

EXAMINING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FIX-UP STRATEGY IN ENHANCING JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION

Aqilah Chanda^{1*}, Mochtar Marhum², Andi Patmasari³, Afrillia Anggreni⁴
^{1,2,3,4}Universitas Tadulako, Palu, Indonesia

*aqilahchanda12@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effectiveness of the Fix-Up Strategy in improving reading comprehension among eighth-grade EFL learners. Reading comprehension remains a persistent challenge for many students due to limited vocabulary, difficulties in understanding sentence structures, and inadequate strategic awareness during reading. While previous studies have reported the effectiveness of the Fix-Up Strategy, limited attention has been given to its structured implementation among Indonesian junior high school EFL learners. Therefore, this study examined the effectiveness of a systematic five-step Fix-Up Strategy in enhancing students' reading comprehension achievement. This study employed a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest control group design involving 54 eighth-grade students from a public junior high school in Indonesia, divided equally into experimental and control groups. Data were collected through reading comprehension tests and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics through SPSS. The findings revealed a substantial improvement in the experimental group, with the mean score increasing from 45.07 to 74.85, while the control group showed only a modest increase from 39.41 to 45.48. The Mann-Whitney U test further confirmed a statistically significant difference between groups ($p = .000$). These findings indicate that the structured Fix-Up Strategy effectively enhances students' reading comprehension and offers practical pedagogical guidance for EFL teachers in promoting more active and metacognitive reading practices in junior high school classrooms.

Keywords: EFL learners, Fix-Up Strategy, Metacognitive Strategy, Quasi-Experimental Study, Reading Comprehension

INTRODUCTION

Reading is widely recognized as one of the most essential language skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning because it enables learners to acquire information, develop language competence, enrich vocabulary, and construct knowledge from written texts. In educational settings, reading serves not only as a receptive skill but also as a cognitive process that supports academic achievement across disciplines. Students with strong reading comprehension skills are more capable of identifying key ideas, interpreting meanings, making inferences, and critically engaging with texts. However, reading

comprehension is not merely a matter of decoding words; rather, it involves complex cognitive and metacognitive processes that require learners to actively construct meaning while monitoring their understanding throughout the reading process (Snow, 2002; Grabe & Stoller, 2019). In EFL contexts, where students are often exposed to limited English input outside the classroom, reading becomes increasingly important because it provides broader opportunities for language exposure and academic development (Duke et al., 2021; Elleman & Oslund, 2019).

Despite its importance, reading comprehension remains one of the most challenging skills for EFL learners, particularly at the junior high school level. Many students encounter difficulties in understanding texts due to limited vocabulary mastery, inadequate grammatical knowledge, unfamiliar sentence structures, and low reading motivation. In many cases, students tend to stop reading when they encounter unfamiliar words or difficult passages because they lack appropriate strategies to repair comprehension breakdowns. Such problems indicate that students frequently struggle not only with linguistic knowledge but also with strategic reading processes. Previous studies have highlighted that reading difficulties among EFL learners are often associated with insufficient awareness of reading strategies and ineffective comprehension monitoring (Ahmadi et al., 2013; Widawati Tedjo et al., 2022; Suharni et al., 2024). Similarly, research in Indonesian EFL classrooms suggests that students often experience challenges in identifying main ideas, understanding contextual meaning, and connecting information within texts, resulting in poor reading performance (Azwar et al., 2024; Solekah & Aziz, 2024).

Given these challenges, scholars increasingly emphasize the importance of strategy-based instruction to support students' reading comprehension. Reading instruction is considered more effective when students are equipped with appropriate strategies that help them actively engage with texts and monitor their comprehension. Afflerbach et al. (2008) distinguish reading skills from reading strategies by explaining that while reading skills become automatic through practice, reading strategies involve conscious and deliberate efforts used to overcome difficulties during reading. This distinction suggests that successful reading depends not only on linguistic competence but also on learners' ability to strategically manage their comprehension process. Similarly, Ness (2007) argues that explicit instruction in reading strategies can significantly improve students' ability to process information and become more independent readers. In this regard, strategic reading instruction is particularly important in EFL classrooms, where students often need additional scaffolding to understand English texts effectively.

