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EFFECTIVENESS OF THE *STUDENT TEAMS-ACHIEVEMENT DIVISIONS* COOPERATIVE LEARNING METHOD ON STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION

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Abstract

This study investigated the efficacy of the Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD) cooperative learning method in enhancing Grade VIII students' reading comprehension of recount texts and examined their perceptions of the method. A purposive sample of 68 students was divided into experimental (n = 35) and control (n = 33) classes. Quantitative data from pre-test, post-test, and quizzes were complemented by qualitative insights from interviews and questionnaires. Statistical analysis via SPSS 22 showed that the experimental class achieved significant improvement ($t = -3.855$, $p < 0.05$), a trend further supported by repeated ANOVA results ($F = 12.419$) and superior post-test performance compared to the control class ($p = 0.033$). Additionally, perception analysis indicated that 80% of participants valued the STAD approach for fostering motivation and collaborative learning. The study concludes that STAD significantly outperforms conventional methods in developing reading comprehension, making it highly recommended as an instructional method.

Keywords: *Cooperative Learning Method, Recount Text, STAD*

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INTRODUCTION

Reading is a fundamental capability in education, serving as the primary avenue for students to acquire information and competency (Stepanenko et al., 2023). In the context of the school curriculum, reading instruction must go beyond basic decoding to focus on comprehension (Fogarty, Kerns, & Pete, 2021). As defined by Grabe & Stoller (2011), Van Den Broek & Helder (2017), Marpaung & Sihombing (2021), and Woolley (2011), reading comprehension is an active cognitive process where readers construct meaning through interaction with written text. Mastery of this skill allows students to "open the gates of knowledge" by capturing both explicit and implied information (Vargas, 2023). Specifically, for grade VIII Junior High School (SMP) students, the curriculum mandates the ability to comprehend functional texts, particularly recount texts regarding past events or activities.

However, preliminary observations at SMP X revealed a significant gap between these curricular expectations and actual student performance. The ability of grade VIII students to comprehend English texts remained far from optimal. Data from preliminary discussions with teachers indicated that the average English score, approximately 60, in the mid-odd semester,

was 20% below the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) of 75. This underperformance was primarily attributed to the prevalence of conventional instructional methods, where teachers relied heavily on lecturing during reading activities. The lack of engagement within this educational setting hindered the development of essential interpersonal and intellectual competencies. As a result, students demonstrated a marked lack of interest, which ultimately compromised the overall quality of their learning achievements.

To address these deficiencies, a shift toward student-centred learning is necessary to create an active and effective classroom atmosphere. According to Johnson and Johnson, teachers should engage students to improve their understanding of reading texts and equip them with the social skills required for success beyond the classroom (Joyce & Calhoun, 2025). Among various interactive strategies, cooperative learning is widely recognized for supporting reading success (Puzio & Colby, 2013; Farzaneh & Nejadansari, 2014). This study specifically proposed the use of Student Teams-Achievement Divisions (STAD), identified by Slavin as one of the most accessible and effective forms of cooperative learning (Jalilifar, 2010).

The selection of STAD is justified by its unique emphasis on team rewards and individual accountability. Unlike unstructured group work, STAD compels students to support one another; to achieve a group reward, members must ensure their teammates successfully master the reading material. This structure fosters peer teaching, in which students deeply process the text to explain it to peers, thereby improving collective understanding. Furthermore, the competitive element—where teams strive to outperform others for rewards—strongly motivates students to perform to their best abilities (Alshiha & Al-Abdullatif, 2024).

Although STAD is widely recognized in the educational literature, this study addressed a practical gap by evaluating its impact on the reading comprehension of recount text among grade VIII students in Indonesia. The investigation was therefore designed to measure the method's effectiveness and to gain a deeper understanding of how students perceived the learning process. Thus, the study was guided by the following questions: (1) Is STAD cooperative learning effective on grade VIII students' reading comprehension skill of recount text?; and (2) What is the perception of grade VIII students in the experimental class on the STAD cooperative learning method in teaching the reading comprehension skill of recount text?.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher adopted a quasi-experimental approach, specifically a non-equivalent control class design, to investigate how effectively the STAD method works. Conducted at SMP X Jakarta, the study involved all grade VIII students. Due to administrative constraints that prevent random assignment, two intact classes were selected through purposive sampling; these groups had similar baseline English proficiency and were led by the same teacher. A total of 68 students participated, where Class VIII-B (35 students) experienced the STAD method, and Class VIII-C (33 students) followed a conventional method as the control class.

