IMPROVING READING ACHIEVEMENT ON DESCRIPTIVE TEXTS USING CHORAL READING STRATEGY

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ABSTRACT: Teachers can employ flexible grouping to enhance choral and duet reading which can benefit students' fluency and expressiveness. This strategy enrichment the students of reading boosts confidence in their ability to speak and read English. This research aimed to determine whether there was a significant difference in reading achievement on the descriptive text between tenth-grade students at SMK Gajah Mada 3 Palembang who were taught using the choral reading approach and those who were not. The participants were tenth-grade students from SMK Gajah Mada 3 Palembang. This research sample consisted of 41 students chosen using a purposive selection technique. They were placed into two groups: experimental and control groups. This research used a quasi-experimental design. The data collection tool was a reading achievement test administered twice to the sample (pretest and posttest). There were 20 valid multiple-choice questions. The data were not normally distributed; thus, the Mann-Whitney U Test and the Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test were employed to examine data. According to the Wilcoxon Signed Rank test findings, the students' reading achievement significantly improved when they used the choral reading strategy. The Mann-Whitney U test results demonstrated students who got a treatment utilizing the choral reading technique excelled in reading compared to those who did not. There was a substantial difference in reading achievement on descriptive text between tenth-grade students at SMK Gajah Mada 3 Palembang who were taught using choral reading strategies and those who were not.

Keywords: *reading achievement, choral reading strategy, descriptive text*

MENINGKATKAN PEMAHAMAN MEMBACA PADA TEKS DESKRIPTIF MENGGUNAKAN STRATEGI MEMBACA PADUAN SUARA

ABSTRAK: Strategi paduan suara Sebagai strategi pembelajaran, guru juga dapat menggunakan pengelompokan yang fleksibel untuk meningkatkan pembacaan paduan suara dan duet, dapat bermanfaat bagi kefasihan dan ekspresi siswa. Strategi pengayaan siswa membaca ini meningkatkan kepercayaan diri dalam kemampuan mereka untuk berbicara dan membaca bahasa Inggris. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui apakah terdapat perbedaan prestasi membaca pada teks deskriptif yang signifikan antara siswa kelas sepuluh SMK Gajah Mada 3 Palembang yang diajarkan dengan menggunakan pendekatan paduan suara membaca dan yang tidak. Peserta adalah siswa kelas sepuluh dari SMK Gajah Mada 3 Palembang. Sampel penelitian ini terdiri dari 41 siswa yang dipilih dengan menggunakan teknik seleksi purposive. Mereka ditempatkan dalam dua kelompok: kelompok eksperimental dan kelompok kontrol. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kuasi-eksperimental. Alat pengumpulan data adalah tes prestasi membaca, yang diberikan dua kali kepada sampel (pretest dan posttest). Ada 20 pertanyaan pilihan ganda yang valid. Data tidak

didistribusikan secara normal, sehingga uji Wilcoxon dan uji Mann-Whitney U digunakan untuk memeriksa data. Prestasi membaca siswa meningkat secara signifikan ketika mereka menggunakan strategi membaca paduan suara, menurut temuan tes Wilcoxon Signed Rank. Hasil tes Mann-Whitney U menunjukkan siswa yang mendapatkan perawatan menggunakan teknik membaca paduan suara unggul dalam membaca dibandingkan dengan mereka yang tidak. Ada perbedaan substansial dalam prestasi membaca pada teks deskriptif antara siswa kelas sepuluh SMK Gajah Mada 3 Palembang yang diajarkan menggunakan strategi membaca paduan suara dan yang tidak.

Kata Kunci: *pemahaman membaca, strategi membaca paduan suara, teks deskripsi*

INTRODUCTION

As an international language, English is currently widely utilized in a variety of professions all around the world. Learning English is vital, and individuals worldwide choose to acquire it as a second language. Everyone uses English to interact and communicate (Mandasari & Wahyudin, 2021). Many nations including Indonesia English is used as a second language in their school curricula, and children begin studying English early (Sinaga, 2021). English was a vital subject in our educational system. Concrete choices made by the Indonesian government reveal that English was being included in the curriculum at the senior high school or vocational level.

