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## The Effects of Shared Reading Approach on Improving Students' Comprehension

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# The Effects of Shared Reading Approach on Improving Students' Comprehension

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## Abstract

This study aimed to research the significance of using shared reading approach on improving KG students' reading comprehension. The research was implemented with five students from KG2 who attend government kindergarten in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. The research followed a mixed methods research design, considering both quantitative and qualitative data. A reading comprehension rubric and cloze test were used as quantitative data collection tools to measure the students' comprehension progress. An observation note was considered to observe students' interaction while implementing the shared reading approach and recorded the occurrences of behaviors. A rating scale were utilized to further explore the students' interactions. Additionally, an interview investigated English teachers' perspectives about the shared reading and their outlook on its significant and strategies. Graphs were used to compare students' progress. The findings showed a significant growth in students' comprehension abilities. Results from reading comprehension rubric and cloze tests exhibited a substantial increase in comprehension. Observation notes and rating scale results showcased a positive improvement in students' interaction skills. Implications from this study indicate the positive effects of using the shared reading approach to improve the students' comprehension. Therefore, it is encouraged to further explore the impact of this approach on students with autism spectrum disorders (ASDS), and the students' fluency skills.

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## Introduction

The research's focal point is an effective and collaborative literacy learning activity or approach in the reading field, and it is widely known as "Shared reading." Whether reading a book in the quiet areas of a school, reading a menu in a restaurant, or reading the names of shops as the car travels through traffic and between buildings, reading is a very important, necessary, and essential aspect of children's life. Therefore, should something of such importance not be shared with children daily? Shared reading is defined by Anne McGill-Franzen (2006) as a whole-group read-along in which the instructor does most of the reading and students add what they know about the topics and events. She also emphasizes that materials for collaborative reading are not limited to large books. Nevertheless, it also includes classroom charts, maps, songs, rhymes, and much more as examples.

Shared Reading is an interactive reading experience in which students participate in or share the reading of a large book or other expanded texts—in contrast, being led and supported by a teacher or other experienced reader. Learning together is an engaging reading experience where students observe an expert who fluently and expressively reads the text. Research conducted by Vygotsky has proven that when collaboration is considered, learning becomes more effective and leads to positive outcomes (Vygotsky, 1979). One basic rule for shared reading is that text must be sufficiently large to allow everyone to view it so that they can share the material properly. According to Don Holdaway (1982), "the natural setting of young children gathered around a big book or chart in a shared experience of literary pleasure with the teacher offers the possibility of powerful learning within a context of satisfying meanings. "In shared reading, children learn fundamental ideas of print functioning, get the feeling of learning, and become readers (Taberski, 2000).

Basically, the shared reading method exists and is used in different situations where children are involved. For instance, a teacher presenting to the class, parents reading a grocery list, or a waitress reading specific meals. People are constantly reading to children. If this is the case, teaching children to read should not be done by using basic methods such as segmenting and blending sounds. This notion of sharing reading is just as crucial for children to learn how to read as it is in their daily lives' comprehension.

## **Literature Review**

A shared reading approach is a collaborating reading experience that happens when children share or join in the reading of the text or other reading. While supported and guided by a teacher. In this, the teacher is exhibiting skills of talented readers, including reading with expression and fluency (Honchell & Schulz, 2012). Brenda Parkes (2000) states that this model frequently includes big books with enlarged artworks and designs. The approach can deliver required support to struggling readers because they can involve in interactive sessions. The model can also shape vision word information and fluency in reading. The shared reading approach permits students to read and enjoy words that they may not be able to read individually. It ensures that every student feels successful by delivering support to the whole group. In shared reading, children acquire essential ideas of how print works, experience the feeling of understanding, and become readers. The shared reading approach introduces the main story by deliberating the cover, title, and author. Students are asked and encouraged to make predictions about the main narrative in the story. The teacher read the story to the students with a suitable tone and inflection. The teacher also asks brief queries to estimate the comprehension level of students. Time is also provided for comments and reactions after concluding the story. The approach also includes follow-up actions like making artworks connected to the narrative (Fountas & Pinnell, 1996).

Don Holdaway is considered the founder of the shared reading approach. He introduced this approach to the world in 1979 while explaining the effect of corporate learning along with the involvement of students. He also described that shared reading links students via mutual experience and feelings. It can be more than a lesson because it can turn into a shared event. In the 1970s, he was trusted with the task of educating children coming to schools in Australia and New Zealand. During that task, he started to realize the need for the shared learning approach. According to Holdway, literacy instruction must be completed using shared reading. A remarkable congruency

was developed between practice and theory before turning it into a shared reading model (Holdaway, 1982).

Comprehension is an energetic procedure in the building of sense and the procedure of originating meaning from linking texts. It includes word knowledge, reasoning, and thinking. Reading comprehension is the procedure of extracting meaning by linking various difficult procedures such as word knowledge, word reading, and fluency. Comprehension is not only dependent on the features of the reader but includes working memory, experience, language procedures, primary reading capabilities, vocabulary, motivation, and inference. Previous research has indicated that shared reading books can help in a great range of early skills for children during the early years of education (Noble et al., 2020). Flavell (1985) defines comprehension as a link between the previous knowledge of the reader and the text, which produces meaning. That means comprehension is an internal process but that certain exterior developments should be activated to allow readers to gain a greater comprehension of reading.

Children start to learn faster, gain larger vocabulary, and turn into successful readers. With the help of a shared reading model, comprehension can boost up because students are exposed to words frequently, gain prior knowledge and connect various concepts. With the recurrent reading, children are permitted to inquire more about the content provided in the book. In this way, they gain more experience and opportunities to improve their learning experience. The shared reading approach has a positive impact on the students' comprehension and other literacy skills. Shared learning can help students to focus their attention and energy on important skills. They can make important predictions in reading. When students can develop a sense of a story, it can ultimately help enhance their comprehension. Therefore, it is one of the most useful approaches for teachers to apply in the classrooms. During the early years of education, this approach can help students to gain important reading and other literacy skills (Noble et al., 2020).

