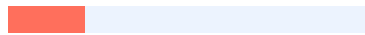# Plagiarism Checker X - Report

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Reading Together, Learning Together: The Impact of Literature Circles on Student Engagement in Reading

Pratama Irwin Talenta1), Ulya Himawati2)

1Faculty of Economics, Business, and Humanities, Universitas Nasional Karangturi Semarang (author 1)

email: pratama.irwin@unkartur.ac.id

2Faculty of Islamic Studies, 27 Universitas Wahid Hasyim (author 2)

email: ulyahimawati@unwahas.ac.id

Write your phone number here (correspondence author only), ex: 081226979574

Abstract

This study aims to provide educators with evidence-based insights that can inform instructional practices and ultimately enhance students' overall reading experiences. The implementation of literature circles as an instructional strategy has garnered significant attention within educational research, particularly in the domain of promoting student engagement in reading. This study uses a mixed-methods research design that combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches. This approach allows for a comprehensive exploration of the impact of literature circles on student engagement in reading while capturing both numerical trends and nuanced insights. The findings of this research illuminate the transformative potential of literature circles as a pedagogical strategy that positively influenced students' engagement and enthusiasm. The researcher leverages the insights gleaned from this study to design and implement literature circles that foster collaborative learning, engagement, and intrinsic motivation. In conclusion, this study underscores the value 32 of literature circles as a tool for educators aiming to create compelling and motivating reading experiences. By embracing the collaborative essence of

literature circles and harnessing the potential of role assignments, the educators can guide students on a journey of exploration, discovery, and ownership within the realm of literature.

Keywords: Literature Circles, Reading, Student Engagement

1. Introduction

Reading is a fundamental skill for academic success because university students need to comprehend an extensive amount of information in a short time to achieve their academic goals (Klimova & Zamborova, 2020). In today's educational landscape, fostering a genuine love for reading and cultivating strong reading comprehension skills among students are essential goals. According to Kosonen (2019) reading offers an opportunity to become close to another person, to be absorbed in another person's words, experience the world in another person's shoes, and see through someone else's eyes. However, educators often grapple with the challenge of maintaining students' engagement in the reading process. The process of reading is a significant and debated aspect of education. Considerable research has been conducted on reading in both one's native language and a foreign language, exploring challenges related to reading in a foreign language, as well as the characteristics and concerns linked to these languages. Traditional classroom approaches to reading instruction can sometimes fall short of fully igniting students' enthusiasm for books and textual exploration. In response, the educators have explored innovative pedagogical strategies to enhance student engagement in reading.

One such strategy that has gained significant attention is the implementation of literature circles. Literature circles are widely used in language teaching to promote active learning, develop communication skills and encourage critical thinking, creativity and self-motivation (Ivic, V., & Sostaric, B., 2020). Literature circles, also known as book clubs, are

structured reading groups in which students come together to read, discuss, and analyze a shared text. According to Kaowiwattanakul (2020) Literature circles are peer-led discussions of written texts in which the students, especially L2 learners, express their opinions and ideas about the story they have read in English. Each member of the literature circle takes on a specific role, such as a discussion leader, summarizer, vocabulary master, or connector. In the Literature circle, the students are not passive learners who receive knowledge but active learners who have ideas and knowledge (Rahman, A., 2022). This collaborative approach to reading not only encourages students to actively engage with the text but also promotes critical thinking, communication, collaboration skills, and enthusiasm.

As educators strive to create meaningful and enriching reading experiences for their students, it is imperative to understand the potential benefits and nuances of literature circles. By investigating the relationship between literature circles and student engagement, this study aims to provide educators with evidence-based insights that can inform instructional practices and ultimately enhance students' overall reading experiences. The implementation of literature circles as an instructional strategy has garnered significant attention within educational research, particularly in the domain of promoting student engagement in reading.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Literature Circles

A study conducted by Daniels (2002) revealed that literature circles create opportunities for students to share their interpretations, ask questions, and engage in meaningful discussions about the text. The research study aims to delve into the impact of literature circles on student engagement in reading. By exploring the extent to which literature circles enhance these factors, as well as investigating how different roles within literature circles contribute to students' sense of ownership and enthusiasm for reading, this study seeks to contribute valuable insights to the field of educational research. The rationale for this study

is rooted in the need to address the prevailing challenges of maintaining student interest in reading as they progress through their academic journeys. Literature circles offer a unique approach that blends collaborative learning, student choice, and active participation, potentially yielding a more student-centered and engaging reading experience.

