Examining graphic organizer for meaningful reading of EFL learners

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Abstract

This study applied experimental research with a quantitative approach investigating the effects of graphic organizer (GO) to elevate reading comprehension of EFL learners with excellent and poor reading habits. The study involved EFL learners from Universitas Duta Bangsa Surakarta in Indonesia. Two classes were chosen to be the samples; the control group and the experimental group. Data collection was carried out by tests (both pre-tests and post-tests). The analysis of statistics was addressed to determine the mean, frequency, total score, standard deviation, and percentage. The values of pre-test for the experimental group with excellent reading habits and poor reading habits were 55.17 and 43.4, while the post-test values of the experimental group with excellent reading habit showed 79.88 and 61.23 for the poor reading habit. The average scores revealed that the experimental group, taught by using the GO strategy, performed better than the control group received conventional way. Thus, it could be considered that the GO strategy necessarily enhanced learners' reading comprehension. It was illustrated in the average score of 75.64 from the experimental group compared to the average score of the control group was 62.44. The mean value in the group treated with GO was higher than that in the group with conventional way. The value of t-test was 4.241, with a 2-tailed significance of 0.001. Thus, it is advisable that the GO strategy can be incorporated in teaching reading of EFL learners to accelerate their reading comprehension.

Keywords: Graphic organizer; reading comprehension; reading habits

INTRODUCTION

The pedagogy of English as a foreign language (EFL) reading instruction has historically posed significant challenges, owing to the multifaceted nature of literacy acquisition. The act of reading serves as a pivotal conduit for accessing and assimilating information, thereby standing as an eminent vehicle for knowledge dissemination. Notwithstanding its undeniable efficacy, the epistemological implications of information gleaned through the reading process remain a subject of fervent scholarly discourse and contention (Woudenberg, 2021). Reading requires a lot more than just a cursory glance; it is needed to understand what is being read. Pais (2020) defines that reading encompasses the cognitive processes of comprehension, lexical acquisition, and semantic contextualization, whereby individuals engage in the assimilation of textual content to derive novel linguistic

constructs and refine their understanding of terminological usage. Put differently, the act of reading necessitates an earnest commitment to apprehend the communicated ideas, thereby facilitating the acquisition of fresh insights and cognitive expansion.

Reading is a useful tool to understand the world and new knowledge extracted from the written textual materials. As students engage with textual prompts, they are enabled to formulate apt responses congruent with the evaluative parameters delineated therein. As pupils read more, they will discover novel words (Munawir & Ramli, 2021). Put succinctly, the act of reading facilitates the augmentation of learners' lexical repertoire. Diarani and Syamsi (2019) similarly posited that sustained engagement in reading endeavors engenders enhancement in an individual's lexical proficiency. Knowing a variety of words will increase the readers' understanding, particularly for learners who are currently in the process of learning and processing information from particular texts.

Despite the fact that all of the information is given in the text, EFL learners often struggle to understand it. it catalyses discursive engagement and critical inquiry among students concerning the semantic nuances and interpretative dimensions of a given text, as well as scrutinize the material for a better understanding. Reading comprehension is viewed as challenging for EFL learners due to elements that necessitate rigorous practices in grasping lexical repertoires, textual configurations, and grammatical conventions and so on. Moreover, the reading class pedagogical approach has been conventional, failing to help EFL learners comprehend English texts. Thus, novel and appealing tactics are required to help EFL students comprehend their meaningful understanding of reading comprehension.

Reading proficiency is an important part of language learning. According to Harmer (2007), reading helps with language acquisition. Reading constitutes a fundamental facet of the tetrad of language competencies, necessitating the extraction and assimilation of copious information and significance from written textual materials. Such engagement affords the reader the agency to delineate the purpose underlying their textual encounter. Paramount among the objectives inherent in the act of reading is the cultivation of comprehension, commonly construed as the cognitive synthesis of coherence and significance.

