



Premise: Journal of English Education and Applied Linguistics

e-ISSN: 2442-482x, p-ISSN: 2089-3345

<https://fkip.ummetro.ac.id/journal/index.php/english>

DOI: 10.24127/pj.v14i2.12080

COMPARING KWL AND SQ3R MODELS ON ENHANCE JUNIOR HIGHSCHOOL STUDENTNS' READING COMPREHENSION

by

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(Article History Received:07-02-,2025:Review1:23-03:2025,Revised;Revised2:23-05-2025:Accepted:16-06-2025:Publihsed;20-06-2025).

Abstract:

This study examines the comparative effectiveness of the KWL (Know-Want-Learned) and SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review) methods in enhancing reading comprehension among 7th-grade students at SMPN 2 Ngadiluwih. The research was motivated by the lack of consensus on the superiority of both methods and the need to account for classroom dynamics and student motivation, factors often overlooked in prior studies. Participants included 68 students, divided into two groups: an experimental group (KWL) and a control group (SQ3R), with reading comprehension scores as the dependent variable, measured via a 20-item multiple-choice test. The objective was to compare the impact of both methods while identifying external factors such as student engagement and teacher competency. A quasi-experimental design with a pre-test and post-test revealed significant improvements in reading comprehension for both methods. However, no statistical difference was found (p-value = 0.914). Data analysis using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test, homogeneity test, and independent t-test in SPSS 27 confirmed that implementation success was influenced by the classroom environment, such as the presence of peer tutors in the SQ3R group, which fostered a conducive learning atmosphere. The study concludes that the KWL method is suitable for simpler texts with high student motivation. In contrast, the SQ3R method is more effective for in-depth analysis with structured guidance. Practical implications include recommendations for teachers to combine both methods based on student needs, the necessity of research-based reading strategy training, and future exploration of technology integration in pedagogical approaches.

Keywords: KWL, Reading, SQ3R

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini mengangkat topik perbandingan efektivitas metode KWL (Know-Want-Learned) dan SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review) dalam meningkatkan pemahaman membaca siswa SMPN 2 Ngadiluwih, dengan latar belakang belum adanya konsensus tentang keunggulan salah satu

How to cite this article:

Thahrnunu, M. M., Sulistyanto, I., & Muchyidin, M. S. (2025). Comparing KWL and SQ3R models on enhance junior highschool studentns' reading comprehension. *Premise : Journal of English Education and Applied Linguistics*, 14(2), 462–479. <https://doi.org/10.24127/pj.v14i2.12080>

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metode serta pentingnya mempertimbangkan faktor dinamika kelas dan motivasi siswa. Subjek penelitian melibatkan 68 siswa kelas 7 yang dibagi menjadi dua kelompok: kelompok eksperimen (KWL) dan kontrol (SQ3R), dengan variabel terikat berupa skor pemahaman membaca yang diukur melalui tes objektif 20 soal. Tujuan penelitian adalah membandingkan dampak kedua metode sekaligus mengidentifikasi pengaruh faktor eksternal seperti keterlibatan siswa dan kompetensi guru. Desain quasi-experimental dengan pre-test dan post-test menunjukkan bahwa kedua metode secara signifikan meningkatkan pemahaman membaca (KWL: +16.91 poin; SQ3R: +16.03 poin), namun tidak ditemukan perbedaan statistik (p -value = 0.914). Analisis data menggunakan uji normalitas Kolmogorov-Smirnov, homogenitas, dan independent t -test melalui SPSS 27 mengonfirmasi bahwa keberhasilan implementasi lebih dipengaruhi oleh lingkungan kelas, seperti kehadiran peer tutor pada kelompok SQ3R yang mendukung suasana belajar kondusif. Hasil penelitian menyimpulkan bahwa KWL cocok untuk teks sederhana dengan faktor motivasi tinggi, sedangkan SQ3R lebih efektif untuk analisis mendalam dengan struktur terarah. Implikasi praktis mencakup rekomendasi bagi guru untuk mengombinasikan kedua metode sesuai karakteristik siswa, serta perlunya pelatihan strategi membaca berbasis riset dan eksplorasi integrasi teknologi dalam penelitian lanjutan.

