

Enhancing Reading Fluency of Seventh Grade Students: An Action Research

Abstract

This action research study investigates the effectiveness of implementing choral reading pedagogy to improve reading fluency among seventh-grade students. Over a 12-week period, 28 students (13 female and 15 male) from class seven participated in the research in a middle school setting. The study employed action research, utilising both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. Researcher used pre- and post-intervention assessments, observations, to measure the impact of choral reading on students' reading fluency and engagement. Results indicate a significant improvement in reading fluency scores, with students demonstrating increased confidence and enthusiasm for reading activities. This study contributes to the growing body of literature supporting the use of choral reading as an effective strategy for enhancing reading fluency in middle school students.

Key Words: Action Research, Choral reading, fluency, reading, enhance, English language

Introduction

Acquiring proficiency in English is being able to communicate in the language as well as use it efficiently for a range of objectives. In the English course, students acquired a variety of contributing techniques and abilities, such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Therefore, reading is the fundamental abilities in learning English. However, students were not motivated to develop reading habit in the school. In addition, it was observed poor reading culture as students hardly hold reading materials during free time. Therefore, the researcher intends to conduct classroom action research.

Choral reading is one important reading instruction technique that educators can use to help students improve reading fluency, which is a critical component of reading comprehension. According to Ayuba and Kadir (2022) study found that the implementation of choral reading can improve students' reading fluency in students. Therefore, in choral reading, students, as well as the teacher, read short passages out loud and in unison. As students repeat the same text, they steadily learn more about correct pronunciation, sight word identification, and reading expression.

Many literacy experts, educational consultants, and teachers emphasize the value of choral reading, particularly for struggling readers. Similarly, the study found that it increases the students' concern to learning, enthusiastic spirit, and more conducive atmosphere of learning in the classroom (Ayuba & Kadir, 2022). Moreover, Ayuba and Kadir (2022) stated that reading is one of the essential skills.

In this study, researcher had investigated the impact of choral reading pedagogy as part of an engaging reading approach. Similarly, majority of the language teachers believed that choral reading can be an excellent method that improves fluent reading abilities for older and younger students when used thoughtfully.

Aims and Objectives

Aims

- ◇ This study aims to find the reading fluency is improved by choral reading instruction.
- ◇ To investigate how choral reading affects students' motivation and level of involvement with reading assignments.

Objectives

- ◇ To create and execute an intervention programme to enhance reading fluency by integrating the choral reading pedagogy in teaching reading in the classroom.
- ◇ To track and assess students' reading fluency development over the course of the intervention.
- ◇ Based on the study's findings, recommendations will be made about the inclusion of choral reading pedagogy in the standard reading curriculum.

Reconnaissance

Situational Analysis

Bhutanese students face several unique challenges as foreign language learners, particularly in developing reading fluency in English. English is introduced as a second language in Bhutanese schools and it has become the medium of instruction in the Bhutanese school setting. On the other hand, most of the Bhutanese students have limited exposure to English outside of the classroom, which can impact their ability to develop reading fluency. Furthermore, the lack of English-language resources and opportunities for practice has hindered their progress.

Bhutan is a multilingual country, and students come from diverse linguistic backgrounds. This diversity can influence students' proficiency in English and their approach to learning the language, including reading. Moreover, the availability of appropriate reading materials in English tailored to the interests and cultural backgrounds of Bhutanese students were some of the limitations. It affects their engagement and motivation to read, which are important factors in developing reading fluency. In addition, the teaching of reading in Bhutanese schools may not always align with best practices for developing reading fluency. Traditional teaching methods focusing on rote learning and memorization may not effectively promote reading fluency. However, socio-economic factors, such as access to resources like books and technology, have influenced students' reading fluency development. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds have faced additional challenges in this regard.

