

The Implementation of Collaborative Strategy in Teaching Students Reading Comprehension at SMP Negeri 12 Palu

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Abstract: This research investigates the implementation of collaborative strategies in teaching reading comprehension to students at SMP Negeri 12 Palu. The study highlights the significance of reading as a fundamental skill that enhances knowledge and vocabulary. Despite its importance, many students struggle with reading comprehension due to factors such as lack of interest, limited vocabulary, and ineffective teaching methods. This research aims to apply collaborative reading strategies to improve students' comprehension skills. A pre-experimental design was utilized, involving a pretest and posttest to measure the effectiveness of the intervention. The results indicate a significant improvement in students' reading comprehension, suggesting that collaborative strategies foster better understanding and engagement in reading activities. The findings provide practical implications for teachers to enhance reading instruction and promote a more dynamic learning environment.

Keywords: *Collaborative Strategies, Reading Comprehension, Teaching Methods and Student Engagement.*

1. Introduction

Reading is important because it plays a crucial role in expanding knowledge, improving vocabulary, and developing reading comprehension. Reading well helps enhance information comprehension and overall learning quality. According to Madolimovich (2022), reading is a dynamic and interactive process in which language learners engage with texts to build meaning and gain a deeper understanding of its content. Reading activities are essential for students at all educational levels, as they lay the foundation for strong literacy skills and academic success (Mose et al., 2022). These skills support students not only in achieving academic success but also in their overall cognitive growth, which is vital for their future development. In the educational curriculum, reading skills are expected not only to understand the literal meaning of texts but also to develop critical thinking skills, such as analyzing, evaluating, and interpreting information. Reading instruction is designed to help students build a deep understanding through interactive and contextual approaches. Sundari (2024) stated that context-based learning can improve students' reading skills, while Mardiana (2015) found that guided practice methods can help enhance reading comprehension. Therefore, the curriculum needs to implement effective and research-based learning strategies so that reading becomes not only an academic skill but also a tool to think more critically and better understand the world.

Despite the recognized importance of reading skills, many students face difficulties in developing them. According to Rahman (2015), some students feel bored when learning reading because they do not know techniques to easily understand the reading material and lack vocabulary. The lack of understanding of effective reading strategies and the inability to apply appropriate techniques make it difficult for students to find key information in texts. At SMP Negeri 12 Palu, the problems in reading instruction include a lack of interest in reading, difficulty understanding reading material, limited vocabulary, and ineffective teaching strategies.

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These issues have led to poor reading outcomes and disengagement among students, particularly in understanding the main idea, analyzing characters, or even recognizing the overall meaning of paragraphs. Many students were only able to recognize a few words without comprehending the broader message.

To address this problem, several studies have applied Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) methods to improve reading comprehension. For instance, Anita (2019) found that CSR significantly improved evaluative and appreciative reading comprehension for college students at STKIP PGRI Sumatera Barat. Novela (2024) demonstrated that CSR improved reading comprehension at various levels, including literal, reorganizational, inferential, evaluative, and appreciative levels among university EFL students. Latifa (2021) showed that collaborative learning strategies effectively enhanced comprehension for agribusiness students in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses. Although these studies confirmed the effectiveness of CSR, they were predominantly conducted at the tertiary level and did not focus on junior high school learners, who typically have different cognitive and social characteristics. These previous methods were strong in fostering higher-order comprehension and peer learning but often lacked adaptability when applied to younger learners with limited background knowledge and reading motivation.

This study focuses on the implementation of Collaborative Reading strategy in improving students' reading comprehension at SMP Negeri 12 Palu. It investigates whether the CSR strategy is effective for junior high school students, particularly in improving their literal comprehension. The collaborative approach used in this research encourages students to work in small groups, read together, analyze texts collaboratively, and support one another in understanding reading material. This method fosters both cognitive skills—such as summarizing main ideas and inferring meanings and social skills, such as teamwork, communication, and mutual responsibility. Thus, it contributes a new perspective by applying CSR in the context of reading learning at the junior high school level, which has rarely been examined in prior research.

