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The Effectiveness of Using Flipped Reading Method to Enhance Students' Reading Comprehension

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Abstract

Reading comprehension is an important literacy skill in the digital age, where students are required to understand, evaluate, and interpret large amounts of information accessed through technology. However, Indonesian students continue to show low reading performance, as reflected in the 2022 PISA results, which highlight the need for more effective learning approaches. Although previous studies have examined the flipped classroom method and reported positive student perceptions, most rely on qualitative or descriptive data, with limited research statistically measuring learning outcomes, particularly in narrative text comprehension at the secondary school level. Therefore, this study aims to test the effectiveness of the flipped reading method in improving the reading comprehension of eighth-grade students. A quasi-experimental design was used involving 64 students, consisting of an experimental group and a control group. Data were collected through pre-tests and post-tests and analyzed using IBM SPSS 25 with the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test and Mann–Whitney U Test due to the non-normal distribution of data. The Wilcoxon test showed a significant increase in both groups (Sig. < 0.001). However, the Mann–Whitney U test showed no statistically significant difference between the two groups ($p = 0.313 > 0.05$). The effect size calculated using Cohen's r was 0.13, indicating a small effect. These results indicate that the flipped reading method does not produce a significant improvement in students' reading comprehension than conventional teaching. Suggesting that this method does not offer strong instructional advantages for teaching narrative reading comprehension at the secondary school level.

Keywords: Flipped Reading, Narrative Text, Reading Comprehension

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Introduction

The rapid advancement of digital technology has transformed the way individual access and process information. In the digital era, students are constantly exposed to large volumes of information through internet-connected devices, making reading literacy which particularly reading comprehension, an essential skill for understanding, evaluating, and interpreting information accurately (Cahyani et al., 2024). Reading comprehension enables learners to think critically, solve problems, and make informed decisions in both academic and real-life contexts (Ningsih et al., 2019). Consequently, in the 21st century, reading skills extend beyond academic achievement and play a crucial role in navigating digital information and global communication (Putrayasa et al., 2024).

Despite its importance, empirical evidence indicates that Indonesian students' reading comprehension remains relatively low. The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022 reported that Indonesian students achieved an average reading literacy score of 359, which is far below the OECD average of 476. Moreover, only about 25% of Indonesian students reached level 2 or higher in reading proficiency, compared to 74% of students in OECD countries (OECD, 2023). These findings suggest that many students experience difficulties in understanding texts, identifying main ideas, and interpreting explicit and implicit meanings, highlighting the urgent need for more effective reading instruction.

To address this challenge, teachers are expected to adopt instructional strategies that actively engage students in the reading process. Teachers no longer function solely as transmitters of knowledge but as facilitators who support students in constructing meaning from texts (Nurhasanah & Mustika, 2024). Research has shown that student-centered and innovative teaching approaches can enhance learning effectiveness (Audina et al., 2020). In reading instruction, narrative texts are commonly used because they aim to entertain, inform, and convey moral values, and their story-based structure can stimulate students' imagination and critical thinking (Agustine, 2021). Şahin (2013) further notes that students tend to comprehend narrative texts more easily than informational texts due to their familiar structure and engaging nature.

However, effective reading instruction depends not only on text selection but also on the teaching method employed. Traditional teacher-centered approaches often limit students' opportunities for interaction and independent learning (Sun et al., 2017; Sarker et al., 2023). In response, technology-integrated approaches such as the flipped classroom have gained increasing attention. The flipped-reading method, adapted from the flipped classroom, requires students to engage with reading materials independently before class, while classroom time is devoted to discussion, analysis, and collaborative activities (Sun et al., 2017; Fahmi et al., 2024).

The flipped-reading itself was adapted from flipped classroom. This method is theoretically grounded in constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes that learners actively construct knowledge through experience and reflection (Vygotsky,

1980, as cited in Wibowo et al., 2025; Bada & Olusegun, 2015). King's (1993) concept of shifting from the "sage on the stage" to the "guide on the side" supports this approach by redefining the teacher's role as a facilitator of learning. Studies by Baker (2000) and Lage et al. (2000) further developed this model by integrating technology to accommodate diverse learning styles and maximize classroom interaction (Ağırman & Ercoşkun, 2022). Bergmann and Sams (2012) later popularized the flipped classroom by emphasizing independent pre-class learning and collaborative in-class activities. In the context of reading instruction, flipped reading also aligns with self-regulated learning theory, as students are encouraged to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own learning while engaging with texts independently.

