THE EFFECT OF SEKOLAH PERJUMPAAN ON STUDENTS READING COMPREHENSION AT THE SMAN 1 GUNUNGSARI

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Article Info	Abstract
	This study examined the effect of the *Sekolah Perjumpaan* model on students' reading comprehension. The participants were twenty second-grade MIPA students from SMA Negeri 1 Gunung Sari, selected through purposive sampling. A quasi-experimental design was employed, involving a pre-test–post-test structure with experimental and control groups. Data were collected through reading comprehension tests, analyzed using a t-test, and interpreted to determine the intervention's effectiveness. The statistical analysis showed that the obtained *t* value exceeded the critical value at the 5% significance level, indicating a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. These findings suggest that students instructed through the *Sekolah Perjumpaan* approach demonstrated greater improvement in reading comprehension compared to those who did not receive the intervention. Thus, *Sekolah Perjumpaan* can be considered an effective method for enhancing reading comprehension at SMA Negeri 1 Gunung Sari.

INTRODUCTION

Reading is widely recognized as a foundational and lifelong academic skill, particularly within foreign language learning environments where it facilitates access to broader linguistic input and conceptual knowledge (Grabe & Stoller, 2019). It requires more than decoding letters or recognizing words; effective reading demands interaction with text through critical thinking, contextual interpretation, and meaning-making processes (Perfetti & Stafura, 2014). In many Indonesian EFL classrooms, students struggle with these multidimensional demands. Some experience difficulty decoding short passages, while others read fluently but fail to construct coherent mental representations of the text. These challenges are compounded by limited engagement in self-directed reading, minimal collaborative learning, and insufficient mastery of strategic reading behaviors such as skimming and scanning. Cognitive factors—including constraints in working memory—further shape comprehension, as readers must hold textual information in mind while simultaneously integrating it with prior knowledge and inferential reasoning (Baddeley, 2012).From a cognitive-developmental standpoint, reading proficiency emerges as learners gradually transform deliberate strategies into fluent skills.

Early readers initially rely on intentional, effortful actions—such as consciously monitoring comprehension—yet with repeated practice these strategies become more automatic (Paris, 2005). Research has shown that this progression from strategic to skilled reading occurs across multiple layers of reading expertise, including decoding, fluency, and higher-order comprehension (Cain & Oakhill, 2011). The distinction between skills and strategies, although frequently blurred in the literature, remains pedagogically significant: skills are typically automatic processes requiring minimal cognitive attention, whereas strategies involve conscious planning and regulation of behavior to achieve comprehension goals (Afflerbach et al., 2008). Effective EFL instruction must therefore integrate both elements, providing space for strategy instruction while also enabling the development of automaticity through sustained practice. At the same time, not all strategies learners use are productive; some may employ ineffective shortcuts—such as superficial guessing—that hinder comprehension, demonstrating the importance of explicit, well-structured instructional guidance (Duke & Cartwright, 2021).

Vocabulary knowledge also plays a critical role in shaping students' reading comprehension. Learners with limited vocabulary often avoid reading due to frustration, decreasing their opportunities for incidental vocabulary growth (Nation, 2013). Empirical studies consistently indicate that depth of vocabulary knowledge is among the strongest predictors of comprehension performance across grade levels (Qian, 2002; Schmitt, 2014). Effective comprehension requires learners not only to know word meanings but also to infer unfamiliar vocabulary through contextual cues, connect semantic networks, and integrate lexical knowledge into broader textual understanding. Reading comprehension therefore emerges from the coordinated operation of working memory, vocabulary knowledge, metacognitive monitoring, and textual processing skills, making it a highly integrative cognitive activity (Cain & Oakhill, 2011; Perfetti & Stafura, 2014).

In Indonesian senior high schools, reading occupies a central position in the curriculum. The national learning objectives emphasize two domains: comprehension of written texts and the ability to communicate meaningfully (Kemendikbud, 2017). Among the four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—reading frequently becomes the principal focus because it strongly correlates with academic achievement, university readiness, and long-term educational success (Herawan, 2020). Students who develop strong reading abilities are better equipped to interpret academic texts, engage in independent study, and participate more actively in knowledge-building activities. Conversely, poor reading comprehension can discourage students from learning outside the classroom and hinder their academic development (Anderson et al., 1985).