Based on the problems identified, the research problem is formulated as follows: “Can the use of collaborative strategy improve students' reading comprehension at SMP Negeri 12 Palu?” To answer this question, this study adopts the CSR model, which consists of four key steps: Preview, Click and Clunk, Get the Gist, and Wrap-Up. According to Mose et al. (2022), collaborative learning activities are based on the principle that learning must involve the exchange of information among groups of students, where each student is responsible for their own learning and encouraged to support the learning of others. Through this structured collaboration, students not only develop their understanding of the texts but also increase motivation and engagement during reading activities.

This research contributes by providing empirical evidence of CSR's effectiveness at the junior high school level, demonstrating how collaborative learning fosters both academic and social development, addressing the research gap in CSR implementation in early secondary education, and offering practical strategies for teachers to enhance classroom engagement and improve reading outcomes.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Previous Studies

There are several studies that used collaborative strategies. First, the research by Anita (2019) aimed to investigate the effectiveness of Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) in enhancing students' evaluative and appreciative reading comprehension abilities at STKIP PGRI Sumatera Barat. The implementation of CSR led to a more optimal reading comprehension process for students, confirming its effectiveness as a strategy for enhancing evaluative and appreciative reading comprehension. The results showed that the implementation of the CSR strategy significantly improved students' reading comprehension skills. This strategy proved to be effective in optimizing the comprehension process, especially in the evaluative and appreciative aspects, and is one of the recommended methods for improving in-depth and critical reading skills.

Second, a study by Novela (2024) aimed to investigate the effectiveness of CSR in improving reading comprehension skills among second-semester English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students at a private university in West Java, Indonesia. The results showed a significant improvement between pre-test and post-test scores, which corroborated the effectiveness of CSR in improving reading comprehension skills at various levels, including literal, reorganizational, inferential, evaluative, and appreciative comprehension. The findings confirm that CSR is an effective strategy in assisting the development of more comprehensive and critical reading skills.

Lastly, a study by Latifa (2021) examined the effectiveness of collaborative learning strategies in improving reading comprehension of agribusiness students in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses and explored their perceptions of its implementation at Muhammadiyah University of Parepare. It was concluded that collaborative learning strategies significantly improved the reading comprehension of agribusiness students.

The difference between this research and previous research lies in the context, the subjects studied, and the focus of implementing collaborative learning strategies. This study focuses on the implementation of the Collaborative Reading method in improving students' reading comprehension at SMP Negeri 12 Palu. While previous research such as Afnita (2018) examined the effectiveness of CSR in evaluative and appreciative comprehension at the college level, Novela (2024) studied CSR effectiveness among EFL students in private universities, and Latifa (2021) focused on collaborative learning strategies in the context of ESP. Thus, this study contributes a new perspective by applying the Collaborative Reading method in the context of junior high school education, which remains rarely explored in previous studies.

This study aims to develop and examine the effectiveness of the Collaborative Reading strategy in improving reading comprehension skills among junior high school students. Unlike prior studies that mainly focused on CSR at the tertiary level with more theoretical and academic approaches—such as in evaluative and appreciative comprehension (Afnita, 2018), EFL settings (Novela, 2024), or ESP contexts (Latifa, 2021)—this research adopts a contextual and practical approach tailored to the characteristics and learning needs of junior high school students. The collaborative strategy employed in this study is designed not only to enhance cognitive aspects such as literal, inferential, and critical reading comprehension but also to foster social skills including cooperation, communication, and responsibility within the learning process. Therefore, this study contributes a novel perspective to the development of reading instruction methods that go beyond academic achievement, aiming to cultivate 21st-century competencies, particularly in the under-researched context of lower secondary education.

2.2.1 What is Reading

Reading is an active process in which the reader does not simply take information for granted. Instead, the reader engages with the text critically, understanding the author's ideas, questioning the content, and finding personal meaning from what is read. Through this process, reading becomes a conversation that allows readers to connect their knowledge, experiences, and views with the author's message. This critical engagement helps readers understand the text better, refine their thinking, and even discover new ideas or insights.

2.2.2 The Importance of Reading

Reading is a complex skill that requires active engagement and continuous practice, as it is closely connected to other language skills like listening, speaking, and writing. As stated by Asnidah et al. (2024), "Reading is one of the English skills that can't be done without the others since it may be combined with others." This emphasizes that reading is not a stand-alone skill, but is closely related to listening, speaking, and writing.