The theoretical foundation of strategic reading instruction is closely related to metacognition, which refers to an individual's awareness and regulation of cognitive processes. Flavell (1979) conceptualized metacognition as the ability to think about one's own thinking and regulate learning processes through planning, monitoring, and evaluating strategies. In reading activities, metacognitive awareness enables students to recognize comprehension problems and apply appropriate strategies to overcome them. Mokhtari et al. (2018) further explain that students with higher metacognitive awareness are generally more successful readers because they can regulate their reading behavior more effectively. Likewise, Zhang and Zhang (2013) emphasize that metacognition plays a significant role in

second and foreign language learning because learners must continuously monitor comprehension and adjust strategies when difficulties occur. Teng (2019) also found that metacognitive strategy instruction contributes positively to students' reading comprehension, motivation, and reading confidence. Therefore, reading comprehension should not merely focus on understanding texts but also involve teaching students how to think strategically while reading.

One strategy that aligns closely with metacognitive principles is the Fix-Up Strategy, which is designed to help learners repair comprehension breakdowns during reading. The Fix-Up Strategy encourages students to actively monitor their understanding and apply specific procedures when meaning becomes unclear. Generally, the strategy includes several techniques such as rereading difficult parts, using contextual clues to infer meaning, breaking down complex sentences, asking questions, and connecting prior knowledge to new information. These procedures encourage learners to become active problem solvers during reading rather than passive recipients of information. According to Li et al. (2022), strategy instruction that promotes self-regulation and active engagement significantly improves students' reading performance and self-efficacy. Furthermore, Zagoto (2016) argues that strategy-based reading instruction helps students develop greater autonomy and comprehension awareness, especially in EFL environments.

A growing body of empirical research has demonstrated the effectiveness of the Fix-Up Strategy in improving reading comprehension. Asnidah et al. (2024) reported that implementing the Fix-Up Strategy significantly improved students' reading comprehension skills by helping them identify meanings and comprehend texts more effectively. Similarly, Herwanis et al. (2021) found that the Fix-Up Strategy positively influenced EFL secondary learners' reading performance and contributed to better comprehension outcomes. Ramadhona et al. (2022) also reported that students who received instruction using the Fix-Up Strategy showed substantial improvement in reading comprehension compared to traditional classroom instruction. Likewise, Ulfah and Jannah (2022) found that the strategy encouraged students to engage more actively in reading activities and become more independent readers. Other studies similarly confirm that strategic reading interventions significantly support students' comprehension abilities, especially when accompanied by explicit instruction and teacher guidance (Muhassin et al., 2021; Sholeh et al., 2019; Li et al., 2022).

In the Indonesian EFL context, recent studies continue to support the role of reading strategies in improving comprehension outcomes. Yuliana and Sutramakdalena (2023) found that the use of the Fix-Up Strategy effectively enhanced students' reading comprehension by enabling them to resolve difficulties independently. Similarly, Awaluddin et al. (2025) and Ibrahim and Budiyaniti (2025) demonstrated that students taught using the Fix-Up Strategy achieved better reading performance than those taught using conventional approaches. Pohan et al. (2025) further emphasized that strategic reading interventions can significantly support students' understanding of report texts in secondary school settings. These findings collectively suggest that strategic reading instruction, particularly through the Fix-Up Strategy, offers substantial benefits for EFL learners' reading development.

Although previous studies consistently report positive findings regarding the effectiveness of the Fix-Up Strategy, several limitations remain evident in the existing literature. First, many previous studies tend to discuss the strategy in a general manner without clearly describing systematic classroom procedures that can be replicated by teachers. Second, much of the existing research primarily emphasizes learning outcomes while paying relatively less attention to how students actively repair comprehension breakdowns during reading. Third, despite increasing research interest, studies focusing specifically on Indonesian junior high school learners remain relatively limited, particularly regarding structured classroom implementation of the Fix-Up Strategy. Furthermore, several studies rely on broad reading interventions rather than explicitly integrating detailed metacognitive repair procedures into classroom instruction (Misa, 2014; Ahmadi et al., 2013; Solekah & Aziz, 2024). These gaps indicate the need for more context-specific investigations that provide clearer pedagogical guidance for implementing strategic reading instruction in EFL classrooms.

