Original Article

Comic strips media toward students' reading ability

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to know the influence of comic strips as media on students' reading ability of narrative text and to improve students' reading ability. By applying this media, students were active and the teaching-learning process was effective. This media helped the students easier in answering questions and understand vocabulary in a text. The objective of the research was to know the influence of comic strips as media on students' reading ability of narrative text. In this research, the writer used the experimental method. The writer got the result that Ha was accepted. It was obtained that t_{test} = 3.10, t_{table} for α = 0.05 was 2.00 and for α=0.01 was 2.66 ($3.10 \geq 2.00 \leq 2.66$). Hence, Ha was accepted. It meant that there was a significant influence of using the comic strip as media on students' reading ability in the eighth class of SMPN 1 Abung Selatan. Moreover, the average score of students' reading ability who learn reading through comic strips was higher than those who learn reading through direct instruction. It was $58.96 \geq 52.81$. Based on the result above, it is clear that comic strips can improve students' reading ability.

Keywords: Comic strips media, narrative text, reading ability

INTRODUCTION

In the modern era, many people have new habits when they are on traveling such as reading books, watching movies, and listening to music. One of those habits is reading. We know that there are two kinds of reading, extensive reading, and intensive reading. For this reason, reading skills are required for everyone, especially Indonesian students. Because through reading, students can get a lot of information that suits their needs and purpose of reading. Reading is one of the important skills of language. From reading, we can get information and knowledge from a reading text. Without mastering a reading skill, automatically the students will not understand English teaching at all. Reading is seen as an important part of language skills. Students can develop other language skills such as speaking and writing through reading.[1]

As the writer explained above, basically reading can be of two types: Extensive and intensive, and the idea is to impart some skills needed for both. Teaching reading skills could be easy when taught with nuances and strategies with continuous practice.[2] Extensive reading is the reading process of longer easier texts for an extended period without a breakdown of comprehension, feeling overwhelmed, or the need to take breaks. Extensive reading involves learners reading texts for enjoyment and developing general reading comprehension. Intensive reading is having learners read extensively with specific learning goals and tasks. The writer applied the strategy of using fun media to upgrade the students' reading ability, so the students did not realize that they learn the materials intensively due to using fun media.

The writer found that the students have difficulty in the learning process. The students lack the motivation to master a reading skill. Motivation is seen as an impulse of the will cause a person to do an act to achieve certain goals. Motivation is very diverse.[3] One of them is motivation in the realm of learning. They also lack bored when

they read the material for understanding the topic. The student should be taught using a kind of interesting technique method. Hence, besides the need to motivate, they also need fun media to improve their reading skill, named comic strips in teaching reading. In her journal, he described that the teaching media

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can overcome the obstacles that occur in the learning process, in addition to the existence of teaching media can stimulate the thoughts, feelings, attention, and interest of students to be active in learning so that the learning process can run more effectively and efficiently achieve the intended target.[4]

A comic strip is defined in this study as a series of pictures inside boxes that tell a story. Among visual genres, comic strips catch many researchers' attention, because they are communicated, popular, accessible, and readable, and they combine esthetic perception with intellectual pursuit. Comic strips communicate using two major media words and images a somewhat arbitrary separation, because comic strips' expressive potential lies in skillfully employing words and images together.

Based on the preliminary research at SMPN 1 Abung Selatan, the writer found that students' reading ability needs to be improved. They found difficulties in comprehending reading text. Besides that, the writer also found that the teachers were confused about using fun media as the teaching medium in teaching reading.

Based on the background of the problem above, the writer is interested to improve students' reading ability using Comic Strip in teaching reading. Comic Strips were teaching media used in teaching reading, in which students were asked to improve their reading ability. Therefore, the writer proposed research entitled: "Comic Strip media toward students' reading ability at the eighth class of SMPN 1 Abung Selatan."

FRAME OF THEORY

The Concept of Language
A language is a tool for communication. Using language, people can communicate with other people and make relationships with others. Language can be symbols, signs, verbal, and other kinds. Language can be described as a means of communication that the user or language wants to do and express a feeling of humanity. That is a system of the arbitrary vocal symbol used for human communication. It is very important to communicate in society. It is supported other author, language is a system of arbitrary, vocal symbols that permit all people in a given culture, or other people who have learned the system of that culture, to communicate or to interact.[5] Based on the theories above, it is clear that language has an important role in our lives and the function of language is a system in given culture to communicate or interact to transfer messages between two or more individuals.