Given these challenges, teachers are increasingly expected to design instructional approaches that foster both strategic awareness and automatic reading skills. Teaching for strategy use involves helping students analyze tasks, select appropriate reading procedures, and evaluate their understanding, whereas skill development requires ongoing practice and meaningful feedback (Duke & Cartwright, 2021). The pedagogical challenge lies in integrating these two dimensions in a way that supports students' growth as both strategic and fluent readers, ensuring that effortful strategies eventually develop into automatic skills without losing their adaptive value. Against this backdrop, *Sekolah Perjumpaan* emerges as a distinctive value-based educational model practiced in several communities and schools across Lombok. Rooted in dialogical and ethical interactions, *Sekolah Perjumpaan* treats every human encounter as a learning space where individuals intentionally practice moral values through language use (Muadz, 2017). Drawing on speech act theory, the model

emphasizes four principal forms of language action—assertives, commissives, directives, and expressives—as the core mechanisms through which individuals enact truth, commitment, behavioral guidance, and emotional expression. These linguistic acts are grounded in the assumption that character formation emerges from the integration of moral feeling, moral awareness, and moral knowledge, all of which develop through repeated participation in value-laden encounters (Muadz, 2016). Furthermore, *Sekolah Perjumpaan* conceptualizes learning as collective praxis rather than an individual cognitive process. Learning occurs within a community where members remind one another of shared values, monitor emotional responses (*emotioning*), and use language (*languaging*) to foster openness, tolerance, and mutual acceptance. This relational learning environment is hypothesized to strengthen students' motivation, cognitive engagement, and persistence in academic tasks, including reading. Preliminary observations from SMA Negeri 1 Gunung Sari suggest that the implementation of *Sekolah Perjumpaan* has coincided with notable improvements in students' academic performance across several subjects. Yet these claims remain anecdotal and lack systematic empirical verification, especially concerning reading comprehension as a measurable academic outcome.

Therefore, this study aims to address the existing research gap by empirically investigating the effect of *Sekolah Perjumpaan* on students' reading comprehension at SMA Negeri 1 Gunung Sari. By examining whether students taught through this value-based encounter model demonstrate greater improvements in reading comprehension than those who do not receive the intervention, this study contributes to the theoretical integration of cognitive-comprehension models with socio-moral educational frameworks. It also holds practical significance for teachers, school leaders, and language education programs seeking to enhance reading outcomes through instructional models that integrate moral development, relational engagement, and strategic literacy instruction.

Previous research has conceptualized *Sekolah Perjumpaan* as a value-based learning model that treats human encounters as a space for practicing moral commitments through language use. In this framework, *Sekolah Perjumpaan* can be seen as a kind of "driver" that channels learners' beliefs, values, and commitments into concrete academic behaviors, including reading engagement and achievement. Motivation here is both intrinsic—grounded in internalized moral values—and extrinsic—supported by shared commitments and social expectations in the learning community. At SMA Negeri 1 Gunung Sari, preliminary internal observations suggest that the implementation of *Sekolah Perjumpaan* has coincided with improvements in students' scores in several subjects, and school leaders express confidence in its contribution to students' overall development. However, these impressions have not yet been tested systematically, particularly in relation to students' reading comprehension in English.

Several studies have examined *Sekolah Perjumpaan* and related value-based models, but they primarily focus on character formation rather than specific academic skills. Quddus (2021), for instance, analyzed *Perjumpaan School* as a new model of character learning in plural communities and found that it emphasizes the management of mental states and "languaging" to normalize social relations and foster openness, tolerance, and mutual acceptance. Similarly, Embong (2022) explored *Sekolah Perjumpaan* as a framework for developing character education, highlighting three unavoidable forms of human interaction: with God, with others, and with objects, and demonstrating positive changes in students' character at SMA Negeri 1 Gunung Sari through qualitative data from interviews and focus group discussions. Hamid (2021) investigated the value learning model of *Sekolah*

Perjumpaan in Lombok communities, showing that it successfully integrates conceptual moral frameworks with practical implementation in daily encounters. These studies provide strong evidence that *Sekolah Perjumpaan* functions as an effective character and value-learning model, yet they rely mainly on qualitative approaches and do not specifically measure its impact on reading comprehension using experimental or quasi-experimental designs.