Responding to these gaps, the present study investigates the effectiveness of a structured five-step Fix-Up Strategy in improving students' reading comprehension. Unlike many previous studies, this research applies a clearly defined sequence consisting of rereading difficult sections, using contextual clues, breaking down sentence structures, asking questions, and connecting prior knowledge to textual information. This structured implementation is expected to provide clearer procedural guidance for students while simultaneously strengthening their metacognitive awareness during reading. Therefore, this study seeks to answer the following research question: Is the Fix-Up Strategy effective in improving students' reading comprehension? The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to the growing body of literature on metacognitive reading instruction and practically to EFL teachers seeking effective approaches for improving reading comprehension at the junior high school level.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental design to investigate the effectiveness of the Fix-Up Strategy in improving students' reading comprehension. Quantitative research is commonly employed to examine causal relationships and measure the effect of an instructional intervention through numerical data and statistical analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Specifically, the present study adopted a pretest-posttest control group design, as this design enables researchers to compare students' achievement before and after treatment while maintaining naturally existing classroom conditions where complete randomization is difficult (Ary et al., 2019). The study involved two groups: an experimental group receiving reading instruction through the Fix-Up Strategy and a control group receiving conventional reading instruction.

The research design can be represented as follows: $O_1 X_1 O_2 / O_3 X_2 O_4$, where O_1 and O_3 refer to the pre-test administered to the experimental and control groups, X_1 represents treatment using the Fix-Up Strategy, X_2 refers to regular classroom instruction without

treatment, and O_2 and O_4 denote the post-test administered after the intervention. The comparison between pre-test and post-test performance was intended to determine whether the Fix-Up Strategy significantly contributed to students' reading comprehension achievement.

Research Setting, Population, and Sample

This study was conducted at SMP Negeri 19 Palu during the 2025/2026 academic year, involving eighth-grade students as the research participants. According to Ary et al. (2019), a population refers to the entire group of individuals sharing particular characteristics relevant to the study. In this research, the population consisted of all eighth-grade students distributed across four classes, namely VIII A, VIII B, VIII C, and VIII D, with a total population of 101 students. Specifically, Class VIII A consisted of 27 students, Class VIII B consisted of 27 students, Class VIII C consisted of 21 students, and Class VIII D consisted of 26 students.

The sample was selected using a random sampling technique, as specified in the research proposal. Sampling is important in educational research because it allows researchers to investigate a representative subgroup of the target population when involving the entire population may be impractical (Cohen et al., 2018). Two intact classes were selected to participate in the study: Class VIII A served as the control group and Class VIII B functioned as the experimental group, with 27 students in each class. The selection of these classes was intended to ensure comparability between groups and minimize variation in students' academic backgrounds and English proficiency before the intervention.

Research Variables

This study involved two major variables, namely the independent variable and the dependent variable. The independent variable was the Fix-Up Strategy, defined as a metacognitive reading strategy that helps learners repair comprehension difficulties when meaning breaks down during reading. The strategy encourages students to employ several comprehension-repair procedures, including rereading, using contextual clues, breaking down sentences, asking questions, and connecting prior knowledge to textual information. Meanwhile, the dependent variable was students' reading comprehension, referring to students' ability to understand, interpret, and derive meaning from English reading texts following instructional intervention.

Research Instrument

The principal instrument used to collect data in this study was a reading comprehension test, administered during both the pre-test and post-test sessions. Educational tests are frequently employed in quantitative studies to measure students' learning outcomes objectively and systematically (Ary et al., 2019). The instrument was developed to assess students' reading comprehension ability, particularly in understanding main ideas, identifying supporting details, interpreting vocabulary in context, and comprehending overall textual meaning.