Other researchers, Zhao & Christison (2020) conducted a study, they concluded that literature circles are [1] effective for the development of literacy skills for linguistically and culturally diverse groups of language learners. While the methods for implementing literature circles may vary depending on the age group of learners, they can be applied to individuals as young as six years old and extend to adults pursuing literacy skills in a second or foreign language (SFL). In literature circles instruction, students are encouraged to read texts collaboratively within small groups to collectively construct meaning. Within these student-led discussion groups, each student is assigned a role aligned with a specific cognitive task and a reading strategy. Furthermore, learners receive explicit guidance, in the form of teacher-prepared role sheets, to assist them in fulfilling their roles and enhancing their language skills. Consequently, these student-led discussions not only facilitate the collective comprehension of the text but also foster the development of language skills associated with their designated roles.

The findings of the studies above revealed that Literature circles pedagogy also encompasses the teacher's provision of explicit instruction at the beginning and end of each class. The teacher assumes the crucial role of a facilitator, supporting students in their interactions with both their peers and the text, particularly when learners are acquiring the skills needed to work autonomously in groups. Given the growing number of young language learners in multilingual and culturally diverse settings, and the increasing number of young learners simultaneously developing literacy skills in their first language (L1) and an SFL with distinct writing systems, there is a pressing need for instructional approaches that address literacy skill development across various orthographic systems.

2.2. Reading skill

Reading skills encompass specific principles and theories that aid learners in attaining reading comprehension. According to Barber & Klauda (2020) successful reading comprehension demands complex cognitive skills, and, consequently, motivation to make meaning from text. The act of reading demands ongoing practice, growth, and enhancement. Reading necessitates both creativity and critical examination. According to Din (2020) critical reading means reacting critically to what is being read. When tackling a specific text in the target language, learners must engage their cognitive processes to uncover answers to reading assessments. Reading is important for several reasons (Rustamova, 2023). Reading skills refer to the abilities and strategies individuals use to understand and interpret written text effectively (Gunning, T. G., 2012). These skills are essential for acquiring knowledge, communicating, and participating in various aspects of daily life. There are several key reading skills, including: 1) Decoding, it involves the ability to translate written words into spoken language. It encompasses recognizing letters, understanding the sounds they represent, and blending those sounds to read words. 2) Phonics, it is the understanding of the relationship between letters (graphemes) and the sounds (phonemes) they make. It helps individuals decode and pronounce words accurately. 3) Vocabulary, these skills involve knowing the meaning of words and their usage. A strong vocabulary enhances comprehension by allowing readers to grasp the nuances of text. 4) Comprehension, it is the ability to understand the meaning of a text. It involves making connections between words, sentences, and paragraphs to extract the main ideas and details. 5) Fluency, it is the ability to read smoothly and at an appropriate rate. Fluent readers can read text without pausing excessively and with proper intonation. 6) Critical Thinking, it enables readers to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information from a text. This includes making inferences, drawing conclusions, and assessing the author's purpose and perspective. 7) Context Clues, the readers use context clues to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words or phrases based on the surrounding text. 8) Summarization, it involves condensing the main ideas and key details of a text into a brief and coherent overview. 9) Text Structure Awareness, the understanding how different

types of texts (e.g., narratives, expository texts) are structured helps readers anticipate content and organize information. 10) Active Reading, this strategy involves annotating texts, asking questions, and engaging with the material to deepen understanding and retention. 11) Reading Comprehension Strategies, these include strategies like making predictions, visualizing, making connections, and monitoring comprehension as readers progress through a text. 12) Reading Speed, the readers can adjust their reading speed based on the complexity and purpose of the text. Skimming and scanning are techniques used to quickly locate information (National Reading Panel., 2000). Developing and honing these reading skills is a lifelong process. Effective reading instruction focuses on teaching these skills progressively and providing opportunities for practice. Additionally, cultivating a love for reading and encouraging regular reading habits can significantly enhance these skills over time.