## **Theoretical Framework**

Considering the difficulty in grasping the global meaning of texts, the purpose of this study is to offer some recommendations on how to assist students gain a better comprehension of texts in shared reading classrooms using schema theory. The schema theory related to reading comprehension and it was developed by Jean Piaget. The theory describes the ability of readers to use prior knowledge for comprehension and learning from text. The word "schema" means active learning of previous experiences or reactions. It is an essential element of cognitive science, is a theory of how knowledge is acquired, processed, and recalled. Cognitive scientists use the technical word schema to explain how humans process, organize and store information in their minds (Shen, 2008). The basic principle of the theory is that written words do not provide all meaning by themselves. But only deliver directions for readers to construct or retrieve meaning from previously acquired knowledge. According to this theory, comprehension is an interactive procedure between the background knowledge of the reader and the text. The effective and efficient ability in comprehension shows the capability to link textual evidence with prior experience. Various experts agree that this theory is one of the most effective theories for human learning processing (An, 2013). The schema theory primarily uses prior knowledge of students gained in the home so that they can utilize them during reading comprehension. The theory can help students to comprehend the meaning of a text from a global perspective. Students can arrange texts and infer possible meanings using prior knowledge or

experiences (Rasakumaran & Patrick, 2019). The theory has a relation with the shared reading model because peers help students to read texts in the classroom to find relevance with their previous knowledge. Thus, in this present study, connections were drawn between what students already know and what they are about to learn. Students were encouraged to comprehend the meaning of the text during the shared reading sessions by developing connections to prior knowledge. Pre-reading activities including brainstorming, predicting, initial conversation, and guessing the title or ending of the book were conducted before reading to assist students in broadening their background knowledge and connecting it to the text to guide them into a much deeper grasp of the text. These activities do not teach pupils anything that they can learn from reading the material. Instead, they entice students to read the book and assist them in connecting the material to their own experiences, interests, and goals (Shen, 2008).

### **Problem Statement and Research Questions**

This study aims to look at the impact of the Shared Reading approach on English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. In certain schools, the guided reading approach is widely used while teaching or reading stories. They were neglecting the benefits of involving students in the reading process. The research subject was chosen in response to several instances seen in government schools in the United Arab Emirates. Students in UAE kindergarten classrooms were not engaged or motivated to participate in reading classes, where they were supposed to develop gaps in foundational reading skills. Teachers refrain from engaging students on the pretext of different reasons in reading classes. Such as shortening time or the inconvenience if students interfere while reading. Teachers prefer reading stories to children for entertainment, ignoring the effects that they can leave on students if they contribute to the reading process. Although reading comprehension is an essential skill that all students need to achieve academic and personal success. Many UAE kindergarten students have significant problems with reading. For instance, inadequate use of primary and prior knowledge (Clemens, Simmons, & Oslund, 2014), lack of vocabulary knowledge (Dewitz & Dewitz, 2003), lack of fluency in reading (Hudson, Holly, & Pullen, 2005), inability to differentiate between different structures of text, and difficulties in forming inferences. All of which have a detrimental effect on the understanding of reading by kindergarten students.

The reason is that teachers overlook the necessity of utilizing and integrating various reading techniques throughout the school year. The shared reading approach is one of the most effective reading approaches that may increase the reading level of students. According to research, interactive shared book reading may promote a wide range of early language abilities. Children who are read too frequently in the early years acquire the language faster, enter school grades with a more extensive vocabulary, and become more successful readers later in school (Noble et al., 2020). Following that, teachers and students can be guided toward positive interactions during shared reading experiences.

According to Cunningham & Zibulsky (2011), "...we would be remiss not to highlight the quality of the attachment relationship between the adult and the child interacts with quantitative variables... As we discuss the skills required for reading acquisition, we should not lose sight of the fact that the shared reading experience is valuable not only for its potential to influence learning. Nevertheless, also, because it can be a vehicle for

developing and sustaining interpersonal relationships, creating opportunities for shared discourse, and helping children see reading as an enjoyable and social process" (p. 399).

Consequently, this research aimed to use the shared reading approach as a medium to improve UAE students' reading and comprehension skills along with their social skills. Based on the problem statement, the following three research questions were framed for this study:

1. How do students interact when a shared reading approach is applied in the classroom?
2. How does the shared reading approach affect students' comprehension?
3. How do teachers implement the sheared reading approach in the classroom?

## **Methods**

### **Research Design**

In conducting this research, the research examined using both quantitative and qualitative data methods (mixed-method approach) to examine the effects of the shared reading approach on improving students' comprehension. Bazeley (2008) describes the mixed method approach as utilizing mixed data while employing the same procedure. It is a sort of research in which a researcher employs the qualitative approach for one part of a research and the quantitative approach for another part of the research.

#### *I. Quantitative Data*

According to Aliaga and Gunderson (2002), quantitative research methods explain an issue or situation by acquiring data in numerical form and evaluating it using mathematical approaches, including statistics. As a result, a quantitative research approach is concerned with quantifying and analyzing factors to obtain findings (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). It entails the use and collection of data for information to be statistically quantified and numerically treated. Hence, to support or disprove alternative knowledge assertions, this research utilized a reading comprehension rubric, cloze test and rating scale as a quantitative data gathering tools.

#### *II. Qualitative Data*

Qualitative research is an interpretive method that seeks to obtain insight into various meanings and behaviors experienced in each social phenomenon. Via the subjective participants' experiences by posing questions such as "why," "how," and "in what way?" the researcher constructs abstractions, ideas, speculations, or philosophies (Palmer & Bolderston, 2006). Observation notes and interviews were utilized as qualitative data gathering techniques in this research.

### **Research Procedure**

Researchers defined the action research cycle as a collective self-reflective inquiry conducted by participants in social circumstances. To enhance the logic and fairness of their own social or educational activities. As well as

their knowledge of these practices and the conditions in which they are carried out (Kemmis, 2009). According to Carr and Kemmis (1986), action research has taken several forms over the last few decades. However, the majority follow a systematic, repetitive process that includes the following—first, issue identification—second, action planning as shown in Figure 1. Third, implementation. Fourth, analysis. Finally, reflection. The primary cycle's findings are used to develop the following cycle, with the action plan being adjusted and the research process being repeated.

