



## TEACHING AUTONOMOUS LEARNING IN INCREASING READING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT

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### ABSTRACT

The study aims to find out whether autonomous learning techniques improve the reading comprehension of the ninth-grade students of SMP Negeri 6 Watampone and to find out if autonomous learning is interesting to the ninth-grade students of SMP Negeri 6 Watampone. In the study, the writers used a quantitative method and pre-experimental design with pre-test post-test, and questionnaire to collect the data. These were used to measure and interpret the interests of students. The result of the study showed that the mean score obtained by the students in the post-test (7.42) was greater than the mean score of the students in the pre-test (2). Besides, the score of students' interests taken using the questionnaire showed that most of them agree with the statement that the Autonomous Learning Technique gives them more benefits than disadvantages. The Autonomous Learning Technique gave better results to increase the students' reading comprehension achievement. In other words, the Autonomous learning technique is effective and interesting in teaching reading.

**Keywords:** *Autonomous Learning Technique, Reading Comprehension, Teaching Technique*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Introduction

Reading is one of the language skills and it's the receptive skill. This means it involves responding to text, rather than producing it. It is an important skill in learning a language besides listening, speaking, and writing because proficiency in reading contributes most to self-dependence in learning. Everyone should have the ability to read, especially in English because the fact shows most of scientific books are written in English. Besides, a learner can get a list of knowledge or ideas to improve his grade point average, change his behavior, and complete a good place in any aspect of life in the world through reading.

The fundamental goal of reading activity is to know enough scientific concepts and to know the interpretation of the language. Tierney states that the basic goals of reading are to enable the student to gain an understanding of the world and themselves, to develop appreciation and interests, to find solutions to their personal and group problems, and to develop strategies by which they can become independently comprehended.



Related to the description explained above, comprehension should be considered as the heart of reading instruction, and the major goal of that instruction should be the provision of learning activities that will enable students to think about and react to what they read. Students need comprehension skills that can help them to get the meaning from reading materials. However, many students are still low in comprehending the reading material. There are many research results that indicate that most Indonesian students still find difficulties in comprehending English textbooks. The difficulties come from many factors, such as a negative reading attitude, a lack of interest, reading knowledge, reading skills, and reading strategies. The other problems found by students such as shortage of prior learning, lack of vocabulary, and sort of text. For example, at the university level, there are many kinds of reading materials such as magazines, brochures, and advertisements, which are used to deliver to the students and they are expected to understand them.

Besides, sometimes the learning style of students does not match with the teaching style of teachers. This case refers to the mismatch between the learning style of students and the teaching style of teachers. Many teachers do not realize that everybody has their own learning style, including their students. Thus, sometimes teacher ignores their students' learning styles. To solve this problem, there should be techniques to increase the students' interest in learning reading skills. Therefore, Autonomous Learning is chosen by the researcher to be examined in this school to increase the students' reading comprehension achievement.

Nowadays, Autonomous Learning is becoming more and more important in studying English because it not only can help students improve their comprehension in reading but also develop their self-consciousness, vision, practicality, and freedom of discussion. These attributes serve to aid the students in their independent learning. The teachers should know the students' preference learning styles to make Autonomous Learning successful when they conduct the teaching-learning process. There are three kinds of learning styles promoted by Scharle and Szabo, namely: auditory (hearing), visual (seeing), and kinesthetic (sensing bodily movement). Each student has her or his own style and tends to prefer one style. Particularly in learning activities, students sometimes unconsciously perform their learning style.



## 2. METHOD

### 2.1. *Research Design*

The writers employed a quantitative method using a pre-experimental design. This included pre-tests, post-tests, and questionnaires to collect and interpret data.

### 2.2. *Samples/Participants*

The population of this research was the eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 6 Watampone. It consisted of 67 students. In this research, the researcher chose the students of VIII A class of SMP Negeri 6 Watampone as a sample. The class consists of 21 students. The writers chose this class as a sample because most of them have better achievements than the others in English based on the information of some teachers. Therefore, they could help the researcher to complete this research easily.