To ensure comprehensive measurement of the variables, four distinct instruments were developed and validated. First, pre-tests and post-tests were designed to measure students' reading comprehension of recount texts before and after the treatment. Second, a series of quizzes was administered weekly to monitor progress during the treatment. Third, to assess student attitudes, a perception questionnaire was adapted from Gonzalez and Torres (2016) and translated into Bahasa Indonesia to ensure comprehension. Finally, semi-structured interviews were conducted to triangulate the quantitative findings and gain deeper insights into students'

experiences. Validity and reliability checks using Cronbach's Alpha, including expert judgment for content validity and pilot testing for internal consistency, were conducted to ensure the robustness of these instruments.

The data collection process spanned a total of eight weeks. Initially, both groups completed a pre-test to establish a baseline for reading proficiency. It was followed by a six-week treatment period where the experimental class engaged in STAD-based activities—including team study and individual quizzes—while the control class followed the conventional method. Following the treatment, a post-test was administered to both groups to measure learning gains. To conclude the data collection, the perception questionnaire was distributed exclusively to the experimental class, followed by interviews with selected students to elaborate on the survey results.

To comprehensively address the research questions, this study employed a mixed-methods approach to data analysis. Statistical procedures were performed using SPSS version 22. Before executing the primary analyses, the data underwent rigorous preliminary screenings for normality and homogeneity to ensure compliance with parametric testing assumptions. The analytical framework involved a paired-sample t-test to assess intra-group variances between pre-test and post-test scores. Furthermore, following the methodological guidelines of Sudiyono (2011), a repeated ANOVA was implemented to evaluate longitudinal shifts across multiple means—specifically for the control class' quiz results, which were collected over six weekly measurements, while a one-way ANOVA was utilized to compare inter-group post-test performance. To complement these findings, questionnaire data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, following Arikunto's (2015) formulas to categorize student perceptions. Finally, qualitative insights from interview transcripts were integrated to provide a nuanced contextualization and explanation of the statistical outcomes.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings are presented based on the two research questions guiding this study: (3.1.1) the effectiveness of the STAD method on reading comprehension of recount texts, and (3.1.2) students' perceptions regarding the method.

3.1 Result

The results of the study can be explained as the following:

3.1.1. Effectiveness of STAD on Reading Comprehension

To evaluate the impact of the STAD-based cooperative learning method, the researcher conducted a comparative statistical analysis involving an experimental group (n = 35) and a control group (n = 33). The dataset, comprising pre-test, post-test, and formative weekly quiz scores, was processed in SPSS version 22 to address the first research question.

Paired-Sample T-Test Results

A paired-sample t-test was used to assess the significant improvement in pre-test and post-test scores within the experimental class. Hypothesis testing was conducted at a significance level of 0.05. Statistically, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected if the calculated t_{count} surpasses the critical t_{table} value; otherwise, H_0 is retained. For this study's degrees of freedom (df = 34), the t_{table} benchmark was set at 1.69092. A detailed summary of these descriptive statistics is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. Description of Data and Results of the Paired-Sample T-Test of the Experimental Class

	Paired Differences					T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Pre-test - Post-test	-7.429	11.400	1.927	-11.345	3.513	-3.855	34	0.000

As illustrated in Table 1, the experimental group demonstrated a substantial mean score elevation of -7.429 (unread minus sign) between the pre-test and post-test. Statistical validation via a paired-sample t-test yielded a t_{value} of -3.855 (unread minus sign), surpassing the critical t_{table} threshold of 1.69092 (df = 34). Given that the observed significance value (p = 0.000) was considerably lower than the alpha level of 0.05, the H_0 was rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis (H_A). Consequently, these findings indicate a statistically significant enhancement in the students' performance within the experimental cohort.

Parallel to this, the control class' performance was evaluated using the same statistical framework. The hypothesis testing criteria remained consistent: H_0 is dismissed if $t_{count} \geq t_{table}$ at a 0.05 significance level. For this group (df = 32), the determined t_{table} was 1.69389, with further data specifications detailed in Table 2.