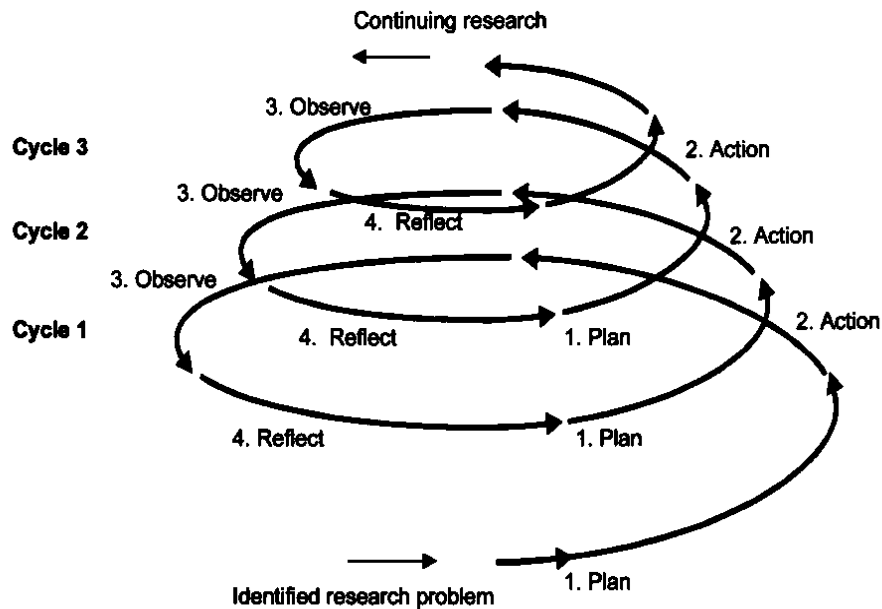


Figure 1. Action Research Protocol (Hopkins, 1985)

First, the plan covers the researcher's critically evaluated activities and includes ways for evaluating the modifications implemented to address the problem, circumstance, or issue (Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2013). In this research, the plan covers the researcher's primary goal, examining the effects of shared reading on improving students' comprehension. Furthermore, the data collection tools were used to answer the research questions. Second, the research action shows acting in respect of the plan using the data collection tools reading comprehension rubric, cloze test, rating scale, interview, and observations. The action was seen when the plan was implemented, and expectations for improvements in the situation were met. The action is purposeful, deliberate, and strategic (Vaccarino, Comrie, Culligan, & Sligo, 2006). Third, according to Kemmis, McTaggart and Nixon (2013), the component of action research in which the modifications indicated in the plan are observed to identify their impact on the settings of the situation is known as the observation of action research. During this phase, data collection tools such as a reading comprehension rubric, cloze test, rating scale, interview, and observations were utilized. To ensure that suitable scientific methodologies and data triangulation were used and applied to offer relevant findings regarding improvements in students' comprehension after applying the shared reading approach. Fourth, the reflection phase includes the researcher's analysis of data collected to identify whether the outcome is satisfactory or not, a noticeable concern, problem, and results. During this phase, the researchers begin to rethink and refine the observed issue and reframe the questions. Until additional clarification

is obtained on the most appropriate use of the specified strategy to ensure a positive impact on the participant. Hence, the second cycle of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting occurs (Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon, 2013).

### **Research Site and Participants**

The study was conducted in a government kindergarten located in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. The participants in this study were six KG/2 students ages from 4 to 6. Purposive sampling was used to choose the participants. In schools, the application of a shared reading strategy is more likely to help all students at all reading levels. In this method, students are involved in reading, discussing, and benefiting from listening and learning from others. While the instructor is in support. This research was implemented in a UAE kindergarten classroom to discover and explore how the process of applying the shared reading approach affects and improves students' comprehension. Additionally, the research discovered strategies teachers can use to help students deepen and expand their understanding. To ensure that the participants were as similar as possible, they were selected based on their shared characteristics as they were aged four to six, Emiratis, and their first language was Arabic. In selecting participants, the researcher sought the assistance of the Mentor School Teacher (MST), a professional kindergarten teacher, and the Mentor College Teacher (MCT), a Doctoral degree holder college instructor.

### **Data Collection Tools**

Data collection is acquiring and measuring information on variables of interest in a systematic manner that allows one to answer specified research questions, test hypotheses, and assess outcomes. The data collection tools utilized to answer this research questions were:

#### *I. Observation*

Fox (1998) stated that Observation is the selection, prompting, recording, and encoding of that collection of behaviors and setting/s involving an organism in person consistent with research reasons. Observation is a method of collecting data that involves witnessing behavior, events or recording physical qualities in their natural contexts to unravel the complexity of any phenomenon to fulfill the demands of a research inquiry. The researcher observed students' interactions while implementing the shared reading approach and recorded the occurrences of the students' interactions. Moreover, the researcher used the observation method to observe how teachers implement the shared reading during their lessons and what strategies they use. The observation template contains the following: the action being observed, goals to be achieved, space for guiding questions, comments, reflection, and the action plan.

#### *II. Reading Comprehension Rubric*

A rubric is an academic phrase that refers to achievement criteria tailored to individual pupils. Rubrics have been widely used in the academic context to help students improve their level of achievement. Furthermore, the aims



have been to develop a collaborative method that contributes to the learning environment's effectiveness. Rubrics often promote student self-awareness by familiarizing them with the course's core objectives (McTighe & Arter, 2010). Rubrics can be used to measure students' reading comprehension if the aims are direct and straightforward. Another essential component of rubrics in reading comprehension is their aid in educational planning and construction. Applying both individualized and universal approaches to fulfill the requirements of students, which is a significant aspect of the educational process (Mijuskovic, 2014). The researcher used a reading comprehension rubric while implementing the shared reading approach and rated the students' performance during the process. The rubric used to rate students' performance in four different skills, which are: Explaining how images and text features contribute to and clarify text, retelling stories from a variety of genres, identifying the main idea and supporting details, and asking and answering questions about key details in a text. The data collection tool was utilized with the support of the Mentor School Teacher (MST), a professional kindergarten teacher and the Mentor College Teacher (MCT), a doctoral degree holder college instructor.

