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The Influence of Mix Freeze Group Strategy on EFL Students' Reading Comprehension and Motivation

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the reading comprehension abilities of students taught using the mixed freeze group strategy versus conventional teaching methods. Specifically, it looked at the reading comprehension of highly motivated students and those with low motivation in both teaching conditions, as well as the interaction between teaching methods and student motivation on reading comprehension. The research employed a quasi-experimental design with a 2x2 factorial structure. The Population of this research was the students of English Department. Data were gathered through tests and questionnaires. The findings and data analysis led to the following conclusions: 1) Students taught using the mixed freeze group strategy performed better in reading comprehension compared to those taught through conventional methods. 2) High-motivation students taught with the mixed freeze group strategy outperformed those taught using conventional methods. 3) Low-motivation students also showed better reading comprehension when taught with the mixed freeze group strategy compared to conventional methods. 4) There was no significant interaction between the teaching method (mixed freeze group strategy vs. conventional teaching) and student motivation in influencing reading comprehension. This suggests that both teaching strategies can be used effectively regardless of students' motivation levels. Overall, the data indicate that the mixed freeze group strategy is more effective than conventional teaching methods, and that motivation does not significantly impact students' reading comprehension ability in this context.

Keyword: *Mix Freeze Group Strategy, Reading Comprehension Ability, Quasi-experimental, Teaching Strategies.*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji kemampuan pemahaman bacaan mahasiswa yang diajar menggunakan strategi mixed freeze group dan metode pengajaran konvensional. Secara khusus, penelitian ini mengamati pemahaman bacaan mahasiswa yang bermotivasi tinggi dan mahasiswa yang bermotivasi rendah dalam kedua kondisi pengajaran, serta interaksi antara metode pengajaran dan motivasi mahasiswa terhadap pemahaman bacaan. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kuasi-eksperimental dengan struktur faktorial 2x2. Populasi penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa Jurusan Bahasa Inggris. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes dan kuesioner. Temuan dan analisis data menghasilkan kesimpulan berikut: 1) Mahasiswa yang diajar menggunakan strategi mixed freeze group berprestasi lebih baik dalam pemahaman bacaan dibandingkan dengan mereka yang diajar melalui metode

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konvensional. 2) Mahasiswa bermotivasi tinggi yang diajar dengan strategi mixed freeze group mengungguli mereka yang diajar menggunakan metode konvensional. 3) Mahasiswa bermotivasi rendah juga menunjukkan pemahaman bacaan yang lebih baik ketika diajar dengan strategi mixed freeze group dibandingkan dengan metode konvensional. 4) Tidak ada interaksi yang signifikan antara metode pengajaran (strategi mixed freeze group vs. pengajaran konvensional) dan motivasi mahasiswa dalam memengaruhi pemahaman bacaan. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa kedua strategi pengajaran dapat digunakan secara efektif tanpa memandang tingkat motivasi siswa. Secara keseluruhan, data menunjukkan bahwa strategi kelompok beku campuran lebih efektif daripada metode pengajaran konvensional, dan bahwa motivasi tidak berdampak signifikan pada kemampuan pemahaman bacaan siswa dalam konteks ini.

Kata Kunci: Kemampuan Membaca, Kuasi-eksperimen, Strategi Kelompok Campuran Beku, Strategi Pengajaran

Introduction

Reading is an essential skill that all students must acquire, especially in English, as it allows them to access a wealth of information and stay up-to-date with current events. Patel and Jain (2008) argue that reading is even more critical than speaking or writing skills, as it sparks students' interest in discovering new information and can also enhance their speaking and writing abilities. Moreover, reading helps to expand students' vocabulary, enabling them to read more effectively and with greater attention to detail.

However, when reading, students must fully grasp all the components of the text. Comprehension is therefore inseparable from reading skills. Understanding the text is crucial, and comprehension plays a central role in this process. According to Israel and Duffy (2009), comprehension is the core of reading, and students must be able to understand the message within the text to gain a complete understanding of what is being communicated. Without this understanding, students cannot fully engage with the text. In other words, students must be able to interpret all the key indicators within a reading passage.