2.2.3 Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension skills are essential in the learning process, as they help students access information from various references such as literature, journals, and scientific research. With a good understanding of the text, students can explore the main ideas, analyze the content more deeply, and filter relevant information for their knowledge development. This skill

also plays a role in improving critical thinking, which is very useful in facing various academic challenges.

2.2.4 Literal Comprehension

Literal comprehension is the most basic level of reading comprehension, as it involves understanding information and facts that are straightforward. According to Budi & Zuhro (2023), literal reading comprehension is an understanding of information and facts that are directly stated in the text.

2.2.5 What is Collaborative Strategy

Collaborative strategy is an approach to learning that emphasizes cooperation between individuals or groups to achieve a common goal. This strategy is based on the principle that learning does not only happen individually but also through social interactions that allow for information exchange and deeper understanding. According to Mose et al. (2022), “Collaborative learning model is a learning activity based on a principle that learning must be based on the change of information among groups of learners in which each student is responsible for his or her own learning and encouraged to improve the learning of other members.”

2.2.6 Teaching Reading Using a Collaborative Strategy

Based on research conducted by Manjorang et al. (2021) on Collaborative Strategic Reading, the teacher guided students to read the text, and students also worked collaboratively in a team of four to five. This strategy consisted of four stages that helped solve students' reading comprehension problems: Preview, Click and Clunk, Get the Gist, and Wrap-Up. Each of these stages supports specific comprehension goals and encourages active participation, vocabulary development, and critical thinking.

3. Method

This research used a quantitative method with a pre-experimental design, specifically the one-group pre-test and post-test design, to determine the effectiveness of the collaborative reading strategy. The population was all seventh-grade students at SMP Negeri 12 Palu, and the sample was class VII B, selected through purposive sampling based on representative characteristics. The sample consisted of 37 students. The research instrument was a reading comprehension test consisting of 10 multiple-choice items, focusing on literal comprehension, and used in both pre-test and post-test. The test was validated by an English teacher and an English education lecturer to ensure content validity. The research procedure involved a pre-test, treatment, and post-test. The treatment was conducted in four meetings using Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR), which included four steps: Preview, Click and Clunk, Get the Gist, and Wrap-Up. Students worked in small groups to understand vocabulary, identify main ideas, and summarize the text. Data were analyzed using SPSS. Since the data were not normally distributed based on the Shapiro-Wilk test, the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was used to compare the pre-test and post-test results.

4. Results

The results of this research indicate a significant improvement in students' reading comprehension following the implementation of the Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) strategy. The average pre-test score of 55.92 suggests that, prior to the intervention, most students were performing below the school's minimum passing standard of 75. The range of pre-test scores, from 46 to 66, reflects a wide variation in reading comprehension among students. After the CSR strategy was implemented, the average post-test score increased to 73.46. Notably, the minimum post-test score (69) exceeded the maximum pre-test score (66), indicating that all students experienced improvement, including those who had initially lower proficiency. The highest post-test score reached 83, showing that some students managed to surpass the expected competency level.

In addition to the rise in the mean score, the standard deviation decreased from 5.283 in the pre-test to 3.845 in the post-test. This decline indicates a more homogeneous distribution of student scores after the intervention. In other words, the gap in reading ability among students narrowed, suggesting that the CSR strategy not only improved overall performance

but also helped equalize students' comprehension levels across the class. Statistical analysis using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test further supports this conclusion. The test yielded a Z-score of -6.047 and an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.000. Since the p-value is lower than the 0.05 significance level, it can be concluded that the difference between pre-test and post-test scores is statistically significant. This suggests that the improvement in reading comprehension did not occur by chance but was a direct result of the CSR intervention.

These findings are consistent with previous studies supporting the effectiveness of CSR. Purnadesia et al. (2023) reported an increase in scores from 51.94 to 83.54 after CSR was implemented in Bengkulu Tengah. Similarly, Sulissulistiyani (2016) found an improvement from 63.14 to 84.57, highlighting gains in literal comprehension and vocabulary. Khampool and Chumworatayee (2023) demonstrated that CSR was also effective at the university level. Although the educational context differs, the findings indicate that the principles of CSR are flexible and adaptable across levels to improve reading comprehension. Boardman et al. (2015) added that CSR not only boosts cognitive skills but also fosters a more collaborative and supportive classroom environment. The decrease in standard deviation observed in this study reflects the social benefits of collaborative learning.

