



Integrating Repetitive Reading with Service-Learning in Ameliorating Critical Reading at a Private Islamic Junior High School

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Abstract

The Community Service Programme was aimed to improve students' reading Islamic narrative texts ability in a school community. This activity is carried out in the form of training to find the needs of the participants. In this activity, the intended participants were students of MTS Swasta An-Nur Kota Langsa grade VII that consisted of 11 students. The methods used in this activity included repetitive reading methods with a communicative approach through a service-learning activity. The results of this programme showed a significant improvement in the critical reading skills of English narrative text as evidenced by the results of the score analysis with SPSS. The success of this programme not only has a positive impact on the participants, but also provides practical experience for students in applying English learning theory in the field, as well as strengthening the role of lecturers as community servants. The implementation of this programme reflects the institution's commitment to supporting sustainable educational development and contributing to improving the quality of human resources in the community.

Abstrak

Program pengabdian kepada masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam membaca teks narasi Islam di lingkungan sekolah. Kegiatan ini terlaksana dalam bentuk pelatihan yang disesuaikan dengan kebutuhan peserta. Dalam kegiatan ini peserta yang dimaksud adalah siswa MTS Swasta An-Nur Kota Langsa. Metode yang digunakan dalam kegiatan ini mencakup metode *repetitive reading* dengan pendekatan komunikatif melalui kegiatan *service-learning*. Hasil dari program ini menunjukkan peningkatan signifikan dalam keterampilan membaca kritis teks naratif berbahasa Inggris yang dibuktikan dengan hasil analisis nilai dengan SPSS. Keberhasilan program ini tidak hanya berdampak positif bagi peserta, tetapi juga memberikan pengalaman praktis bagi mahasiswa dalam mengaplikasikan teori pembelajaran bahasa Inggris di lapangan, serta memperkuat peran dosen sebagai pengabdian masyarakat. Implementasi program ini mencerminkan komitmen institusi dalam mendukung pembangunan pendidikan yang berkelanjutan dan berkontribusi pada peningkatan kualitas sumber daya manusia di masyarakat.



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Introduction

In the academic setting, critical reading is a vital ability that helps students properly examine, assess, and synthesize material (Suzanne, 2016). Related to the idea, Rodionova, I., & Titova (2023) thought that the capacity to distinguish between and interact critically with texts is more important than ever in a time when information is both plentiful and of varying quality, but a lot of students find it difficult to acquire this ability, which is frequently overwhelmed by the need to learn material rapidly.

The possibility of repetitive reading as a tactic to improve students' critical reading skills is investigated in this study. It has been demonstrated in a variety of educational situations that repetitive reading, which entails the systematic review and engagement with material over time, reinforces comprehension and retention (Ulu, H., & Akyol, 2016). The study intends to ascertain whether this approach can enhance students' capacity to interact with texts at a more profound, analytical level by applying it to critical reading. The reason is because many students still find it difficult to comprehend English texts (Annisa, N., Syam, U., & Mannong, 2023).

There had been several researches done about the issue. First, Zimmermann, L. M., Reed, D. K., & Aloe (2021) compared repeated reading and non-repetitive reading fluency interventions produced reading outcomes similar in greatness, with no significant differences. Their research results indicated that non-repetitive reading fluency instruction may be a practicable approach for students with reading difficulties. The research is quite dissimilar with the existing research where the authors focus on repetitive reading without working on non-repetitive one. Second, Baker (2019) analyzed about a Community based service learning in a language education community. His research revealed that linguistic proficiency, cultural understanding, motivation and interests related to language learning or civic engagement. Compare to Baker's research, the current research applies service-learning to help English language learners in critical reading. The differences are found in the form of subject of research, focus and limitation of the study, and also the different approach chosen.

Moreover, the study focuses on how students' capacity to recognize arguments, assess supporting information, and comprehend the underlying presumptions in narrative texts is affected by repeated learning. This study attempts to give empirical data on the effectiveness of repetitive reading in improving critical reading abilities through a series of scheduled reading sessions and assessments on narrative texts.