Kata kunci: KWL, Membaca, SQ3R

INTRODUCTION

Reading is a fundamental aspect of the education process. The reader employs effective strategies to construct a meaningful representation of the text, thereby enhancing their comprehension of the material. By reading, they can gain a deeper understanding of the subject matter, ultimately leading to more effective learning outcomes. In essence, reading facilitates the acquisition of information and knowledge, which are essential components of the educational process (Zuriah & Mutia, 2023). However, to obtain correct information and increase knowledge, students must comprehend all the important parts of the text they read to understand the content and meaning. The ability to understand texts and interpret the information appropriately and correctly is called reading comprehension.

Proficient reading comprehension enables students to grasp the meaning of texts and fosters critical thinking (Arifin, 2020). As students advance in their education, they are expected to read and write across a wide variety of disciplines with increasing skill, flexibility, and insight. In the domain of reading comprehension, students are expected to demonstrate an ability to comprehend the texts they read. However, a considerable proportion of students have been observed to experience difficulties in this ability. The factors contributing to this phenomenon can be generally classified into several categories, including the level of difficulty in understanding the material, a lack of vocabulary mastery, a lack of baseline knowledge, and a lack of reading motivation. Based on Zulianti & Hastomo (2022),

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Instructors and teachers in the classroom must decide to use appropriate strategies. Teaching and learning activities can be conducted effectively if there are proper strategies in place to help achieve the learning objectives.

Therefore, the KWL chart, a widely used instructional strategy, has been identified as a promising approach for enhancing reading comprehension. The Know-Want-Learned (K-W-L) Chart strategy, proposed by Donna Ogle in 1992, is a three-part approach designed to engage students in the process of knowledge construction and active thinking, promoting the development and enhancement of their skills. The KWL chart guides students through a three-step process of activating prior knowledge, setting learning goals, monitoring and evaluating their comprehension, and extending their thinking beyond the text (Wijaya, 2023). In addition, there is the SQ3R method, which stands for Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review, and was introduced by Francis P. Robinson in 1946. is another proven strategy. By leading students through a methodical procedure that involves scanning the material, formulating questions, reading for comprehension, highlighting important details, and revisiting for reinforcement, this technique promotes active reading. The SQ3R approach enhances understanding, memory, and critical thinking by facilitating multiple interactions with the material (Silfani, 2024).

Previous studies have proven the effectiveness of both methods. For example, Firda Wulan Sudarsono & Astutik (2024) found that the SQ3R method helps students understand texts more systematically. Similar findings were reported by Hilaikal & Ayu (2023), who demonstrated that this approach is highly effective in assessing reading comprehension at the secondary school level. Meanwhile, Katemba & Sihombing (2023) compared the Venn Diagram and KWL strategies, concluding that KWL is superior in facilitating deeper comprehension. Additionally, this finding is supported by Manik et al. (2022), who reaffirmed the effectiveness of SQ3R, particularly in understanding narrative texts. Furthermore, Nair & Said (2020) revealed that using the KWL Chart helps ESL students organize information more effectively, while Sari et al. (2023) found that this method allows students to set more precise learning objectives.

Other studies, such as that of Shintia (2021), examined the combination of Brainstorming and KWL Charts, which proved effective in structuring explanatory texts.

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Similarly, Larasati (2018) states that the SQ3R method can stimulate students' prior knowledge. Finally, Sugiharti et al. (2020) state that SQ3R is an excellent reading method for improving reading comprehension. This reading method is quite suitable for learning purposes. Overall, these studies confirm that both SQ3R and KWL strategies are effective in enhancing reading comprehension, depending on the context and students' needs.

Despite these promising results, current literature reveals a state-of-the-art gap: few studies have directly compared the effectiveness of KWL and SQ3R within the same learning environment. Moreover, prior studies often overlooked variables such as teacher competence, class dynamics, and student engagement, which may influence the effectiveness of reading strategies. This gap highlights the need for a comparative study that also takes into account these contextual variables. To address this, the present study employs a quasi-experimental design, using post-test comparisons between two groups: one taught using the KWL method and the other using the SQ3R method. The dependent variable is students' reading comprehension, assessed via structured post-tests. This study aims to contribute to empirical knowledge and pedagogical application by offering teachers guidance on how to implement these methods in context-sensitive ways. It also enhances the literature by documenting variable control, instruments, and participant sampling with analytical precision. Based on this framework, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. Is there a significant difference between the KWL and SQ3R methods in improving students' reading comprehension?
2. How effective is each strategy (KWL and SQ3R) in enhancing reading comprehension, considering classroom conditions and student engagement?

