

The Effect of Storytelling Method on Students' Reading Comprehension

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Article History	ABSTRACT
Received: 20-06-2026	Background: Students at State Junior High School (SMPN) 4 Monta experience difficulties in reading comprehension, particularly in identifying main ideas, understanding supporting details, following sequences, and drawing conclusions. Limited vocabulary, low interest in reading, and passive participation may contribute to these difficulties. Purpose: This study examined the effectiveness of the storytelling method in improving students' reading comprehension at State Junior High School (SMPN) 4 Monta. Method: This quantitative study employed a true experimental design with a pre-test and post-test control group design. The participants were 43 eighth-grade students, consisting of 23 students in the experimental group and 20 students in the control group. The experimental group received storytelling instruction using narrative texts, while the control group received conventional instruction. Data were collected through reading comprehension tests and analyzed using descriptive statistics, the Shapiro–Wilk normality test, Levene's test of homogeneity, a baseline equivalence test, paired-samples t-tests, an independent-samples t-test, and Cohen's <i>d</i> effect size. Results and Discussion: The experimental group's mean score increased from 52.74 to 82.13, while the control group's mean score increased from 49.95 to 63.40. The independent-samples t-test showed a statistically significant difference between the groups, $t(41) = -7.406$, $p < 0.001$, with an absolute mean difference of 18.730 points and a large effect size ($d = 2.26$). These findings indicate that storytelling produced greater improvement in reading comprehension than conventional instruction. The narrative structure and contextualized presentation of vocabulary may have supported students in organizing information, activating prior knowledge, and constructing meaning from narrative texts. Conclusions and Implications: The findings demonstrate that storytelling significantly improved students' reading comprehension and produced greater gains than conventional instruction. Storytelling may therefore be considered an alternative instructional strategy for teaching narrative texts in EFL classrooms, particularly at the junior high school level. Future studies should involve larger and more diverse samples, longer treatment periods, different educational contexts, and various text types to further examine the effectiveness and applicability of storytelling in English language learning.
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ABSTRAK

Latar Belakang: Siswa di SMP Negeri 4 Monta mengalami kesulitan dalam pemahaman bacaan, khususnya dalam mengidentifikasi gagasan utama, memahami rincian pendukung, mengikuti urutan peristiwa, dan menarik kesimpulan. Keterbatasan kosakata, rendahnya minat baca, dan partisipasi yang pasif dapat menjadi faktor penyebab kesulitan tersebut.

Tujuan: Penelitian ini mengkaji efektivitas metode bercerita dalam meningkatkan pemahaman bacaan siswa di SMP Negeri 4 Monta.

Metode: Penelitian kuantitatif ini menggunakan desain eksperimen murni (true experimental design) dengan rancangan kelompok kontrol *pre-test* dan post-test. Partisipan penelitian adalah 43 siswa kelas delapan, yang terdiri dari 23 siswa di kelompok eksperimen dan 20 siswa di kelompok kontrol. Kelompok eksperimen menerima pembelajaran menggunakan metode bercerita dengan teks naratif, sedangkan kelompok kontrol menerima pembelajaran konvensional. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes pemahaman bacaan dan dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif, uji normalitas Shapiro-Wilk, uji homogenitas Levene, uji kesetaraan awal (baseline equivalence test), uji-t sampel berpasangan (paired-samples t-test), uji-t sampel independen (independent-samples t-test), dan ukuran efek Cohen's d.

Hasil dan Pembahasan: Skor rata-rata kelompok eksperimen meningkat dari 52,74 menjadi 82,13, sedangkan skor rata-rata kelompok kontrol meningkat dari 49,95 menjadi 63,40. Uji-t sampel independen menunjukkan adanya perbedaan yang signifikan secara statistik antara kedua kelompok, $t(41) = -7,406$, $p < 0,001$, dengan selisih rata-rata absolut sebesar 18,730 poin dan ukuran efek yang besar ($d = 2,26$). Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa metode bercerita menghasilkan peningkatan pemahaman bacaan yang lebih besar dibandingkan pembelajaran konvensional. Struktur naratif dan penyajian kosakata dalam konteks tertentu kemungkinan besar membantu siswa dalam mengorganisasikan informasi, mengaktifkan pengetahuan awal, dan membangun makna dari teks naratif.