One part of English macro skills was reading. As stated by Sari (2019), reading is a process of interactions between the reader and the material in which all the schematic knowledge interacts with all the reader's social and contextual factors. Nur and Djuwairiah (2017) stated that reading is a part of language skills that requires an interactive approach through text to comprehend the meaning and get information from written text. Apriana & Dianti (2020) stated skillful readers take more than just eye movements to process the graphemes that are scattered across a written sentence and have the ability to derive meaning from reading activities because they use an engaged reading process to accomplish reading goals. Reading is one of the English skills learners must acquire, along with speaking, listening, and writing. Burhan (2012, p. 9) stated that reading skill was a physical and cerebral activity that reveals the meaning of written texts, and it included the process of learning letters. To grasp the meaning of the text, students must be able to analyze and interpret the text, which makes it easier to understand the text itself. Students must also understand the goals of the writers' points of view to understand the text.

The goal of reading was to be able to comprehend the text more effectively. Additionally, reading a text will provide the students with fresh perspectives and knowledge that will boost their intelligence and prepare them for problems in the real world. Students should master all genres of texts; one of them is descriptive text. In addition to Loka (2020), descriptive text was intended to describe a particular thing, person, animal, or place. When reading a descriptive text, students need to grasp that it has four linguistic features: action verbs, simple present tense, utilizing adjectives to describe nouns, and specified participants. According to Eko (2017), the process of description was done by ordering their characteristics clearly, starting with being named, classified, and dealing with their attributes, behaviors, functions, and so on, so that the readers or hearers could notice what the writer was writing about as if they could directly see it through their own eyes.

Based on the researcher's observation and interview with one of the English teachers at SMK Gajah Mada 3, the researcher found that the students still lacked English skills. One of the most common challenges with learning is a lack of motivation, which can lead to difficulty in vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing, speaking, and listening in English. Thus, some students at SMK Gajah Mada 3 still got low grades, only 50% of students there passed the minimum grades. This is problematic because most of the questions assessed require reading the text and Vocational High Schools in which students master English have a significant impact on their future skill capital, the researcher was attempting to increase students' reading accomplishment to earn maximum grades, and the researcher was interested in expanding this title to include a study that assists students and teachers in matching the strategy of teaching and improving their reading comprehension.

This study aims to provide a solution to the taught method by utilizing the choral reading strategy to address this issue. Thus, the researcher taught students the choral reading technique. To use this technique, the students read confidently and applied the choral reading strategy; nobody notices when they make mistakes when they read. It is hoped that using this approach will help students love reading.

According to Soto Taberes (2016), in choral reading, the teacher and students read a paragraph or sentence at a time, giving them the advantage of a model while practicing reading aloud. Choral reading helps students gain confidence by making it simple to pronounce and grasp words one at a time. As a result, the choral reading strategy should be used as an alternative method of dealing with these challenges.

The Concepts of Reading Achievement

According to Akhmetova (2022), reading achievement was performance in reading and the ability to utilize reading skills with fluency and comprehension. It indicates that accomplishment was the consequence of measuring and evaluating what was learned over time. It would not have been possible if students did not study first.

According to Brown (2004), an achievement was the acquisition of knowledge or skills. The most common kind of achievement was standardized progress made by a learner at a given grade level in gaining measurable skills and knowledge, typically through scheduled instructions like classroom instruction or training.

In other words, reading achievement refers to the fluency and comprehension of reading skills that result from continuous learning and assessment. It was a process of acquiring knowledge or skills, often achieved through standardized progress at a given grade level, often through classroom instruction or training.

The Concepts of Descriptive Text

The things described in Sanggam and Kusno (2008) descriptive have been described in detail in the text. It could have been tangible or abstract—a person, an animal, a plant, or another object. The identified section was normally put in the opening paragraph. This passage had several grammatical patterns. The use of the simple present tense, the employment of adjectives, and the use of thinking and feeling verbs were all examples.