### *III. Cloze Test*

The researcher utilized weekly cloze tests to answer the first research question. Students were given a paragraph from each week's story and were instructed to insert words as they read to complete and generate meaning from the text. Enhancing reading comprehension is a crucial, if not the most important, the aim of any reading program. As a result, many exercises in learning to read are designed to improve comprehension skills. The cloze procedure is a technique used to improve comprehension abilities that involve having pupils read material with words eliminated every fifth word in a regular rhythm. While reading, students fill in the missing words so that the whole paragraph makes sense again. Although cloze activities have initially been designed to assess readability, they are now thought to increase the ability to use context clues effectively and give incentive for reading (Mcgee, 1981). Wilson L. Taylor investigated comparative tests to determine reading comprehension in 1953. He discovered that letting students fill in the blanks with context cues from the surrounding words, like in the example above, is strongly associated with how legible the text is for the learner (Taylor, 1953). Researchers have studied the Cloze technique over time and discovered that it does represent reading comprehension levels (Mcgee, 1981).

### *IV. Rating Scale*

A rating scale were utilized to identify the students' interaction when implementing the shared reading approach to answering the second research question. The researcher examined observing the students' interaction while implementing the shared reading approach and completing a rating scale based on the students' interaction. Teachers can use rating scales to reflect the degree or frequency of the learner's behaviors, abilities, and approaches. A rating scale is analogous to a dimmer switch that allows for various performance levels. Rating scales specify the criteria and offer four or five response options to represent the quality or frequency of student work (Wind, Tsai, Grajeda, & Bergin, 2018). Accordingly, the researcher aimed to answer a few questions regarding the students' interaction, such as Can the students make effective communication and adjust fully to other speakers' contributions, take the initiative and negotiate persistently whenever necessary, drawing on a vast repertoire of expressions and techniques? Does he/she have a valuable ability to communicate information and

express feelings, opinions, and ideas on various topics? Can the students initiate contributions more than once in each session? Are the students' comments always insightful and constructive and use appropriate vocabulary (linked to the story)? Are the students' comments balanced between general impressions, opinions, and specific, thoughtful criticisms or contributions? Furthermore finally, can the students participate and make links between the story's events and their personal lives?

*V. Interview*

Because it is viewed as "conversing," and talking is natural, interviews are common to acquire qualitative research data. Interviews do not need any statistical understanding, and the people to be interviewed, known as respondents, may be accessible and interested. The interview data comprise the interviewer's assumptions, prejudices, inquiries, and the precise words of a respondent (Griffe, 2005). The Interview is prepared in collaboration between the interviewer and the responder. The task of analysis is to give tangible form to the meaning of the Interview, which is referred to as interpretation (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1989). The researcher conducted interviews with three English subject teachers during the data gathering process. The Interview consists of six questions to investigate the teacher's perspective on the shared reading approach. The questions are: What do you know about the shared reading approach? Do you think it's important? What type of impact does the shared reading approach leave on students? How do students interact when you apply the shared reading approach? How do you implement the shared reading in the classroom? Do you face challenges implementing it in the classroom?

**Results**

**Impacts of Shared Reading Approach on Students’ Reading Comprehension Skills**

The use of the reading comprehension rubric, and cloze test was intended to answer the first research question of this study: How does the shared reading approach affect students’ comprehension? Throughout the eight weeks, the reading comprehension of the participants was measured on weekly basis. (see Figure 2) presents the rubric scores from three different weeks.