Table 2. Description of Data and Results of the Paired-Sample T-Test of the Control Class

	Paired Differences					T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Pre-test - Post-test	0.606	13.906	2.421	4.325	5.537	0.250	32	0.804

Table 2 shows the control group exhibited a marginal mean increase of 0.606 between the pre-test and post-test. Statistical analysis yielded a t_{count} of 0.250 with 32 degrees of freedom (df = 32). Given that the observed p 0.804 significantly exceeded the predetermined significance level of 0.05, and the t_{value} remained below the critical threshold (0.250 < 1.69389), the H_0 was retained while the H_A was rejected. This indicates that the traditional teaching methodology did not produce a statistically significant enhancement in students' reading comprehension, specifically regarding recount text.

Repeated ANOVA Results

To complement the primary test data, a longitudinal evaluation of quiz performance was conducted within the experimental group to gauge the efficacy of the STAD method. It involved a series of six weekly quizzes, the results of which were scrutinized using a repeated ANOVA under the assumption of Sphericity. The decision-making framework was based on a 0.05 significance level, in which H_0 was rejected only if $F_{count} \geq F_{table}$. For this analysis, the critical F_{table} was established at 2.29 ($df_1 = 5$, $df_2 = 115$). The descriptive statistics for these longitudinal data points are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Results of the Repeated ANOVA of the Experimental Class

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Quiz	Sphericity Assumed	6,084.896	5	1,216.979	12.419	0.000	0.351
	Greenhouse-Geisser	6,084.896	3.936	1,545.791	12.419	0.000	0.351
	Huynh-Feldt	6,084.896	4.851	1,254.401	12.419	0.000	0.351
	Lower-bound	6,084.896	1.000	6,084.896	12.419	0.002	0.351
Error (quiz)	Sphericity Assumed	11,269.271	115	97.994			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	11,269.271	90.538	124.470			
	Huynh-Feldt	11,269.271	111.569	101.007			
	Lower-bound	11,269.271	23.000	489.968			

The repeated ANOVA results detailed in Table 3 indicate that the calculated F_{count} of 12.419 is significantly greater than the critical F_{table} of 2.29. Furthermore, the associated significance count ($p = 0.000$) is considerably lower than the established alpha level of 0.05. These findings necessitate rejecting H_0 in favor of H_A, indicating a statistically significant difference in the average quiz performance of students in the experimental group. It suggests that integrating the STAD cooperative learning method effectively improved students' reading comprehension of recount texts.

In a similar vein, data from the control class were evaluated to determine if conventional instructional methods yielded significant differences in student outcomes across the six assessment intervals.

Table 4. Results of the Repeated ANOVA of the Control Class

Source		Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Quiz	Sphericity Assumed	4,180.435	5	836.087	2.976	0.015	0.119
	Greenhouse-Geisser	4,180.435	2.742	1,524.554	2.976	0.043	0.119
	Huynh-Feldt	4,180.435	3.171	1,318.318	2.976	0.035	0.119
	Lower-bound	4,180.435	1.000	4,180.435	2.976	0.099	0.119
Error (quiz)	Sphericity Assumed	30,902.899	110	280.935			
	Greenhouse-Geisser	30,902.899	60.326	512.269			
	Huynh-Feldt	30,902.899	69.763	442.971			
	Lower-bound	30,902.899	22.000	1,404.677			

To ensure consistency, a repeated ANOVA was conducted under the Sphericity Assumed condition. The hypothesis was tested against a critical F-value of $F_{table} = 2.30$ ($df_1 = 5$, $df_2 = 110$) at the 5% significance level. Under this framework, H_0 would be rejected only if the

empirical F_{count} met or exceeded the table threshold. Detailed descriptive data for this group are provided in Table 4.

According to the repeated ANOVA results detailed in Table 4, the calculated F_{count} (2.976) exceeds the critical F_{table} value of 2.30. Furthermore, the observed significance level ($p = 0.015$) is lower than the established alpha threshold of 0.05. These statistical findings necessitate rejecting the H_0 and accepting the H_A. Substantively, this indicates a statistically significant difference in the mean scores across the six quizzes administered to the control class, in which recount text reading comprehension was taught using conventional methods.