As we all know, there were just two parts to the description text. Identification refers to identifying the things to describe, whereas description provides a detailed account of the object mentioned in the identification. There were two generic structures of descriptive text, according to Yenita and Adzanil (2014), as below:
a. Identify the phenomenon to describe.
b. Description refers to the components, traits, and characteristics of a person, location, or thing to describe.

The Concepts of Choral Reading Strategy

According to Yulianto (2019), choral reading is collaborative and collective in nature and allows active students to talk while learning. It implied that, at a certain moment, students must actively stand up and explain the material they had obtained. Choral reading is a type of assisted reading in which many readers read the material aloud together (Rasinski, 2010).

Choral reading involves students reading aloud a certain passage. The instructor or another model reader is generally the leader. Choral reading method phases,

according to Lestari (2017), they were:
1. The teacher or model reader previews a section for the students, and they all guess what the passage is about.
2. The teacher then reads the paragraph aloud, first alone, then with the students joining in.
3. The teacher mutes her voice and lets the students read the chapter aloud.
4. Students were instructed to recount the material and respond to comprehension questions. During this practice, students should read as a group as soon as possible without speed-reading.
5. If time allows, the instructor should pair up students to read the passage again. Again, teachers must ensure that English language learners have appropriate background and vocabulary knowledge for the passages they are reading. Because of their pronunciation and English issues, many English language learners are wary about reading aloud.

METHODOLOGY

1. Research Design

This research used a quasi-experimental design. The objectives of the research were to determine whether there was a significant difference in reading achievement on the descriptive text between tenth-grade students at SMK Gajah Mada 3 Palembang who were taught using the choral reading approach and those who were not. Before starting to implement the strategy, the research participants were first given a pretest to measure their reading achievement level before the experimental phase began. After that, they were given the treatment. In the experimental class, the treatment was the implementation of the Choral reading, meanwhile in the control group, the treatment was using direct teaching. The design of the quasi-experiment is described in Table 1.

Figure 1. Research Design

Table 1. Pretest and Posttest Non-Equivalent Control Group Design

Group A (experiment)	O_1 (pretest)	X (treatment)	O_2 (posttest)
Group B (control)	O_3 (pretest)		O_4 (posttest)

Source: Cohen et al (2018, p.407)

2. Research Participants

The population of the research was the tenth-grade students of SMK Gajah Mada 3 Palembang in the academic year 2022-2023 which were 41 students. The researchers used purposive sampling as the technique to choose the research samples. There were 41 students selected as the sample, with X AK as the experimental consisting 21 students, and X MP 2 as the control group consisted 20 students. The researcher used purposive sampling because those classes were students' pronunciation of unfamiliar words and their lack of confidence when reading were the two main issues they encountered when receiving reading instruction.

3. Technique for Collecting Data

The data is gathered through a test. The test consisted 20 of multiple-choice questions. The researcher employed descriptive text to direct the learning process. To determine the level of reading comprehension among the students, the researcher administered a pre-test before the treatment, and each participant received a score below the KKM (70). The researcher used the content validity of the instrument by gathering the data. Researchers mostly seek information from instruments to achieve their objectives. Cohen (2018, p. 282) defines content validity as expert judgments on the relevance and sampling of the test's contents to a certain topic.

Before the test was used to collect the data, a try-out test was administered to X MP 1 consist 11 students of SMK Gajah Mada 3 Palembang. The tryout test was analyzed by using a corrected item-total correlation. The researchers found that there were 20 valid items and 30 items were not valid. The valid items were:1, 3, 4, 13, 25, 27, 28, 30, 32, 36, 38, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 49 and 50.

Cronbach's Alpa was used by the researchers to assess the instrument's dependability. The instrument is considered reliable when the coefficient of Cronbach's Alpa is higher than 0.7. After analyzing the data by using SPSS 20, the researchers found that the coefficient of Cronbach Alpha of the reading test was 0.989 was categorized as very highly reliable. The reliability data is described in Table 2.