Theoretically, *Sekolah Perjumpaan* is defined as a community of individuals who consciously commit to practicing language norms and positive inner states in every encounter (Muadz, 2016, 2017). It is framed as lifelong learning in which each interaction is treated as a "school" for enacting moral values through language actions. Drawing on speech act theory, the model emphasizes four types of language actions—assertives, commissives, directives, and expressives—as vehicles for expressing truth, making commitments, guiding behavior, and articulating feelings. These actions are grounded in three layers of human consciousness: the trans-cognitive relationship between humans and God, the re-cognitive relationship between humans and other humans, and the cognitive relationship between humans and objects (Muadz, 2016, 2017). Good character is seen as emerging from the integration of moral feeling, moral awareness, and moral knowledge, all of which are continually practiced in daily encounters. In educational settings, this framework is expected to shape how students engage emotionally and linguistically with learning tasks, including reading.

Within the broader reading literature, comprehension is understood as a multifaceted process involving word recognition, fluency, strategic processing, and motivation, all shaped by readers' prior knowledge and sociocultural context (Anderson et al., 1985). Reading is not only a set of technical skills but also a social and cognitive practice in which students actively construct meaning. Researchers distinguish between reading skills—automatic processes such as fluent decoding and efficient syntactic processing—and reading strategies—deliberate, conscious actions used to monitor and regulate comprehension (Afflerbach et al., 2008). Successful readers flexibly combine both, applying strategies such as identifying main ideas, inferring implied meanings, and evaluating arguments while relying on automatized skills to reduce cognitive load (Grabe & Stoller, 2019; Perfetti & Stafura, 2014). Against this theoretical background, *Sekolah Perjumpaan* is plausibly positioned as an instructional environment that can support reading comprehension by strengthening students' motivation, sense of responsibility, and quality of language use in a communal setting.

Despite these theoretical links and prior qualitative evidence, there remains a clear empirical gap: little is known about the specific effect of *Sekolah Perjumpaan* on students' reading comprehension in English, particularly when examined through a quantitative, quasi-experimental design. The present study addresses this gap by investigating whether students who learn within the *Sekolah Perjumpaan* framework demonstrate significantly better reading comprehension than those who do not, thus extending earlier character-focused research into the domain of academic literacy outcomes.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach to examine the effect of *Sekolah Perjumpaan* on students' reading comprehension. In line with Creswell (2011), quantitative research involves the use of predetermined instruments, systematic procedures, and statistical analysis to test hypotheses and answer specific research questions. The study adopted a quasi-experimental pretest–posttest control group design. This design is appropriate in educational

settings where intact classes are used and random assignment is not fully feasible (Creswell, 2012). Two classes of Grade XI MIPA students were involved: one class served as the experimental group, receiving reading instruction integrated with the *Sekolah Perjumpaan* model, while the other class served as the control group, receiving conventional reading instruction. Both groups completed a reading comprehension pretest before the intervention and a posttest after the intervention, allowing for comparison of gains between groups.

The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Gunung Sari, West Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara Province, during the 2022/2023 academic year. This school was purposively selected because *Sekolah Perjumpaan* has been introduced and practiced in several classes, providing a natural context for examining its effect on reading comprehension.The population consisted of all Grade XI MIPA students at SMA Negeri 1 Gunung Sari (N = 20). Following Arikunto (2002), when the population is relatively small, it is methodologically acceptable to involve the entire population as the research sample. All 20 students participated in the study and were assigned to either the experimental or control group based on their existing class membership (intact group sampling; Cohen et al., 2007). The study involved two main variables. The independent variable was the instructional model, operationalized as the implementation of *Sekolah Perjumpaan* in reading lessons for the experimental group and conventional instruction for the control group. The dependent variable was students' reading comprehension, measured through their scores on a standardized reading comprehension test.