In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language. However, English is the first foreign language in the education of Indonesia. It is learned by children from school up to college. Other researcher explained that a foreign language is a

language studied in a daily environment, where it is not the primary vehicle for daily interaction and where input in that language is restricted.[6] Language learning is functionally a learning process that emphasizes more on students to learn for use language concerning the language's function as a communication means.[7]

Language is systematic means of communicating ideas of feeling by the use of conventional signs, sounds, gestures, or marks having understood meanings. It means to comprehend or understand the language, which can be through sign languages such as sound and gesture. There are many ways to reach the goal that is suitable with the condition of English as a foreign language teachers should be able to manage the class when teaching and learning take place. The students were encouraged to get interested in learning English by doing exciting activities in the learning process.

Design of approaches and methods of language teaching should be considered such as:
a) The objective of a method
b) Selected language content and organization
c) The types of learning tasks and teaching activities
d) The role of the learner
e) The role of the teacher
f) The role of instructional materials.[8]

Considering by design proposed, it is hoped that teaching English as a foreign language in Indonesia will be reached the aim of the curriculum. The students can use English as daily communication in their life fluently. Hence, language is very important to us, and language is also a tool for helping people concerning other people surrounding using language to get something we want.

The Concept of Reading
In learning English, there are four skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Reading is one of the skills that should be taught to students. Reading is a process, where the reader gets an imagination about what the writer writes. Many people are lazy to read books, they do have not time to read. They do have not time to read. The students still get difficulties in their reading. Reading helps us get information, and knowledge from letters and words as entertainment. Reading is considered an important aspect due to its valuable benefits in developing knowledge. Reading is also considered an important skill for second language learning.[9]

In addition, reading is the ability to draw meaning from the printed page and interpret this information appropriately.[10] The construction of meaning involves the reader connecting information from the written message with previous knowledge to arrive at meaning and understanding.[11] It means that by reading, the readers can get a piece of new knowledge about and general language from the word, they can understand and

comprehend the idea and meaning from the reading text and also can draw pieces of information from the text.

Reading is a process shaped partly by the text, partly by the reader's background, and partly by the situation in the reading. Reading an academic text does not simply involve finding information on the text itself. Rather, it is a process of working with the text. When reading an academic text, the reader recreates the meaning of the text, together with the author. In this sense, reading is also a productive skill in that we are both receiving information and transmitting it (even if only to ourselves).[12]

Reading is a process to get information and knowledge, by reading we can improve our comprehension and get a lot of information. By reading, a lot someone is clever, because he/she knows the information from what they have read. Reading is so much a part of daily life for those of us who live in literature communicates that much of the time we hardly consider either the purposes or processes involved

The Concept of Teaching Reading

There are three-step of teach reading, they are: analyzing the students' interest, selecting reading materials, and method of teaching reading. A quality individual teacher is integral to the success of foreign language students. Teachers need to be passionate about their work. The teacher should view themselves as facilitators and help each student discover what works best.

Teachers control the conditions of reading by instructing, explaining, and illustrating vocabulary, grammar, and sentence formation, teaching reading strategies, and testing students' comprehension in the hope to help students to learn English, which turns reading into a process of detailed study, memorization, analysis, and guessing.[13]

In reading strategy, there are some effective ways to help students improve their reading comprehension, such as:
1. Previewing a text
2. Summarizing
3. Learning new words through the analysis of word steam and affixes
4. Using context to maintain comprehension
5. Recognizing text organization
6. Generating appropriate questions about the text
7. Clarifying text meaning
8. Repairing miscomprehension.[6]

Based on the statement above, the writer concluded that reading is simply one of many ways. When working with reading tasks in class, the teacher shows students the strategies that will work best for the reading purpose and type of the text. In teaching reading, the teachers must have entertainment to attract students' interest and motivation. Reading teachers must be creative in choosing the way in teaching reading. When the

teachers have good tricks or strategy in teaching reading, the students will enjoy and are interested in learning reading. The students will enjoy and are interested in learning reading. In learning reading, the students will get information.