Moreover, reading denotes the capacity to derive significance from printed text and adeptly construe the conveyed information, as articulated by Grabe and Stoller (2002). Chotimah & Rukmini (2017) likewise state that reading is also regarded as an interactive and intellectual action in which written symbols undergo semantic transfiguration to convey specific communicative intent between the authorial agent and the recipient reader. Reading entails a fluid cognitive operation wherein readers amalgamate textual input with their preexisting background knowledge to engender the construction of semantic significance, thereby aspiring toward comprehension as the ultimate objective. (Nunan, 2003; Rosyita & Faridi, 2017).

Within the domain of linguistics, a text denotes any oral or written discourse spanning varied lengths, which serves to engender a unified and coherent entity (Halliday & Hasan, 1976). The text, whether articulated orally or inscribed in written form, embodies a multifaceted construct comprising discernible elements conducive to acquisition and comprehension. Such elements encompass syntactic, lexical, grammatical, morphological, phonological, and semantic components, alongside supplementary informational facets. These textual entities commonly serve as integral components within

the framework of instructional settings, particularly in the context of pedagogical interventions aimed at fostering reading proficiency.

Educational endeavors focused on reading instruction may evoke both stimulating and challenging, especially when directed towards English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners lacking robust reading proclivities. The pedagogical undertaking of teaching reading manifests as a multifaceted endeavor, encompassing the cultivation of decoding proficiencies, fluency attainment, and the cultivation of reading comprehension acumen. Reading instruction serves as a cornerstone for the cultivation of cognitive processes integral to synthesis and discerning evaluation.

Reading is characterized as an interactive engagement between the reader and the textual material, imbued with significance and necessitating active involvement from readers who harbor specific objectives to accomplish during the reading process (Koda, 2005). In succinct terms, the goal of teaching reading is to improve reading comprehension. The more the reader interact with the text, the more his habit of reading is created.

Habits are behaviours that people repeat on a regular basis. A habit denotes a recurrent action executed on a daily basis without conscious deliberation, typically enacted promptly (Duhigg, 2012), and the practice was constant, often repeated continually, and resulted in efficacy (Simamora, 2015). People assist desired behaviour by developing favourable habits and then acting on them (Wood, 2017). Consequently, if reading behavior epitomizes a facet of students' habitual practices, it ensures that their reading habits will inadvertently integrate into their individual personalities (Simamora, 2015).

As earlier stated, reading delineates the cognitive endeavor of acquiring knowledge and details through the comprehension of individual word meanings, as well as habitual behaviors, that are acts performed on a regular basis that generate an effect comparable to reading habits. Reading habits are competencies that are deliberately performed in order to extract both significance and knowledge from the topics being read (Kumara & Sampath, 2018). This underscores the fact that pupils who have reading habits reveal that they will generate something as a result of the behaviors that are frequently carried out when reading. As consequence, persons with reading habits may benefit from and apply them.

Furthermore, students with excellent habits of reading can respond to queries with greater ease than students who are not used to reading (Owusu-Acheaw & Larson, 2014). Thus, when pupils become accustomed to reading, they will be able to comprehend both the words and their meanings. Understanding words is useful for aiding students in their comprehension process. In order to assimilate the information presented in the reading text, a learner must distinguish each word individually (Harianto, 2020). It demonstrates that using known words can assist learners to absorb more easily of what is being read. Word recognition, furthermore, allows children to connect words word by word, clarifying and strengthening their grasp of what they read (Adams, 2010). This underlines that learners employing phrase or word rehearsal during reading engage in one of the strategies for word recognition. Thus, the procedure of word recognition constitutes an instrument and talent for readers during reading comprehension (Schadler & Thissen, 1981).