Moreover, reading comprehension itself is a multidimensional construct. Muis (2013, as cited in Kholiq & Luthfiyati, 2020) categorizes reading comprehension into four levels which are literal, inferential, critical, and creative comprehension. Literal comprehension involves understanding information explicitly stated in the text, while inferential comprehension requires readers to interpret implied meanings and relationships (Brassell & Rasinski, 2008). Critical comprehension refers to the ability to analyze and evaluate the accuracy and credibility of information (Damariswara, 2022), and creative comprehension involves generating new ideas and interpretations based on the text (Syafi'ie, 1998, as cited in Damariswara, 2022). These levels provide a comprehensive framework for assessing students' reading comprehension, particularly in narrative texts that require both explicit and implicit understanding.

In addition, several studies have reported advantages of the flipped-reading method. Bergmann and Sams (2012) argue that flipped learning increases flexibility, allows students to review materials repeatedly, and enables teachers to provide more individualized support. The method also enhances teacher–student interaction and encourages active classroom participation. Empirical studies have reported positive student perceptions, including increased motivation and engagement (Fahmi et al., 2020; Ramadhanty & Puspitaloka, 2020; Samiei & Ebadi, 2021).

However, challenges have also been identified. Limited internet access remains a major obstacle for some students (Ramadhanty & Puspitaloka, 2020), and students accustomed to teacher-centered learning may struggle to adapt to the increased responsibility required in flipped learning environments (Rustamovna et al., 2023). These findings indicate that the effectiveness of flipped reading depends on students' readiness, technological access, and teachers' instructional design.

Furthermore, most existing studies on the flipped classroom focus primarily on students' perceptions and attitudes toward the learning method rather than on empirical evidence of its effectiveness in improving specific language skills. Additionally, many studies rely on descriptive or qualitative approaches without statistically examining learning outcomes. Research that specifically investigates

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the impact of the flipped-reading method on students' reading comprehension based on four levels, particularly in narrative texts at the secondary school level in the Indonesian context, remains limited.

This gap indicates a need for quantitative research that examines whether the flipped-reading method can significantly enhance students' reading comprehension performance. Additionally, employing a quantitative quasi-experimental design, this research is expected to provide empirical evidence regarding the contribution of the flipped-reading method to students' reading comprehension achievement. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on measuring learning outcomes rather than students' perceptions, its specific emphasis on narrative texts, based on four levels of reading comprehension, and its application within the context of eighth-grade students at an Indonesian junior high school.

Through this approach, the study is expected to offer an alternative and innovative instructional strategy for improving reading comprehension in the digital age. Therefore, the present study aims to investigate the effectiveness of the flipped-reading method in improving students' reading comprehension in narrative texts. This study seeks to answer the research question: *Is the flipped-reading method effective in enhancing students' reading comprehension in narrative texts?*

Method

This study employed a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental research design to examine the effectiveness of the flipped-reading method on students' reading comprehension. A quantitative approach was selected because it allows for the systematic collection and analysis of numerical data to objectively measure learning outcomes through statistical procedures (Creswell, 2012; Mohajan, 2020). The quasi-experimental design was chosen due to practical constraints within the school context, where random assignment of participants was not feasible. Accordingly, two intact classes with comparable academic characteristics were selected and assigned as an experimental group and a control group.

The population of this study consisted of eighth-grade students at MTsS Nurul Qur'an, West Jakarta. Two existing classes were selected as the research sample, each consisting of 32 students. Class VIII B was designated as the experimental group and received instruction using the flipped-reading method, while Class VIII E served as the control group and was taught using conventional teacher-centered instruction. All students in both groups participated fully in the research process, including the administration of the pre-test and post-test, allowing for both within-group and between-group comparisons.

Data collection was conducted through three stages: pre-test, treatment, and post-test. The pre-test was administered to both groups to measure students' initial reading comprehension prior to the instructional intervention. The treatment

phase was implemented over four face-to-face instructional meetings, with each session lasting approximately 90 minutes. In the experimental group, the flipped-reading method was applied through three instructional stages: pre-class, in-class, and post-class activities.