### 2.3. *Instruments*

The research instruments used in this study to assess the effectiveness of autonomous learning techniques on reading comprehension and student interest included:

#### 2.3.1. Reading test

To collect the data, the researchers did some steps based on the procedures below:

##### a. Pre-test

Before doing the treatment, the students were given a pre-test to know their basic achievement in reading. The purpose of giving a pre-test was to know the students' ability to comprehend some text. In this test, the researcher spent 30 minutes to do it.

##### b. Treatment

At first, the researcher gave the students a pre-test to identify their understanding of reading comprehension. After that, the researcher distributed a questionnaire to identify students' learning styles. The questionnaire consists of 15 questions. Then, the students were grouped and treated based on their learning styles, namely visual, auditory, and kinesthetic.

In the teaching and learning process, there were four meetings and the researcher spent 2x45 minutes for each meeting.



c. Post-test

After completing the meetings, the post-tests were given to the students. The result of the pre-test and post-test was calculated in order to measure whether or not the students made progress in reading comprehension toward the application of Autonomous Learning. The post-test given to the students was the same as the pre-test.

2.3.2. Questionnaire

The students were given the first questionnaire before the treatment to categorize the students' preference learning style. The second questionnaire was about students' interests, which was given after giving the post-test or the last section of the data collection procedures.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 1. The students' reading comprehension achievement

The students' reading comprehension achievement deals with the rate percentage of the students' scores obtained through test mean score, standard deviation, test of significance, and the result of inferential analysis.

- a. The rate percentage of the students' scores obtained through tests are presented below :

**Table 1** The frequency and percentage of the student's achievement on pre-test

No.	Interval Score	Classification	Pre-Test	
			Frequency	Percentage
1	9.6-10.0	Excellent	-	-
2	8.6-9.5	Very good	-	-
3	7.6-8.5	Good	-	-
4	6.6-7.5	Fairly Good	-	-
5	5.6-6.5	Fairly	-	-
6	3.6-5.5	Poor	2	9.52%
7	0-3.5	Very Poor	19	90.48%
<b>Total</b>			21	100%

Table 1 shows that before treatments were conducted, most of the students were in very poor classification with the highest rate percentage was 90.48%. Meanwhile, none of them was in excellent classification. It indicates that before the treatments were given, the level of the students' reading comprehension achievement was categorized into very



poor classification. It means that before treatment, the students' level of reading comprehension is not satisfied.

Before conducting treatment, the researcher distributed a questionnaire to know the students' preference learning style. There were three types of learning styles in this research. They were visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles. Based on the result of the research, nine students were categorized as visual learners, eight students were categorized as auditory learners, and four students were categorized as kinesthetic learners. The classification of the students' scores after being given treatments is presented below:

**Table 2** The Frequency And Percentage of the Students' Achievement On Post-Test

No.	Interval Score	Classification	Pre-Test	
			Frequency	Percentage
1	9.6-10.0	Excellent	-	-
2	8.6-9.5	Very good	2	9.52%
3	7.6-8.5	Good	9	42.86%
4	6.6-7.5	Fairly Good	6	28.57%
5	5.6-6.5	Fairly	4	19.05%
6	3.6-5.5	Poor	-	-
7	0-3.5	Very Poor	-	-
<b>Total</b>			21	100%

After getting treatment for several meetings, the students' scores increased. It is shown in the table above. Two students got very good, nine students got good, six students got fairly good, and four students got fairly. It means that Autonomous Learning Technique successfully increases the students reading comprehension achievement.

b. Mean score and standard deviation

There is a significant improvement in students' reading comprehension after comparing the results of the pre-test and post-test which have been presented. It is supported by the fact that the mean score of post-test is higher than that of the pre-test