Therefore, Bhutanese seventh-grade students have faced various challenges in developing reading fluency in English as a foreign language. Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach that considers the linguistic, cultural, pedagogical, and socio-economic factors that impact students' reading experiences. Moreover, it was the zeal and curiosity of the researcher to research on the impacts of the choral reading pedagogy. As a teacher researcher, it is crucial to find the effectiveness of teaching pedagogy and share the result findings to colleagues in the school to implement in their teaching journey. Therefore, teacher researcher decided to conduct classroom action research on the topic "Enhancing Reading Fluency of Seventh Grade Students: An Action Research". Thus, 28 students from seventh grade were used as convenience sampling method in this study. To avoid research bias, researcher had selected 13 male and 15 female from seventh grade. On the other hand, participants were keen to participate in research activities.

Competency

The researcher in this team have undergone few days of professional development on Action Research and researcher had done conventional researchers as a part of M. Ed program. Moreover, researcher had an experienced of conducting action research and published few papers in Asian journals.

Critical Friend

A critical friend is a person who is trusted and who can be your friend or an adviser or a guide. Critical friends helped the researcher to come up with good research by providing direct opinion and critiques to a person's work. A critical friend has to contribute to a research

outcome by taking time and went through understanding the context of work. In the process of carrying out the action research, all the teacher researchers were considered as critical friends guiding and helping each other throughout the research process.

Literature Review

Reading fluency is a crucial component of reading proficiency, especially in the context of second language acquisition. Choral reading, a pedagogical approach where students read aloud together in unison, has been proposed as a strategy to enhance reading fluency among students. This literature review examines existing research on the implementation of choral reading pedagogy to enhance reading fluency, with a focus on seventh-grade students.

Reading Fluency

Choral reading is based on the theory that simultaneous reading helps students develop fluency by providing a supportive environment where they can practice reading aloud without fear of making mistakes. According to Bessette (2020) mentioned that choral reading is a major teaching and learning strategy. Choral reading, a literacy strategy where students read aloud together as a group, has gained attention for its potential to improve reading fluency and comprehension. This literature review examines various studies on the implementation of choral reading pedagogy and its impacts on students' reading skills. Choral reading can be used with readers of all levels, from beginner to advanced. This makes it a versatile and effective strategy for any classroom.

According to Ayuba and Kadir (2022), Khasawneh and Fallatah (2022) found that choral reading method improves students' reading fluency at seventh grade. Further the findings conclude that choral reading method improves the speed of students in reading. Choral reading is a simple but effective teaching strategy that can greatly impact your students' literacy skills. Similarly, Dolean (2017) revealed that repeated choral reading has been successfully used to enhance reading fluency in L1, but little is known about how (and to what extent) this strategy impacts reading in foreign language classrooms.

Reading fluency, which encompasses accuracy, speed, and proper expression, is a critical component of effective reading. Several studies have demonstrated that choral reading can significantly enhance these aspects of reading fluency. Researchers had emphasized that repeated and guided oral reading, including choral reading, helps students to develop

automaticity in word recognition and increases reading speed. Similarly, a study by Ashby et al. (2017) found that students who participated in choral reading activities exhibited marked improvements in their reading rate and accuracy compared to those who did not engage in such activities.

Impacts of Choral Reading

Several studies have investigated the effectiveness of choral reading in enhancing reading fluency among students. For example, majority of the researchers opined that choral reading improved reading fluency and comprehension among elementary school students. According to Ayuba and Kadir (2022) concluded that choral reading can be an effective strategy for improving reading fluency in students of all ages. Likewise, Sheela and Premalatha (2023) and Mendaros (2022) study found that students could use choral reading to enhance reading fluency and expression. Most of the research on choral reading has focused on younger students, there is evidence to suggest that it can also be beneficial for seventh-grade students.

When students read aloud together in unison, they can hear the rhythm of the words and learn to read with expression. Choral reading allows students to hear how the words should sound while reading aloud. It could help them to internalize the proper rhythm and become more fluent in reading. According to Jenkins et al. (2015) found that choral reading improved reading fluency and comprehension among seventh-grade students, particularly those with lower reading proficiency. Similarly, Kodan and Akyol (2018) mentioned that repeated reading is considered an effective strategy that exposes poor students actively to the intense reading and read at the demanded speed with help from a good reader to enhance reading fluency.