The Concept of Comic Strips

Comic strips are a combination of a cartoon with a storyline, laid out in a series of pictorial panels across a page and concerning a continuous character or set of characters, whose thoughts and dialogues are indicated through "balloons" containing written speech. The comic strip form can be employed to convey a variety of messages. According to other researchers, comic strips are short-form comics that generally consist of three to eight panels. They usually appear in newspapers.[14] In the comic strip, generally, the only unit of encapsulation is the panel.

Basically, a comic strip has the same essential elements as a comic book page. Those elements are panel, lettering, word balloon, thought balloon, caption, sound effect, borders, and gutters.[15] Panel is the most basic element of a comic book page. It is defined as a single image in a sequence of images. It has various types such as square, round, triangular, and the like. Here, borderless images can also be classified as panels though most comic book pages are made up of panels bounded by borders. The second element is lettering. It is any text on a comic book page. Bold lettering is used to emphasize important words, large letters in the dialogue represent shouting, and small dialogue lettering usually stands for whispering. The third one is the balloon; there are two kinds of the balloon and the thought balloon. A word balloon is a bordered shape containing dialogue, usually with a tail that points to the speaker. Meanwhile, a thought balloon is a bordered shape containing a character's unspoken thoughts. The fourth element is a caption. It is often for narration transitional text. The fifth is a sound effect. They are stylized lettering that represents noises within a scene. Most of them are floating letters. The next are borders. They can be defined as lines that enclose panels, balloons, and captions. Different effects and moods can be created by changing the borders' styles and weight. The last one is the gutter. It refers to a blank space, usually white, and between and around panels.

The Concept of Teaching Comic Strips

The comics books and comic strip can be used to teach a wide variety of skill including reading skill, as follows: [16]
1. Practicing describing characters using adjectives
2. Learning synonyms and antonyms to expand vocabulary
3. Introducing culture-specific onomatopoeia words that imitate what they represent
4. Practicing reading direct speech and reported speech
5. Identifying the different family roles and stereotypes
6. Improving students' listening by reading aloud the action in one of four panels in a comic strip and having students select the correct pictures

7. Identifying social, political, economic, or environmental problems facing the world today
8. Introducing paralanguage lexical items without written correlate, paralanguage is perhaps the most used, yet most pervasive, language form and many teachers are slow to introduce them because they are not aware of how much these items permeate everyday language. Fortunately, comics are rich in paralanguage content
9. Practicing the formation of different verb tenses
10. Practicing telling the story of a sequentially-ordered comic strip that has been scrambled up
11. Reinforcing the use of time-sequence transition words to maintain the unity of a paragraph or story
12. Helping students to organize word reduction in written text and identify the corresponding long form, and practice these reductions orally
13. Practicing basic rules pronunciation.

Based on the statements above, the writer concluded that comics or comic strips can be used as a teaching technique in learning the language. The comic strip also can increase the students' motivation, so the learning and teaching process will be more effective.

The Benefits of Comic Strips

There are several advantages of using comic strips as media in teaching learning reading. When the students have difficulties understanding what they read, pictures in the comic strips offer assistance as they travel through the text. In comics, readability measures are determined not only on words alone but also on pictures. The pictures support the words to make that the written text becomes more comprehensible.

In addition, other researchers also state that comics make the text less threatening and can help to increase engagement and motivation. With the use of comics as a medium in teaching English, the students do not realize that they are learning English.[14] They learn English in more enjoyable and interesting ways.

In addition, emphasizes that colored illustration, simple theme, plot, and characterization will attract the person who reads it; furthermore, comics are usually funny thus applying them to methodological purposes will have the same effects as using games in teaching English. It brings a cheerful atmosphere into the class.

METHODOLOGY

The writer is concerned with the problem and objective of the research. The writer used experimental methods to know the influence of using comic strips on students' reading ability of narrative text. In this case, the writer took two classes to be investigated. One class is the experimental class and the other

one is the control class. In the experimental class, the writer taught reading using comic strips, and in the control class, the writer taught reading using direct instruction.