This study adds to our understanding of how to use repetitive reading to improve critical reading, which is helpful for educators who want to help their students become more analytical readers and better equipped for the demands of both the classroom and the environment. Furthermore, the study's distinctive context is provided by the focus on a private Islamic junior high school, which emphasizes the need for students to critically engage with a variety of texts by combining religious and secular instruction. The goal of the repetitive reading technique was to assist pupils in internalizing critical reading strategies. It is typified by constant repetition and reinforcement. This method was

supposed to help pupils become more proficient and self-assured readers by strengthening their capacity to assess, interpret, and analyze textual content.

Method

The primary strategy used in the study to improve students' critical reading abilities was a service-learning approach. A combination of academic instruction and community involvement, service-learning emphasizes personal development and reflective thinking while addressing societal issues (Salam, M., Awang Iskandar, D. N., Ibrahim, D. H. A., & Farooq, 2019). The study was conducted at MTS An-Nur Kota Langsa, a private Islamic Junior High School in Langsa City, involving students from the 8th grade that consisted of 11 students, by integrating a service-learning approach with repetitive reading approaches. The approach was created to support students' ongoing development of their analytical skills by including them in real-world, community-focused projects that called for the frequent use of critical reading techniques. To find whether the students' critical reading was improved, pre-test and post-test that consisted of 20 multiple-choice questions about Islamic narrative texts were administered.

Implementation of Service-Learning

The service-learning component was created with the school's curriculum in consideration, with a focus on how critical reading abilities may be used practically in everyday situations. That idea is supported by Ma, C., Tse, I., & Chan (2018). Students worked on community-based projects that needed them to use their reading comprehension and analytical skills to solve issues or address needs in the surrounding community. The projects were chosen with consideration for how well they would evaluate the students' reading and critical thinking abilities as well as how well they would relate to their education.

➤ **Project selection and design:**

In order to make sure the service-learning projects were relevant and in line with academic goals, faculty members and community partners worked together to select them. These projects involved things like reading materials creation for younger community pupils and assessing narrative texts or stories. Students had to read the texts carefully, analyze them critically, and integrate their findings into outcomes that would benefit the community.

➤ **Repetitive reading through service:**

Throughout the project, students were required to do comparable tasks on multiple occasions in order to apply the concept of repetitive reading. For instance, over the course of four weeks, students evaluate several narrative texts, giving them constant opportunity to sharpen and enhance their critical reading abilities. Students talked about their experiences, the difficulties they had, and the reading tactics they used during the

frequent reflection sessions. Students needed this reflection in order to process the skills they were learning.

➤ Assessment and feedback:

Feedback was given in the form of tests, with an emphasis on how students may develop their analytical and critical reading abilities. The repeated learning process needed to be reinforced, and this feedback loop was crucial.

➤ Integration with Islamic educational values:

Given the context of the private Islamic junior high school, the service-learning projects were also designed to incorporate Islamic values such as community service (*khidmah*) and knowledge seeking (*talabul 'ilm*). In line with Islamic teachings, students were encouraged to consider how their education and community involvement impacted their personal growth and community duty. Narrative texts chosen consisted Islamic values about prophet Muhammad and his friends.

Result and Discussion

In the process of this service-learning programme, in project selection and design, faculty members and community partners worked together to select reading materials and narrative texts about prophet Muhammad and his friends were chosen in order to integrate English reading material with Islamic values. However, firstly, the participants had answered 20 pre-test questions in the form of multiple-choice. Then, in the progression of programme, the participants needed to read the texts cautiously, analyze them critically, and answer the questions regarding the texts. Then in repetitive phase, students evaluated the narrative texts by reading them repeatedly and discussed with their friends about the texts during the learning process. Lastly, students were required to answer 20 questions in form of post-test as assessment and feedback. During the process, faculty members and partners facilitated, supervised, and ensured the programme ruined well.