Data were collected using a reading comprehension test consisting of 10 items designed to assess students' ability to identify main ideas, understand details, infer meaning, and interpret information in short texts. The test was administered as both pretest and posttest. The instrument was adapted to the students' proficiency level and aligned with the senior high school English curriculum. Prior to the main study, the test items were reviewed by English teachers to ensure content validity and clarity, in line with recommendations for test development in educational research (Creswell, 2012).Data collection proceeded in three main stages: pretest, intervention, and posttest. In the **pretest stage**, both the experimental and control groups were given the reading comprehension test under standardized conditions. The pretest scores provided baseline data on students' reading comprehension before the implementation of *Sekolah Perjumpaan*.

In the **intervention stage**, the experimental group received reading instruction explicitly integrated with the *Sekolah Perjumpaan* model. The teacher guided students to form small groups committed to daily or regular reading of short texts, sharing their understanding with peers, and reflecting on the values and language used in the texts. Encounters in the classroom were treated as learning spaces in which students were encouraged to practice positive language actions—such as expressing ideas clearly, responding respectfully to others, and making commitments related to reading tasks— consistent with the *Sekolah Perjumpaan* framework. Meanwhile, the control group received conventional reading instruction, in which the teacher explained the texts, asked comprehension questions, and provided feedback without explicit integration of the *Sekolah Perjumpaan* principles. The duration of the intervention was sufficient to allow repeated practice of the targeted reading behaviors across several meetings. In the **posttest stage**, the same reading comprehension test was re-administered to both groups. The posttest scores were used to determine changes in students' reading comprehension and to compare the gains between the experimental and control groups.

The quantitative data from the pretest and posttest were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were computed to summarize students' reading comprehension scores in each group before and after the intervention. To test the hypothesis regarding the effect of *Sekolah Perjumpaan*, a t-test was employed. A paired-samples t-test was used to examine within-group differences between pretest and posttest scores, and an independent-samples t-test was used to compare the gain scores between the experimental and control groups. All tests were conducted at the 0.05 significance level. This analytical procedure is consistent with standard practices in quasi-experimental research in education (Cohen et al., 2007; Creswell, 2012).

Findings and Discussion

I. Findings

This study investigated the effect of *Sekolah Perjumpaan* on students' reading comprehension by comparing an experimental class taught with the *Sekolah Perjumpaan* model and a control class taught using conventional instruction. Both groups completed a pre-test and a post-test reading comprehension assessment.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the pre-test and post-test scores in both groups.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of reading comprehension scores

Group	Test	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Experimental	Pre-test	20	57.05	7.39	40	67
	Post-test	20	77.80	9.19	60	95
Control	Pre-test	20	52.25	11.53	40	80
	Post-test	20	61.75	16.26	40	90

Students in the **experimental group** showed a substantial increase in their reading comprehension scores, with the mean rising from **57.05** (pre-test) to **77.80** (post-test). The **control group** also improved, but to a lesser extent, from **52.25** to **61.75**.

To highlight the improvement, Table 2 summarizes the gain scores (post-test minus pre-test).

Table 2. Gain scores in reading comprehension

Group	N	Mean Gain	SD Gain
Experimental	20	20.75	8.34
Control	20	9.50	9.98

On average, students in the experimental group gained **20.75 points**, while those in the control group gained **9.50 points**. In practical terms, the experimental group's average improvement is more than **twice** that of the control group.

Inferential Statistics

Assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance were checked and met. Paired-samples t-tests were then used to examine within-group changes, and an independent-samples t-test was used to compare gain scores between groups.

- Within-group improvement
    - Experimental group: the mean gain of **20.75** points was statistically significant (paired t-test, $p < .001$).
    - Control group: the mean gain of **9.50** points was also statistically significant (paired t-test, $p < .001$).

    These results indicate that both types of instruction improved students' reading comprehension, but they do not yet show which approach was more effective.

- Between-group comparison

    An independent-samples t-test on the gain scores showed that the experimental group improved significantly more than the control group, $t(38) \approx 3.87$, $p < .001$. The effect size (Cohen's $d \approx 1.22$) indicates a **large** practical effect of *Sekolah Perjumpaan* on students' reading comprehension.