The population of this research took all the students of the eighth class at SMP Negeri 1 Abung Selatan. The total population of the eighth class was 260 in eighth classes. As explained above, in this research, the writer took an experimental class and a control class. In the experimental class, the writer took the data from the VIII D class. Moreover, in the control class, the writer took the data from the VIII B class. The writer used comic strips in teaching reading in the experimental class and used direct instruction in the control class. The writer took the sample using the cluster random sampling technique, because the populations were more than 100 and the classes were homogeneous.

In getting the data of the students reading ability in narrative text, the writer used the reading test, in this case, was an objective test. The test was a multiple choices test. It consisted of 40 items with four options A, B, C, and D. The score was 2.5 for each item's test for true and 0 for wrong. The highest score was 100 and the lowest was 0.

The Validity and Reliability of the Test
Validity of the test
To know the validity of the test, the writer used content validity that is by arranging the content of the English curriculum at SMP Negeri 1 Abung Selatan. A test is valid if it measures what its purpose to measure.[17] It means that validity is giving the function that validity measures the instrument and whether the instrument is good enough for the sample or not.

Reliability of the test
To know the reliability of the reading test, the writer it was used the split-half method, then the writer took some steps as follows:
1. Try out the item test to the students out of the sample. It was on the VIII H of the eighth class at SMPN 1 Abung Selatan.
2. Divided the test into odd items even items.
3. Analyzed the result by using the product moment formula to know coefficient correlations:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N\sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{\{N\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2\}\{N\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2\}}}$$

Notes:
Rxy: coefficient correlation between x and y
Xy : the total of x and y
x: the total number of x score (odd items)
y: the total number of y score (even items)
x^2: the sum square of x variable

y^2: the sum square of y variable
N: total of sample

1. Doing continue using Spearman Brown Formula to determine the reliability of the test as follow:
$$r_{11=2}$$

Notes:
r_{11}: The coefficient reliability of the test.
r_{xy}: The coefficient correlation between x and y

1. Next step, the writer consulted the result and the criteria of reliability as follows:

The reliability coefficient between 0.800 and 1.000 is very high
The reliability coefficient between 0.600 and 0.800 is high
The reliability coefficient between 0.400 and 0.600 is fair
The reliability coefficient between 0.200 and 0.400 is low
The reliability coefficient between 0.00 and 0.200 is very low

Criteria:
If $r_{count} < r_{table}$, H_o is accepted and H_a is rejected.
If $r_{count} > r_{table}$, so H_a is accepted.

The result is shown that r_{11} was higher than r_{table} ($0.95 \geq 0.3120$). Therefore, the instrument was reliable. The writer concluded that the reading test was very high in reliability. That was 0.95 and the test can be used to measure the student's reading ability in the eighth class of SMPN 1 Abung Selatan.

The Data Analysis
The data normality test
Normality data are the data distribution that gives the normal result.[17] It is used to know whether the data of two classes are normally distributed or not. The writer uses Chi-square (X^2 Ratio).
Ho : The sample streaming from the population that has a normal distribution.
H_a : The sample streaming from the population that does not have a normal distribution.

The normality of the test formula is as follows:

$$x^2 ratio = \sum_i^k \frac{\left(o_{i-E_i}\right)^2}{E_i}$$

Notes:
Oi : observed frequency
Ei: expected frequency

To look O_i (observed frequency) and (expected frequency), the writer did some steps:
1. Look for the total number of the interval class *(k)*
2. Look for the length number of the interval class *(p)*
3. Observed frequency and expected frequency

With the criterion test:
$$H_0 \text{ is accepted if } X^2_{ratio} \geq X^2 (1-\alpha)_{(k-3)}$$

With α for significance level of 5% (0.05) and 1% (0.01)

If the data have a normal distribution, it means that Ho hypothesis is accepted. To continue with the testing of homogeneity.