The test consisted of 15 items, including five multiple-choice questions and ten essay questions. The multiple-choice items were designed to evaluate students' ability to identify

vocabulary meaning, recognize details in the text, and select appropriate answers based on textual comprehension. Meanwhile, the essay section aimed to assess deeper understanding by requiring students to explain textual meanings, identify relationships between ideas, and provide evidence-based responses. The scoring system ranged from 0 to 5, depending on the completeness and accuracy of students' responses. For the essay section, a scoring rubric was employed to reduce subjectivity in assessment. A score of 0 indicated an irrelevant or unanswered response, 1–2 reflected limited understanding with incomplete or inaccurate information, 3–4 represented partially accurate responses with adequate comprehension, and 5 indicated a complete, accurate, and well-supported response based on the text.

To strengthen instrument credibility, the test items were developed based on the English curriculum and adjusted to students' reading competence at the junior high school level. Prior to implementation, the instrument was reviewed by an English teacher to ensure content appropriateness, clarity, and alignment with instructional objectives. Furthermore, consistent testing procedures were applied to both groups to maintain fairness and reduce potential measurement bias during the assessment process (Cohen et al., 2018).

Data Collection Procedure

The data collection process was conducted in three stages, namely pre-test, treatment, and post-test. Prior to the intervention, a pre-test was administered to both groups to measure students' initial reading comprehension ability. The pre-test consisted of reading passages followed by comprehension questions designed to assess students' understanding of main ideas, supporting information, vocabulary meaning, and textual interpretation. The pre-test was also intended to identify common comprehension difficulties experienced by students before the intervention, such as limited vocabulary knowledge, misunderstanding sentence meaning, and inability to connect information within the text.

Following the pre-test, the experimental group participated in instructional sessions using the Fix-Up Strategy, while the control group received regular reading instruction commonly implemented in classroom practice. The treatment involved descriptive reading materials, including texts such as *My Lovely Pet*, *My Best Friend*, and contextual materials relevant to students' daily experiences. The treatment was conducted over six instructional sessions during regular classroom meetings, with each session lasting approximately 80 minutes. During these sessions, students in the experimental group received structured instruction using the Fix-Up Strategy, while the control group followed conventional reading instruction based on regular classroom practice. This implementation timeline was intended to provide sufficient exposure to the strategy and ensure consistency throughout the intervention period.

The implementation of the Fix-Up Strategy followed a five-step procedure. First, students practiced rereading difficult sections to identify overlooked information and improve understanding. Second, they applied context clues to infer unfamiliar vocabulary based on surrounding textual information. Third, students learned to break down complex sentence structures into smaller comprehensible units to facilitate meaning construction. Fourth, they engaged in self-questioning activities to monitor understanding and verify textual information. Finally, students were encouraged to activate prior knowledge to

establish meaningful connections between textual content and personal experience. These activities were expected to strengthen students' metacognitive awareness and encourage more active engagement during reading.

After completing the treatment period, a post-test was administered to both groups using equivalent testing procedures to examine students' reading comprehension improvement following the instructional intervention.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Initially, descriptive statistics were employed to summarize students' reading performance, including minimum score, maximum score, mean score, and standard deviation. Descriptive statistics are useful for providing a general overview of participants' performance and score distribution (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

Before hypothesis testing, assumption testing was conducted to determine the suitability of statistical procedures. A Shapiro-Wilk test was performed to examine whether the data were normally distributed, followed by Levene's test to assess homogeneity of variance between groups. Since some post-test data were not normally distributed, the Mann-Whitney U test was employed as a non-parametric statistical analysis to determine whether significant differences existed between the experimental and control groups. Statistical significance was determined at the 0.05 level, meaning that a probability value lower than .05 indicated a statistically significant difference between groups (Ary et al., 2019).

Research Rigor

Several procedures were undertaken to strengthen the rigor and credibility of the research findings. First, the reading comprehension test was designed based on curriculum objectives, adjusted to students' expected reading competencies, and reviewed for content appropriateness to strengthen instrument credibility. Second, comparable classroom procedures, instructional duration, and testing conditions were maintained across both groups to ensure consistency. Third, the experimental treatment followed a structured teaching outline to ensure that the implementation of the Fix-Up Strategy remained systematic throughout the intervention period. Finally, the application of descriptive and inferential statistical analyses strengthened the objectivity of the findings by minimizing subjective interpretation and supporting evidence-based conclusions (Cohen et al., 2018).