Kesimpulan dan Implikasi: Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa metode bercerita secara signifikan meningkatkan pemahaman bacaan siswa dan menghasilkan peningkatan yang lebih besar dibandingkan pembelajaran konvensional. Oleh karena itu, metode bercerita dapat dipertimbangkan sebagai strategi pembelajaran alternatif untuk mengajarkan teks naratif di kelas EFL khususnya pada tingkat sekolah menengah pertama. Penelitian selanjutnya perlu melibatkan sampel yang lebih besar dan beragam, periode perlakuan yang lebih lama, konteks pendidikan yang berbeda, serta berbagai jenis teks untuk mengkaji lebih lanjut efektivitas dan penerapan metode bercerita dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris.

Kata Kunci *Ber cerita, Metode Mengajar, Pemahaman Bacaan, Teks Naratif, Bahasa Inggris Sebagai Bahasa Asing (EFL)*



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INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is one of the most essential skills in learning English because it enables students to understand, interpret, and analyze written texts. It plays a crucial role in academic success since most educational materials are presented in written form. Students are required to comprehend various types of texts to acquire knowledge and information effectively. Reading comprehension refers to the process of deriving and building meaning through engagement with written text.[1] Similarly, [2] state that reading involves combining textual information with readers' background knowledge. These definitions indicate that reading is not merely recognizing words but also understanding meaning through linguistic and cognitive

processes. Therefore, developing students' reading comprehension is an important goal of English language instruction, particularly at the junior high school level.

However, students' reading comprehension at State Junior High School (SMPN) 4 Monta remains relatively low. Based on preliminary observations, many students experience difficulties in identifying the main idea, locating specific information, and interpreting the meaning of sentences accurately. Interviews with the English teacher revealed that students have limited vocabulary knowledge, which makes it difficult for them to understand and translate English texts. In addition, students demonstrate low interest in reading activities and tend to be passive during classroom discussion and learning activities.[3] argue that the teaching method employed by teachers affects how students understand and respond to learning materials. Based on classroom observations, the lecture method is commonly used in English classes and mainly emphasizes teacher explanations, providing limited opportunities for students to interact during the learning process.[4] [5] also point out that traditional teaching methods often make students passive learners. Consequently, students have fewer opportunities to actively engage with learning materials and develop their reading comprehension skills.[6] These conditions indicate the need for a more interactive and student-centered approach to reading instruction.

Several previous studies have examined the use of storytelling to support students' reading comprehension in EFL contexts.[7] investigated the use of digital storytelling to enhance vocabulary among 32 sixth-grade students. The study employed a mixed-method approach, with pre- and post-tests used to assess vocabulary development and qualitative data collected through student feedback and teacher perspectives. The findings indicated that digital storytelling supported vocabulary acquisition and retention and also contributed to students' engagement in language learning. Similarly, [8] examined students' engagement and perceptions of storytelling in EFL reading comprehension among 31 elementary school students. The study employed a qualitative case study design, with data collected through classroom observations, questionnaires, and interviews. The findings showed that students responded positively to storytelling activities and became more engaged in reading activities. However, the study did not directly measure students' reading comprehension achievement. Other studies have also investigated digital storytelling through different approaches and for various purposes.[9] These studies indicate that storytelling can support language learning and student engagement; however, the existing evidence varies in terms of instructional approaches, research designs, and learning outcomes. More specifically, it remains necessary to establish whether storytelling can produce a significant improvement in students' reading comprehension when its effectiveness is directly compared with conventional instruction using a controlled experimental design. Therefore, the present study addresses this methodological gap by examining the effectiveness of the storytelling method through a pre-test and post-test comparison between an experimental group and a control group of eighth-grade students at State Junior High School (SMPN) 4 Monta.