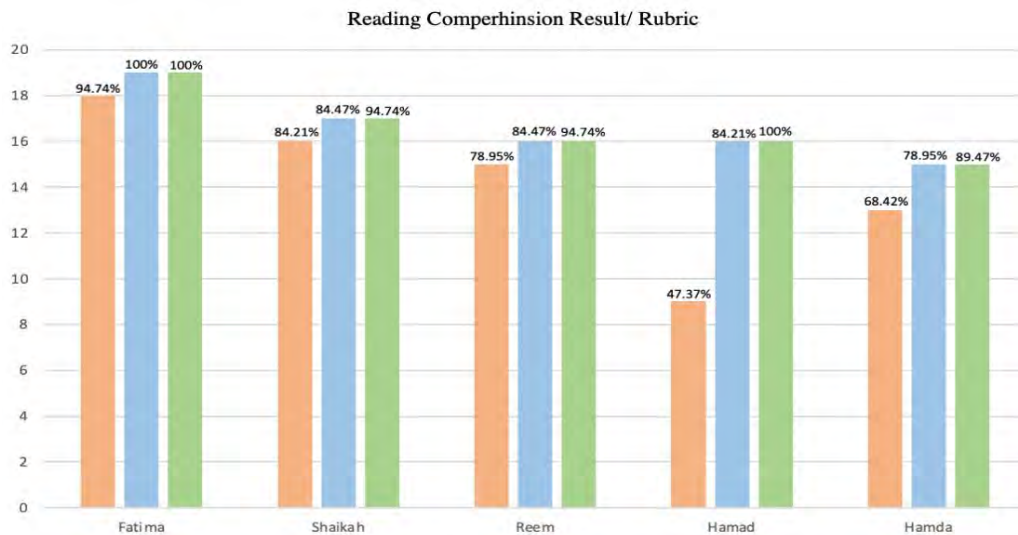


Figure 2. Reading Comprehension Results/ Rubric

According to the research findings, the students' levels of comprehension were favorably impacted and enhanced after five weeks of using the approach. Some participants showed an adverse reaction when the first week adopted the approach. They could not describe how visuals and text elements help to enhance and clarify language. There was no response from the pupil. However, once the strategy was put into action several times, they interacted with the teacher and the text being read. The students demonstrated progress in expressing how visuals and text characteristics add to and clarify the text they are interacting with. The student's performance rate rose dramatically and positively. Their level of comprehension was favorably impacted by the fifth week. It was apparent that the students' level required support to bring out the abilities that were identified in the fifth week. Even though the students were from different levels, they were able to ask basic questions regarding the book, and their responses demonstrated a basic level of comprehension. They did, however, require the instructor's urging and guidance to ask or answer questions about crucial features in a literary or factual work during the first few weeks. For instance, ask and answer literal inquiries (who, what, where) but may require assistance with more inferential questions and answers involving why and how and more details. Their levels grew to the point that they could independently ask and answer complicated inferential questions, as well as create links to prior knowledge, related texts, and the subject. It's significant that text segments are connected, and so reading comprehension is improved by giving the students the opportunity to generate an inquiry-based on their own understanding (Goudvis & Harvey, 2017). A researcher examined shared reading as a way of getting students to study textbooks that they would not have read otherwise. The researcher additionally added that a study proved that shared reading was a method of teaching students not just how to read fluently but also how to obtain a profound understanding of what they read (Moss & Loh, 2010). According to the research findings, some of the students had little to no knowledge of the major concepts and details during the first week, and they were unable to identify the main idea of the text. The students struggled to develop phrases that reflected their comprehension of the text's primary ideas and facts. They required encouragement and guidance from the teacher to identify the main topic of the text or of a given page within the book. However, once the strategy was applied and the learners were given the opportunity to participate, their level of engagement improved. They began to compose simple words to communicate their knowledge of what they had read. The shared reading approach can help students improve their reading comprehension during the learning process (Maghfirah, 2021). Additionally, researchers proved that shared reading is an effective supplement to the guided reading and comprehension methods required for autonomous reading. The researchers conclude that using a shared reading technique assists pupils in grasping the content as they read. The pupils can comprehend on their own (Dorn & Soffos, 2005).

Regardless of participants' various levels, the researcher noticed a consistency in their levels in recognizing the key concepts in the stories and recognizing supporting details by the fifth week. They were able to independently identify the main point of the text and the focus of different pages within a book, as well as describe how the details support the author's specific statements. During the first week, the students' performances required the teacher's prompting and support to recount stories and describe the overall structure of the stories. They did, however, demonstrate progress and were able to independently recount stories with explanation and establish the essential message, lesson, or moral. describes the general framework of the story, including the beginning, which serves as an introduction, and the end, which serves as a conclusion. Retellings give a wealth of information for instructors to get insight into their students' comprehension processes. They also provide pupils with the

opportunity to propose their ideas (Irwan, 2016). The same applied in the shared reading approach when allowing the students to retell the stories, their abilities to express has been improved.

The data were analyzed statistically to interpret the mean score of students' reading comprehension skills as presented in (see Table 1).

Table 1. Mean Scores of Students' Reading Comprehension

	Week 1	Week 3	Week 5
Fatima	18/19	19/19	19/19
Shaikah	16/19	17/19	18/19
Reem	15/19	16/19	17/19
Hamad	9/19	16/19	19/19
Hamda	13/19	15/19	17/19
Mean	14.2	16.6	18
Standard Deviation	3.42052628	1.51657509	1

The mean score of the pupils was 14.2 during the first week, 16.6 after three weeks, and 18 during the last week. The average growth implies that the pupils have made significant progress. This demonstrates the effectiveness of the combined tick strategy in developing and boosting pupils' reading comprehension levels. Results confirms previous findings by Dorn & Soffos (2005) that adopting shared reading as a reading strategy improves pupils' reading comprehension skills.

To further discover the effects of the shared reading on the students' comprehension, the researcher examined using cloze tests. The researcher used the cloze test to investigate and assess the improvement of these skills after implementing the approach. The students used to complete an assessment after completing an entire week of reading a story using the shared reading approach. Accordingly, they are instructed to fill in the blanks with the correct words based on the story and generate meaning from the text. The pupils could not read the text alone, and things required the intervention of the teacher to read the text and ask questions to receive answers.

As shown in (see Figure 3), completing the test after being exposed to the approach for a week has resulted in excellent outcomes. Even in the first week, the percentage of pupils did not surpass 75%. The students had varying degrees of comprehension, but they all improved their comprehension in some manner, and even if the pupils couldn't read on their own, the teacher's reading had no detrimental impact on their levels, and they were able to complete the test properly. Even though the rate of progress between weeks is slow, it is a totally significant development considering students' overall English language proficiency.

Pupils were able to perceive concepts in a positive way, reflecting their knowledge and comprehension of the stories' substance. The pupils were able to select the correct ideas that would complete the sentences on the test by the last week of using the technique. This demonstrated that the students were able to dive deeper into the substance of the stories because of the recurrence of reading them via shared reading. Numerous experts have

emphasized the importance of shared reading for children's vocabulary learning as well as the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and overall comprehension (Coyne, Simmons, Kameenui, & Stoolmiller, 2004) (Fisher, Frey, & Lapp, 2008). Coyne et al. (2004) stated that explicitly teaching word meanings within the framework of shared storybook reading is an effective technique for increasing the vocabulary of young children at risk of experiencing reading problems (p. 152). Furthermore, this explicit training boosts these children's levels of comprehension. As a result, they may increase their capacity to recognize and acquire unfamiliar words more independently and incidentally.

