

Classroom Learning Activities and Reading Comprehension of Junior High School Students

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Abstract:

This quantitative study aimed to determine the relationship between classroom learning activities and reading comprehension of the students who were registered at a secondary school. This study utilized the descriptive correlational research design. A self-constructed instrument was used for this study and convenience sampling method was applied in gathering the data. Respondents were asked to rate each statement for classroom learning activities inventory by using a five-point Likert scale. Frequency, percentage, and mean were used to determine the level of each variable. Meanwhile, to find out the relationship between variables, Pearson Product Moment was utilized. It was found out that the extent of classroom learning activities ($M=3.93$) experienced by the students was on 'high' level, and student's reading comprehension ($M = 82.25$) was on 'high' level as well. Moreover, the results showed that significant relationships occurred between classroom learning activities ($r = .946$, $p = .00 < \alpha = 0,05$) and student's reading comprehension. In conclusion, students' reading comprehension significantly related to what classroom learning activities they experienced.

Key Words: Classroom Learning Activities, Reading Comprehension, Junior High School Students

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INTRODUCTION

Understanding a written text or reading material is critically important in the development of the children's reading skills and particularly in obtaining a qualified education. Payne et al (2023) noted that students who complete the elementary level but lack reading skills are not likely to graduate from high school. Furthermore, students without high levels of reading comprehension will face difficulties in accomplishing school tasks and assignments which need critical thinking skill. There is nothing more disheartening for a teacher than to face the fact that one or even a number of the children in class are not reading satisfactorily because reading is an activity that would help develop comprehension (Durante, 2025). Tavares et al (2023) noted that in a technological society, the demands for higher literacy are constantly increasing, creating ever more serious consequences for those who fall short and contributing to the

widening economic disparities in our society. Meaningful comprehension might not be achieved without experiencing an eloquent reading activity.

Reading competency in English is especially important to Indonesian students due to the large amount of course texts, references and internet materials that appear in that language. The ultimate goal of reading is to comprehend the information that is conveyed in the text (Putri et al., 2024). The reader should gain full understanding of the message that is being conveyed by the writer (Bukhori & Zahro, 2025). Comprehension should go beyond simply understanding the explicit message that is being conveyed by the writer. To truly comprehend the text is to make connections between the information in the text and the information in the reader's head (Nazilah et al., 2024). More deeply is to draw inferences about the writer's meaning, to evaluate the quality of the message, and possibly even to connect aspects of the text with other works of literature (Naningsih et al., 2024). However, some students still face difficulties in producing those skills. In fact, reading scores of junior high school students have not improved so far. It was reported that around 122 million of school-aged children are illiterate (IEA, 2021). Even more, based on interviews set to some English teachers from different schools in North Sulawesi, Indonesia, it was found out that some students continued to struggle in their reading comprehensions, and performed inadequately in academics.

The theoretical framework of this study is anchored on the following theories. According to Rumelhart's Interactive Theory of Reading, comprehending a text is an interactive process between the reader's background knowledge and the text. Efficient comprehension requires the ability to relate the textual material to one's own knowledge. Another theory is Bandura's Social Learning Theory and Interactive Theory of Reading. Bandura's Social Learning Theory posits that people learn from one another, via observation, imitation, and modeling. People learn through observing others' behavior, attitudes, and outcomes of those behaviors.

Though many strategies have been proposed by scholars, oftentimes complaints are heard from the learners that they did not understand the reading lessons delivered by their reading teachers. The meaningless events the reading teacher employed in the classroom might be one of the reasons. It has been observed that in English language classrooms, learning-reading events usually put a greater amount of emphasis and time on testing reading comprehension than teaching readers to comprehend (Mulatu & Regassa, 2022). Teachers are expected to not only to master the subject matter, but they also must master and knowledgeable the strategies suit to the students that may help them become successful learners (Rozi & Badriyah, 2025; Utamimah & Nur Aisyah, 2025). The research conducted by Dadandi (2022) showed that teacher behaviour and practices created the events in learning to read were correlated to reading comprehension skills. Schools are established to cooperate in education of the students. As one of the agents for learning, education, and training, school has

an important and specific role to play (Azizah et al., 2025). McBreen and Savage (2024) asserted that schools must shape attitudes, develop tastes, and even impose ideas. Society expects schools to build a curriculum revolving around the shaping of the future citizens. As the welfare of the child comes to be the basic goal of schools, academic success is enhanced by reading and eventually success is achieved. As an act and a process, reading calls for deeper consideration of the many relating factors, especially in cases where reading is processed by language learners of English. These factors always include classroom learning activities which will be investigated.

Based on the needs and conditions above, it is important to prove whether student's English reading comprehension might be developed by some factors at school, through the variety of classroom learning activities facilitated by the teacher. This study was conducted to determine the relationship between classroom learning activities and English reading comprehension of the first year students of the Unklab Adventist Junior High School for the school year 2024-2025. Specifically, this study was attempted to answer the following questions: 1) What classroom learning activities are experienced by the Junior High School? 2) What is the reading comprehension level of the Junior High School students?, and 3) Is there a significant relationship between classroom learning activities and reading comprehension of the Junior High School students?