During the pre-class stage, students were provided with digital learning materials at least one day before the lesson. These materials consisted of narrative texts adapted from Aesop's Fables and explanatory reading-related content delivered through educational videos accessed via YouTube. Students were required to study the materials independently before attending class. During the in-class stage, classroom time was devoted to guided discussion, collaborative analysis of narrative texts, and clarification of students' understanding rather than direct lecturing. In the post-class stage, the teacher reviewed the learning outcomes, provided feedback, and evaluated students' comprehension based on their classroom participation and performance.

In contrast, the control group received conventional instruction using a teacher-centered approach. Students in this group did not receive learning materials prior to the lesson and came to class without pre-class preparation. During classroom instruction, the teacher explained the narrative texts and guided students through the materials directly. As a result, most classroom time was allocated to explanation, with relatively limited opportunities for discussion and collaborative learning activities compared to the experimental group.

The primary research instrument was a multiple-choice reading comprehension test consisting of 40 items designed to assess students' comprehension of narrative texts, particularly based on four levels of reading comprehension. Instrument validation was conducted through expert judgment to ensure content validity. The test items were reviewed by two lecturers with expertise in English language teaching and reading instruction. The validation process focused on the relevance of the items to the research objectives, clarity of language, suitability for eighth-grade students, and alignment with narrative text comprehension indicators. Feedback from the experts was used to revise and refine the instrument prior to its implementation. Although statistical reliability testing was not conducted, expert validation was considered sufficient to ensure the appropriateness of the instrument for classroom-based quasi-experimental research.

To control potential confounding variables, several measures were implemented. Both groups were taught using the same narrative text genre and were allocated equal instructional time. The same reading comprehension test was used for both pre-test and post-test administration. In addition, the instructional process in both groups was conducted by the same teacher to minimize differences in teaching style and instructional delivery. Students' initial equivalence was examined through pre-test results to ensure that both groups had comparable reading comprehension levels prior to the treatment.

Following data collection, the data were analyzed using IBM SPSS version 25.

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Prior to hypothesis testing, normality tests were conducted to examine whether the data met the assumptions required for parametric analysis. The results indicated that the data were not normally distributed; therefore, non-parametric statistical tests were applied. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was used to analyze improvements within each group from pre-test to post-test, while the Mann–Whitney U Test was employed to compare post-test scores between the experimental and control groups. In addition, effect size analysis was conducted to determine the magnitude of the flipped-reading method's impact on students' reading comprehension.

Ethical considerations were addressed throughout the research process. Prior to data collection, official permission was obtained from the academic supervisor, the university, and the school administration where the research was conducted. The study was carried out under the supervision and approval of the school. Students' participation was institutional in nature, and all data collected were used solely for research purposes. Participants' identities were kept confidential to ensure ethical research practice.

Results

The researcher collected pre-test and post-test data from two different classes: an experimental class and a control class. The experimental class received instruction using the flipped-reading method. In contrast, the control class was taught using only the traditional method. The purpose of this is not only to describe the results but also to interpret their meaning to determine whether the flipped-reading method is more effective than the conventional method in improving eighth-grade students' reading comprehension of narrative texts.

The analysis begins with an overview of the data characteristics, followed by interpretations of the statistical tests, and concludes with a synthesis linking the findings to pedagogical theory, earlier research, and potential implications for future practice and investigation. The results begin with the normality test, which was conducted to determine the distribution of the pre-test and post-test scores from both the experimental and control classes. The pre-test results in both groups were found to be normally distributed, as indicated by significance values greater than 0.05 in both the Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk tests.

Specifically, the experimental class obtained values of 0.200 and 0.491, while the control class obtained 0.200 and 0.753 for each test, respectively. These findings suggest that at the beginning of the study, students in both classes demonstrated comparable reading comprehension abilities and that the pre-test data met the assumptions required for certain statistical analyses. However, the post-test results in both classes showed non-normal distributions, with significance values falling below 0.05.

For the experimental class, the post-test scores yielded 0.005 and 0.034, while the control class obtained 0.035 and 0.038. This indicates that the distribution of students' scores after the intervention became uneven, possibly due to variations

in students' learning pace, engagement, or response to instructional methods. Because the data no longer met the normality assumption, the research proceeded using non-parametric tests—the Mann–Whitney U test and the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test—to analyse differences and improvements.