To further investigate the disparity between the two groups, a one-way ANOVA was conducted on the test results of both the experimental and control classes. This analytical procedure was employed to differentiate between four sets of data: the pre-test and post-test scores for each group. The decision-making framework for this hypothesis test was as follows: H_0 is rejected if $F_{count} \geq F_{table}$, whereas H_0 is retained if $F_{count} < F_{table}$ at a 0.05 significance level. For a sample size of $N = 68$, the F_{table} was determined to be 3.99. The comprehensive outcomes of this one-way ANOVA are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Results of the One-Way ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Pre-test	Between Groups	6.418	1	6.418	0.024	0.877
	Within Groups	17,580.346	66	266.369		
	Total	17,586.765	67			
Post-test	Between Groups	1,270.691	1	1,270.691	4.730	0.033
	Within Groups	17,730.779	66	268.648		
	Total	19,001.471	67			

Table 5 indicates that the pre-test F_{count} for the intergroup and within-group variances is 0.024 at the 0.877 significance level. The hypothesis test formula is that if $F_{count} \geq F_{table}$, then H_0 is rejected and H_A is accepted; if $F_{count} < F_{table}$, then H_0 is accepted. H_A is rejected at the 0.05 level of significance, $N = 68$, and F_{table} 3.99 within the two groups. The result of the calculation is $F_{count} < F_{table}$ and is $0.024 < 3.99$.

The F_{count} of the post-tests of the intergroup variance and variance within the group is 4.730 at the significance level of 0.033; the $F_{count} > F_{table}$ is $4.730 > 3.99$; and if $F_{count} \geq F_{table}$, then H_0 is rejected and H_A is accepted. Conversely, if $F_{count} < F_{table}$, then H_0 is accepted and H_A is rejected at the 0.05 significance level, $N = 68$, and F_{table} 3.99 in both groups.

Based on the one-way ANOVA calculation data, the conclusion is that in the pre-test, F_{count} 0.024 is less than $F_{table} = 3.99$. This result indicates that H_0 was accepted and H_A was rejected. There was no significant difference in pre-test scores between the experimental and control classes before receiving different treatments. For the post-test, the F_{count} of 4.730 is greater than the F_{table} of 3.99. Thus, H_0 is rejected, and H_A is accepted. There is a significant difference in post-test scores between the experimental and control classes. In other words, the increase in the value that occurs in the experimental class after obtaining the teaching of the reading comprehension skill of recount text with the STAD cooperative learning method is more significant than the difference in the scores of the control class after receiving the recount text reading technique with the conventional method.

3.1.2. Students' Perceptions of the STAD Method

Data regarding students' perceptions were collected via a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews in the experimental class. The student perception questionnaire on the STAD cooperative learning method was analysed using data tabulation to determine whether the questionnaire items received a positive or negative perception from the respondents. The average value of the determinants determines whether the perception is positive or negative. The tabulation of the student perception questionnaire data regarding the STAD cooperative learning method follows the data processing procedures outlined by Arikunto (2015).

Questionnaire Data

The calculation indicates that 18 items of the student perception questionnaire on the STAD cooperative learning method were perceived positively, and 7 statement items were perceived negatively. It means that the analysis of the 25-item questionnaire indicated that 80% of the statements received a positive perception, while 20% appeared statistically negative. The seven statements that statistically received a negative perception are positive when calculated manually based on the number of respondents who answered 'agree' and 'disagree'. The researcher compiled the answers 'strongly agree' and 'agree' into the 'agreed' category, and the answers 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' into the 'disagree' category. Next, the results for the categories 'agree' and 'disagree' were compared. Thus, the researcher did not observe a negative perception of the whole point of the questionnaire statement. The data indicate that students agreed that the method improved social interaction and comprehension of recount texts. However, to confirm this, the researcher outlined seven points from the aforementioned statement, supported by the interview data.

Interview Data

The qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews enriched the quantitative findings by providing a detailed perspective on student experiences. Overall, across the seven interview questions, the students in the experimental class held a positive perception of the STAD method, characterizing it as an enjoyable and effective way to improve their reading comprehension. A key highlight of their experience was the facilitation of vocabulary acquisition through group discussions, which helped them navigate the complexities of recount texts and decipher unfamiliar words. Additionally, the competitive element in quiz scores served as a strong motivator, encouraging students to work more diligently to ensure their team outperformed others. Despite some students finding the method challenging, respondents expressed a clear preference for STAD over the conventional method and indicated a strong willingness to engage with it in future lessons.

3.2 Discussion

By situating the current results within the broader context of prior research, this segment analyzes the gathered data alongside existing literature to clarify any discrepancies, while simultaneously emphasizing the unique value this study adds to the Indonesian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) landscape.

3.2.1 Interpretation of Effectiveness

The study's core findings highlight that the STAD cooperative learning method significantly boosted grade VIII's comprehension of recount text, a result not observed with traditional teaching methods. This disparity was clearly reflected in the paired-sample t-test results, where the experimental class demonstrated marked progress, while the control class showed little to no change. Specifically, the t_{count} for the experimental class substantially exceeded that of the control class, confirming that STAD is a highly productive method for enhancing reading

comprehension in this specific genre.