2.3. Student Engagement in Reading

Students need to be engaged when learning to read. Without being actively engaged, students are less likely to gain what is being taught during reading instruction (Lekwa et al., 2019, as cited in Graybeal, 2022). Student engagement was studied on how the students were watching attentively and listening to the teacher as well as how well directions were followed (Graybeal, 2022). Student engagement in reading refers to the level of active participation and interest that students display when reading texts or literature. It is a critical aspect of effective education because engaged students are more likely to comprehend, analyze, and retain what they read. Engaged readers are also more motivated to continue reading and exploring various types of texts. Some ways to foster student engagement in reading, such as: 1) Choice of Reading Material, this activity allows the students to choose books or texts that align with their interests and reading levels. Guthrie and Davis (2003) suggested that choice in reading materials increases student engagement. For instance, if a student is passionate about fantasy fiction, they may be more engaged in reading "Harry Potter" by J.K. Rowling. 2) Discussion and Interaction, encouraging students to participate in book clubs, literature circles, or

classroom discussions about the texts they're reading. Vygotsky's social development theory emphasizes the importance of social interaction in learning, which includes discussing texts (Vygotsky, 1978). These interactions allow students to share their thoughts and engage in critical thinking. 3) Real-World Relevance, connecting the reading material to real-life situations or current events can make it more engaging. For instance, discussing a novel's themes in the context of contemporary issues can capture students' interest. The concept of making learning relevant is a fundamental principle in educational psychology (Marzano, 2003). 4) Activities and Projects, assigning creative projects related to the reading, such as writing book reviews, creating visual representations, or even staging short plays based on the text. The use of creative activities to enhance engagement aligns with constructivist learning theories (Piaget, 1973). 5) Technology and Multimedia, incorporating digital tools, audiobooks, or multimedia resources to provide a variety of ways to engage with the material. For example, students can listen to an audiobook or watch a film adaptation of a novel. Research has shown that multimedia elements can enhance comprehension and engagement (Mayer, 2001). 6) Intrinsic Motivation, encouraging students to find their own intrinsic motivation for reading, whether it's the joy of discovering a new world through books or the satisfaction of mastering a challenging text. Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) posits that intrinsic motivation, driven by personal interest and satisfaction, leads to higher engagement and learning outcomes. By incorporating these strategies and considering individual student preferences and needs, educators can enhance student engagement in reading, ultimately promoting a love for literature and improving reading comprehension skills.

Then, based on the background on the study above, a conclusion can be drawn to provide satisfactory answer to the research questions of the study. The research questions in this study were:

1. To what extent do literature circles enhance student engagement in reading?

2. How do different roles within literature circles contribute to students' sense of ownership

and enthusiasm for reading?

3. Research Method

This study uses a mixed-methods 16 research design that combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches. In a sense, more insight into a problem is to be gained from mixing or integration of the quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2009). This approach allows for a comprehensive exploration of the impact of literature circles on student engagement in reading while capturing both numerical trends and nuanced insights. Also, according to Halcomb & Hickman (2015) the opportunity to combine qualitative and quantitative components can be helpful in explaining or exploring findings in a way that can directly inform their translation into usual care. The study involved 100 students from 1st – 8th semester of Universitas Nasional Karangturi Semarang and Universitas Wahid Hasyim, selected through random sampling. The participants had varying levels of reading proficiency.

In data collection, a pre- and post-assessment survey were administered to participants to measure their initial engagement related to reading. The survey included Likert-scale items 2 and open-ended questions, capturing aspects such as students' self-perceived engagement and attitudes toward reading. Participant observations was conducted during literature circle sessions to capture the dynamics of discussions, collaboration, and student interactions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of participants to gain deeper insights into their experiences with literature circles, role assignments, and feelings of ownership 6 and enthusiasm for reading.

The interview took place during the class sessions. The participants were presented with a series of questions. The following questions were as delineated below:

Part A: Demographic Information

1. What is your grade level?

2. How frequently do you engage in reading for pleasure outside of class?

3. How comfortable do you feel discussing and sharing your thoughts about books with

your peers?

Part B: Engagement in Reading

4. How engaged do you feel when participating in literature circles?

5. Before participating in literature circles, how motivated were you to read assigned texts?

6. After participating in literature circles, do you find yourself looking forward to the reading discussions?

Part C: Role Assignments and Ownership

7. Did assuming a specific role (e.g., discussion leader, summarizer) within the literature circle discussions influence your level of engagement with the text? Please explain.

8. How did your role assignment contribute to your sense of ownership and involvement in the literature circle discussions?

9. Do you feel more motivated to actively participate in discussions when you have a designated role? Why or why not?

Part D: Overall Experience

10. In your opinion, how have literature circles impacted your overall interest in reading? Please provide specific examples.

11. If you could describe the experience of participating in literature circles in one word, what would it be?

12. Do you believe that literature circles are an effective way to encourage students to read and engage with texts? Why or why not?

Part E: Additional Comments

13. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences with literature circles and their impact on your engagement in reading?