**Table 3** Mean Score and Standard Deviation of the Students' Pre-Test and Post-Test

Test	Pre-test	Post-test
Mean score	2	7.42
Standard deviation	0.95	0.93

The table above shows that the autonomous learning technique successfully improves students' reading comprehension at the SMP Negeri 6 Watampone. The mean



score of the result of the students' pre-test was 2 and the mean score of the result of the students' post-test was 7.42. Besides, the students' standard deviation of the pre-test was 0.95 and the standard deviation of the post-test was 0.93. This means that the standard deviation of the post-test was higher than the standard deviation of the pre-test.

c. Test of significance

To know whether or not the mean score was different from two tests (pre-test and post-test), the writer used a test of significance. Commonly, it is known as T-test. T-test value is used to know whether there is or not significant difference between pre-test and post-test in reading comprehension achievement through Autonomous Learning Technique at the level of significance 0,05 or 5% where N=number of students (21), sample: 21-1 = 20. The following table shows the result of the t-test classification:

**Table 4** T-Test of the students' reading comprehension achievement

Variable	T-Test Value	T-Table Value
X-Y	31.9	2.086

Based on table 4 above, the researcher concludes that the t-test value is greater than the t-table ( $2.086 < 31.9$ ). It can be assumed that the students' reading comprehension achievement has been improved successfully. Between the t-test and t-table is very significant. Thus, it can be concluded that teaching English through Autonomous Learning proved to be effective in improving the students' reading comprehension achievement.

### 3.2. Discussion

#### 3.2.1. Improvement in Reading Comprehension

The quantitative analysis of pre-test and post-test scores demonstrates a significant improvement in students' reading comprehension abilities. The mean score increased from 2 in the pre-test to 7.42 in the post-test, highlighting a substantial improvement. The frequency and percentage distributions of scores also reflect this positive trend. Initially, 90.48% of students fell into the "very poor" category, with no students achieving "excellent" or "very good" classifications. Post-treatment, none of the students remained in the "very poor" category. Instead, 29.52% reached the "very good" classification,



42.86% achieved "good," 28.57% were "fairly good," and 19.05% were "fairly." This shift signifies that the autonomous learning techniques effectively elevated the students' reading comprehension levels across various performance categories. These are further supported by the t-test value of 31.9, which is significantly greater than the t-table value of 2.086, confirming that the improvement is statistically significant.

### 3.2.2. Effectiveness of Autonomous Learning Techniques

The effectiveness of autonomous learning techniques can be attributed to their ability to cater to individual learning styles and promote self-directed learning. By classifying students into visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners and tailoring the instructional approach accordingly, the study capitalized on the students' inherent strengths. This personalized method likely contributed to the significant gains observed in reading comprehension.

Autonomous learning encourages students to take responsibility for their learning, fostering a sense of independence and self-motivation. The treatment sessions, which involved group activities and discussions, enabled students to engage with the material actively and collaboratively. This approach aligns with contemporary educational theories that advocate for student-centered learning environments, where learners are active participants in their educational journeys.

### 3.3.3. Student Interest and Engagement

The questionnaire revealed that the majority of students found the autonomous learning techniques engaging and beneficial. The positive reception suggests that students appreciated the opportunity to learn in a manner that resonated with their preferences and interests. This finding is crucial, as student interest and motivation are significant factors in academic success. When students are engaged and interested in the learning process, they are more likely to invest effort and exhibit persistence in overcoming challenges.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

The Autonomous Learning Technique helps the students of the SMP Negeri 6 Watampone to increase their reading comprehension achievement. Based on the data of mean score which has been explained above, the mean score of the pre-test is 2 and the mean score of the post-test is 7.42. It means that the score of the students after getting



treatment increases by 5.42. The standard deviation of the students' pre-test is lower than the result of the student's post-test. It means that the value has positively increased. Therefore, Autonomous Learning Technique successfully increases the students' reading comprehension achievement.

The interest of the students studying through Autonomous Learning according to the result of the questionnaires which have been distributed shows that most of the students appreciate by giving agree statement with Autonomous Learning Technique. Therefore, it can be concluded that Autonomous Learning technique is highly interesting, especially for the students of the SMP Negeri 6 Watampone.

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