To assess the significance of performance gaps between the two groups during treatment, the mean quiz scores of six representative students per class were analyzed using a repeated ANOVA. The analysis confirmed that these score differences were statistically significant. Interestingly, the repeated ANOVA revealed a nuance. Although the control class showed no substantial improvement from pre-test to post-test, they did exhibit minor fluctuations in their weekly quiz scores. This observation differs from the paired-sample t-test results for the control class. It appears that while marginal variances emerged during the treatment phase, they were not robust enough to yield a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test.

Nevertheless, the difference between the six average quizzes in the experimental class is much more significant. It can be observed in the difference in the F_{table} calculation for the experimental class, that is, 12.419 – 2.29, which yields 10.129. Additionally, the difference in the calculation of F_{table} and F_{count} in the control class is 2.976 – 2.30, resulting in 0.676. This result indicates that the difference in the average scores of the six quizzes in the experimental class exceeds 9.453 points compared with those in the control class. It is similar to the descriptive and paired-sample t-test results for both groups.

Such discrepancies in performance likely arise from the distinct nature of the testing formats: descriptive quizzes versus multiple-choice standardized tests. For the control class, fluctuating scores indicate that weekly exposure to materials, without the benefit of organized peer support, fails to solidify the skills needed for standardized assessments. In contrast, the experimental class' robust and linear improvement underscores the efficacy of STAD in fostering stable reading proficiency. This trajectory is validated by the statistical breakdown and paired-sample t-tests, which reveal significant differences in scores during the treatment phase and across all six quizzes. Consequently, the data confirm that the experimental class achieved a more statistically significant improvement than the control class across the pre-test, treatment period, and post-test phases.

The final phase of answering the first research question involved a one-way ANOVA to test the statistical variance between the classes. The results demonstrated a clear shift: although both groups started with equivalent reading proficiency, the treatment led to a substantial lead for the experimental class. Rather than merely echoing existing studies, this evidence offers a robust validation of Slavin's (2005) theory, which identifies team rewards and individual accountability as vital drivers of achievement. By isolating the STAD method as the cause of these gains, this study reinforces the idea that structured interdependence is more effective for comprehension than conventional individual effort.

Unlike typical quasi-experimental studies that rely solely on pre-test and post-test benchmarks, this study offers a novel longitudinal perspective by using a repeated ANOVA to evaluate the trajectory of student progress across six weekly quizzes administered during the treatment phase. This granular analysis of quiz scores demonstrates that the STAD method fosters more significant and consistent development of reading comprehension over time than conventional methods, thereby providing more substantial evidence of instructional effectiveness than standard assessment designs.

Furthermore, these findings extend Zarei's (2012) research on the suitability of STAD for L2 reading comprehension. While Zarei focused on general L2 gains, this study specifically examines recount texts for grade VIII students, suggesting that the STAD framework is

particularly effective for genres that require chronological and functional understanding. It challenges the traditional reliance on conventional method—often the default in Indonesian EFL contexts—which often fail to equip students with the cognitive skills necessary to move beyond basic decoding.

The success observed here can be attributed to a shift in the "cognitive labor" of the classroom. In conventional models, the teacher holds the cognitive burden through lecturing. In contrast, the STAD format re-centers this burden onto the students, compelling them to process recount texts deeply enough to explain them to peers. This process of "peer teaching" reinforces their understanding, effectively transforming the reading task from passive reception of facts into active construction of meaning, as described by Grabe and Stoller (2011). By achieving these results within a demographic often characterized by low enthusiasm and suboptimal outcomes, this study highlights STAD not just as a fun alternative but as a high-accountability method that addresses specific social and cognitive deficiencies in the classroom.

3.2.2 Interpretation of Students' Perceptions

Based on the questionnaire analysis, the conclusion is that, in general, the STAD cooperative learning method used in the experimental class to teach reading comprehension for recount texts received a positive response from the respondents. The qualitative findings reveal that Indonesian grade VIII students perceive STAD as a "fun" yet "challenging" shift from the norm. The 80% positive response rate on the questionnaire underscores the social nature of learning. Students specifically highlighted the utility of discussion for vocabulary mastery. It supports the Vygotskian view of social learning, in which peer interaction serves as a scaffold for individual cognitive development. Through group discussions and competition, the students felt supported by the group, relied on one another, considered each other's opinions, stayed aware of their respective tasks, and were motivated to be the best. The respondents agree that learning to read recount texts using the STAD cooperative learning method is a positive and fun idea that can improve social interactions among students through discussions, thereby making students more active and interactive. Additionally, this method can help students improve their comprehension of recount text.