In data analysis, pre- and post-assessment survey responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics and paired-sample t-tests to identify changes in engagement before and after participation in literature circles. The participant observations were analyzed

using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns, themes, and interactions within literature circle sessions. Interview transcripts were analyzed using a similar thematic analysis approach to uncover participants' perceptions, experiences, and insights regarding their engagement in reading. The convergence of quantitative and qualitative data enabled triangulation, enhancing the credibility and validity of the study's findings. By cross-referencing the results from both data sources, a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of literature circles on student engagement in reading were achieved.

4. Result and Discussion

Research Question 1: To what extent do literature circles enhance student engagement in reading?

The quantitative analysis of pre- and post-assessment survey data revealed a significant positive shift in students' self-reported engagement related to reading after participating in literature circles. Prior to engaging in literature circles, a majority of participants reported moderate to high levels of engagement (70.2%) in reading. However, following their involvement in literature circles, the figure increased noticeably, with 87.4% of participants reporting elevated engagement and 80.9% indicating higher enthusiasm. It indicated a meaningful increase in engagement post-literature circles.

Figure 1. Students' Engagement in Reading

The qualitative data further illuminated this finding. During participant observations, lively and dynamic discussions were observed, with students actively sharing their interpretations, posing thought-provoking questions, and expressing enthusiasm for the selected texts. Interviews provided valuable insights into the factors contributing to enhanced the engagement and enthusiasm. The students described how the collaborative nature of literature circles made reading more interactive and enjoyable. They

noted that the sense of community and shared exploration motivated them to invest more effort into understanding the text. The findings of this study offered valuable insights into the impact of literature circles on student engagement in reading. The purpose of literature circles is to increase student engagement, understanding, and academic performance (Davis & Bush, 2021). The observed increase in engagement suggests that literature circles provided a promising avenue for revitalizing reading experiences in educational settings. By fostering a collaborative and interactive approach to reading, literature circles empowered students to actively participate in the learning process. This study contributed to the growing body of research on literature circles and their potential to enrich reading experiences. The findings highlight the transformative power of literature circles in promoting engagement and a deeper connection to the world of literature.

Literature circles had emerged as a pedagogical approach that holds promise for revitalizing student engagement in the realm of reading. The concept of literature circles revolved around collaborative reading experiences where students come together to explore and discuss a shared text. This interactive approach was designed to go beyond the traditional solitary act of reading and transform it into a communal endeavor that nurtures engagement. One of the core tenets of literature circles is the creation of a space where students have the opportunity to voice their interpretations, ask questions, and actively engage with the material. The interactive nature of literature circle discussions serves as a catalyst for student engagement, as they navigate through the complexities of the text collectively. This engagement was further amplified by the intrinsic motivation that stems from sharing insights and responding to peers' perspectives. Within literature circles, students assumed different roles, each with its unique responsibilities. For instance, the discussion leader guides the conversation, the summarizer presents key points, and the vocabulary master clarifies unfamiliar terms. These roles contribute to a sense of shared ownership over the learning process, compelling students to be active contributors to the group's exploration of the text. As students engage with their roles and

interact with their peers, they develop a deeper connection to the reading material, heightening their overall engagement.

Literature circles also tapped into the power of choice, as students often had the freedom to select texts that resonate with their interests. This autonomy to choose aligns with the principles of intrinsic motivation, as students were more likely to be engaged when the content appeals to their personal preferences. As a result, literature circles provided an avenue for students to exercise agency in their reading choices, leading to heightened engagement and investment in the reading experience. The impact of literature circles on engagement went beyond the immediate discussions; it extends to the development of critical thinking skills. When students collaboratively dissected and analyzed the text, they were compelled to think critically about character motivations, plot nuances, and thematic elements. This cognitive engagement not only enhanced their comprehension but also sparked intellectual curiosity, further nurturing their engagement in the reading process. In essence, literature circles presented a dynamic approach to reading instruction that embraces interaction, collaboration, and student agency. By fostering an environment where engagement was nurtured through shared exploration, peer interaction, and active participation, literature circles had the potential to rejuvenate student engagement in reading, making the act of reading not just a task, but a vibrant and meaningful learning experience.

Top of Form

Research Question 2: How do different roles within literature circles contribute to students' sense of ownership and enthusiasm for reading?