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were carefully maintained throughout the research process. Before conducting the study, formal permission was obtained from the school administration and classroom teachers. Students participated within regular classroom learning activities, and no participant experienced educational disadvantage during the intervention. All collected data were used exclusively for academic purposes, and students' identities remained confidential during analysis and reporting. Additionally, participation in

classroom activities was conducted respectfully and without causing physical, emotional, or academic harm to the students.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were conducted to examine students' reading comprehension performance before and after the implementation of the Fix-Up Strategy. The analysis included the minimum score, maximum score, mean score, and standard deviation for both the control and experimental groups.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of students' reading comprehension scores in the control group

Test	N	Minimum	Maximum	M	SD
Pre-test	27	13	73	39.41	15.03
Post-test	27	27	80	45.48	13.09

As presented in Table 1, students in the control group demonstrated a slight improvement in reading comprehension performance after receiving conventional instruction. The mean score increased from 39.41 in the pre-test to 45.48 in the post-test, indicating an average gain of approximately 6.07 points. Similarly, the minimum score improved from 13 to 27, while the maximum score increased from 73 to 80. In addition, the standard deviation decreased slightly from 15.03 to 13.09, suggesting that students' scores became relatively more consistent after instruction. However, the improvement observed in the control group remained relatively modest.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of students' reading comprehension scores in the experimental group

Test	N	Minimum	Maximum	M	SD
Pre-test	27	20	80	45.07	13.67
Post-test	27	60	93	74.85	12.58

In contrast, the experimental group demonstrated substantially greater improvement following the implementation of the Fix-Up Strategy. As shown in Table 2, the mean score increased markedly from 45.07 in the pre-test to 74.85 in the post-test, reflecting an average increase of 29.78 points. Furthermore, the minimum score increased considerably from 20 to 60, indicating that lower-achieving students also benefited from the intervention. The maximum score improved from 80 to 93, while the standard deviation decreased slightly from 13.67 to 12.58, suggesting more consistent student achievement after treatment. These findings indicate that students exposed to the Fix-Up Strategy experienced greater reading comprehension improvement than those receiving conventional instruction.

Normality Test

Prior to hypothesis testing, a normality test was conducted using the Shapiro-Wilk test to determine whether the data met the assumption of normal distribution.

Table 3. Shapiro–Wilk Normality Test Results

Group	Statistic	df	p
Pre-test Control	.954	27	.273
Post-test Control	.898	27	.012
Pre-test Experimental	.948	27	.188
Post-test Experimental	.832	27	.001

The results in Table 3 indicate that the pre-test scores in both the control group ($p = .273$) and experimental group ($p = .188$) were normally distributed, as the significance values exceeded the threshold of .05. However, the post-test scores in both groups did not meet the normality assumption, with significance values below .05 ($p = .012$ for the control group and $p = .001$ for the experimental group). Since the normality assumption was not fully satisfied, a non-parametric statistical test was selected for further analysis.

Homogeneity of Variance Test

A homogeneity test was conducted using Levene's Test to determine whether the variance between the two groups was statistically equivalent.

Table 4. Levene's test of homogeneity of variance

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	p
0.560	1	52	.458

As shown in Table 4, the significance value obtained from Levene's Test was .458, which exceeded the criterion value of .05. This result indicates that the variance between the experimental and control groups was homogeneous. Therefore, the assumption of homogeneity was fulfilled, allowing further comparative analysis to be conducted.

Mann–Whitney U Test

Since the post-test data did not fully satisfy the normality assumption, the Mann–Whitney U test was applied to determine whether significant differences existed between the experimental and control groups after the intervention.

Table 5. Mann–Whitney U test results

Statistic	Value
Mann–Whitney U	47.500
Wilcoxon W	425.500
Z	-5.529
p (2-tailed)	.000

The results displayed in Table 5 demonstrate that the significance value for the Mann–Whitney U test was .000, which was lower than the established significance level of .05. This finding indicates a statistically significant difference between the reading comprehension

outcomes of students in the experimental and control groups. Since the experimental group achieved a substantially higher mean score ($M = 74.85$) than the control group ($M = 45.48$) in the post-test, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Fix-Up Strategy significantly improved students' reading comprehension.