The NAEP has identified at least four levels of reading comprehension as highlighted by Hibbard and Wagner (2003). The primary tier, denoted as Initial Understanding (IU), entails the student's ability to recapitulate factual content extracted from both fictional and non-fictional textual sources. Subsequently, the subsequent stage involves Developing an Interpretation (DI). To cultivate interpretive skills, students are prompted to engage in a heightened level of analysis, scrutinizing content derived from either a singular narrative or a segment of nonfictional discourse through a lens of elevated cognitive complexity. The subsequent tier, Making Connections (MC), mandates the application of advanced cognitive faculties, compelling students to synthesize textual information and interrelate it with personal experiences (text-to-self), societal contexts (text-to-world), and/or content from disparate textual sources. The fourth tier, Critical Stance (CS), necessitates that students undertaking fictional analysis critically evaluate the efficacy of the author's narrative or the illustrator's visual contributions in rendering a narrative cogent and impactful. For instance, students may be tasked with evaluating the author's adeptness in employing descriptive language to delineate plot dynamics, substantiating assertions with textual evidence. Conversely, within nonfictional contexts, students are tasked with assessing the credibility and relevance of informational sources, evaluating whether the content aligns with the intended subject matter, is factually accurate, authored by a qualified individual, and maintains objectivity.

Nevertheless, numerous EFL students still struggle with text comprehension and task completion, particularly when faced with complex and lengthy sections. They particularly struggle with reading while dealing with a text's central issue, discovering supporting facts, identifying terms with comparable meanings, and occasionally drawing conclusions. Thus, EFL students require ingenuity in reading class in the form of engaging, practical, and effective approaches, or strategies for quickly absorbing reading material. Graphic Organizer (GO) is another exciting alternative strategy for teaching reading comprehension in this modern time that is claimed and demonstrated to help EFL learners acquire a better understanding of the subject.

GO is a teaching approach that uses images to help readers connect and comprehend complex information. The graphical representations utilized in graphic organizer (GO) often adopt geometric forms such as boxes, circles, and squares, systematically arranged to illustrate the interrelation between individual words, phrases, and successive paragraphs. Complementary directional indicators, typically depicted as arrows, serve to delineate the interconnectedness of informational components and elucidate the logical progression of information within the organizer. Observing GO in its textual application is analogous to seeing a map with images and information added to it. As a result, it can assist learners understand a particular reading content more easily. The ensuing are antecedent investigations examining the impact of graphic organizer (GO) on reading comprehension.

Heidarifard (2014) conducted the investigation scrutinized the impact of graphic organizers (GOs) on the reading comprehension and critical thinking proficiencies of second-grade Iranian high school students enrolled in general education courses. The research encompassed a cohort of 80 female participants and adopted a quantitative research design. Within the experimental group, students underwent assessment via a critical thinking questionnaire to gauge the extent to which the utilization of GO contributed to the enhancement of their critical thinking capacities. The results showed that teaching GO elevated comprehension of texts. Nevertheless, The predictive capacity of

critical thinking proficiency did not attain statistical significance, while a notable enhancement in participants' reading comprehension proficiency ensued consequent to reading instruction integrating graphic organizers (GOs)..

Hernández-Chérrez et al. (2020) undertook a parallel inquiry investigating the efficacy of graphic organizers (GOs) in augmenting reading comprehension proficiency among students enrolled at Unidad Educativa Joaquin Lalama in Ambato, Ecuador. The study cohort comprised 40 control participants and 35 experimental counterparts. Employing visual aids such as images, students were facilitated in generating linguistic data or logogens, thereby encoding information both visually and linguistically. This approach facilitated information assimilation and retention while manifesting a noteworthy augmentation in receptive skills encompassing listening acumen and focus, alongside advancements in reading comprehension and learning capabilities, including decoding proficiency and terminological comprehension coupled with the integration of pre-existing knowledge. Additionally, the utilization of GOs was found to foster the cultivation of essential cognitive faculties and bolster student motivation through the expansion of vocabulary knowledge and enhancement of text comprehension.