This study employed a quantitative approach using a true experimental design with a pre-test and post-test control group design. The participants were 43 eighth-grade students at State Junior High School (SMPN) 4 Monta, consisting of 23 students in the experimental group and 20 students in the control group. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to examine the effectiveness of the storytelling method in improving students' reading comprehension. Based on the problems described above, this study addresses the following research question: Is the storytelling method effective in improving students' reading comprehension at State Junior High School (SMPN) 4 Monta? Based on this research question, the hypotheses of this study are formulated as follows: **H0:** The storytelling method does not have a significant effect on students' reading comprehension at State Junior High School (SMPN) 4 Monta. **Ha:** The storytelling method has a significant effect on students' reading comprehension at State Junior High School (SMPN) 4 Monta. Therefore, this study aims to

investigate the effectiveness of the storytelling method in improving students' reading comprehension at State Junior High School (SMPN) 4 Monta.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading Comprehension

In EFL instruction at the junior secondary level, reading comprehension involves learners' ability to construct meaning from written texts by integrating textual information with linguistic knowledge and prior knowledge. Reading comprehension refers to the process of deriving and building meaning through engagement with written text.[1] Similarly,[2] state that reading involves combining textual information with readers' background knowledge. These perspectives show that comprehension extends beyond word recognition because readers need to interpret information and establish relationships among ideas. The process also requires linguistic and cognitive resources to process textual information effectively. Through these processes, reading comprehension supports learners in developing their ability to interpret information and engage critically with written texts.

Reading comprehension is a complex process involving several interconnected skills. Students are expected to identify the main idea, recognize supporting details, and make logical inferences from a text. According to [10], these skills are essential for achieving effective reading comprehension. Likewise, [11] explains that comprehension involves cognitive processes that enable readers to interpret and evaluate texts critically. This suggests that reading is an active mental process rather than a passive activity. Furthermore,[12] argue that successful reading comprehension depends on both linguistic knowledge and strategic competence. Students need sufficient vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, and an understanding of text structure to comprehend written texts successfully. Without these abilities, students may experience difficulties in understanding the meaning of a text, which may reduce their confidence and interest in reading activities. Therefore, appropriate instructional strategies are required to improve students' reading comprehension.[13] These interconnected skills enable students to construct meaning from written texts more effectively and to apply critical thinking during the reading process. Therefore, English teachers are expected to employ appropriate teaching strategies that not only improve students' linguistic competence but also encourage active participation and higher-order thinking skills.

Factors Affecting Reading Comprehension

One of the major factors influencing reading comprehension is vocabulary knowledge. Vocabulary plays a significant role in helping students understand the meaning conveyed in written text.[14] state that students cannot comprehend a text if they do not understand the vocabulary used in it. Likewise, limited vocabulary may hinder students from understanding even relatively simple reading materials.[15] Besides vocabulary knowledge, background knowledge also plays a significant role in reading comprehension.[16] explain that readers utilize their prior knowledge to interpret new information presented in a text. Without sufficient background knowledge, students may misinterpret the intended meaning of a text. Furthermore, motivation is another important factor affecting reading comprehension.[17] Students with high learning motivation are generally more engaged and actively involved in reading activities. Therefore, vocabulary knowledge, background knowledge, and learning motivation should be carefully considered when teaching reading comprehension. These factors are closely related and collectively influence students' ability to understand written texts effectively.

Motivation plays an essential role in determining students' success in reading comprehension.[18] state that motivated students are more likely to participate actively in reading activities and comprehend texts effectively. In contrast, students with low motivation tend to

avoid reading activities and show limited participation during the learning process.[19] also explain that motivation significantly influences students' participation in classroom learning. When students are motivated, they are more willing to make greater efforts to understand reading materials. Conversely, low motivation may reduce students' confidence in learning English and negatively affect their reading comprehension. Moreover, unmotivated students are more likely to become passive during classroom activities. Therefore, teachers should create a learning environment that promotes students' motivation and active participation.[20] Increasing students' motivation is an important step toward improving students' reading comprehension achievement.