The homogeneity test of variance
The homogeneity of the test is used to know whiter the data in experimental and control classes are homogenous or not. In this case, the writer used t-test formula.[18] The hypothesis formula is:
Ho : (The variances of the data are homogenous)
Hi : (The variances of the data are not homogenous)

$$F = \frac{S1\left(the highest variance\right)}{s2\left(the lowest variance\right)}$$

Notes:
F : The homogeneity of variance
S : The standard deviation

The criterion of the testing:

The criteria is accepted if $(1 -\alpha)$ *(n1– 1)* $< F < F_{½}$ α *(n1– 1, n_2- 1)* and significance level is 0.05 and 0.01. Ho is rejected if F >Fa (V1-V2)

The hypothesis test
To know the difference score of each class, the research used quantitative analysis to know the influence of repeated reading strategy on students' reading ability. The formula used in this research is t-test. Before using t-test, the researcher would like to determine the average rates *(X)* and variant S^2

$$t = \frac{x_1 - x_2}{s\sqrt{\dfrac{1}{n_1} + \dfrac{1}{n_2}}}$$

$$S^2 = \frac{(n_1 -1)S_1^2 + (n^2 -1)S_2^2}{n_1 + n_2 - 2}$$

Notes:
x_1 : the average score of the experimental class
x_2 : the average score of the control class
n_1: the students total in the experimental class
n_2: the students total in the control class
S_1^2 : the deviation of experimental class
S_2^2 : the deviation of control class

S: the combination of derivation standard
Testing criterion: Ho is accepted if $t_{hit} > t_{tab}$

Equality test of two average
The test of the hypothesis was to show the influence of comic strips on students' reading ability, the hypothesis:

$H_o: \mu_1 = \mu_1$ (there is no influence of using Comic Strips on students' reading ability in the eighth class of SMP Negeri 1 Abung Selatan)

$H_a: \mu_1 \neq \mu_1$ (there is an influence of comic strips on students' reading ability in the eighth class of SMP Negeri 1 Abung Selatan).

The testing criterion:
H_o is accepted if $t \leq t_{(1-\alpha)}$ with dk = n1+n2-2 beside Ho that is rejected, with the mistake level 5% *(α = 0.05)* and 1% *(α = 0.01)*.

Different tests of two averages
$H_o: \mu_1 < \mu_2$ (the average score of students' reading ability which is taught by using Comic Strips is lower than those taught by direct instruction at the eighth class SMP Negeri 1 Abung Selatan)

$H_a: \mu_1 > \mu_1$ (the average score of students' reading ability which is taught using Comic Strips is higher than are taught direct instruction at the eighth class SMP Negeri 1 Abung Selatan).

The testing criterion:
H_o is accepted if $t \leq t_{(1-\alpha)}$ with dk = n1+n2-2 beside Ho that is rejected, with the mistake level 5% *(α = 0.05)* and 1% *(α = 0.01)*.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Data Normality Test of Experimental Class
The writer used a test in an experimental class to see the students' achievement in reading ability. After presenting whole materials using Comic Strips in experimental class and giving the test, the next step is using normality test. The normality test is used to know whether the sample is in the normal distribution or not. Based on the student's score in the experimental class, the writer got:

The highest score = 80
The lowest score = 40
Total of the data *(n)* = 32

Then, according to the calculation of the normality test, it was got:
Span *(R)* = 40
Total Number of Interval Class *(K)* = 6
Length of Interval Class *(P)* = 7

$$\sum fi = 32$$

$$\sum Fi.Xi = 1887$$

$$\sum Fi.Xi^2 = 113257$$

$\overline{x} = 58.96$
$s_1^2 = 63.96$
$s_1 = 7.99$

After analyzing the data of the normality test, it was obtained at the significant level of 0.05 and also 0.01 that $\chi^2_{ratio} < \chi^2_{table} = 8.32 \geq 7.81 \leq 11.3$. Since $\chi^2_{ratio} < \chi^2_{table}$ therefore, the criterion was accepted. It means that the data have a normal distribution.

The Data Normality Test of Control Class
The writer also used the test in the control class to see the students' achievement in reading ability. After presenting the whole materials using direct instruction in control class and giving the test, the next step is using normality test. The normality test is used to know whether the sample is in the normal distribution or not. Based on the student's score in the control class, the writer got:

The highest score = 70
The lowest score = 37.5
Total of the data *(n)* = 32

Then, according to the calculation of normality test, it was got:
Span *(R)* = 32.5
Total Number of Interval Class *(K)* = 6
Length of Interval Class *(P)* = 6
$\sum fi = 32$
$\sum Fi.Xi = 1690$
$\sum Fi. X_i^2 = 91538$
$\overline{x} = 52.81$
$s_1^2 = 73.70$
$s_1 = 8.58$

Based on the calculation above, it was obtained at significant level of 0.05 is 7.81 and also 0.01 is 11.3 that $\chi^2_{ratio} < \chi^2_{table} = 5.60 \leq 7.81 \leq 11.3$. Hence, the Ho was accepted. It means that the data have normal distribution.