Most of the students were shy and reluctant to read aloud in front of the class. In addition, Khasawneh and Fallatah (2022) study revealed that choral reading develops reading fluency skill such as pronunciation, expressive reading, reading accuracy and reading speed.

The Action Research conducted by Midi, et al. (2024) found that choral reading strategy had significantly effective to enhance the students' reading fluency. Similarly, Dolean, et al., (2017) found that choral reading leads to significant improvement of reading fluency of the students. Furthermore, the study found that implementation of choral reading has an effective strategy influence towards students reading fluency and comprehension (Septiawan, 2021, & Mendaros, 2022). However, the researcher decided to study only one area on reading fluency.

Average reading fluency per minute

Reading fluency is being able to read accurately at a good pace and with right expression or intonation. Reading too slowly impairs comprehension as it is hard to hold a complete thought in place. Reading too quickly and speed reading can also lead to poor comprehension. If students do not read at the average rate as per the grade level, it is important to improve reading rate. According to Hasbrouck and Tindal (2017), and Brysbaert (2019) had recorded that the grade 6th - 8th average reading fluency rate is recorded 150-204 words per minute [wpm] by native readers. However, technical readings is found to be read much slower. Furthermore, Brysbaert (2019) has analysed that adults who read aloud average 183 words per minute. Moreover, even adults' brains could change their brain structure, makes new neuropathways, and improved learning skills through consistent practice in short intervals over days. According to the study by Taylor, Davis, and Rastle (2017) showed that learning to read by sounding out words (phonics) has a dramatic impact on both the accuracy of reading aloud and comprehension.

Action Research Question

How can I enhance reading fluency of seventh-grade students over a specific time period?

Acting (Methodology)

The study employed action research. The participants were seventh-grade students (15 male and 13 female) from the school who were willing to participate in this reading intervention. The researcher selected class VII for the study using a convenience sampling method. The sample size consisted of 28 students, selected based on the researcher's class.

Data Collection

Based and Post Data

The researcher administered a simple reading fluency assessment to measure students' reading fluency levels before and after the intervention.

The researcher collected base data from 28 participants for 1 minute, followed by an analysis. The reading fluency varied among the participants. Therefore, the researcher decided to implement interactive reading activities for a period of three months. From the last week of July to the end of October, the researcher implemented choral reading for around 10 minutes before each language period. However, the researcher administered the assessment twice, at the end of August (post-test 1) and September (post-test 2), to monitor the progress of reading fluency and the effectiveness of choral reading pedagogy. Researcher compiled the assessment results to determine the final outcome and facilitate discussions. It administered a final post-

assessment at the end of October to track the progress of reading fluency and evaluate the impact of the intervention pedagogy.

Intervention

Out of numerous reading fluency enhancement pedagogies, researchers had decided to employ choral reading pedagogy. Choral reading boosts shy learners/readers reading aloud, and it has many advantages over disadvantages.

Introduction to Choral Reading

Students were introduced to the concept of choral reading, where they read aloud together as a group, following a leader or a designated reading pace and choosing their own choice of reading materials, such as library, English text, and others.

Selection of Reading Material

The researcher instructed the students to bring their own library books to the English class, where they engaged in individual choral reading for ten minutes. It included short stories, poems, essays, English text, and library books. Similarly, the researcher arranged a PowerPoint slide for the class to read together for ten minutes at times while maintaining constant observation.

Modelling and Practice

The teacher researcher modelled choral reading techniques, emphasizing aspects such as pace, expression, and coordination. Before the whole-class sessions, students had the opportunity to practice choral reading in pairs, small groups, and individually.

Whole -Class Choral Reading Sessions

During English language classes, the researcher conducted regular choral reading sessions, where students read aloud together until the second week of October. The researcher provided guidance and feedback to improve reading fluency and expression.

Monitoring and Feedback

The teacher researcher monitored students' progress in reading fluency through regular assessments and observations during choral reading sessions. Students received individual feedback to enhance their reading fluency.

Assessment

The researcher conducted base- and post-intervention assessments to measure changes in students' reading fluency, which may include standard reading fluency tests, teacher observations, and student self-assessments.