METHOD

Design

The study employed a quasi-experimental design with a post-test only, which allows the researcher to control certain variables, although not completely randomly. The data was gathered from two groups: a control group and an experimental group. The present study examined two factors. The dependent variable is students' reading comprehension proficiency, while the independent variable is the KWL and SQ3R approach. The control group received

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instruction using SQ3R methods, whereas the experimental group was taught reading comprehension using the KWL chart.

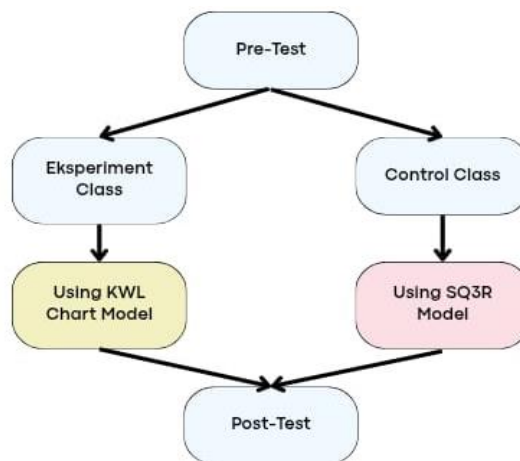


Figure 1. Research design quasi-experimental design

Participant

Students in the 7D and 7E classes at SMPN 2 Ngadiluwih formed the subject of the study. Each class consisted of 34 students, with nearly identical levels of English proficiency. Class 7E served as the control group, whereas Class 7D was the experimental group. Some of them were at the intermediate level, but the majority were at the beginner level. Nonetheless, they all have some fundamental reading abilities that enabled them to read without the researcher's assistance.

Instrument

This study employed a multiple-choice test as the main instrument to assess students' reading comprehension. The test consisted of 20 items that focused on key reading skills, including identifying main ideas, drawing conclusions, locating specific information, and understanding vocabulary, particularly adjectives, within descriptive texts. The items were developed in accordance with the curriculum indicators. They were explicitly designed to align with the characteristics of descriptive reading passages used in both treatment and control groups. To ensure the instrument's validity, face validity was first examined by two expert lecturers from Universitas Islam Kadiri. In addition to expert judgment, the test items underwent empirical validation using IBM SPSS Statistics 27, where validity was measured

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through item-total correlation. Items that did not meet the minimum threshold ($r\text{-count} > r\text{-table}$) were either revised or removed.

Table 1: Validity Test

<i>No.</i>	<i>R-count</i>	<i>R-table</i>	<i>Valid (Pre)</i>	<i>R-count</i>	<i>R-table</i>	<i>Valid (Post)</i>
1	0.683	0.3291	Valid	0.552	0.3291	Valid
2	0.609	0.3291	Valid	0.748	0.3291	Valid
3	0.554	0.3291	Valid	0.516	0.3291	Valid
4	0.435	0.3291	Valid	0.680	0.3291	Valid
5	0.675	0.3291	Valid	0.618	0.3291	Valid
6	0.365	0.3291	Valid	0.523	0.3291	Valid
7	0.542	0.3291	Valid	0.703	0.3291	Valid
8	0.666	0.3291	Valid	0.361	0.3291	Valid
9	0.348	0.3291	Valid	0.622	0.3291	Valid
10	0.501	0.3291	Valid	0.628	0.3291	Valid
11	0.563	0.3291	Valid	0.514	0.3291	Valid
12	0.492	0.3291	Valid	0.740	0.3291	Valid
13	0.374	0.3291	Valid	0.650	0.3291	Valid
14	0.535	0.3291	Valid	0.572	0.3291	Valid
15	0.420	0.3291	Valid	0.636	0.3291	Valid
16	0.597	0.3291	Valid	0.512	0.3291	Valid
17	0.337	0.3291	Valid	0.636	0.3291	Valid
18	0.625	0.3291	Valid	0.361	0.3291	Valid
19	0.601	0.3291	Valid	0.531	0.3291	Valid
20	0.671	0.3291	Valid	0.541	0.3291	Valid

Reliability analysis was also conducted using Cronbach's Alpha to ensure internal consistency. However, before conducting an independent t-test, it is necessary to ensure that the data follows a normal distribution and is homogeneous. Therefore, a normality test and a homogeneity test were performed to ascertain the distribution and homogeneity of the data, respectively.

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Table 2: Normality Test (Kolmogorov-Smirnov)

Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) ^c		.200 ^d	
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed) ^e	Sig.	.725	
	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	.714
		Upper Bound	.737

The data can be considered normal if the p-value is greater than 0.05. The normality test table above demonstrates that the data show the post-test results are normally distributed, which is due to the Asymptotic Distribution. Sig. (2-tailed) is 0.200 and Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed) is 0.725, both of which are higher than 0.05.