Table 1. Reliability Test Result

Reliability Statistics			
Cronbach's Alpha	Part 1	Value	0.947
		N of Items	10[a]
	Part 2	Value	0.958
		N of Items	10[b]
	Total N of Items		20
Correlation Between Forms			0.943
Spearman-Brown Coefficient	Equal Length		0.971
	Unequal Length		0.971
Guttman Split-Half Coefficient			0.969

a. The items are: Soal_1, Soal_3, Soal_4, Soal_13, Soal_25, Soal_27, Soal_28, Soal_30, Soal_32, Soal_36.

b. The items are: Soal_38, Soal_39, Soal_40, Soal_42, Soal_43, Soal_44, Soal_45, Soal_47, Soal_49, Soal_50.

3. Technique for Analyzing the Data

Normality tests were used to examine whether a data collection is well represented by a normal distribution (Flynn, 2003, p.17). If the value was less than 0.05, then the data were not typical. If the value was more than 0.05, the data was considered normal. After being analyzed, it turned out that the data were abnormal it described in Table 3.

Table 2. Normality Test Result

Test Statistics[a]	
	Posttest_experimental - Posttest_control
Z	-3.838[b]
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

b. Based on negative ranks.

Therefore, the researcher used a non-parametric test, where the non-parametric test obtained a result for the pre-test which was 0.000, and a result for the post-test which was 0.000. If the probability was lower than 0.05, it means that the data was normal.

The researcher conducted a homogeneity test using Levene statistics. If the probabilities were greater than the 0.05 level of significance, the experimental variance was homogenous. If the probability were less than 0.05, the variances would be considerably different. The result of the homogeneity pre-test was that the significance was 0.05. Meanwhile, the post-test was 0.33. In conclusion, the data had the same variances. The data were not normally distributed. Thus, the researchers used a non-parametric test which was the Wilcoxon signed-rank test and Mann-Whitney U Test Result. It was used to find out whether there was any significant difference between students who taught reading achievement using the choral reading strategy with students who did not use the strategy.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Descriptive Analysis of Experimental Group

After analyzing the data on students' achievement, it was found that the mean score of the pretest was 27.86 and the post-test score was 79.29. In the pretest, the minimum score was 20, the maximum score was 50, and the standard deviation was 9.297. In the posttest, the minimum score was 60, the maximum score was 95, and the standard deviation was 9.910. The result of the descriptive analysis of the experimental group is presented.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Experimental Group

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PreExperimental	21	20	50	585	27.86	9.297
PostExperimental	21	60	95	1665	79.29	9.910
Valid N (listwise)	21					

Furthermore, the result of the data shown in the pre-test was no one student in the good category (0%), 2 students in the weak category (10%), and 19 students in the poor category (90%). Meanwhile, in the post-test, 13 students were in the excellent category (62%), 5 students in the good category (24%), and 3 students in the good category (14%).

Table 3. The Score Distribution for the Experimental Group

Score	Category	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
80-100	Excellent	0	0%	13	62%
70-79	Good	0	0%	5	24%

60-69	Fairly good	0	0%	3	14%
50-59	Weak	2	10%	0	0%
0-49	Poor	19	90%	0	0%
	Total	21	100%	21	100%

2. Descriptive Analysis of Control Group

After analyzing the data on students' achievement, it was found that the mean score of the pretest got a score of 32.25 and the posttest got a score of 58.25. In the pretest, the minimum score was 15, the maximum score was 60, and the standard deviation was 13.424. In the posttest, the minimum score was 30, the maximum score was 75, and the standard deviation was 12.277. The result of the descriptive analysis of the experimental group is presented.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Control Group

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PreControl	20	15	60	645	32.25	13.424
PostControl	20	30	75	1165	58.25	12.277
Valid N (listwise)	20					

Furthermore, the result of the data shown in the pre-test was 1 student in the good category (5%), 1 student in the weak category (5%), and 18 students in the poor category (90%). Meanwhile, in the post-test, 5 students were in the good category (25%), 7 students in the good category (35%), 4 students in the weak category (20%), and 4 students in the poor category (20%).