Furthermore, comprehending a reading text is not an easy task. Students need to understand all the elements of the text, including its vocabulary, to grasp the message effectively. When students are familiar with all the indicators in the text, they will be better equipped to understand its content. In an interview with an English reading lecturer at English Department, the researcher found that third-semester students in the English Department struggled with reading comprehension. The lecturer noted that students exhibited low comprehension levels, had limited vocabulary, and lacked effective reading strategies. Observations

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of third-semester students in the English Department at IAIN Kerinci further confirmed these issues. The researcher found that students' performance in reading comprehension was consistently low, as evidenced by their midterm exam scores across three classes: A, B, and C. It can be seen in the table below:

Table 1 Analyze of Students' Reading Mid-Test Scores at Third Semester of the English department

Scores	Grade	Percentage (%)		
		Class A	Class B	Class C
81 - 100	A	-	9	11
66 - 80	B	9	12	20
56 - 65	C	35	38	37
45 - 55	D	28	35	17
0 - 44	E	28	6	14

(Source: Lecture's Book Mark)

The data above shows that about 28% of the students at class A got E, 28% of students got D, 35% of students got C, only 9% of them got B, and none of the students got A. Then, at class B, 9% of the students got A, 12% of them got B, 38% of the students got C, 35% of them got D, and 6% of the students at class B got E. Meanwhile, at class C, 11% of the students got A, 20% of the students got B, and the highest percentage 37% of the students got C, 17% of the them got D, and 14% of the students at class C got E.

Several factors emerged from the interviews and observations. First, students showed a lack of interest in reading, possibly because they struggled to activate their prior knowledge about the topics discussed and therefore could not effectively explore new information from the texts. Second, students had difficulty understanding the texts they read. They struggled with processing information, making sense of sentences, determining sentence meanings, or even grasping the main ideas of the text. Students also needed extra time to comprehend texts and did not consistently engage with English reading materials, either at home or in class. This lack of engagement, coupled with challenges in completing exercises, may be attributed to ineffective reading strategies.

Block and Pressley (2002) suggest that teachers can improve their ability to teach reading by learning and applying effective strategies in their own reading practice. According to Kagan and Kagan (2009), one such strategy that can be

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effective in teaching reading is the "Mix Freeze Group" method, which is engaging and enjoyable for students.

To address these challenges, the researcher proposes the use of the Mix Freeze Group strategy as a solution. This method is expected to help students better understand the content of reading materials. By applying this strategy, students will likely become more motivated and engaged in their learning. The strategy also provides direct supervision during the learning process, guiding students as they develop their reading skills. Additionally, the effectiveness of the Mix Freeze Group strategy can improve students' auditory processing (comprehension) and their overall classroom behavior.

Methods

This study was a quasi-experimental research. According Arikunto (2005). The goal of this research was to explore the cause-and-effect relationship by comparing one or more experimental groups with one or more control groups. Since it was not feasible to control all relevant variables, the study employed a quasi-experimental method. Specifically, the research used a treatment-by-block design, which is similar to a factorial 2x2 design.

Data collection was conducted through tests and questionnaires. The test was administered as a posttest at the end of the treatment for both the experimental and control groups. The questionnaire data was collected at the beginning of the teaching process. The data was then categorized into two groups: highly motivated students and low-motivated students. This division was made to examine the learning outcomes of students based on their motivation levels.

The data were analyzed using a t-test to assess the first, second, and third hypotheses, in order to determine whether there were significant differences in the scores of high-motivated and low-motivated students between the mixed freeze strategy and conventional teaching methods.