Table 3: Homogeneity test

	<i>Sig.</i>
<i>Based on Mean</i>	.856
<i>Based on Median</i>	.857
<i>Based on Median and with adjusted df</i>	.857
<i>Based on the trimmed mean</i>	.921

As with the normality test, data can be considered homogeneous if the significance value is greater than 0.05. As demonstrated in the table above, all the significance values are higher than 0.05, indicating that the data is homogeneous.

Data collection technique

A three-step process was employed to collect data: (1) A pre-test was conducted prior to the implementation of the actions to assess students' baseline comprehension levels. The test consisted of 20 multiple-choice questions, designed to measure various aspects of reading, including main ideas, details, and vocabulary. The pre-test was conducted in a single session lasting 60 minutes; (2) The treatment was put into practice, with the experimental group receiving instruction using the KWL Chart and the control group the SQ3R method for 2 weeks, with two sessions per week. Each session lasted 90 minutes and included guided practice, group discussion, and individual exercise to reinforce comprehension skill; and (3) a Post-test was conducted to evaluate learning outcomes following the treatment's completion.

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This test mirrored the pre-test in structure and difficulty level, consisting of the same 30 questions. The session was conducted over 60 minutes, allowing for a direct comparison of performance before and after the intervention.

Data analysis technique

The study utilized IBM SPSS 27 for both inferential and descriptive statistical analyses to assess the efficacy of each reading strategy. The data obtained from the pre-test and post-test consisted of students' reading comprehension scores, measured on a numerical scale. The pre-test scores served as baseline data to determine students' initial reading comprehension levels before the treatment. In contrast, the post-test scores reflected their progress after receiving treatment. To ensure that the data met the statistical assumptions, homogeneity and normality tests (Kolmogorov-Smirnov test) were conducted. After confirming normality, an independent sample t-test was employed to compare the mean post-test scores of the experimental and control groups, assessing the effectiveness of the two reading strategies. This test is used to compare the means of two independent groups and determine whether there is statistical evidence that the associated population means are significantly different. The formula for the Independent t-test is:

$$t = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{\sqrt{\frac{s_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{s_2^2}{n_2}}}$$

Where:

- \bar{X}_1, \bar{X}_2 are the sample means
- s_1^2, s_2^2 are the sample variances
- n_1, n_2 are the sample sizes

The hypotheses tested in this study were as follows:

1. Null Hypothesis (Ho): There is no significant difference in reading comprehension improvement between students using the KWL Chart strategy and those using the SQ3R method.

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2. Alternative Hypothesis (Ha): There is a significant difference in reading comprehension improvement between students using the KWL Chart strategy and those using the SQ3R method.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Finding

The study revealed that KWL and SQ3R improved students' reading comprehension. At the beginning of the research, the experimental class and the control class had the same ability and enthusiasm. There were a few students who had relatively good reading skills, but most of them had low skills. The reason for this was that they had only learned the English Language in junior high school, which was due to a change in the curriculum. They had no basic English skills, low motivation to read, and low vocabulary. The pre-test results show that the average score of the control class is 64.12, and the average score of the experimental class is 62.94.

After the researcher and teacher provided treatment in each class, the researcher conducted a post-test, which was then analyzed using an independent t-test. Since the independent t-test requirements have been fulfilled, the researchers conducted an independent sample t-test, the results of which are as follows

Table 4: Mean of classes

<i>Class</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Pre-Test (Mean)</i>	<i>Post-Test (Mean)</i>
<i>Class D (Eksperimen)</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>62.94</i>	<i>79.85</i>
<i>Class E (Control)</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>64.12</i>	<i>80.15</i>

Based on the table above, the post-test results indicate an improvement in both groups compared to the pre-test. The average of the two classes increased. The average of the control class increased by 16.03 points to 80.15. In comparison, the average of the experimental class increased by 16.91 points to 79.85. It demonstrates that both methods are effective in enhancing reading comprehension. Nevertheless, to compare the two methods, researchers used an independent sample t-test; here are the results:

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Table 5: Independent T-Test

Equal variance assumed	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
	66	.914	-.294	2.711	-5.708	5.119

Based on the table above, the value of Sig. (2-tailed) is 0.914, which is greater than 0.05. This indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between the post-test results of the two groups. In hypothesis testing, a significance value greater than 0.05 means that the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. Therefore, both the KWL and SQ3R strategies yielded comparable outcomes in terms of improving students' reading comprehension. However, as shown in Table 1, there is a slight difference in the mean scores, with the control group scoring 0.3 points higher than the experimental group. Although this difference is not statistically significant, it may still hold practical relevance depending on the classroom context and instructional implementation.