Storytelling Method

One instructional method that can be applied in reading instruction is storytelling. Storytelling is considered a meaningful and enjoyable technique in language learning because it enables students to learn through meaningful contexts.[21] explain that storytelling helps students understand language naturally while maintaining their interest and engagement in the learning process. The use of storytelling can be explained through Schema Theory, which emphasizes the role of learners' prior knowledge in understanding new information.[22] When students engage with a story, they can activate relevant knowledge and experiences and connect them with the information presented in the text. This process can help students construct meaning and understand the content of the text more effectively. In the present study, storytelling is implemented through narrative texts, which are appropriate for junior high school students because they present stories with clear organizational structures consisting of orientation, complication, and resolution.[23] Through storytelling activities, students can follow the sequence of events more easily, understand the content of the story, and actively engage in classroom learning. In addition, storytelling creates a more interactive learning atmosphere that can encourage students' motivation and participation. Therefore, storytelling is considered a relevant instructional method for reading instruction because it provides meaningful contexts that can activate students' prior knowledge and support them in constructing meaning from the text.

Previous Studies

Banoth and Muthyala[7] investigated digital storytelling among 32 sixth-grade students using a mixed-method approach. Pre- and post-tests, student feedback, and teacher perspectives were used to examine vocabulary development. The findings showed improvements in vocabulary acquisition and retention as well as students' engagement. Similarly, Yulianawati et al.[8] examined storytelling in EFL reading comprehension among 31 elementary school students using a qualitative case study design. Data were collected through observations, questionnaires, and interviews, with findings indicating positive student responses and increased engagement in reading activities.

The two studies converge in showing positive effects of storytelling on students' involvement in English learning, but differ in their outcomes and methodological approaches. Study[7] focused on vocabulary development, whereas[8] focused on engagement and perceptions in reading activities. However, neither study directly examined the effect of storytelling on reading comprehension achievement through an experimental comparison between groups. Both studies also involved elementary-level learners. Therefore, the effect of storytelling on reading comprehension among junior high school students remains insufficiently established. The present study addresses this gap by investigating the effect of storytelling on the reading comprehension of eighth-grade students at State Junior High School (SMPN) 4 Monta using a pre-test and post-test control group design.

METHOD

Research design

This study adopted a quantitative research approach with a true experimental design. Quantitative research was employed to examine the effect of the storytelling method on students' reading comprehension through the collection and statistical analysis of numerical data. According to [24], quantitative research is used to analyze data in the form of numbers and to test hypotheses using statistical procedures. In this study, students' reading comprehension served as the dependent variable and was measured through pre-test and post-test scores. The numerical data obtained from the tests were analyzed using statistical procedures to determine whether the storytelling method had a significant effect on students' reading comprehension. Therefore, the quantitative approach was considered appropriate for providing objective and measurable evidence regarding the effect of the storytelling method.

The research design used in this study was a true experimental design, specifically a pre-test and post-test control group design. This design involves an experimental group and a control group, with participants randomly assigned to the groups and their performance measured before and after the treatment.[25] Random assignment is an important characteristic of true experimental research because it provides participants with an equal opportunity to be placed in either the experimental or control group.[26] Before the pre-test and treatment, the students from Class VIII A and Class VIII B were combined and randomly assigned to two groups through a drawing procedure conducted by the researcher. Each student participated in the drawing and received either the letter A or B. Students who received the letter A were assigned to Class VIII A and formed the experimental group, while students who received the letter B were assigned to Class VIII B and formed the control group. Through this random assignment procedure, the experimental group consisted of 23 students and the control group consisted of 20 students. The experimental group received instruction using the storytelling method, whereas the control group received conventional teaching. Both groups were administered a pre-test before the treatment and a post-test after the treatment. The pre-test was conducted to determine the students' initial reading comprehension levels, while the post-test was used to measure their reading comprehension after the treatment. The results of the two groups were then compared to determine whether the storytelling method produced a significant effect on students' reading comprehension.