Overall, the findings suggest that students who received instruction through the Fix-Up Strategy achieved stronger reading comprehension performance than those taught through conventional instructional approaches. The strategy appeared to support students in understanding texts more effectively by encouraging active monitoring, comprehension repair, and engagement during reading activities.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of the Fix-Up Strategy significantly improved students' reading comprehension. Students who received instruction through the Fix-Up Strategy showed substantially higher improvement than those taught through conventional reading instruction. This finding is evident in the considerable increase in the experimental group's post-test mean score ($M = 74.85$) compared to the control group ($M = 45.48$). Furthermore, the Mann-Whitney U test revealed a statistically significant difference between the two groups ($p = .000$), indicating that the observed improvement was not merely incidental but associated with the instructional intervention. These findings suggest that the Fix-Up Strategy may improve reading comprehension by helping students actively monitor understanding, respond to comprehension breakdowns, and engage more strategically with texts during reading activities.

One possible explanation for this improvement is that the Fix-Up Strategy encouraged students to become more active and strategic readers rather than passive recipients of textual information. Prior to the intervention, many students experienced difficulties in understanding vocabulary, identifying key ideas, and interpreting sentence meaning, particularly when encountering unfamiliar words or complex text structures. During the implementation of the strategy, students were systematically trained to recognize comprehension breakdowns and apply corrective procedures, including rereading, identifying contextual clues, simplifying sentence structures, asking questions, and connecting prior knowledge to textual information. These activities likely enabled students to engage more deeply with reading materials and reduce comprehension difficulties encountered during reading.

A deeper interpretation of these findings suggests that the effectiveness of the Fix-Up Strategy may be closely associated with its emphasis on active cognitive engagement during reading. Rather than depending solely on linguistic knowledge, students were encouraged to regulate their comprehension process through deliberate problem-solving behaviors. The structured five-step procedure likely reduced students' tendency to stop reading when encountering unfamiliar vocabulary or difficult sentence structures by providing practical strategies to repair comprehension breakdowns. In this sense, the improvement observed in the experimental group may not only reflect increased reading performance but also indicate stronger strategic awareness and greater learner autonomy during reading activities.

The present findings align with the theoretical perspective of metacognitive reading instruction, which emphasizes students' awareness of their own cognitive processes while reading. According to John H. Flavell (1979), metacognition involves planning, monitoring, and evaluating one's own learning processes. In reading activities, metacognitive awareness enables learners to recognize comprehension problems and select appropriate strategies to overcome them. The five-step Fix-Up Strategy implemented in this study reflects these metacognitive principles because students were explicitly guided to monitor understanding and apply problem-solving strategies whenever confusion emerged. Similarly, research by Mokhtari et al. (2018) suggests that students with stronger metacognitive awareness tend to demonstrate better reading comprehension because they are able to regulate their reading behavior more effectively.

The findings are also consistent with previous empirical studies reporting the effectiveness of the Fix-Up Strategy in improving reading comprehension. For example, Asnidah et al. (2024) found that the implementation of the Fix-Up Strategy improved students' ability to understand texts and identify meanings more effectively. Similarly, Muhassin et al. (2021) reported that Indonesian EFL learners who were taught using the Fix-Up Strategy demonstrated significantly better reading comprehension performance than students taught through traditional instruction. Likewise, Ramadhona et al. (2022) found that the strategy contributed positively to students' comprehension achievement by helping them overcome reading difficulties independently. Comparable findings were also reported by Ulfah and Jannah (2022), who found that students became more active and confident readers after learning to apply Fix-Up procedures while reading.

In addition, the findings support research emphasizing the importance of strategy-based reading instruction in EFL contexts. Li et al. (2022) argue that reading strategy instruction contributes positively not only to comprehension performance but also to students' motivation and self-efficacy. Similarly, Teng (2019) found that metacognitive reading strategy instruction significantly enhanced learners' ability to monitor comprehension and respond effectively to textual difficulties. The present findings further extend this literature by showing that a structured five-step implementation of the Fix-Up Strategy can effectively support reading comprehension among Indonesian junior high school students. Unlike several previous studies that discuss the strategy in broader terms, this study demonstrates how systematic implementation of rereading, contextual clues, sentence breakdown, self-questioning, and prior knowledge activation may contribute to improved learning outcomes.