Discussion

This study aimed to investigate the comparative and individual effectiveness of the KWL Chart and SQ3R strategies in enhancing students' reading comprehension. Addressing the first research question, which focused on whether there is a significant difference between the two methods, the results indicate that although both groups experienced improvement, the difference was not statistically significant (Sig. = 0.914). Nonetheless, the descriptive data show that students in the SQ3R group scored marginally higher on average in the post-test. This suggests that while no method statistically outperformed the other, contextual classroom factors may have influenced learning gains.

Supporting these findings, prior studies have emphasized the strengths of each method. (Firda Wulan Sudarsono & Astutik, 2024) Moreover, Hilaikal and Ayu (2023) found that SQ3R enhances students' structured reading skills. (Katemba & Sihombing, 2023), (Nair & Said, 2020), and (Sari et al., 2023) demonstrated the value of KWL in promoting goal-setting and metacognitive awareness. Meanwhile, Shintia (2021) demonstrated the effectiveness of KWL when combined with other strategies, particularly in ESL settings.

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To answer the second research question on the effectiveness of each strategy individually, the data showed that both KWL and SQ3R had a positive impact on reading comprehension, as indicated by improved post-test scores. The KWL strategy helped students identify main ideas and organize information logically, consistent with its design to activate prior knowledge and facilitate goal-setting. Meanwhile, the structured phases of the SQ3R method encouraged deeper engagement with the text, leading to improved retention.

A closer look at the slight advantage in the SQ3R group reveals contributing factors. The control group was taught by an experienced teacher and supported by peer tutors. In contrast, the KWL group was led by the researcher, who had limited teaching experience. This aligns with the findings of Sutresna & Wijayanti (2021) and Suhendri (2022), who emphasized the positive impact of peer tutoring on learning outcomes. Additionally, the teacher in the SQ3R class was more experienced and had known the students for a longer period, allowing for more effective instructional delivery. (Suhartini et al., 2021) highlighted that teacher competence plays a crucial role in facilitating student learning, which may explain why the SQ3R class performed slightly better in this study. Conversely, the KWL class was characterized by high enthusiasm but also frequent distractions. While many students actively asked questions, some disruptions led to a less conducive learning environment. (Fathmawati et al., 2016) stated that classroom environment significantly affects student motivation and comprehension, which supports the idea that these distractions may have hindered the full potential of the KWL Chart method. These findings suggest that the instructional context, particularly teacher experience, peer support, and classroom environment, may serve as moderating variables that influence the effectiveness of each strategy.

Although the instructional method was the primary focus of comparison, the slightly higher performance of the SQ3R group indicates that pedagogical outcomes are not determined solely by strategy choice but also by how well the strategy is supported by classroom conditions. Moreover, the findings offer opportunities for a deeper interpretation of the suitability of each strategy for different learner profiles and contexts. Given that the SQ3R group showed slightly higher average gains, despite the lack of statistical significance, it raises the question of whether SQ3R is particularly beneficial for students with lower

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academic backgrounds or those who require more structured scaffolding (McLaughlin, 2012). The five-step format of SQ3R may help struggling readers process information more clearly and retain it longer, aligning with Robinson's emphasis on sequential cognitive engagement. On the other hand, the KWL strategy, with its reflective and goal-setting nature, may be more effective in multimedia or digital learning environments where students are encouraged to explore content interactively (Mak, 2011). For example, KWL could be integrated with digital platforms, where students input what they know, generate questions, and document what they have learned in real-time. It could make the strategy more engaging and accessible for learners who are already familiar with digital tools.

Theoretically, the findings align with Ogle's constructivist learning framework, in which students build knowledge through active engagement, and Robinson's cognitive processing model, which relies on repeated and structured interaction with reading materials. The balance between theory and instructional delivery highlights the need for adapting strategies to classroom realities.

Despite the study's strengths, limitations exist. The two-week treatment period, with only four sessions, may have been insufficient to demonstrate significant long-term impacts. The lack of instructor parity across groups may have introduced bias. Furthermore, uncontrolled variables such as classroom motivation, prior knowledge, and peer dynamics may have affected the outcomes. Future research should consider longer durations, diverse participant profiles, and the inclusion of multiple instructors to control these variables.