Population and Sample

The population of this study consisted of all eighth-grade students at SMPN 4 Monta. The population comprised 63 students distributed across three parallel classes: Class VIII A consisted of 23 students, Class VIII B consisted of 20 students, and Class VIII C consisted of 20 students. Purposive sampling was used to select Class VIII A and Class VIII B based on the research requirements and the suitability of these classes for the implementation of the study.[25] Class VIII C was not included in the study. Therefore, the sample consisted of 43 students from Class VIII A and Class VIII B. After the sample was determined, the 43 students from Class VIII A and Class VIII B were combined and randomly assigned to the experimental and control groups. The random assignment was conducted by the researcher through a drawing procedure.[27] Each student participated in the drawing and received either the letter A or B. Students who received the letter A were assigned to the experimental group, while those who received the letter B were assigned to the control group. The random assignment resulted in 23 students in the experimental group and 20 students in the control group.

The experimental group received instruction using the storytelling method, whereas the control group received conventional instruction. Both groups completed a pre-test before the treatment and a post-test after the treatment. Thus, the study involved 43 participants drawn

from a population of 63 eighth-grade students, with purposive sampling used to select the sample classes and random assignment used to distribute the participants between the experimental and control groups.

Instruments

The instrument used in this study was a reading comprehension test administered in the form of a pre-test and a post-test. The pre-test was conducted to measure students' initial reading comprehension ability before the treatment, while the post-test was administered after the treatment to measure students' reading comprehension achievement. The test scores obtained from both administrations were used as the primary data for statistical analysis. The instrument was designed to measure students' reading comprehension objectively and consistently, enabling the researcher to evaluate the effectiveness of the storytelling method.

Procedures

The research was conducted over five meetings for each group from April to May 2026, with each meeting lasting approximately 40 minutes. Each group received one pre-test, three treatment sessions, and one post-test. The experimental group was taught using the storytelling method with three narrative texts: *The Lion and the Mouse*, *The Clever Rabbit and the Crocodile*, and *The Ant and the Grasshopper*. The storytelling treatment consisted of three stages. In the pre-storytelling stage, the researcher introduced the topic, activated students' prior knowledge, introduced key vocabulary, and used relevant pictures. In the while-storytelling stage, the researcher presented the story using appropriate pronunciation, intonation, expressions, and gestures, while students listened, read, and identified important information. In the post-storytelling stage, students answered comprehension questions, discussed the story, identified the main idea, facts, sequence, inferences, and conclusions, and retold the story in their own words.

The control group received conventional teaching using the same texts, learning objectives, reading comprehension indicators, time allocation, and assessment procedures. The researcher taught both groups to maintain consistency, with the teaching method as the main difference between the groups. After the treatment, both groups completed the post-test under comparable conditions. Permission to conduct the research was obtained from the school principal. The confidentiality of students' identities and research data was maintained throughout the study.

Data analysis

The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean, minimum, maximum, and standard deviation were calculated to describe students' performance. The Shapiro–Wilk test and Levene's test were used to examine normality and homogeneity. A paired-samples t-test was used to compare pre-test and post-test scores within each group, while an independent-samples t-test was used to compare the experimental and control groups. The significance level was set at 0.05, with $p < 0.05$ indicating a significant difference.

Table 1 Pre-Test and Post-Test Control Group Design

Group	Pre-Test	Treatment	Post-Test
Experimental	O ₁	X	O ₂
Control	O ₃	-	O ₄

Source : [24]

Description:

X = Treatment Using storytelling

E = Experimental Group

K = Control Group

O₁ = Pre-test of The Experimental Group

O₂ = Post-test of The Experimental Group

O₃ = Pre-test of The Control Group

O₄ = Post-test of The Control Group

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

This study addressed the research question: Does the use of the storytelling method improve students' reading comprehension at SMPN 4 Monta? To answer this question, the analysis examined students' reading comprehension scores before and after instruction, the comparability of the two groups at baseline, within-group changes, and differences between the experimental and control groups. Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were conducted, including the Shapiro–Wilk normality test, Levene's test of homogeneity, a baseline equivalence test, paired-samples t-tests, an independent-samples t-test, and Cohen's d effect size.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics of Students' Reading Comprehension Scores