Result and Discussion

In this study, the researcher collected all the necessary data, which included both test results and questionnaire responses. The test was used to assess the students' reading comprehension skills, specifically their ability to understand the text, while the questionnaire measured their motivation levels. The test data were collected after the study had been conducted in both the experimental and control

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groups, whereas the questionnaire data were gathered during the first session of the teaching process. The questionnaire data were then analyzed to categorize students into high-motivation and low-motivation groups for both classes. All the collected data were analyzed to determine the maximum and minimum scores, the mean score (\bar{X}), variance (s), and standard deviation (SD) for each group. The results of the reading comprehension test for both the experimental and control groups are presented in the table below:

Table 2 Result of The Reading Comprehension

Class	N	Maximum score	Minimum score	Mean	Variance	Standard Deviation
Experiment	16	96	56	75,13	80,38	8,97
Control	12	84	40	62,08	95,34	9,76

According to the table above, the highest score on the reading comprehension test for students in the experimental class, who received the treatment using the mixed freeze group strategy, was 96, while the lowest score was 56. The average score was 75.13, the variance was 80.38, and the standard deviation was 8.97. In contrast, for the control class, which used conventional teaching methods, the highest score was 84, the lowest score was 40, the average score was 62.08, the variance was 95.34, and the standard deviation was 9.76.

1. The Result Test of High Motivated Students of Experiment and Control Class

Table 3 Result Test of High Students' Grammar Mastery of News Item Text in Experiment and Control Class

Class	N	Maximum score	Minimum score	Mean	Variance	Standard Deviation
Experiment	6	96	84	90	16	4
Control	7	84	72	77,14	13,83	3,72

Based on the table above, the highest score on the reading comprehension test for high-motivated students in the experimental class, who received the treatment using the mixed freeze group strategy, was 96, while the lowest score was 84. The average score was 90, the variance was 16, and the standard deviation was

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4. In contrast, for the high-motivated students in the control class, who were taught using conventional methods, the highest score was 84, the lowest score was 72, the average score was 77.14, the variance was 13.83, and the standard deviation was 3.72.

2. The Result Test of Low Motivated Students of Experiment and Control Class

Table 4 Result Test of Low Motivated Students 'Grammar Mastery of News Item Text in Experiment and Control Class

Class	N	Maximum score	Minimum score	Mean	Variance	Standard Deviation
Experiment	5	68	56	61,33	16,36	4,04
Control	4	52	40	46,86	13,83	3,72

The table above shows that the highest score on the reading comprehension test for low-motivated students in the experimental class, who received the treatment using the freeze group strategy, was 68, while the lowest score was 56. The average score was 61.33, the variance was 16.36, and the standard deviation was 4.04. In contrast, for the low-motivated students in the control class, who were taught using conventional methods, the highest score was 52, the lowest score was 40, the average score was 46.86, the variance was 13.83, and the standard deviation was 3.72.

The normality test in this research was analyzed by using Lilliefors. The result of test could be seen on table below:

Table 5 Test of Normality in Experiment and Control Classes

Class	Lscore	Ltable	Data distribution
Experiment	0,1352	0,190	Normal
Control	0,1324	0,173	Normal

Based on the table above, the normality test for both classes, conducted using the Lilliefors test, showed that the data were normally distributed. For the experimental class, the L-score was 0.1352, while the L-table value was 0.190. For the control class, the L-score was 0.1324, and the L-table value was 0.173. With an α level of 0.05, it was found that the L-score was less than the L-table in both cases. This indicates that the data for both classes followed a normal distribution.

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Table 6. Test of Normality of High Motivated Students' Reading Comprehension Test in Experiment and Control Classes

Class	Lscore	Ltable	Data Distribution
Experiment	0,1915	0,319	Normal
Control	0,2062	0,300	Normal

The table above shows that the normality test for the reading comprehension of high-motivated students in both classes, conducted using the Lilliefors test, indicated that the data were normally distributed. For the experimental class, the L-score was 0.1915, while the L-table value was 0.319. For the control class, the L-score was 0.2062, and the L-table value was 0.300. With an α level of 0.05, the results showed that the L-score was less than the L-table for both classes, indicating that the data for both groups followed a normal distribution.