Rahat et al. (2020) expanded their investigation to explore the effects of graphic organizers (GOs) on the reading comprehension abilities of intermediate-level English learners and examined their attitudes toward the utilization of these visual aids. The study encompassed forty intermediate-level students, with twenty participants assigned to the experimental group receiving GO intervention, while the remaining twenty students in the control group received instruction via conventional methodologies. Findings indicated that the implementation of GOs contributed to enhancements in English reading comprehension among pupils, advocating for their integration as pedagogical tools. Specific types of GOs, such as tree diagrams and brainstorming, demonstrated utility as pre-reading activities, whereas event chains and character maps proved highly beneficial during reading, and plot maps and thematic maps emerged as advantageous post-reading aids. The employment of visual organizers facilitated the identification of key concepts and the extraction of textual gist. Students perceived the utilization of GOs as notably engaging, particularly appreciating their efficacy in streamlining grammatical complexities within English as a Foreign Language (EFL) texts by filtering out extraneous information, alongside their efficacy in facilitating vocabulary acquisition, often likened to engaging in enjoyable gaming activities.

Furthermore, Salazar-Rodríguez (2020) assessed the efficacy of graphic organizers (GOs) in enhancing text comprehension within a scholastic context, employing a quantitative, quasi-experimental research design. The findings indicate a discernible enhancement in overall text comprehension attributable to the implementation of GOs. However, notable disparities in scores are evident when juxtaposed with comprehension levels at the literal level. While findings suggest a modest improvement in inferential comprehension, it remains uncertain whether GOs significantly facilitate inferential reasoning processes, particularly in critical construction. Their primary utility appears to reside in augmenting literal comprehension processes. Nonetheless, it is recommended that further investigation be undertaken at an advanced educational tier utilizing more complex assessments to surmount the identified limitations.

López and López (2022) delineate the effectiveness of employing graphic organizers (GOs) as a means to augment reading comprehension among second-language English

learners. The study encompassed 25 university students specializing in Language and Literature, who exhibited challenges in comprehending narrative text intricacies. Employing quantitative methodologies, including pre- and post-tests, rubrics, surveys, and a checklist, facilitated the evaluation of students' progress and advancement. The checklist served as a guiding framework for students to integrate requisite elements into their assignments. Findings revealed a notable enhancement in students' reading comprehension, with a 54% improvement evident in post-test scores. Additionally, students expressed satisfaction with the implementation of this methodology, advocating for its application across various academic disciplines.

Previous academics have explored the significances of GO strategies on comprehension of reading text, critical thinking skills, and academic performance. However, no research has been conducted to investigate the effects of GO strategies on understanding the reading texts for learners of EFL with varying reading habits, despite the fact that reading habits might also play a crucial role. Thus, this study intends to broaden the practice of GO strategy to improve reading comprehension for EFL learners with excellent and poor reading habits.

METHOD
This research was experimental design with a quantitative approach which aimed to demonstrate the effects of GO to elevate the comprehension of reading textual written materials for EFL learners with excellent and poor reading habits. Quantitative descriptive approach was applied due to the numerical statistical measurement and data analyses. The purpose of descriptive design is to gain knowledge about the views of individuals, actions, and demographics (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, education) (Johnson & Christensen, 2010). Purposive sampling was applied to get the participants as the sample. The samples were classified in groups of excellent reading habits and poor reading habits.

The study comprised EFL learners at Universitas Duta Bangsa Surakarta in Indonesia, 25 EFL learners belonged to experimental group and 24 for control group. There were two groups researched in study that the first was control group received conventional way of teaching reading text and the second was the experimental group with GO strategy to improve EFL learners' reading comprehension. Pretest was administered in both groups before the treatments were carried out. After the treatments, both groups were given posts to see the outcomes resulted from the two strategies. The data were subjected to analysis using the T-Test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
This study aimed to assess the efficacy of graphic organizers (GO) as opposed to traditional methods in instructing reading comprehension to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners exhibiting diverse reading habitual activities. This study encompassed two distinct groups: the experimental cohort utilized graphic organizers (GO), while the control cohort used conventional strategies to improve their reading comprehension.