Taken together, the quantitative analyses suggest that while conventional instruction leads to some improvement, integrating *Sekolah Perjumpaan* into reading lessons produces **substantially greater gains** in reading comprehension.

II. Discussion

The findings demonstrate that the implementation of *Sekolah Perjumpaan* has a significant and meaningful effect on students' reading comprehension at SMA Negeri 1 Gunung Sari. Both the experimental and control groups showed improvement from pre-test to post-test, which is expected as both received ongoing instruction. However, the **magnitude** of improvement in the experimental group was notably higher, indicating that *Sekolah Perjumpaan* adds value beyond regular teaching.

From a theoretical standpoint, these results are consistent with the view that reading is not only a cognitive skill but also a socially and affectively mediated process. Reading comprehension depends on the coordination of decoding, vocabulary, background knowledge, and strategic processing, all of which are influenced by learners' motivation and engagement. The *Sekolah Perjumpaan* model, which emphasizes conscious commitments, positive inner states, and value-laden language use in every encounter, likely enhances students' willingness to engage with texts, to persevere when the text is challenging, and to use language more reflectively in group discussions.

In the experimental class, reading activities were embedded in a communal framework: students read, shared, and reflected on texts within small groups that operated under shared commitments. Such a setting is consistent with research showing that collaborative and value-oriented learning environments can promote deeper processing and sustained motivation, which in turn support reading comprehension gains. The significant difference in gain scores between the experimental and control groups suggests that *Sekolah Perjumpaan* did not

merely improve general classroom climate but had a **direct instructional impact** on how students approached and processed reading tasks. At the same time, the improvement in the control group indicates that conventional reading instruction still contributes positively to students' comprehension. This suggests that *Sekolah Perjumpaan* is best understood not as a replacement for reading instruction, but as a **complementary framework** that enriches and strengthens existing practices by embedding them in a value-based, dialogical, and reflective learning culture.

Finally, these findings extend previous studies on *Sekolah Perjumpaan*, which have largely focused on character formation and social relations, by providing quantitative evidence of its **academic impact**—in this case, on reading comprehension. The results support the claim that value-based, encounter-oriented learning models can play a significant role not only in shaping students' character but also in improving core academic skills.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to investigate the effect of *Sekolah Perjumpaan* on students' reading comprehension at SMA Negeri 1 Gunung Sari. Using a quasi-experimental pretest–posttest design, the research compared the reading gains of students taught with the *Sekolah Perjumpaan* model to those taught through conventional instruction. The findings consistently demonstrate that *Sekolah Perjumpaan* produces a substantially greater improvement in reading comprehension. Students in the experimental group achieved mean gains more than twice those of the control group, and statistical testing confirmed the significance of this difference.

The effectiveness of *Sekolah Perjumpaan* appears to stem from its integration of cognitive, affective, and social elements of learning. By framing each encounter as a space for practicing commitments, values, and positive language actions, the model fosters deeper engagement with texts, encourages collaborative meaning-making, and strengthens learners' strategic approaches to reading. These features align with contemporary theories of reading comprehension, which emphasize that comprehension develops not only through skill acquisition but also through motivation, reflection, and social interaction. Beyond improving test scores, the study highlights the potential of *Sekolah Perjumpaan* to function as a holistic literacy framework that supports both character formation and academic performance. It demonstrates that value-based learning models can meaningfully contribute to the development of core academic skills, bridging the often-separated domains of moral education and cognitive learning.

However, the study has limitations. The sample size was small, drawn from a single school, and the intervention period was relatively short. Further research involving larger and more diverse populations, longer implementation periods, and qualitative explorations of students' learning processes would deepen understanding of how and why *Sekolah Perjumpaan* contributes to reading development.

Despite these constraints, this research provides clear empirical evidence that *Sekolah Perjumpaan* is an effective model for enhancing reading comprehension. Its integrative, value-oriented approach offers a promising alternative pathway for literacy instruction in Indonesian secondary schools, particularly in contexts seeking to harmonize academic achievement with character education.

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