Table 7 Test of Normality of Low Motivated Students' Reading Comprehension Test in Experiment and Control Classes

Class	Lscore	Ltable	Data distribution
Experiment class	0,2399	0,319	Normal
Control class	0,208	0,300	Normal

Based on the table above, the normality test for both classes was conducted using the Lilliefors test, which indicated that the data followed a normal distribution. For the experimental class, the Lscore was 0.2399, while the Ltable value was 0.319. For the control class, the Lscore was 0.208, and the Ltable value was 0.300. With a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$, it was found that the L_{score} values were smaller than the L_{table} values, confirming that both classes exhibited a normal distribution.

Test homogeneity for reading comprehension test used F-test with $\alpha=0, 05$. That was; the comparative analysis between the big and small variances to find out the equality among the experiment and control classes.

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a. The Result of Homogeneity Testing of Experiment and Control Class

Table 8 Test Homogeneity of Students' Reading Comprehension Test

Class	Fscore	Ltable	
Experiment and Control	1,19	2,03	Homogen

Based on the table above Fscore= 1, 19 and Ftable= 2, 03 showed that Fscore < Ftable it meant that the variance of sample was homogeneity.

b. The Result of Homogeneity Testing of High Motivated Students

Table 9 Test of Homogeneity of High Motivated Students' Reading Comprehension Ability

Class	Fscore	Ltable	
Experiment and Control	1,16	4, 95	Homogen

Based on the table above Fscore= 1, 16 and Ftable= 4, 95 showed that Fscore < Ftable it meant that the variance of sample was homogeneity.

c. The Result of Homogeneity Testing of Low Motivated Students

Table 10 Test of Homogeneity of Low Motivated Students' Reading Comprehension Ability

Class	Fscore	Ltable	
Experiment and Control	1,18	4, 95	Homogen

Based on the table above Fscore= 1, 18 and Ftable= 4, 95 showed that Fscore < Ftable it meant that the variance of sample was homogeneity.

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d. The Result of Homogeneity Testing for Interaction between Mix Freeze Group Strategy and and Motivation toward Students' Reading Comprehension Ability

Table 11 Test Homogeneity of Four Group Samples

$b_{0,9973} > b_4 0,5761$	Homogeny
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Based on the result of Barlett, it could be seen the score of $b_{0,9973}$ was bigger than $b_4 0,5761$ so H_1 was accepted. It could be concluded that the variance of those four group samples were homogeny.

Due to homogeneity and normality, so the hypothesis testing could be done. In this research, the hypothesis 1, 2, and 3 were tested by using t-test and hypothesis 4 by analysis of variance (anova) 2x2 with formula unweighted mean (Ferguson, 1976).

1. Test of Hypothesis 1

The result of first hypothesis in this research showed that the score of students' Reading comprehension ability which was taught through mix freeze group startegy was higher than that of conventional teaching. As seen on the table below:

Table 12 Result of Hypothesis 1

Classification	Classes	
	Experiment	Control
N	23	25
\bar{x}	75, 13	62, 08
S^2	80, 38	95, 34
S	8, 97	9, 76
t_{score}	4, 89	
t_{table}	1, 684	

The results of the hypothesis testing showed that the Tscore was 4.89, while the Ttable was 1.684, with a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. Since the Tscore exceeded the Ttable ($T_s > T_t$), the hypothesis was accepted. This indicated that students' reading comprehension ability using the Mix Freeze Group Strategy was superior to that achieved through conventional teaching methods.