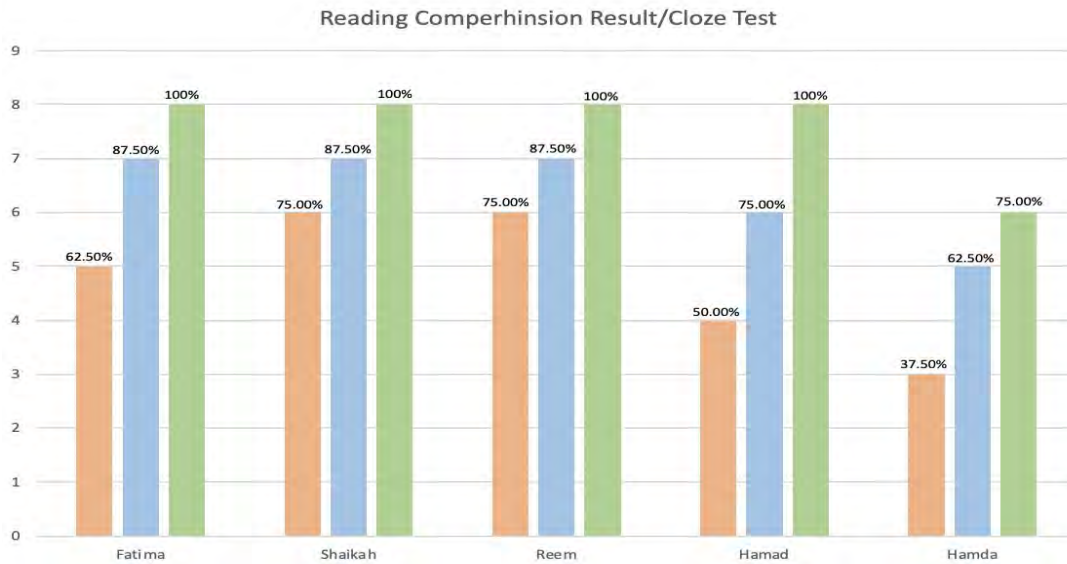


Figure 3. Reading Comprehension Result/ Cloze Test

The data were analyzed statistically to interpret the mean score of students' reading comprehension skills as presented in (see Table 2).

Table 2. Mean Scores of Students' Reading Comprehension

	Week 1	Week 3	Week 5
Fatima	5/8	7/8	8/8
Shaikah	6/8	7/8	8/8
Reem	6/8	7/8	8/8
Hamad	4/8	6/8	8/8
Hamda	3/8	5/8	6/8
Mean	4.8	6.4	7.6
Standard Deviation	1.303840481	0.894427191	0.894427191

The test results revealed that the average level of pupils' reading comprehension was steadily growing, rising from 4.8 in the first week to 7.6 in the last week. The pupils' growth was visible on a weekly basis, and the shared reading method assisted the pupils in improving their comprehension. Allowing students to interact with the text and with their peers during reading sessions has been identified as a critical aspect in enhancing students'

comprehension (Tada, 2020).

### **The Way Students Interact When a Shared Reading Approach is applied in the Classroom**

Shared reading, according to the definition, is an interactive activity between readers and the text. Readers engage and interact with the text automatically to obtain the primary information. It is critical to consider the type of engagement to achieve improvements in comprehension and engagement (Nurmala, 2018). Accordingly, the researcher used observation and a rating scale to observe the students' interactions when implementing the shared reading approach to answer the research's second question. The researcher examined using both data collection tools by dividing them into five weeks (every week = one tool).

#### *Observation*

The researcher observed the type of interaction students have during reading lessons when the shared reading approach is applied. Moreover, the researcher examined answering the following questions during the process of collecting data using observation notes: Does the student interact with the teacher and the book? Is the student's reaction positive? Is the student's reaction negative and unexpected? Does student interaction change over time during the class? Based on what has been observed, students' interactions the first time they were observed were completely different from their interactions the last time they were observed. The level of interaction of all students has improved significantly and positively. For example, one of the participants (Shaikah) when she was observed for the first time, she refused to participate in different parts of the shared reading process and the retelling activity. However, when she was observed for the second time she participated in the retelling activity and was showing signs of assimilation of the story. The students had progressed to the point where they grasped the concept of this technique and what they should do if there was a large book in front of them and the teacher asking them to engage in the reading process. Proof of this, the students interacted during the retelling of the story to a degree where the students initiatively asked the teacher if it was possible to stand in front of the classroom to retell the story. However, students need constant support to participate, keep interactions positive, and not lose interest.

To further explore the students' interaction and to answer the second research question, the researcher examined using the observation method and rating scale. The researcher observed the type of interaction students have during reading lessons when using the shared reading approach. First, for the rating scale, the researcher selected the following criteria to observe the students on first, they can make effective communication and adjust fully to other speakers' contributions, taking initiatives and negotiating persistently whenever necessary, drawing on a wide repertoire of expressions and techniques. Second, they have a sound ability to communicate information and to express feelings, opinions, and ideas on a variety of topics. Third, students initiate contributions more than once in each session. Fourth, comments are always insightful and constructive; they use appropriate vocabulary (linked to the story). Fifth, comments balanced between general impressions, opinions, and specific, thoughtful criticisms or contributions. Finally, they can participate and make links between the story's events and their personal life. The scores of the students' interactions are shown in the (see Figure 4).