Table 1. Normality Test

Tests of Normality

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Class	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
RESULT OF TEST	Pre-test Expreiment Class	.093	32	.200*	.970	32	.491
	Post-test Experiment Class	.191	32	.005	.928	32	.034
	Pre-test Control Class	.101	32	.200*	.978	32	.753
	Post-test Control Class	.161	32	.035	.929	32	.038

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Following the normality analysis, the study examined within-group improvement using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test. In the experimental group, there was a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results, with a Z value of −4.772 and a significance level of < 0.001. This indicates that the flipped-reading method had a substantial positive effect on students' reading comprehension. Students showed noticeable progress after participating in pre-class video learning combined with collaborative in-class activities.

The control group also showed a significant improvement from pre-test to post-test, as reflected by the Z value of −4.626 with a significance level of < 0.001. This finding suggests that the conventional teaching method employed in the control group was also effective in enhancing students' reading comprehension of narrative texts. Although both groups demonstrated significant improvement, the Wilcoxon test does not reveal whether one method was significantly more effective than the other. Thus, the comparison of gain scores was carried out using the Mann–Whitney U test.

Table 2. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

Test Statistics[a]

	Post-test Experiment - Pre-test Experiment	Post-test Control - Pre-test Control
Z	-4.772[b]	-4.626[b]
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	<,001

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test
b. Based on negative ranks.

The Mann–Whitney U test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the improvements of the experimental and control groups. The significance value obtained was 0.313, which is greater than the threshold of 0.05, meaning that the null hypothesis was accepted. In other words, while both the flipped-reading method and the conventional method contributed to significant improvements within each class, the difference in the magnitude of improvement between the two was not statistically significant. This suggests that the flipped-reading method did not surpass the conventional method in

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effectiveness within the context and duration of this study. Complementary to this finding, the effect size calculation (r = 0.13) indicated a small effect, further supporting the interpretation that the flipped-reading method, although beneficial, did not produce a meaningfully greater impact than conventional teaching.

Table 3. Mann Whitney U

Test Statistics[a]

	Post-Test Results
Mann-Whitney U	437.000
Wilcoxon W	965.000
Z	-1.010
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.313

a. Grouping Variable: Class

Group	Mean pre-test	Mean post-test	Mean gain score
Experimental	58.20	70.78	12.57
Control	54.68	66.32	11.79

The table illustrates the change in students' average reading comprehension scores from pre-test to post-test in both groups. The experimental group showed an increase from a pre-test average score of 58.20 to a post-test average score of 70.78, while the control group increased from 54.68 to 66.32. Although both groups showed progress after the learning intervention, the magnitude of the increase between the two groups appeared to be relatively similar.

In terms of score improvement, the experimental group achieved an average increase of 12.57 points, while the control group achieved a slightly lower average increase of 11.79 points. This indicates that both learning methods contributed to an improvement in students' reading comprehension. However, the difference in score improvement between the two groups was minimal, which is consistent with the results of the Mann-Whitney U test, which showed no statistically significant difference (p = 0.313).

In essence, a small number of students in both groups experienced stagnation or a decline in scores, indicating that individual learning differences may have influenced the results.

Discussion

Based on the findings of this study, it is clear that learning through the flipped reading method does not produce a significant instructional impact. These findings indicate that both teaching approaches are equally effective in the context and limitations of this study. Despite this, this method still could students' reading skills, especially in understanding narrative texts.

Furthermore, the absence of a significant difference between the experimental and control groups indicates that the flipped-reading method did not produce better results than the teacher-centered method during the short time of

implementation. However, the significant improvement from pre-test to post-test in both groups shows that structured reading instruction is effective regardless of the teaching method used. This finding suggests that narrative texts, which usually have clear structures and familiar story patterns, allow students to improve their reading skills under different teaching approaches because they are easier to understand.

In addition, the improvement in both groups can be explained through this study result which both groups received guidance in understanding same text, identifying story structure, and answering same comprehension questions. These activities helped students improve their reading comprehension. In the control group, the teacher-centered method may have supported students well because the teacher provided clear explanations and repeated important points, which helped students understand the text more easily, especially at the literal and inferential levels.

One possible reason for the limited impact of the flipped method is that students were more familiar with teacher-centered learning. In this learning style, students usually listen to the teacher and depend heavily on direct explanations. This situation is supported by Maharsi et al. (2021), who found that students often need time to adapt to flipped learning, especially when they are used to learning from the teacher. Although flipped learning offers many benefits, it can be challenging for students who are not yet ready to learn independently.