In addition, Bermillo and Merto (2022) found that students in CSR groups had higher reading motivation and significantly better comprehension scores than non-CSR groups. This aligns with the observed increase in student interest and participation during the learning process. Such motivation plays a key role in improving reading performance. Despite the positive outcomes, this study has several limitations. First, the intervention lasted only six sessions, which may be insufficient to observe the long-term effects of the CSR strategy, especially for students with special learning needs. Second, the sample size was relatively small and limited to one class in a single school, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to broader student populations. Moreover, differences in students' initial reading abilities posed a challenge in collaborative group work. Since the effectiveness of CSR relies heavily on group dynamics, lack of cooperation or group dominance can reduce the strategy's impact. Limited learning resources such as engaging reading materials or support tools (e.g., dictionaries, internet access) also presented practical challenges.

The evaluation instruments used in this study primarily focused on literal comprehension, while reading comprehension includes multiple levels such as inferential, evaluative, and appreciative. As a result, the impact of CSR on higher-order comprehension remains unclear. This limitation suggests that future research should incorporate a broader range of assessment tools to measure different levels of comprehension. By doing so, researchers can gain a more comprehensive understanding of how Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) influences not only students' ability to understand explicit information but also their skills in making inferences, evaluating content, and appreciating texts.

4.1. The Result of Pre-Test and Post-Test

presents the individual scores of students on the pre-test, with the highest score being 66 and the lowest 46. Compared to the school's minimum passing grade of 75, none of the students met the required standard at this stage. Meanwhile, Table 4.2 shows the students' individual scores on the post-test, which indicates a significant improvement, with the highest score reaching 80 and the lowest 69.

After calculating the scores in the experimental class, the researcher used SPSS 26 to analyze the descriptive statistics. By examining the mean scores, score distribution, and performance variation, the researcher gained an initial overview of the students' reading abilities in the class. These findings served as the foundation for implementing the collaborative strategy aimed at effectively enhancing students' reading comprehension skills.

4.2 Data Analysis

Table 4.3

Descriptive Statistics					
Pre-test and Post-test Results of Experimental class					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-test	24	46	66	55.92	5.283
Post-test	24	69	83	73.46	3.845
Valid N (listwise)	24				

Based on the results of the descriptive statistical analysis of the pre-test and post-test data conducted on 24 students, a general overview of their progress after the treatment was obtained. The mean score of the pre-test was 55.92 with a standard deviation of 5.283, while the minimum and maximum scores were 46 and 66, respectively. This indicates that prior to the treatment, students' abilities varied considerably, with some obtaining relatively low scores.

After the treatment, which involved using a collaborative strategy in the learning process, the mean post-test score increased significantly to 73.46 with a standard deviation of 3.845. The minimum post-test score was recorded at 69, while the maximum reached 83. Interestingly, the minimum score in the post-test was higher than the maximum score in the pre-test, indicating that all students showed improvement in their learning outcomes. Moreover, the lower standard deviation in the post-test suggests that students' performance became more consistent and homogeneous after the treatment.

Therefore, it can be concluded that there was a significant improvement in learning outcomes, both in terms of the average scores and score distribution. Since the data were not normally distributed, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test was used for further inferential statistical analysis to test the

significance of the difference. The results indicate that the treatment had a potentially positive effect on improving students' abilities in the tested material.

Table 4.4

Test Normality							
	Class	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Reading Comprehension	Pre-test	.183	24	.036	.925	24	.077
	Post-test	.322	24	.000	.822	24	.001

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

The normality test was conducted to determine whether the pre-test and post-test data were normally distributed. Two methods were used: the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. Based on the Kolmogorov-Smirnov results, the pre-test data had a significance value of 0.036 ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the data were not normally distributed. However, the Shapiro-Wilk test showed a significance value of 0.077 ($p > 0.05$), suggesting that the data were normally distributed. For the post-test, the significance values were 0.000 in the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and 0.001 in the Shapiro-Wilk test, both of which are below the threshold of 0.05, indicating that the post-test data were not normally distributed. Since the sample size in this study is relatively small ($n < 50$), the Shapiro-Wilk test is considered more reliable. Therefore, it can be concluded that the pre-test data were normally distributed, while the post-

test data were not. As a result, non-parametric statistical tests were used for further data analysis in this study.