Another important finding of this study is that the Fix-Up Strategy appeared to benefit not only high-achieving students but also lower-performing learners. This can be observed from the increase in the experimental group's minimum score from 20 to 60, suggesting that students who initially struggled with reading comprehension also experienced meaningful progress. This finding may indicate that the strategy provides scaffolding for students with varying proficiency levels because it equips them with practical tools to manage reading difficulties independently. As a result, students may feel more confident and less likely to abandon reading tasks when encountering unfamiliar vocabulary or difficult passages.

Despite these positive findings, several considerations should be acknowledged. During the implementation process, some students initially required substantial guidance in applying the Fix-Up procedures effectively. Activities such as identifying contextual clues, breaking down sentence structures, and formulating self-questions were not immediately familiar to all learners. This suggests that the effectiveness of the strategy may depend partly on the quality of teacher guidance and the consistency of classroom practice. Therefore, teachers intending to implement the Fix-Up Strategy should provide sufficient modeling, guided practice, and feedback to ensure that students understand how to use the strategy effectively.

From a pedagogical perspective, these findings highlight the importance of integrating explicit reading strategy instruction into EFL classrooms, particularly for junior high school learners who often struggle with comprehension difficulties. The Fix-Up Strategy may serve as a practical classroom approach because it equips students with concrete steps to overcome reading obstacles independently. Teachers may incorporate structured rereading, contextual clue identification, self-questioning, and prior knowledge activation into regular reading instruction to encourage more active student engagement. Such practices may contribute not only to improved comprehension performance but also to the development of students' confidence and metacognitive awareness as independent readers.

Overall, the findings indicate that the Fix-Up Strategy represents a promising instructional alternative for improving reading comprehension in EFL classrooms, particularly at the junior high school level. By encouraging students to monitor understanding actively and apply metacognitive repair strategies, the approach appears to help learners engage more meaningfully with texts and overcome comprehension difficulties. Consequently, the present study contributes to the growing body of evidence supporting metacognitive and strategy-based reading instruction in EFL contexts while also offering practical implications for English teachers seeking more effective approaches to reading instruction.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the effectiveness of the Fix-Up Strategy in improving students' reading comprehension among eighth-grade EFL learners. The findings revealed that students who received instruction through the Fix-Up Strategy demonstrated significantly better reading comprehension achievement than those taught through conventional instructional methods. This was evidenced by the substantial improvement in the experimental group's post-test performance and the statistically significant difference identified through the Mann-Whitney U test ($p < .05$). Therefore, the findings confirm that the Fix-Up Strategy was effective in enhancing students' reading comprehension.

The improvement in students' reading achievement indicates that the Fix-Up Strategy helped learners become more active and strategic readers. Through structured procedures such as rereading difficult sections, using contextual clues, simplifying sentence structures, asking self-monitoring questions, and activating prior knowledge, students were able to address comprehension difficulties more effectively. The strategy not only supported students in understanding textual meaning but also encouraged greater metacognitive

awareness during reading activities. Consequently, students appeared more capable of monitoring comprehension and employing appropriate strategies when encountering unfamiliar vocabulary or difficult passages.

The findings of this study contribute both theoretically and practically to EFL reading instruction. Theoretically, the study strengthens existing evidence regarding the role of metacognitive and strategy-based instruction in supporting reading comprehension development among EFL learners. Practically, the findings suggest that English teachers, particularly at the junior high school level, may consider integrating the Fix-Up Strategy into classroom instruction to foster more active engagement and improve students' comprehension performance. Since the strategy provides students with practical tools to overcome reading difficulties independently, it may also support learner autonomy in reading activities.

Despite these positive findings, this study has several limitations. The research involved a relatively limited number of participants from a single educational setting and focused only on descriptive reading texts within a specific instructional period. Therefore, future studies are encouraged to involve larger participant groups, diverse educational contexts, and broader text genres to examine the consistency of the strategy's effectiveness. Future research may also explore students' perceptions, engagement, and metacognitive development when implementing the Fix-Up Strategy in EFL classrooms.

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