This study was conducted to the first year students of Unklab Adventist Junior High Schools, second semester for school year 2024-2025. While various factors may predict English-reading comprehension, this study was focused only on classroom learning activities. There are several skills first year junior high school students can learn from English as a second language class. In this study however, only reading skill was included.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study utilized the Descriptive-Correlational Research Design. Correlational research describes relationships of variables. This design determines the factors which have relation with students' English- reading comprehension based on classroom learning activities. Pearson product moment correlation was used to determine the relationship between variables.

The population of this study were students of Unklab Adventist Junior High Schools, located in Airmadidi, North Sulawesi. The sample of this study consisted of 64 first year students who enrolled in the second semester of school year 2024-2025. Convenience sampling method was applied in gathering the data of this study. It means only students who were present in the schools when the questionnaire administered and gathered are as the sample of the study.

An instrument was used to collect the needed data in this study. This instrument was a self-constructed instrument. Sources from both electronic and hard copies were utilized in the making of this instrument. This instrument consisted of students' profile and Classroom Learning Activities inventory.

Students' reading comprehension level was determined by using the English reading test scores which was collected from their English teacher by the end of second semester, school year 2024-2025. In order to fill in the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to rate each statement. The respondents rated the instrument by using the following chain: 5 (Always); 4 (Often); 3 (Sometimes); 2 (Rarely); 1 (Never). The respondents' responses were scaled using the following criteria: 4.50 – 5.00 Always, 3.50 – 4.49 Often, 2.50 – 3.49 Sometimes, 1.50 – 2.49 Rarely, and 0.50 – 1.49 Never.

The content validity of the instrument was done by experts in the area of study or those who have experiences in constructing questionnaires. The purpose of content validation is to find out if the items are clear and unequivocal, if the number of items are adequate enough to collect data, if the questions are objective and not biased, and if all questions are relevant to the study. A pilot study had been conducted in one public Junior High School in Airmadidi, in order to test the reliability of the instruments. This was to find out whether the instrument is consistent, accurate, and trusted to measure the variables. The results of the pilot study showed that the instrument was valid and reliable since Cronbach's Alpha was .876 for Classroom Learning Activities instrument.

To secure permission to conduct the study, the researcher talked to and handed a letter from the Dean of College of Education to the principals of the respective schools. During the data gathering, the questionnaire were personally handed to the students with verbal explanation of the purpose of the study. Students were given ample time at their own convenience in completing the questionnaire. The data was encoded and analysed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software to obtain the information essential for data analysis and interpretation. Different statistical treatments were used to analyze the data: 1) To answer sub problems 1 and 2 on level of classroom learning activities and students' English reading comprehension, the researcher used descriptive statistics analysis through the frequency, mean and standard deviation, 2) To answer sub problem 3, Pearson product moment correlation was used. The overall mean was interpreted using the following criteria: 4.50– 5.00 Always/Very High, 3.50 – 4.49 Often/High, 2.50 – 3.49 Sometimes/Moderate, 1.50 – 2.49 Seldom/Low, 0.50 – 1.49 Never/Very Low. Meanwhile, students' reading comprehension level is based on the school grading system, which categorized as: 81-100 means very good, 66-80 means good, 51-65 means enough, and below 50 means not enough. The results of the correlation were interpreted at .05 level of significance.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Table 1 shows the descriptive of classroom learning activities. Classroom learning activities are categorized into before reading, during reading, and after reading activities. The results showed that all classroom learning activities were

'often' experienced by the students, which on the top was 'before reading' activity (M = 3.99). This then followed by 'during reading' activity (M = 3.91) and 'after reading' activity (M = 3.89), respectively. It is also revealed that students association with their schoolmates at school was 'high' (M = 3.76).

Table 1. Descriptive of Classroom Learning Events

		Before Reading	During Reading	After Reading
N	Valid	64	64	64
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		3.99	3.91	3.89
Median		4.08	4.00	3.80
Mode		4	4	4
Std. Deviation		.644	.657	.630
Minimum		3	2	2
Maximum		5	5	5
Sum		256	250	249

Table 2 shows the mean score of students' reading comprehension level. Reading comprehension level of the student was 'good' (M = 82.25) since the mean score fell between 80 - 90. Based on the grading system of Indonesian Education Ministry, having score between 80 – 90 means students have good performance on English Subject, more specifically on English reading comprehension.

Table 2. Descriptive of students' English reading comprehension

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Reading comprehension	82.25	10.036	64

Table 3 shows the relationship between classroom learning activities and student's English reading comprehension. It was found that all classroom learning activities in reading have significant relationship with students' reading comprehension.