Furthermore, to provide insights into the effectiveness of the implemented method toward students' critical reading ability, the findings that based on a comparison of pre-test and post-test scores of the participating students were analyzed. Below is the analysis of the data:

Table 1. Students' Pre-test and Post-Test Scores

No	Students' Names	Pre-test Score	Post-test Score
1.	Aulia Salim	95	100
2.	Eki N	90	95
3.	Fauzan	95	100
4.	Ibnu Ibr	85	90
5.	Khairul F	80	80
6.	M. Icmal	85	75
7.	Rafas	100	95
8.	Salman	80	93
9.	T. Albiruni	80	90

10.	Wan Firdaus	95	90
11.	Zubair	75	80

The majority of students showed improvement in their critical reading skills, as evidenced by the increase in their post-test scores compared to their pre-test scores. This suggests that the repetitive reading approach, combined with service learning, positively influenced their ability to analyze and interpret texts.

Several students demonstrated substantial gains. The data from table 1 show several essential things. For example, Salman's score increased from 80 in the pre-test to 93 in the post-test, and T. Albiruni's score improved from 80 to 90. These results indicate that the method was particularly effective for these students, likely due to their engagement with the repetitive reading process and the practical application of skills through service learning.

Students like Aulia Salim and Fauzan who already had high pre-test scores of 95, managed to achieve perfect scores of 100 in the post-test. This indicates that even those who started with strong critical reading skills were able to benefit from the approach, further enhancing their abilities.

Khairul F showed no change in his scores, maintaining an 80 in both the pre-test and post-test. This stability suggests that while the student did not regress, the method may not have been as impactful for him compared to others, possibly due to individual learning preferences or external factors affecting his performance.

M. Icmal experienced a decrease in his score, from 85 in the pre-test to 75 in the post-test. Similarly, Wan Firdaus's score dropped from 95 to 90, and Rafas's score slightly decreased from 100 to 95. These declines may indicate challenges with the repetitive reading method or external factors that influenced their performance. Further investigation would be needed to understand these cases better, such as considering motivation levels, engagement in service-learning projects, or other academic pressures. After that, simple statistics analysis through SPSS seems need to do to find the significance as shown in the following table.

Table 2. Paired Samples Statistics to Find the Significance

		Paired Samples Statistics			Std. Error
		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Mean
Pair 1	Pre-test	87.2727	11	8.17424	2.46463
	Post-test	89.8182	11	8.26823	2.49297

From table 2, we can find that for the average score of learning outcomes in the pre-test $87.27 < \text{post-test } 89.81$, it means that descriptively there is a difference in the average learning outcomes between pretest and post-test. Furthermore, to prove whether the difference is really real (significant) or not we need to use paired sample correlations.

Table 3. Paired Sample Correlations

Paired Samples Correlations		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Pretest & Posttest	11	.650	.030

The output in table 3 above shows the results of the correlation test between the two pre-test and post-test variables. Based on the table above, it is known that the correlation coefficient value is 0.65 with a significance value (Sig) of 0.030. Since the sig value. $0.030 < 0.05$, there is a positive relationship between the two variables, namely pre-test and post-test. So, the difference between pre-test and post scores is significant or real which means that students' ability in reading narrative text is ameliorated after the implementation of repetitive reading in the service-learning programme at the school.

Conclusion

The study concludes that the implementation of repetitive reading combined with service-learning significantly enhances students' critical reading abilities. The analysis of pre-test and post-test scores indicates a notable improvement in students' capacity to analyze, interpret, and critically engage with texts after participating in the repetitive reading process.

This approach's effectiveness at MTS An-Nur Kota Langsa shows its potential for wider implementation in similar educational environments, especially those that integrate curricula from both religious and secular sources. Thus, the study's conclusion, which emphasizes the value of ongoing practice, practical application, and reflective learning in reaching significant academic achievements, is in support of the use of repetitive reading processes in educational programs designed to improve critical reading skills.

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