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2. Test of Hypothesis 2

The results of the second hypothesis revealed that the reading comprehension ability of highly motivated students taught using the Mix Freeze Group Strategy was higher compared to those taught through conventional methods. This is evident from the data presented in the table below:

Table 13 Result of T-Test Score in Experiment and Control Classes

Classification	Classes	
	Experiment	Control
N	6	7
\bar{x}	90	77,14
S^2	16	13,83
S	4	3,72
t_{score}	6,01	
t_{table}	1,796	

Based on Table 28, the Tscore was 6.01 and the Ttable was 1.796, with a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. Since the Tscore was greater than the Ttable ($T_s > T_t$), the hypothesis was accepted. This indicates that the reading comprehension ability of highly motivated students taught using the Mix Freeze Group Strategy was superior to that of students taught through conventional methods.

3. Test of Hypothesis 3

The findings of the third hypothesis in this study indicated that the reading comprehension scores of low-motivated students who were taught using the Mix Freeze Group Strategy were higher compared to those taught through conventional methods. This can be observed in the table below:

Table 14. Result of Hypothesis 3

Classification	Classes	
	Experiment	Control
N	6	7
\bar{x}	61,33	46,86
S^2	16,36	13,83
S	4,04	3,72
t_{score}	6,73	
t_{table}	1,796	

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Based on the table above, the T-score was 6.73 and the T-table was 1.796 with $\alpha = 0.05$. Since the T-score was greater than the T-table ($T_s > T_t$), the hypothesis was accepted. This indicates that the reading comprehension ability of low-motivated students taught using the Mix Freeze Group Strategy was superior to that of students taught with conventional methods.

4. Test of Hypothesis 4

To examine the interaction between the two teaching models and motivation on students' reading comprehension ability, a 2x2 ANOVA was conducted using the Unweighted Means formula. This method was chosen to analyze the differing sample sizes. The results of the analysis are presented in the table below:

Table 15 The Result of ANOVA 2x2

Sum of Variance	Jk	Db	Variance	Fo
Inter-row	5603,631	1	5603,631	278, 25
Inter-column	1204,44	1	1204,44	59, 81
Interaction	4,16025	1	4,16025	0,21
Within sel	443, 05	22	20,1386	

The third row in the ANOVA table above shows that the F_o value was 0.21, while the F_t value was 4.30. Since $F_o < F_t$, it can be concluded that there was no interaction between the teaching models and motivation in relation to students' reading comprehension ability.

Furthermore, the difference in reading comprehension ability between high- and low-motivated students taught using the Mix Freeze Group Strategy was 75.67 (90 - 61.33), while for those taught using conventional methods, the difference was 62 (77.14 - 46.86). These scores indicate a significant difference between the two groups, as shown in the table below:

Table 16. Average scores of Experiments and Control Class

Model of Teaching Motivation	Mix Group Strategy	Freeze	Conventional Teaching
High		90	77,14
Low		61,33	46,86
Average Score		75,67	62

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Based on the average scores of students reading comprehension ability presented above, it is evident that one of the strategies was effective. This was confirmed when the data was displayed in a chart, where two ordinal lines were shown instead of a diagonal line. This suggests that improving students' reading comprehension ability can be achieved through the Mix Freeze Group Strategy.

Discussion

This study was conducted over eight sessions with the experimental class and seven sessions with the control class. During the first session, all students completed a motivation questionnaire to assess their initial motivation to learn. Following this, different treatments were applied to the two groups. The experimental class received the Mix Freeze Group Strategy, while the control class was taught using conventional methods. After the treatments, both classes took a test to evaluate the effectiveness of each approach. The results indicated that students in the experimental group, who were taught using the Mix Freeze Group Strategy, scored higher than those in the control group who were taught using conventional methods.

In the first activity using the Mix Freeze Group Strategy, students were not very engaged, as they were still adjusting to the new approach. Their records showed that only a few texts were fully understood, and they made several mistakes in identifying words. However, by the second activity, students showed improvement. They were more motivated and made fewer mistakes when identifying words. The number of texts they understood also increased, and this progress continued in the third and fourth activities. By this point, students were highly motivated and expressed a desire for the teacher to use this strategy for all types of texts.