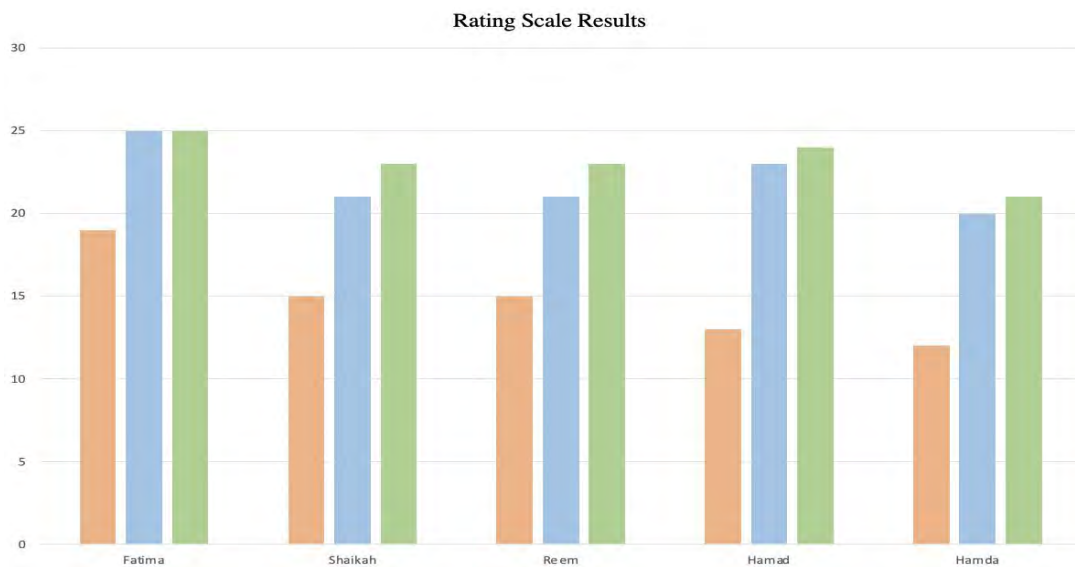


Figure 4. Rating Scale Results/ Students Interactions

Table 3. Students Mean Score

	Week 1	Week 3	Week 5
Fatima	19/25	20/25	25/25
Shaikah	15/25	21/25	23/25
Reem	15/25	21/25	23/25
Hamad	13/25	23/25	24/25
Hamda	12/25	20/25	21/25
Mean	14.8	22	23.2
Standard Deviation	2.6832816	2	1.4832397

According to the research findings, the students' interactions have been unfavorable since the first week of using this strategy in this class. However, because of the researcher's constant encouragement and students emulating each other, the students were able to engage favorably before the middle of the period in which they were anticipated to get a full positive interaction. As shown in (see Figure 4 and Table 3), the findings highlight that it was not difficult to persuade pupils to engage because the approach is centered on collaboration between the instructor, students, and writers. Vygotsky has proven that when collaboration is considered, learning becomes more effective and leads to positive outcomes (Vygotsky, 1979). From a researcher's viewpoint, shared reading can help to develop children's interests. Shared reading is regarded as a socially produced, collaborative activity in which children's interests are as much a prerequisite as a result of book reading (Militante, 2006). Holdaway (1979) highlighted how delightful, shared reading interactions boost children's motivation. These children progressively acquire unshakeable favorable expectations of print. As well as compelling motivation to learn how to read it for themselves.

Second, for the observation, the researcher observed the type of interaction students have during reading lessons

when the shared reading approach is applied. Moreover, the researcher examined answering the following questions during the process of collecting data using observation notes: Does the student interact with the teacher and the book? Is the student's reaction positive? Is the student's reaction negative and unexpected? Does student interaction change over time during the class? Based on what has been observed, students' interactions the first time they were observed were completely different from their interactions the last time they were observed. The level of interaction of all students has improved significantly and positively. For example, one of the participants (Shaikah) when she was observed for the first time, she refused to participate in different parts of the shared reading process and the retelling activity. However, when she was observed for the second time she participated in the retelling activity and was showing signs of assimilation of the story. The students had progressed to the point where they grasped the concept of this technique and what they should do if there was a large book in front of them and the teacher asking them to engage in the reading process. Proof of this, the students interacted during the retelling of the story to a degree where the students initiatively asked the teacher if it was possible to stand in front of the classroom to retell the story. However, some students need constant support to participate, keep interactions positive, and not lose interest. In a study, Carleen Dacruze Payne (2005) found that when using a shared reading strategy, it is important to choose a book that both the instructor and the students can enjoy. Therefore, both teacher and student interaction will increase in a way that will benefit the concept acquisition. The text must be insightful to demonstrate and discuss the reading process. It's widely established that shared reading experiences can help pupils improve their emotional relationships.

### **Strategies Used by the Teachers to Implement the Shared Reading Approach in the Classroom**

During the qualitative phase, an interview was used as an instrument for collecting qualitative data to better understand the common reading strategy utilized by English language instructors at the school. According to what the instructors said and what the researcher observed, the researcher concluded and stated that not all the teachers at the school are aware of the need to use this approach on a consistent and intentional basis. Because instructors utilize the same lesson plans, they all employ the same methods to teach students. The researcher also determined that instructors adopt this strategy unintentionally, with the purpose of reading books to children only, rather than focusing on printing subjects, discussing comments, or simply involving students in the reading process. They read books in the blink of an eye, denying students the opportunity to learn, share, discuss, and enjoy. According to a study by Joy Alcantra (2011) children succeed when instructors understand the reading process and provide reading and comprehension opportunities that assist students in developing reading skills and improving comprehension. Having students actively engaged in purposeful reading activities helps to explain where the students are right now and where their comprehension is heading for the future. Numerous scholars have underlined the necessity of training and equipping students with reading comprehension methods early in life (Spencer, et al., 2011) (Pellegrini, Lake, Neitzel, & Slavin, 2009). As a result, assisting pupils in becoming excellent readers is primarily dependent on their classroom instructors' experience, expertise, and competence (Almutairi, 2018).

However, one of the teachers' developed a significant amount of awareness regarding the shared reading approach. She started to dedicate a lot of time to reading stories using this collaborative method. Teachers



emphasized the following literacy knowledge areas and strategies to implement the shared reading approach: Practicing phrased and fluent reading, investigating certain text aspects, recognizing common high-frequency terms, commercially available big books, poetry, and charts, materials written by the children during interactive writing, and focusing on what they know and need to learn (Honchell & Schulz, 2012). The teacher used to emphasize reading fluently while focusing on the relevant phrases in the stories. Furthermore, we emphasize the high-frequency words that are included in the curriculum on a weekly basis. The teacher examined how to use materials created by students during story writing lessons as one of the most effective ways to improve the students' comprehension.

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

Based on the literature review and throughout the process of collecting data to answer the first research question, the researcher concluded that the approach significantly affected the students' comprehension. Even if their levels of understanding and assimilation differed, all students were affected in one way or another, and it should be noted that none of them was affected in a negative way. Even with the teacher's help, students were able at different stages and levels to explain and clarify how images and text features contribute to the text; to ask and answer questions about key details in the text; to identify the main idea and supporting details; and to retell stories of a variety of genres. Changes in students' comprehension of the stories and their content were noted as the approach was used continuously.