Group	Test	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Experimental	Pre-test	23	40	67	52.74	9.051
Experimental	Post-test	23	70	93	82.13	7.540
Control	Pre-test	20	40	63	49.95	7.388
Control	Post-test	20	50	77	63.40	9.046

Table 2 shows that both groups improved in reading comprehension after instruction. The experimental group increased from a mean score of 52.74 in the pre-test to 82.13 in the post-test, representing a gain of 29.39 points. The control group increased from 49.95 to 63.40, representing a gain of 13.45 points. Thus, the experimental group demonstrated a larger descriptive improvement than the control group. However, these descriptive differences alone do not establish whether the groups differed significantly; therefore, further inferential analyses were conducted.

Test of Normality

Table 3 Test of Normality (Shapiro-Wilk)

Group	Test	Statistic	df	sig.
Experimental	Pre-test	0.922	23	0.072
Experimental	Post-test	0.935	23	0.141
Control	Pre-test	0.937	20	0.214
Control	Post-test	0.932	20	0.165

Table 3 shows that all Shapiro–Wilk significance values were greater than 0.05: 0.072 for the experimental pre-test, 0.141 for the experimental post-test, 0.214 for the control pre-test, and 0.165 for the control post-test. Therefore, the score distributions did not significantly depart from normality, and the normality assumption for the subsequent parametric analyses was

satisfied.

Test of Homogeneity

Table 4 Test Homogeneity

Variable	Levene statistics	df1	df2	Sig.
Reading comprehension scores	1.203	1	41	0.279

Table 4 indicates that Levene's test produced a significance value of 0.279, which was greater than 0.05. Thus, the variances of the experimental and control groups were considered homogeneous, satisfying the equal-variance assumption for the independent-samples t-test.

Test Baseline Equivalence Test

Table 5
Baseline Equivalence Test

Variable	Experimental	control	t	df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Pre-test score	56.78	49.95	1.097	41	0.279

Table 5 shows that the experimental group had a mean pre-test score of 52.74, while the control group had a mean score of 49.95. The independent-samples t-test showed a significance value of 0.279, which was greater than 0.05. Therefore, there was no statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups in their initial reading comprehension ability before the treatment. This indicates that the two groups were comparable at baseline.

Paired-Samples t-Test

Table 6 Paired Sample t-test Result

Group	Mean difference	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Control	-13.450	-12.347	19	<0.001
Experimental	-29.391	-18.948	22	<0.001

Table 6 shows statistically significant differences between the pre-test and post-test scores in both groups. The experimental group showed a mean difference of -29.391, $t(22) = -18.948$, $p < 0.001$, while the control group showed a mean difference of -13.450, $t(19) = -12.347$, $p < 0.001$. The negative sign reflects the direction of the calculation because the difference was calculated as pre-test minus post-test. Therefore, both groups demonstrated significant improvement after instruction, with the experimental group showing a substantially larger mean increase than the control group.

Independent-Samples t-Test

Table 7 Independent Sample t-test Results

variable	Assumption	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. error difference	95%CI lower	95%CI Upper
Reading compre	Equal varianed	-7.406	41	<0.001	-18.730	2.529	-23.838	-13.62

hension score	assumed
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Table 7 presents the results of the independent-samples t-test. Because the homogeneity assumption was satisfied, the equal variances assumed row was interpreted. The analysis showed a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups, $t(41) = -7.406$, $p < 0.001$. The absolute mean difference was 18.730 points, and the 95% confidence interval for the difference ranged from 13.623 to 23.838 points in absolute terms. The experimental group obtained a higher post-test mean score than the control group (82.13 vs. 63.40). These findings indicate that students who received storytelling instruction achieved significantly higher reading comprehension scores than students in the control group.