Table 4. The Score Distribution for Control Group

Score	Category	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
80-100	Excellent	0	0%	0	0%
70-79	Good	0	0%	5	25%
60-69	Fairly good	1	5%	7	35%
50-59	Weak	1	5%	4	20%
0-49	Poor	18	90%	4	20%
	Total	20	100%	20	100%

3. Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test Result

The Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used to determine whether the choral reading strategy could substantially improve students' reading ability. In this method of analysis, paired observations of two sets of data are measured. To interpret the results of the test statistics, two conditions must be considered. First, there is a large improvement if the number is smaller than 0.05, and conversely. The summary of the Wilcoxon signed-rank test is displayed in Table 5.

Table 5. The Summary of Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test

Test Statistics[a]	
	Post-Test Experimental – Pre-Test Experimental
Z	-4.038[b]
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test	
b. Based on negative ranks.	

Based on the table 5, the value of Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of the Wilcoxson Signed-Rank test is 0.000, which is lower than the critical value of 0.005. The Wilcoxon Signed Rank test results show that the choral reading strategy improves students' reading ability. This suggests that this strategy can significantly improve students' reading ability in secondary school.

4 The Mann-Whitney U Test Results

The Mann-Whitney test was developed to determine whether the means of two independent samples differed. When the study data was not normally distributed, the independent t-test was substituted with the Mann-Whitney U test. The hypothesis was accepted if the Asymp.sig value of the Mann-Whitney U test was less than 0.05 and rejected if it was larger than 0.05. Table 6 summarizes the results of the Mann-Whitney U test.

Table 7. The Result of the Mann-Whitney U Test

Result of Reading Skill	
Mann-Whitney U	34.000
Wilcoxon W	244.000
Z	-4.619
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
a. Grouping Variable: Class	

Based on Table 7, the Mann-Whitney U test's coefficient of Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) was 0.000, which was less than the critical value of 0.005. This suggests that there was a significant difference in the reading abilities of the students in the groups that received treatment using the Choral Reading strategy and those that did not. This result demonstrates that, following the completion of the treatment session, the experimental group did better in reading than the control group.

DISCUSSION

The use of the choral reading strategy was effective in teaching reading descriptive text to the tenth-grade students of SMK Gajah Mada 3 Palembang. The choral reading strategy demonstrated that it could improve student's reading achievement because it allowed students to know the vocabulary, have high motivation, and achievement of descriptive text. Before the research, students had difficulty understanding the descriptive text.

Before the study, the students had difficulties in comprehending descriptive text. After being treated, the students could easily understand the descriptive text. Comprehensively this is in line with research from Midi (2024) and Nasution (2019), who found that the use of choral and reading strategies was significantly effective in improving the students' reading skills. In conclusion, based on the findings and interpretations of this study, the research concluded that there was a significant difference on reading achievement between the tenth-grade students of SMK Gajah Mada 3 Palembang who were taught using the choral reading strategy and those who were not. In other words, the choral reading strategy was effective which means that the alternative hypotheses (Hα) were accepted and the null hypotheses (HO) were rejected. It was proven from the student's reading class after the post-test was given by the research. The student's reading scores between the pre-test, and post-test were different.

In addition, the scores made by the experiment group were significantly different from the control group. It means that a choral reading strategy could help achievement text and be more enthusiastic and active participation in the teaching and learning process of reading. Moreover, this strategy is used to facilitate the enrichment stock of students' vocabulary and improve their reading achievement.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that there was a significant difference between the tenth-grade students at SMK Gajah Mada 3 Palembang who were taught by using choral reading strategy in reading achievement of descriptive text and those who were not. It was proven from the students' reading class after the post-test was given by the researcher. The students reading scores between the pre-test and post-test were different.

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