Another factor that influenced the results is that many students were not accustomed to studying independently or actively participating in discussions. The flipped-reading approach requires students to prepare the material before class and take part in classroom discussions, which demands higher learning responsibility. Pallathadka and Pallathadka (2020) also reported that some students see pre-class activities as an extra burden rather than as a learning opportunity, which may reduce the effectiveness of the flipped model.

In addition, the short duration of the treatment may have limited the success of the flipped method. Previous studies show that students usually need several weeks or even months to become comfortable with flipped learning routines. As stated by Alan and Cheung (2023), the benefits of flipped learning often appear gradually as students become more independent and familiar with the learning process. Because this study was conducted in a short period, the flipped method may not have reached its full potential.

Moreover, the use of narrative texts may also explain why the results of both groups were similar. Narrative texts are generally easier to understand because they have clear storylines, familiar themes, and chronological events. When the reading material is relatively simple, different teaching methods may produce similar learning outcomes. Furthermore, if the reading test focuses mainly on literal comprehension, both teaching methods are likely to show similar improvement results.

Additionally, several limitations of this study should also be considered. The

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short research duration limited students' adaptation to the flipped method. The use of digital materials may also have caused difficulties for students with limited internet access or devices. In addition, the test instrument focused more on basic comprehension skills and did not fully measure higher-order thinking skills, which are usually supported by flipped learning.

Despite these limitations, this study still provides useful implications. Teachers can consider using flipped reading to encourage student participation and independent learning. To make the flipped method more effective, teachers should guide students on how to study before class, use short and interesting learning videos, and gradually train students to become more independent learners. Schools should also support this method by improving technological facilities and providing digital literacy training. Meanwhile, students are encouraged to develop better learning habits, such as managing time and taking notes during pre-class activities. Previous studies by Fulgueras and Bautista (2020) and Samiei and Ebadi (2021) also showed that flipped learning can improve reading comprehension and critical thinking when applied properly.

Finally, future research is recommended to apply the flipped-reading method for a longer period so that students have enough time to adapt. Future studies may also explore its use with more complex text types, such as expository or argumentative texts. Using mixed research methods can help provide deeper insights into students' motivation, learning experience, and challenges in flipped learning.

Conclusion

This study was conducted to examine whether the flipped-reading method could significantly enhance students' reading comprehension compared with conventional instruction, particularly in understanding narrative texts. The use of a quasi-experimental design with pre-test and post-test measures aimed to provide empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of this method, given the growing interest in technology-integrated and student-centered approaches in Indonesian classrooms.

The findings, however, showed that although the experimental group experienced significant internal improvement, this increase was not statistically different from that of the control group. This outcome demonstrates that, within the limited duration of the intervention and considering students' initial unfamiliarity with independent pre-class learning, flipped reading did not outperform conventional methods. These results suggest that the flipped-reading model may require more time, systematic preparation, and stronger student readiness to yield its intended benefits.

Despite the absence of significant between-group differences, the study holds meaningful implications for classroom practice. Teachers are encouraged to gradually integrate flipped-learning elements, such as guided pre-reading tasks, short video materials, or online vocabulary practice to build students' autonomy

and digital learning habits before fully implementing the model. Schools may also consider providing structured training to help students develop the self-regulation skills necessary for independent learning outside the classroom.

Future research should explore longer treatment periods, incorporate varied text genres, and investigate students' engagement in pre-class learning activities. Mixed-methods studies may also offer deeper insights into learners' perceptions, motivation, technological access, and behavioral patterns, which may collectively influence the effectiveness of flipped-reading implementation. By addressing these aspects, subsequent studies can better capture the conditions under which flipped reading can meaningfully improve reading comprehension and contribute to more effective literacy instruction in secondary education

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Appendix

Questions number	Narrative Text Type	Reading Levels	Student Understanding
1-10	Fables	Literal Reading Comprehension Level	Measures students' ability to comprehend explicitly stated information where the answer can be found directly in the text.

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Questions number	**Narrative Text Type**	**Reading Levels**	**Student Understanding**
11-20	Fairy Tales	Inferential Reading Comprehension Level	Measures students' ability to understand implied meaning where the answer may not be explicitly written in the text.
21-30	Legends	Critical Reading Comprehension Level	Measures students' ability to judge and evaluate information that is appropriate or inappropriate from the text they have read.
31-40	Folktales	Creative Reading Comprehension Level	Measures students' ability to create new ideas based on the text they have read.