In addition to the results of statistical calculations and questionnaire analysis, a significant increase in the ability to read recount text of the grade VIII students after obtaining the learning reading comprehension skill by using the STAD cooperative learning method is also supported by information obtained from interviews that can explain in detail the occurring phenomenon and enrich the reasons of the respondents. Crucially, the interview data highlighted the role of competition as a primary motivator. It validates the specific design of STAD, where group success depends on individual quiz scores. The students' admission that the method was "difficult" but preferred over conventional methods suggests that they value the active engagement and cognitive load required by STAD, provided it is supported by the social safety net of their team.

According to the respondents, this method is fun and can help them improve their reading comprehension. Although the STAD cooperative learning method received a positive response from all respondents, many perceived that learning with this method is difficult. Nevertheless, all respondents indicated that discussions with their groupmates helped them understand the texts, especially when encountering new vocabulary. Furthermore, all respondents felt motivated to understand the text better and to achieve higher scores than other groups when they knew their quiz scores would be used as a means of competition. The respondents also admitted that they preferred the STAD cooperative learning method to the conventional

method. The respondents hope and are willing to participate if this method is implemented again.

Therefore, the interview results may provide additional in-depth insights into students' perceptions of the STAD cooperative learning method, including its effectiveness in improving students' reading comprehension in the experimental class and why they like this method. In addition, the interview results provide clearer information about the difficulties students encounter when collaborating with friends who do not work well together and help them determine the meanings of new vocabulary. Through the interviews, the element of competition in this method is proven to motivate students to comprehend the texts, and respondents can express their expectations and suggestions more straightforwardly. This result cannot be obtained through a closed questionnaire. Still, the information from the interviews will be helpful to the researcher when providing suggestions for implementing the STAD cooperative learning method in the future and for further research.

3.2.3 Genuine Contribution to the Field

While the STAD method is well-documented globally, this study makes several unique contributions to the literature, particularly in the Indonesian EFL context. First, this study validates the effectiveness of STAD specifically for recount texts, a mandatory genre in the Indonesian Junior High School curriculum; the narrative and chronological nature of these texts is found to be exceptionally well-suited to the collaborative reconstruction activities inherent in the STAD framework. Furthermore, the study challenges the prevalent notion of a "passive learner" culture in Indonesia by demonstrating that student passivity is an instructional byproduct of conventional teacher-centered methods rather than an immutable cultural trait. By implementing a structured cooperative framework, the study provides empirical evidence that Indonesian students can rapidly transition into active, interactive learners when the environment supports engagement. Finally, the findings offer a nuanced perspective on the role of competition within a collectivist society, showing that inter-group competition effectively catalyzes intra-group cooperation. It suggests that STAD channels competitive drives constructively, making it a culturally compatible and powerful pedagogical tool for the Indonesian educational landscape.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that transitioning from the conventional method to the STAD cooperative learning method significantly improves grade VIII students' reading comprehension of recount texts. Statistical analyses—including t-test and ANOVA—confirm substantial gains in the experimental class compared to the control class. The method's success is driven by peer interdependence and competitive motivation, with 80% of students reporting improved vocabulary and engagement. While the study's quasi-experimental design in Jakarta limits its generalizability, the inclusion of a six-week granular quiz analysis that provides an unprecedented look at the learning trajectory of Indonesian students validates STAD as an effective method in similar contexts. Educators are encouraged to adopt STAD, while future research should examine long-term retention and diverse text genres.

ETHICAL STATEMENTS

This study was conducted in accordance with established ethical principles, including informed consent, protection of informants' confidentiality, and respect for local cultural values. Special consideration was given to participants from vulnerable groups to ensure their safety, comfort, and equal rights to participate. No external funding was received, and the authors declared no conflict of interest. All data and information presented were collected through valid research

methods and have been verified to ensure their accuracy and reliability. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) was limited to technical assistance for writing and language editing, without influencing the scientific substance of the work. The authors express their gratitude to the informants for their valuable insights and to the anonymous reviewers for their constructive feedback on an earlier version of this manuscript. The authors take full responsibility for the content and conclusions of this article.

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