In conclusion, although no significant statistical difference was found, both strategies demonstrated pedagogical merit. KWL fosters self-directed learning, while SQ3R provides a structured approach that supports comprehension. From a practical standpoint, these findings suggest that educators do not necessarily need to choose between the KWL and SQ3R approaches. Instead, the two strategies can be integrated within a thematic or project-based learning curriculum. For instance, a lesson might begin with a KWL chart to activate students' prior knowledge and set learning goals, followed by the application of the SQ3R method during the reading activity to guide information processing and retention. At the end of the lesson, students could return to their KWL chart to reflect on what they have learned and how it connects with their original questions. This integration allows for both metacognitive

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awareness and structured reading practice, accommodating diverse student needs and preferences. The effectiveness of each is closely tied to learner profiles and classroom conditions. This study not only contributes empirical evidence on strategy implementation but also offers practical insights for educators in adapting methods to fit their teaching contexts.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that there is no significant difference in reading comprehension improvement between students using the KWL Chart strategy and those using the SQ3R method, as evidenced by the hypothesis test failing to reject the null hypothesis (H_0). However, descriptive analysis shows that students taught using the SQ3R method scored an average of 0.3 points higher on the post-test compared to those using the KWL Chart strategy. Although the alternative hypothesis (H_a), which suggests a significant difference, was not statistically proven, other factors may have influenced the results, such as students' learning motivation, classroom environment, peer tutors, and teacher competence. However, this study effectively demonstrates how the KWL Chart and SQ3R approaches both considerably increase students' reading comprehension abilities, as seen by the gains in post-test results. Both strategies improved student involvement and understanding, although the findings revealed no significant difference between the two techniques, with the control group performing slightly better than the experimental group. Although the SQ3R method's organized approach promotes increased comprehension and retention, the KWL Chart provides a simple framework that helps students to create reading goals and concentrate on pertinent material. The implementation difficulties mentioned suggest that teachers should consider these factors when selecting teaching methods. Ultimately, combining the two approaches could provide a more comprehensive strategy for reading improvement.

Limitation

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the use of a quantitative research method allows for statistical analysis of the data. However, it does not capture students' perspectives and experiences in depth. Future studies should incorporate

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qualitative methods, such as interviews or observations, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of students' learning experiences. Second, the research was constrained by a limited timeframe, which may have affected the depth of data collection and analysis. A more extended study period, such as classroom action research, could provide more robust insights into the effectiveness of different reading comprehension strategies. Lastly, the researcher faced challenges in controlling external factors such as classroom conditions, student motivation, and teacher influence, which might have impacted the results. Future research should consider strategies to minimize these external variables, ensuring a more accurate evaluation of the learning methods.

Implication

The findings of this study have several important implications for educational practice, policy, and future research. Although the statistical analysis did not show a significant difference between the KWL Chart and SQ3R methods, the slight advantage observed in the SQ3R group suggests that specific instructional strategies may enhance reading comprehension more effectively in specific contexts. Educators and curriculum designers should consider incorporating both methods while taking into account student learning preferences and classroom dynamics. Additionally, this study emphasizes the importance of a more integrated approach to teaching reading comprehension, where quantitative results are complemented by qualitative insights to enhance understanding of student engagement and learning experiences. For future research, it is recommended to explore the long-term effects of these strategies, such as classroom action research, and investigate their impact across different proficiency levels. It should ensure that researchers possess the appropriate abilities and knowledge to implement learning strategies effectively.

Additionally, incorporating qualitative approaches can provide deeper insights into student motivation and perception. Schools and instructors should employ these two strategies more frequently, as they are highly effective in enhancing students' reading abilities. They may also utilize other media, such as images and smart whiteboards, to capture students' interest. By addressing these areas, future studies can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of effective reading comprehension strategies in educational settings.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author would like to express sincere gratitude to all those who supported the completion of this study. Special thanks go to the English Education Study Program of Universitas Islam Kadiri for providing academic guidance and institutional support throughout the research process. Deep appreciation is extended to the lecturers and peer reviewers who offered valuable feedback and insights, which significantly improved the quality of this paper. The author is also thankful to the teachers and students who participated in this study for their time, cooperation, and willingness to engage in the learning activities. The author would also like to humbly acknowledge her own perseverance and commitment in completing this research. The process has been a valuable journey of academic growth and personal development. Lastly, I would like to thank my family and friends for their continuous encouragement and motivation throughout this journey.

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