could immediately ask questions and receive explanations using simpler language. Student 5 added that the relaxed atmosphere helped them understand the texts better.

Regarding the challenges, some students admitted that they sometimes found it difficult to follow explanations when their peers spoke too fast or when group discussions became too crowded. A few students also felt nervous when acting as tutors because they were afraid of making mistakes. However, they also mentioned that these experiences improved their confidence and communication skills.

In terms of progress, all students agreed that *Peer Teaching* helped them improve their reading comprehension. They reported becoming more confident, understanding the text faster, and being more active during the lessons. They also appreciated how their peers' corrected mispronunciations or explained the meanings of difficult words patiently. Moreover, students said they felt more motivated to read because studying with friends was fun, less boring, and built a positive classroom atmosphere.

Overall, the students' responses indicate that *Peer Teaching* successfully promoted not only reading comprehension but also motivation, cooperation, and learner autonomy. The peer interaction during the reading sessions made students more responsible for their learning and encouraged them to take part actively in class discussions.

Conclusion

This study concluded that the implementation of the Peer Teaching technique in reading classes at Junior High School had a positive impact on students' learning experiences, particularly in terms of participation, confidence, and reading comprehension. The peer teaching process was implemented through several systematic stages, including preparation, peer tutor training, collaborative reading activities, feedback sessions, and continuous teacher guidance.

During the implementation, students became more active and engaged in classroom discussions, demonstrating improved comprehension through peer explanations and group interactions. Peer tutors developed leadership and communication skills, while other students gained confidence in expressing their ideas and clarifying understanding through peer assistance. Despite certain challenges such as student dominance, unequal participation, and limited class time, the overall process contributed to a more interactive and student-centered learning environment.

Thus, peer teaching proved to be an effective instructional strategy to enhance both academic performance and interpersonal collaboration in English reading classes.

Suggestions
Based on the findings of this research, several suggestions are proposed:
1. For Teachers:
   Teachers are encouraged to apply the peer teaching technique regularly and systematically in English reading activities. To maximize its effectiveness, teachers should design structured lesson plans, provide clear peer tutor guidance, and monitor group interactions to ensure balanced participation among students. Continuous evaluation and reflection after each session are also essential to address challenges such as dominance or time constraints.
2. For Schools:
   Schools should provide supportive environments and resources to facilitate the implementation of collaborative learning strategies like peer teaching. This may include teacher training, sufficient class time allocation, and materials that promote cooperative learning.
3. For Future Researchers:
   Future studies are recommended to explore the application of peer teaching in other language skills such as speaking, listening, or writing, as well as in different educational contexts or grade levels. Additionally, researchers could examine the long-term effects of peer teaching on students' motivation, autonomy, and academic achievement through a broader or comparative approach.

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