The research consisted of four major activities. The stages were try-out, pretest, treatment, and post-test. The treatment was administered after the pretest section. The researcher employed the GO technique to teach reading comprehension in the experimental cohort, while the control cohort received traditional instruction. However,

before administering the pretest, the researcher split each class according to students' reading tendencies. Students were classified into excellent and poor reading habits.

In the experimental group, 16 (sixteen) EFL students were classed as having excellent reading habits, while 9 (nine) had poor reading habits while in the control group 14 (fourteen) had excellent reading habit and 10 (ten) had poor reading habits. The GO strategy was utilized groups of students with excellent and poor reading habits. In the pretest, the learners with excellent reading habits who received the instruction of reading comprehension by using GO had a mean score of 55.17, and in the posttest, it was 79.88. These findings denote effective examination performance, as evidenced by the significant enhancement observed between pretest and posttest scores, indicative of the utility of the GO technique in augmenting reading comprehension among students characterized by excellent reading habits.

Furthermore, in the pretest, students characterized by deficient reading habits, instructed in reading comprehension through the application of graphic organizers (GO), attained a mean score of 43.41, which increased to 61.23 in the post-test, suggestive of commendable performance on the examination, as discerned from the notable elevation in post-test scores relative to the pretest. Thus, the efficacy of the GO technique is successful in improving learners' reading comprehension who have poor reading habits.

In the control group, students with excellent reading habits who received conventional way of teaching reading had a mean score of 44.20 in the pretest, and in the posttest, it was 48.23. it means that conventional way has no significance to improve EFL learners' reading comprehension. Furthermore, the mean performance outcome among students characterized by poor reading habits receiving conventional way of teaching reading comprehension was 35.34, and the mean post-test score amounted to 40.10, denoting inadequate textual comprehension among the students.

In the experimental group, students entered information from the text into GO provided to them. They were also instructed to discover the text's signal words and write them in the GO. In the experimental group, different reading comprehension tactics described by Brown (2001) were employed to teach reading class using GO. First, the students were directed to focus on discourse markers, thereafter utilizing semantic mapping or clustering techniques to enhance reading comprehension and impose structure upon the inherent informational complexity encountered within textual content. Subsequently, they transcribed the cue words and pertinent information for incorporation into the graphic organizer (GO). The EFL learners were enthusiastic due to the new insights of how to comprehend reading text is given to them.

Furthermore, the GO technique improved EFL learners' reading comprehension. They demonstrated an improved comprehension of the linkages and relationships between facts, information, and words from the texts they were studying. This method also serves to awaken students' past knowledge of a certain text and to depict the structural framework of a reading passage through the schematic representation of key vocabulary. When students viewed the texts, they remembered what types of texts they were reading because of the GO they had learnt for them, and they identified the text structures. It indicates that the GO technique allows students to produce a strong visual representation of the connections and interactions between facts, information, and terminology. As a result, the GO technique helps students understand the texts more easily and foster the expansion of linguistic data or logogens in a manner that enables dual

coding: both visually and linguistically of which benefit leaners to process and remember content (Hernández-Chérrez et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrated that the use of GO is helpful in teaching the reading comprehension on EFL learners characterized by excellent and poor reading habits. This is corroborated by the results of the pre-test and post-test, which show that EFL learners' reading comprehension improved significantly. During the GO treatments in the experimental group, the EFL students were very passionate and delighted when studying reading comprehension using GO. Many of them asked about signal words and how they function to determine the relationship and concept of paragraphs in the text.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

Author 1: Conceptualization, Methodology, Data Collection and Analysis, and Writing; **Author 2:** Instrument Validation, Theoretical Analysis, and Reviewing

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