Duration

The researcher implemented the intervention over a specified period, scheduling regular choral reading sessions throughout the three-months intervention period. The researcher scheduled ten minutes of choral reading before the actual lesson from August to October for three months. By implementing this intervention plan, the study aims to enhance the reading fluency of seventh-grade students through the effective use of choral reading pedagogy, contributing to the existing knowledge on effective reading instruction methods for learners.

Ethical Clearance

This research aims to investigate the impact of choral reading pedagogy in enhancing reading fluency among seventh-grade students. Ensuring study participants' well-being and rights requires ethical considerations. Therefore, the researcher obtained ethical clearance from both the participants and the head of the agency.

Informed Consent

All participants, including students, teachers, and school administrators, provided informed consent prior to participation. Consent forms were clearly outlining the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, the voluntary nature of participation, and the confidentiality of data.

Confidentiality

The researcher kept all data collected confidential and stored securely. Researcher assigned unique identifiers to participants to ensure anonymity in any reporting or publication of results. Only the researcher involved in the study will have accessed to the identifiable information.

Voluntary Participation

The participants in this study were voluntary and could leave at any time without penalty. Students were not be penalised in any way for choosing not to participate or for withdrawing from the study.

Data Analysis

The researcher used descriptive statistics to analyse the base- and post-assessment data, measuring changes in reading fluency. Researcher thematically analysed the data from semi-structured and structured interviews and observations to understand the students' experiences and perceptions.

Data Handling and Reporting

The researcher used the collected data solely for this research and reported it in aggregate form to maintain confidentiality. The findings were disseminated in a way that protected the participants identities.

Therefore, the researcher adhered to ethical principles and guidelines in this research to protect the rights, well-being, and confidentiality of all participants. The researcher promptly and appropriately addressed any concerns regarding ethical issues.

Study Surveys

The researcher conducted surveys to gather students’ perceptions and experiences with choral reading, including their engagement and motivation. Furthermore, the researcher administered a structured interview to collect data. Therefore, the researcher conducted a thematic analysis to triangulate the results with both the base-data and post-data.

Observations

The researcher observed choral reading sessions to assess the implementation’s fidelity and student engagement. Teacher researcher administered four assessments (Mid-Assessment-1 and Mid-Assessment-2). Table 1 shows the base data collected from all the participants.

Table 1. Base data

| Participants | No. of words read correctly in 1 minutes |
|---------------------|---|
| A | 80 |
| B | 60 |
| C | 110 |
| D | 105 |
| E | 85 |
| F | 60 |
| G | 95 |
| H | 102 |
| I | 109 |
| J | 108 |
| K | 65 |
| L | 109 |
| M | 75 |
| N | 54 |
| O | 114 |
| P | 53 |
| Q | 85 |
| R | 72 |
| S | 70 |
| T | 70 |
| U | 69 |
| V | 105 |
| W | 73 |
| X | 92 |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| Y | 122 |
| Z | 46 |
| AA | 68 |
| AB | 61 |
| Average words read correctly | 82.75 |

Table 1 presents the base-data on reading fluency word per minute [wpm], which was conducted on 28 students. There were 13 girls and 15 boys involved in this study. The result shows that the average mean score is 82.75 wpm in a one-minute reading. The quantitative base-data indicates that the majority of the students lacked fluency in reading English. The researcher confirmed his observation that none of the students engaged in reading during their free time. The observation over the past five months piqued the researcher’s interest in conducting action research to improve reading fluency. Therefore, the researcher employed choral reading pedagogy as an intervention to motivate students to read and to study its impact on their reading performance.