Table 4.5

Wilcoxon Test

Test Statistics^a

Class - Reading Comprehension	
Z	-6.047^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test**b. Based on positive ranks.**

The Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test was conducted to determine whether there was a significant difference in students' reading comprehension scores before and after the treatment. This non-parametric test was used because the post-test data were not normally distributed, as previously indicated in the normality test results. Based on the output, the test produced a Z value of -6.047 and an Asymptotic Significance (2-tailed) value of 0.000. Since the p-value (0.000) is lower than the significance level of 0.05, it indicates that there is a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. The result is based on positive ranks, which means that the majority of students' scores increased after the treatment. Therefore, it can be concluded that the treatment had a significant effect on improving students' reading comprehension.

5. Discussion

The results of this research indicate a significant improvement in students' reading comprehension following the implementation of the Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) strategy. The average pre-test score of 55.92 suggests that, prior to the intervention, most students were performing below the school's minimum passing standard of 75. The range of pre-test scores, from 46 to 66, reflects a wide variation in reading comprehension among students.

After the CSR strategy was implemented, the average post-test score increased to 73.46. This improvement approaches the school's passing standard and reflects a substantial enhancement in reading comprehension. Notably, the minimum post-test score (69) exceeded the maximum pre-test score (66), indicating that all students experienced improvement, including those who had initially lower proficiency. The highest post-test score reached 83, showing that some students managed to surpass the expected competency level.

In addition to the rise in the mean score, the standard deviation decreased from 5.283 in the pre-test to 3.845 in the post-test. This decline indicates a more homogeneous distribution of student scores after the intervention. In other words, the gap in reading ability among students narrowed, suggesting that the CSR strategy not only improved overall performance but also helped equalize students' comprehension levels across the class.

Statistical analysis using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test further supports this conclusion. The test yielded a Z-score of -6.047 and an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of 0.000. Since the p-value is lower than the 0.05 significance level, it can be concluded that the difference between pre-test and post-test scores is statistically significant. This suggests that the improvement in reading comprehension did not occur by chance but was a direct result of the CSR intervention.

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Research by Khampool and Chumworatayee (2023) demonstrated that CSR was also effective at the university level. Although the educational context differs, the findings indicate that the principles of CSR are flexible and adaptable across levels to improve reading comprehension. Boardman et al. (2015) added that CSR not only boosts cognitive skills but also fosters a more collaborative and supportive classroom environment. The decrease in standard deviation observed in this study reflects the social benefits of collaborative learning.

In addition, Bermillo and Merto (2022) found that students in CSR groups had higher reading motivation and significantly better comprehension scores than non-CSR groups. This aligns with the observed increase in student interest and participation during the learning process. Such motivation plays a key role in improving reading performance.

Despite the positive outcomes, this study has several limitations. First, the intervention lasted only six sessions, which may be insufficient to observe the long-term effects of the CSR strategy, especially for students with special learning needs. Second, the sample size was relatively small and limited to one class in a single school, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to broader student populations.

Moreover, differences in students' initial reading abilities posed a challenge in collaborative group work. Since the effectiveness of CSR relies heavily on group dynamics, lack of cooperation or group dominance can reduce the strategy's impact. Limited learning resources such as engaging reading materials or support tools (e.g., dictionaries, internet access) also presented practical challenges.

The evaluation instruments used in this study primarily focused on literal comprehension, while reading comprehension includes multiple levels such as inferential, evaluative, and appreciative. As a result, the impact of CSR on higher-order comprehension remains unclear. This limitation suggests that future research should incorporate a broader range of assessment tools to measure different levels of comprehension. By doing so, researchers can gain a more comprehensive understanding of how Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) influences not only students' ability to understand explicit information but also their skills in making inferences, evaluating content, and appreciating

6. Conclusions

The implementation of collaborative reading strategy in teaching students' reading comprehension at SMP Negeri 12 Palu has been proven to be effective in improving students' reading comprehension skills. The results of this study show that the collaborative reading strategy has a significant impact on improving students' reading comprehension. This effectiveness is reflected in the increase of students' post-test scores compared to their pre-test scores, indicating that students were able to understand texts more accurately after being taught using the strategy. The structured steps in collaborative reading such as previewing, click and clunk, get the gist, and wrap up help students to interact with texts more meaningfully, support each other's learning, and build confidence in understanding various types of reading materials.

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