The second research question aimed to discover the students' interaction when implementing the shared reading approach. Interaction with more experienced adults was critical to the development of the shared reading approach from a social standpoint, and hence offered a suitable context within which positive interactions were seen. Shared reading interactions do not merely relate to text reading. "The language linked with storytime is not simply the text," says Barton (2007), "but also the discussion surrounding the text and the interactions that are typically richer in diversity and complexity." (Barton, 2007). Shared reading interactions with instructors and peers helped a lot when teaching young children. The implementation of collaborative reading helped all pupils in terms of enhanced child interest and the building of emotional relationships. The study's findings show that the students' interaction was good throughout the shared reading lessons, and they were able to engage in and get out of the introverted zone. Even though the students appeared apprehensive at the beginning, however, with the application of the approach, students' interaction increased dramatically. Students demonstrated more interest and self-esteem in reading when teachers implemented shared reading. According to Neuman (1996), Vygotsky (1978) discovered that social support provided pupils with the opportunity to engage beyond their reading capacity, absorb relationships, progress their language development, think independently, and problem solve (Newman, 1996).

The final study objective was to identify the strategies that instructors utilize in the classroom to adopt this approach. After reviewing the findings, the researcher concluded that teachers do not value this approach and do not consider it a fundamental strategy in reading lessons. There were no effective methods linked to the shared reading approach. The researcher emphasizes the necessity of raising reading awareness and the numerous ways that aim to improve students' knowledge and comprehension. However, in contrast to the findings of the first stage

of the study, a shift in one teacher's knowledge of the significance of shared reading was identified. The teacher's use of this strategy has been noticed in reading sessions where the researcher does not employ the approach. The teacher used to stress the importance of reading fluently while focusing on key phrases in the story. In addition, we highlight the high-frequency terms that are incorporated into the curriculum on a weekly basis. According to the teacher, one of the most successful strategies to boost students' comprehension is to employ materials made by students during narrative writing courses.

The researcher determined that the approach had a considerable impact on the students' comprehension, even if their degrees of comprehension and assimilation varied. All the pupils were influenced in some way, and it should be mentioned that none of them were negatively affected. Even with the teacher's assistance, students were able to explain and clarify how images and text features contribute to the text; to ask and answer questions about key details in the text; to identify the main idea and supporting details; and to retell stories of various genres at various stages and levels. As the strategy was utilized repeatedly, changes in students' comprehension of the stories and their content were observed. During the process of adopting the strategy, the pupils' engagement was rewarding, and they had no difficulty connecting with the book, peers, and the instructor. The students' performance was remarkable yet highly excellent. These final findings revealed a positive and effective aspect of pupils' comprehension. The students from the low level had very shocking interaction and development. Their interaction with the approach used helped them greatly in developing many skills and even their comprehension abilities. Despite their need for support from the teacher, they did not rely on the teacher to help them, but rather they were trying hard to develop their skills and benefit from the approach. The study's findings show that the students' interactions were effective and positive throughout the shared reading lessons. Especially after conducting retelling activities. Retellings give a wealth of information for instructors to get insight into their students' comprehension processes. They also provide pupils with the opportunity to propose their ideas (Irwan, 2016). Even though in the beginning the students appeared apprehensive, their hesitation decreased. Despite the different levels of the students, their interaction was wonderful, and the high level of confidence among the students was noted. At first, there were hesitant students, but after the teacher's constant support and encouragement, the students had the courage to try. Shared reading provides opportunities for struggling students who may be slow learners or do not have basic reading skills as compared to other students (Routman, 2003).

## **Recommendations**

### **Recommendations for Practice**

First, the researcher discovered that teaching reading methods is an important component in enhancing student comprehension. Many instructors, however, do not have a sufficient foundation for teaching these reading comprehension methods (Kucukoglu, 2013). Accordingly, it is recommended that teachers must be prepared to devise successful comprehension strategies and approaches when teaching such skills to their pupils. Second, considering the strategy, the researcher recommends that the English instructor employ the shared reading when teaching reading. Particularly on emphasizing retelling activities, because it might help students become more motivated and active participants in developing their comprehension. Third, the researcher recommends encouraging the pupils to utilize their second language (English) in the classroom during the shared reading

sessions. To help the deepen the students' comprehension.

### **Recommendations For Future Research**

Recommendations for further research include: first, the researcher recommends that instructors explore the best and most successful strategies for implementing shared reading in the classroom to obtain the best results for their pupils. Second, measuring and assessing students' comprehension prior to implementing the approach to determine the skills that students need and focus on developing them when reading by applying the approach. Although measuring each individual student's comprehension and analyzing their assessment scores takes time, it aids in the direction of applying the approach (Alcantra, 2011). The approach is comprehensive, and implementing it may require additional preparation, but if the instructor concentrates on a certain skill, it will benefit the student in the end. Knowing this information can aid in the selection of relevant lessons, resulting in a more efficient use of instructional time. Third, encouraging the parents to implement the share reading approach to see whether using the approach from both sides would improve the level of students' comprehension. According to Saint-Laurent, Giasson, & Couture (1997), participation in their child's learning, particularly in reading activities, has been shown to promote students' attainment of academic success. Fourth, conducting a study that specifically explores the effects of the shared reading approach on improving students' fluency skills. As much as the National Reading Panel has designated reading fluency as a vital competence test for reading proficiency in the United States, it is sometimes overlooked and misunderstood when teaching reading (Rupley, Nichols, Rasinski, & Paige, 2020). A study of the relationship between the shared reading approach and fluency is needed. Researchers need to investigate how students' fluency will be affected when they observe and interact with their teachers. They need to release their inner actors to demonstrate what it means to read correctly, at an acceptable speed, and with the right expressions and voice tones (Rupley, Nichols, Rasinski, & Paige, 2020). Finally, future study on the impact of the shared reading approach on the reading performance and interaction of students with autism is recommended. It is known that delays in understanding and interaction are common in children with autism spectrum disorders (ASDS). Shared reading, the practice of adults reading aloud to children while engaging in activities that foster interaction between the adult and child, is an intervention that has been shown to improve those early abilities in normally developing children (Boyle, McNaughton, & Chapin, 2019). Accordingly, the researcher suggests investigating how students' with ASDS in the United Arab Emirates would be affected by this approach.

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