Effect Size

To determine the practical magnitude of the difference between the two groups, Cohen's d was calculated based on the post-test means and pooled standard deviation. The resulting effect size was approximately $d = 2.26$, which represents a large effect. This indicates that the difference between the experimental and control groups was not only statistically significant but also substantial in practical terms. Therefore, the findings provide evidence that the storytelling method produced a meaningful improvement in students' reading comprehension performance.

Discussion

The findings answer the research question of whether the storytelling method improves students' reading comprehension at SMPN 4 Monta. The experimental group increased by 29.39 points, compared with 13.45 points in the control group. The baseline equivalence test showed no significant difference between the groups before treatment ($p = 0.075$). After treatment, the experimental group achieved significantly higher post-test scores than the control group ($p < 0.001$), with a large effect size ($d = 2.26$). These findings indicate that storytelling was more effective in improving students' reading comprehension. One possible explanation is that storytelling provides a meaningful narrative structure that helps students organize and interpret information. The sequence of orientation, complication, and resolution may help students follow relationships among events and construct meaning from the text.[28] Storytelling may also activate students' prior knowledge by connecting familiar narrative elements with new information, supporting their understanding of main ideas, details, sequences, and conclusions.[29]

Storytelling may further support vocabulary comprehension by presenting unfamiliar words in meaningful contexts.[30] Contextual clues from characters, actions, and events can help students infer word meanings and understand the text as a whole.[31] In addition, storytelling activities such as listening, predicting, interpreting, and retelling may encourage active processing and student engagement during reading instruction. The present findings are consistent with previous studies reporting positive effects of storytelling or narrative-based instruction on language learning and reading-related outcomes [7], [8], [20], and [23]. Although the direction of the findings is consistent with previous research, the present study showed a relatively large difference between the groups, with a post-test mean difference of 18.73 points and an effect size of $d = 2.26$. Differences in participants, instructional duration, materials, assessment instruments, and implementation may explain variations in effect magnitude.

Overall, the findings provide a direct answer to the research question: The storytelling method significantly improved students' reading comprehension at SMPN 4 Monta. The experimental group showed greater improvement than the control group, with a statistically significant post-test difference and a large standardized effect. This, storytelling can be considered an effective instructional strategy for supporting junior high school students' comprehension of narrative texts.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study demonstrates that the storytelling method can effectively improve students' reading comprehension at State Junior High School (SMPN) 4 Monta. The main finding is that students who received storytelling instruction achieved greater improvement in reading comprehension than those who received conventional instruction. The experimental group increased from a mean pre-test score of 52.74 to a post-test score of 82.13, while the control group increased from 49.95 to 63.40. The independent-samples t-test showed a statistically significant difference between the two groups ($t(41) = -7.406, p < 0.001$), with a large effect size ($d = 2.26$). These findings indicate that storytelling can provide meaningful narrative structure and contextual support that help students understand and organize information in narrative texts more effectively.

The findings have practical implications for English teachers, particularly at the junior high school level. Storytelling can be used as an alternative instructional strategy to make reading activities more interactive, meaningful, and engaging. Teachers can incorporate storytelling through activities such as activating students' prior knowledge, introducing key vocabulary, prediction, guided questioning, identifying main ideas and supporting details, following sequences of events, and retelling stories. These activities can encourage students' active participation while supporting their ability to construct meaning from reading texts. Storytelling may therefore be particularly useful when teaching narrative texts because the sequence of events and contextual information can help students organize and understand the content of the text.

This study has several limitations. The research involved a relatively small number of participants from only one school, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other educational contexts. In addition, the treatment was implemented over a relatively short period and focused on narrative texts. Future research should involve larger and more diverse samples, longer treatment periods, and different types of reading texts to examine whether the findings can be generalized to other contexts. Further studies could also investigate the long-term effects of storytelling on reading comprehension and its potential effects on other English language skills, such as vocabulary, speaking, and listening.

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