Before the treatment, the researcher assessed students' motivation using the motivation questionnaire. The data was categorized into two groups: high motivation and low motivation students. Based on the motivation scores of both classes, students were classified into three levels: high, middle, and low motivation. In the experimental class, six students were classified as highly motivated, while another six students were categorized as having low motivation. The remaining students were categorized as having middle motivation.

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Both high and low motivation students received the treatment, and were tested afterward. The average test scores revealed that high-motivation students performed better than low-motivation students. However, analysis of the Mix Freeze Group Strategy results showed that high-motivation students did not always score higher than low-motivation students. Furthermore, the motivation scores for both classes were nearly identical, with the experimental class scoring 2.94 and the control class scoring 2.98. Similarly, the mean discrimination test results indicated that the motivation levels in both classes were comparable.

After receiving the treatment, there was a noticeable difference in the students' reading comprehension scores. The experimental class, which was taught using the Mix Freeze Group Strategy, had a higher mean score (75.13) compared to the control class (62.08). Reading is a crucial activity in language learning, not only for acquiring information but also for broadening the learner's mind. Reading comprehension helps students expand their knowledge. Conventional reading instruction, however, often results in passive learning, with students sitting still and focusing only on reading exercises without much engagement. This can lead to boredom and disengagement. Therefore, teachers must find ways to make learning more engaging, student-centered, and interactive.

The Mix Freeze Group Strategy is an effective teaching method that encourages active participation. It motivates students by allowing them to move around, find new partners, and discuss the material. This approach breaks the monotony of traditional reading exercises, enabling students to refresh their minds, engage in discussions, and absorb the material more effectively. As a result, the Mix Freeze Group Strategy positively influences students' ability to understand narrative texts in English. The researcher conducted this study to evaluate the success of this strategy in improving students' reading comprehension.

The analysis of the experimental and control class scores revealed a significant difference. The t-test calculation yielded a t-value of 2.614, while the critical t-value was 1.67 (at a 0.05 significance level and 48 degrees of freedom). Since the t-value was higher than the critical t-value, the difference between the two groups was statistically significant. Thus, it can be concluded that the Mix Freeze Group Strategy had a significant effect on the students' reading comprehension of narrative texts at SMPN 28 Kerinci.

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The researcher drew inspiration for this study from two previous research studies. The first, by Mulia (2010), titled "The Use of Cooperative Learning 'Think-Pair-Share' in Teaching Reading Descriptive Text", examined whether the "Think-Pair-Share" strategy was more effective than conventional teaching methods. The study found that the t-value (28.145) was higher than the critical t-value (1.992), indicating that Think-Pair-Share was effective in teaching reading. The second study by Wulandari (2011) entitled "Improving Students' Reading Comprehension in Descriptive Text through Cooperative Script Method", focused on improving reading comprehension using the Cooperative Script Method. The study, conducted in two cycles, showed an increase in students' scores from 63.75 in the first cycle to 76.24 in the second, demonstrating the effectiveness of the Cooperative Script Method in improving students' reading comprehension.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings and data analysis, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Students' reading comprehension ability is better when taught using the Mix Freeze Groups Strategy compared to conventional teaching methods.
2. High-motivation students' reading comprehension ability is improved more effectively through the Mix Freeze Groups Strategy than through conventional teaching.
3. Low-motivation students' reading comprehension ability also shows better improvement with the Mix Freeze Groups Strategy than with conventional teaching.
4. There is no significant interaction between the Mix Freeze Groups Strategy, conventional teaching, and students' motivation in relation to their reading comprehension ability. This suggests that both teaching methods can be applied regardless of students' initial motivation levels. The data indicates that the Mix Freeze Groups Strategy is more effective than conventional teaching. Thus, students' reading comprehension ability is more strongly influenced by the teaching method than by their motivation.

In conclusion, the Mix Freeze Groups Strategy proves to be an effective approach for improving students' reading comprehension skills. Therefore, it is recommended that

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English teachers use the Mix Freeze Groups Strategy in their teaching, particularly for reading comprehension.

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