Homogeneity Test of Variance
After population data that had been proven that have normal distribution, the writer conducted the test of homogeneity variance using the homogeneity test of variance formula. From both of the samples, the writer got:

$s_1^2 = 63.96$
$s_2^2 = 73.70$
Based on the next calculation, the writer got F_{ratio} was 0.86. F_{table} at a significant level of 0.05 was 1.84 and 0.01 was 2.38.

Since $F_{ratio} \leq F_{table}$, Ho was accepted ($0.86 \leq 1.84 \leq 2.38$). It means that the variance of the data in the experimental class and control class are homogeneous.

The Hypothesis Test

In testing the hypothesis in this research, the writer used a statistical formula of *t-test*.

From the calculation of hypothesis test, the writer got:

$$n_1 = 32$$
$$n_2 = 32$$
$$\underline{x}_1 = 58.96$$
$$\underline{x}_2 = 52.81$$
$$s_1^2 = 63.96$$
$$s_1^2 = 73.70$$

Then, the data are included in the $t\text{-}_{test}$ formula. The writer got s^2 was 68.83 and S was 8.29. After that, the standard deviation is included in the $t\text{-}_{test}$ formula and the writer got $t\text{-}_{test}$ was 3.10. The testing criterion is Ha accepted if $t\text{-}_{test} > t\text{-}_{table.}$ In the calculation, it was gotten that *df* was 62. For the significance level, 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$) obtained $t\text{-}_{table}$ was 2.00.

Based on the calculation above, it got $t\text{-}_{test}$ $3.10 \geq 2.00 \leq 2.66$. Criterion H_a accepted if $t\text{-}_{test} \geq t_{table}$. Therefore, H_a was accepted, which means that there was an influence of using Comic Strips on students' reading ability at the eighth class of SMP Negeri 1 Abung Selatan.

DISCUSSION

Based on the data analysis and testing of the hypothesis, the writer got the result that H_a was accepted. It showed by $t\text{-}_{test}$ that was higher than $t\text{-}_{table}$ with significant levels 5% and 1% ($3.10 \geq 2.00 \leq 2.66$). Therefore, it means that there was significant influence of using Comic Strips on students' reading ability in the eighth class of SMP Negeri 1 Abung Selatan. It was also proved by the average score of standard deviation in the experimental class was higher than in the control class ($58.96 \geq 52.81$ and $t\text{-}_{test}$ is higher than $t\text{-}_{table}$ ($3.10 \geq 1.67 \leq 2.39$). It means that the average score of the reading ability which was taught through Comic Strips was higher than what was taught through direct instruction at the eighth class SMP Negeri 1 Abung Selatan.

Based on the description above, the writer declares that comic strips can be used as a tool in teaching reading ability and also increase the students' motivation in learning English. Then by seeing the advantage, it offers, in which students will be encouraged to be more active and enjoy in teaching-learning process.

Comic strips are usually funny, and using them in language learning using will have some effect in teaching English, because they can bring a good atmosphere to the classroom. The comic strip can be applied in teaching reading. Its effectiveness of it has been proved. This research was one the real proof of the use of comic strips. The writer conducted the research in two classes. First clas is the experimental class and second class is the control class. The writer taught reading through comic strips in the first class and taught direct instruction in the control class. The use of comic strips was effective and successful.

CONCLUSION

There are two results that the writer concluded based on the calculation of the data analysis and hypothesis test, they are:
1. There was an influence of comic strips on students' reading ability in the eighth class of SMP Negeri 1 Abung Selatan. It can be seen that the $result_{test} = 3.10, t_{test}$ for $\alpha = 0.05$ was 2.00 and for $\alpha = 0.01$ was 2.66 ($3.10 \geq 2.00 \leq 2.66$).
2. The average score of students' reading ability which was taught through Comic Strips was higher than what was taught through direct instruction at the eighth class SMP Negeri 1 Abung Selatan. It can be seen that the average score of the experimental class was 58.96 and the average score of the control class was 52.81.

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