

# Improving junior high school students' reading comprehension of narrative text by using Audiobook

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## ABSTRACT

This research was done to find out if the use of audiobook is effective in increasing students' reading comprehension of narrative text. The researcher used pre-test and post-test design. The sample of this research was 8<sup>th</sup> grade students at Sekolah Alam Lampung. The instrument used in this study was a reading comprehension test. The data were analyzed by using Repeated Measures T-Test in Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software in which the significance was determined by  $p < 0.05$ .

The result of the research showed that the mean score of the pre-test was 36 while the post-test was 55.5. The value of significance was  $0.000 < 0.05$ , indicating that the hypothesis was accepted; therefore, there is a significant difference between students' reading comprehension of narrative text after teaching by using audiobooks. Thus, based on the result, it is concluded that audiobooks can be applied to increase students' reading comprehension of narrative text.

**Keywords:** audiobook, effective, narrative text, reading comprehension

## I. INTRODUCTION

The goal of reading is to comprehend the ideas employed in the text. According to (Sutarsyah, 2015), reading begins with getting meaning from sounds that are transferred into letters or written symbols. In addition, he stated that reading involves bottom-up process, top-down process, and interaction process. Bottom-up process means decoding the written symbols by recognizing letters and combining them into words, words into phrases, clauses, and sentences from the text. The top-down process means using the readers' schemata to construct meaning from the text. The interaction process involves both bottom-up and top-down processes. Thus, reading is an interactive process of constructing meaning involving the readers in connecting the ideas from the written message using their schemata.

For EFL students, the process of reading English text requires more attention since the process involves a foreign language. The students need to know the meaning as well as comprehend the ideas stated in the text. This process also has its own challenges, especially in the classroom activity. The teachers not only have to make the students able to read, but they also have to make the students read. This fact is exposed by the English teacher in SMP Alam Lampung. She added that it was difficult to make the students read and focus on the reading text. Under these circumstances, the researcher offered a teaching media to be implemented in the teaching-learning process of reading comprehension.

Teaching media facilitates the teacher to gather students' attention (attentive), arouse students' learning attitudes (affective), help students remember and comprehend information (cognitive), and help the students organize information to even out their understanding and perceptions. In finding suitable media for reading comprehension, the researcher considers that the media should involve more of the students' senses but not distract them from reading the text. Therefore, the

researcher decided to involve audio. In this case, (Serafini, 2004) offered audiobook as a media in reading comprehension practice. Audiobook is a recording of a book or text being read aloud which can be accessed through websites or applications.

(Serafini, 2004) showed that audiobook enables students to have a new reading experience by allowing them to know how the text is actually read, how it is supposed to be read, and how the actual Intonation and expression of every sentence is. In addition, (Burkholder & Sayra Stone-Harris MEd, 2004) argued that audiobook exposes struggling readers to something they have never experienced before by allowing them to experience what fluent readers have every time they read a book. Based on the statements above, the use of audiobook as a media is expected to be able to help the students comprehend a reading text, and also to be able to increase their interest in reading comprehension practice.

The background above motivated the researchers to investigate the improvement in Junior High School students' reading comprehension of narrative text by using audiobooks. This investigation dealt with junior high school students with narrative text as the reading materials. The researchers chose narrative text contained in the basic competencies points 3.14 and 4.18 of 8<sup>th</sup>-grade junior high school syllabus. This research used revised Bloom's Taxonomy as the aspect in assessing students' reading comprehension (Veeravagu et al., 2010). This investigation was important due to the need for proper media to facilitate Junior High School students in improving their reading comprehension and increasing their interest in it.

## **II. METHODS**

The design of this research was quasi-experimental by using a quantitative method. The quantitative method was used to find out the effect on students' reading comprehension of English narrative text after being taught by using audiobooks. The method for collecting the quantitative data was pre-test and post-test design. The pre-test was administered to measure their reading comprehension ability before getting the treatment, and the post-test was administered to find out how far the students' reading comprehension ability was after implementing the treatment. This research involved a class of 8<sup>th</sup> grade Junior high school students of SMP Alam Lampung. The participants were determined by using purposive sampling.