The role assignments within literature circles also had implications for instructional practices. Educators can capitalize on the benefits of assigning distinct roles to students, which not only enhanced their comprehension of the text but also nurtured their sense of ownership and enthusiasm for reading. These findings underscore the potential for literature circles to serve as a catalyst for transforming reading from a solitary

activity into a vibrant communal endeavor. Also, they assigned within literature circles emerged as a crucial factor in fostering students' sense of ownership and enthusiasm for reading. Analysis of the qualitative data from interviews indicated that students perceived their assigned roles, such as discussion leader or summarizer, as opportunities to actively contribute to the group's understanding of the text. Many participants expressed that these roles empowered them to take responsibility for their learning and engage deeply with the material. Moreover, observations during literature circle sessions highlighted the collaborative and supportive nature of role interactions. The students who assumed roles like discussion leaders demonstrated increased confidence in guiding discussions, while those in summarizer roles felt a sense of responsibility to present accurate and concise summaries. This collaborative dynamic encouraged students to become more invested in their roles, thereby enhancing their engagement and motivation to contribute effectively.

Literature circles had been lauded for their ability to enhance student engagement in reading by providing a structured platform for active participation and collaborative learning. This interactive approach fostered a sense of ownership over learning, promoting engagement beyond the mere consumption of content. The role of student choice within literature circles had been recognized as a key factor in promoting motivation. Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) emphasized that when students are given the autonomy to select texts aligned with their interests, they are more likely to exhibit intrinsic motivation for reading. Literature circles amplify this aspect by allowing students to collectively choose texts, enabling them to explore genres and themes that resonate with their preferences. The distribution of roles within literature circles has been investigated for its impact on student collaboration and engagement. Johnson and Johnson (2009) noted that assigning specific roles, such as discussion leader or summarizer, creates a division of labor that encourages active participation and accountability. The collaborative nature of literature circles fosters a supportive learning environment where students learnt from their peers and developed valuable communication skills. Literature circles have demonstrated

potential in enhancing students' cognitive engagement and critical thinking skills. Klinger and Vaughn (1999) reported that literature circle discussions stimulate higher-order thinking processes, as students analyze character motivations, infer meanings, and construct evidence-based interpretations. Engaging in such analytical discussions contributed to a deeper understanding of texts and cultivates a sense of intellectual curiosity. Beyond immediate engagement, literature circles had been explored for their potential to cultivate lasting reading habits. A longitudinal study by McConachie, Hall, and Reschly (2006) found that students who participated in literature circles exhibited sustained interest in reading over time. The collaborative and enjoyable nature of literature circles contributes to positive reading experiences that extend beyond the classroom. The literature reviewed underscores the multifaceted benefits of literature circles in enhancing student engagement and motivation in reading. From fostering collaborative learning to nurturing intrinsic motivation, literature circles offer a promising avenue for revitalizing reading experiences. Literature circles encourage collaboration among readers. Group discussions stimulate diverse interpretations and perspectives, leading to a richer understanding of the text. Also, Literature circles promote active engagement with texts, allowing readers to discuss, analyze, and clarify their understanding of the material. This leads to improved comprehension of complex literary works. Participants in literature circles develop critical thinking skills by examining characters, themes, symbols, and plot elements. They learn to question and evaluate the author's choices and viewpoints, fostering deeper insights into the text. However, gaps in understanding remain, particularly concerning the nuanced impact of different roles within literature circles.

5. Conclusion (and Suggestion)

This study aimed to investigate the impact of literature circles on student engagement in reading, with a specific emphasis on how distinct roles within literature circles contribute to students' sense of ownership and enthusiasm for reading. The findings of this research illuminate the transformative potential of literature circles as a pedagogical strategy that

positively influences students' reading experiences and attitudes.

The implications of this research extend to both educators and researchers in the education field. Educators can leverage the insights gleaned from this study to design and implement literature circles that foster collaborative learning, engagement, and intrinsic motivation. The dynamic interplay between role assignments and heightened ownership underscores the potential of literature circles to not only enhance reading skills but also nurture a lifelong passion for literature. Future research could further delve into the sustainability of the observed enhancements in engagement over extended timeframes and explore the adaptability of literature circle experiences to other subject domains. In conclusion, this study underscores the value of literature circles as a tool for educators aiming to create compelling and motivating reading experiences. By embracing the collaborative essence of literature circles and harnessing the potential of role assignments, educators can guide students on a journey of exploration, discovery, and ownership within the realm of literature. As we strive to cultivate a generation of enthusiastic readers and astute critical thinkers, literature circles emerge as a promising avenue for transformative pedagogy and enriched learning experiences.

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