Table 3. Relationship between classroom learning Activities and students English reading comprehension

		Before Reading	During Reading	After Reading	Reading Comprehension
Before Reading	Pearson Correlation	1	.885**	.884**	.919**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	64	64	64	64
During Reading	Pearson Correlation	.885**	1	.887**	.920**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	64	64	64	64
After Reading	Pearson Correlation	.884**	.887**	1	.885**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	64	64	64	64

Reading	Pearson Correlation	.919**	.920**	.885**	1
Comprehens	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
ion	N	64	64	64	64

		Classroom Learning Activities	Reading comprehension
Classroom	Pearson Correlation	1	.946**
Learning	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
Activities	N	64	64

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

During reading activity showed the strongest relationship with students' reading comprehension ($r = .920, p < 0.01$). Followed by before reading activity which also showed a significant relationship with students' reading comprehension ($r = .919, p < 0.01$). In terms of after reading activity, significant relationships existed between after reading activity with students' reading comprehension ($r = .885, p < 0.01$). As an overall, significant relationship occurred between classroom learning activities and students' English reading comprehension ($r = .946, p < 0.01$).

Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between classroom learning activities and English vocabulary achievement is 'rejected'. The relationships were all in a positive direction, indicating that the students who do pre-reading, during reading, and after reading activities constantly exhibited higher level of English reading comprehension.

Discussion

Reading comprehension is a complex cognitive process that requires intentional instruction and strategic engagement from both teachers and students. Wang et al (2024) categorized comprehension strategies into three phases: before reading, during reading, and after reading. Each phase plays a critical role in guiding students toward deeper understanding.

Before reading, teachers can support comprehension by helping students set specific reading goals, preview the text, and make predictions about the content. These pre-reading strategies activate prior knowledge and set a purpose for reading. During reading, students should be encouraged to use techniques such as skimming and scanning, sequential reading, note-taking, paraphrasing, and evaluating the text's content. These strategies keep learners actively engaged and help them process information effectively. After reading, comprehension deepens when students summarize key points, reflect on the content, and think critically about how they can apply what they've read to real-world contexts.

Each of these phases aligns with the metacognitive reading process: planning (before reading), monitoring (during reading), and evaluating (after reading). For example, planning includes previewing titles, illustrations, and

headings; monitoring involves self-questioning, summarizing, and identifying main ideas; while evaluating includes applying the information to new situations or empathizing with the author or characters (Wang et al, 2024). Comprehension, fundamentally, is about constructing meaning. Ryskin & Nieuwland (2023) As noted, it is an internal cognitive process that cannot be directly observed but can be inferred from a reader's behavior and responses. Meaning is not simply extracted from the text; rather, it is constructed through interaction between the reader's prior knowledge and the information presented. This interaction makes reading an active, thinking process, where readers assimilate and accommodate new ideas based on what they already know.

Teaching reading comprehension is at the heart of literacy instruction. According to Li & Chu, (2023) , helping children understand what they read is central to their academic success. Yet, many students struggle because they lack the necessary skills to comprehend grade-level texts (Goldman & Snow, 2015). True reading goes beyond decoding; it involves making meaning from print, a process that depends on the interplay between the reader, the text, and the mental actions taken during reading. Zimmermann et al. (2021) emphasized that meaningful reading involves various perceptual and cognitive stages: from letter identification and word encoding to semantic processing and inferencing. These stages are influenced not only by the text but also by students' backgrounds and classroom experiences. As such, effective comprehension instruction must take into account individual differences in how students process and understand texts.

This assertion is supported by the findings of Zimmermann et al. (2021), who observed that students with higher reading scores frequently applied what they learned in the classroom to their reading tasks. Similarly, studies by Yapp et al (2023) demonstrated that students benefited from metacognitive reading strategies in both their first and second languages. These findings underscore the importance of providing learners with diverse, strategy-based reading activities that are grounded in their everyday classroom experiences.

Nguyen (2022) emphasized that identifying the factors affecting reading comprehension can greatly assist educators in developing effective teaching strategies. These factors include both cognitive and environmental elements, such as language development, cognitive ability, and early reading experiences . Furthermore, Bleukx et al (2025) suggested that teachers who take the time to understand their students' individual literacy profiles are better able to foster intrinsic motivation. Offering students a variety of engaging and meaningful learning activities is essential in maintaining their interest and supporting comprehension.

However, this study's findings diverge from some previous research in terms of the types of classroom learning activities students reported experiencing. Contrary to expectations, participants indicated that most of their learning activities were concentrated during reading, particularly through

mastery-oriented instruction and motivation-enhancing strategies. Kim et al (2021) also demonstrated that motivation plays a significant role in boosting reading comprehension, supporting the idea that student engagement is crucial across all phases of reading instruction. In conclusion, the development of reading comprehension involves more than just decoding text. It requires active participation, strategic support, and meaningful classroom interactions. Teachers carry a significant responsibility in addressing students' diverse needs and equipping them with the metacognitive tools necessary for lifelong reading success.

CONCLUSION

The study found that students at Adventist Junior High School in Airmadidi, North Sulawesi, frequently engaged in classroom learning activities before, during, and after reading, with pre-reading activities being the most common. Overall, students demonstrated strong reading comprehension, particularly at the literal level. The statistical analysis revealed a significant relationship between classroom learning activities and students' English reading comprehension, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that students actively engage in all phases of reading activities to further enhance their comprehension skills. Teachers should implement a balanced approach that incorporates pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading strategies such as note-taking, skimming, summarizing, and reflecting. Additionally, future research involving a larger sample size is suggested to explore effective teaching strategies and engaging classroom activities that foster students' reading development.

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