## **III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

#### **Results of The Pre-test and Post-test**

The pre-test was administered to find out students' initial achievement in reading comprehension of narrative text. Then, the students' pre-test scores were compared with the students' post-test scores to find out the significance of the improvement.

**Table 1. Distribution of Students' Scores in Pre-Test and Post-Test**

Interval score	Pre-test			Post-test		
	Number of Students	Percentage	Mean	Number of Students	Percentage	Mean
10-24	4	40%	<b>36</b>	2	20%	<b>55.5</b>
25-39	0	0%		1	10%	
40-54	3	30%		1	10%	
55-69	3	30%		3	30%	
70-85	0	0%		3	30%	
	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>	

The table above shows that all of the students' scores improved from the pre-test to the post-test and they got higher scores after getting the treatment. It can also be seen that the students' mean score on the post-test is higher than the score on the pre-test, where the gain is 19.5. It means that the students performed better during the post-test. In order to find out the significance of the improvement, the researcher did hypothesis testing by using a paired sample T-test which is presented in the table below.

**Table 2. Paired Sample T-Test**

	Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower				Upper
Paired Sample 1: pre-test - post-test	19.500	7.246	2.291	-24.683	-14.317	8.510	.000	

The table shows that the results of the computation of the value of two-tailed significance is 0.000. It means that  $H_1$  is accepted because  $0.00 < 0.05$ . The data show that the degree of freedom is 9, the t-value is 8.510 and the t-table is 1.833. It proves that there was an improvement in the student's reading comprehension of narrative text by using audiobook.

## Discussion

Regarding the previous study, this research supports a quantitative study conducted by (Margaretha & Jannah, 2022). The research was conducted to measure the effectiveness of audiobook in teaching reading comprehension to ninth-grade students of MTs Pesantren Al Amin Mojokerto in the academic year 2021 / 2022. This quantitative study found that there was a significant difference before and after the implementation of audiobook where the mean score of the post-test result was higher than the pre-test result. This indicated that the use of audiobook was effective in teaching reading comprehension.

Another corresponding study was conducted to find out the effect of audiobook on 11th grade students' reading comprehension (Rahman & Hajar, 2020). The findings showed that the use of audiobook was more effective than the non-audiobook. It was proven by the comparison of the mean score from the experimental and the control groups. The students were interested in using audiobooks because it was stimulating, challenging, available, powerful, and innovative in the reading activity.

This study also corresponds to the theory by (Serafini, 2004) who exposed that an audiobook is an important component that can be used in a comprehensive reading program. Audiobook has some benefits for students to have a new reading experience by allowing them to know how the text is read, how it is supposed to be read, and how is the actual Intonation and expression of every sentence which is resulting in increasing their reading comprehension. In addition, this study has proved that the use of media in teaching English can increase students' achievement which is in line with a theory cone of learning proposed by Edgar Dale. This theory claims that the use of audio as a medium (hearing words) can increase the comprehension level by 20%.

#### IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Having conducted the research at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade of SMP Alam Lampung Selatan and analyzing the data, the researcher concluded that the use of audiobook is effective in narrative text reading comprehension teaching-learning. This is supported by the teaching and learning process which was successfully done without any significant obstacles. In addition, the use of audiobook was proven to improve students' comprehension of narrative text significantly by comparing the pre-test and post-test results.

Based on the findings, the use of audiobook is effective to be implemented in narrative text reading comprehension for junior high school students. Therefore, English teachers should apply the medium in teaching reading comprehension of narrative text, especially in junior high school. In addition, this research was conducted to find out the use of audiobook in improving one of the students' receptive skills which is reading comprehension of narrative text. The researcher suggests that the further research implement audiobook to improve students' listening skill as a productive skill.

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