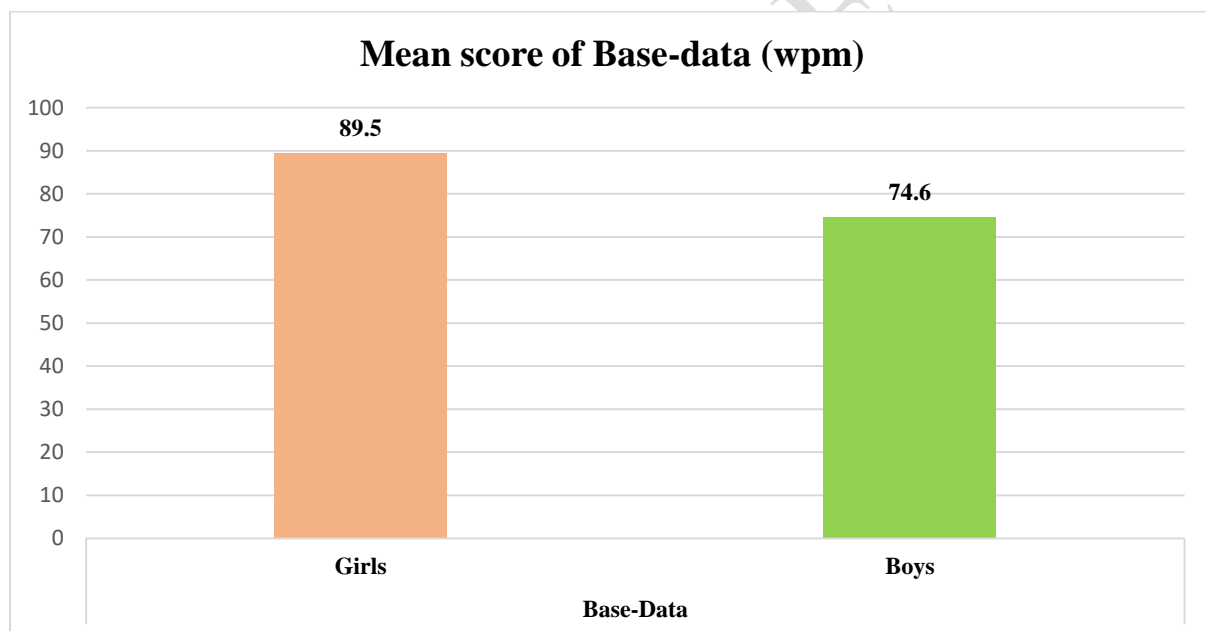


Figure 1. Comparative Result of Base-data of Girls and Boys

Figure 1 presents a comparative analysis of the reading fluency of girls and boys using the base data. The graph revealed that girls were generally better at reading fluency than boys. The mean score for girls was 89.5 wpm, while the mean score for boys was 74.6 wpm, indicating a mean difference of 14.9 wpm. This indicates that the reading fluency of boys was slightly lower than the girls. Therefore, the researcher decided to implement choral reading as an intervention, having observed that a few shy students were reluctant to read aloud. Therefore, choral reading encourages every reader to read aloud, thereby eliminating the shyness associated with reading.

RESEARCH REPORT

Reading fluency

Reading fluency does not refer to the number of words read in a minute; it refers to the ability of readers to read correctly and fluently for comprehension purposes. Analysis of the Oral Reading Fluency [ORF] assessments revealed a statistically significant improvement in students' reading fluency from pre- to post-intervention, as shown in table 2 below.

Table 2. Result of Base-Data and Post-Data

| Participants | No. of words read correctly in 1m (Pre-test) | No. of words read correctly in 1m (Post 1) | No. of words read correctly in 1m (Post 2) | No. of words read correctly in 1m (Final Post Test) |
|---------------------|---|---|---|--|
| A | 80 | 142 | 182 | 181 |
| B | 60 | 133 | 134 | 140 |
| C | 110 | 94 | 132 | 140 |
| D | 105 | 155 | 260 | 225 |
| E | 85 | 144 | 163 | 225 |
| F | 60 | 109 | 160 | 150 |
| G | 95 | 110 | 161 | 165 |
| H | 102 | 94 | 158 | 145 |
| I | 109 | 165 | 214 | 166 |
| J | 108 | 164 | 200 | 206 |
| K | 65 | 89 | 101 | 180 |
| L | 109 | 96 | 101 | 123 |
| M | 75 | 96 | 100 | 123 |
| N | 54 | 92 | 127 | 110 |
| O | 114 | 145 | 163 | 179 |
| P | 53 | 110 | 139 | 150 |
| Q | 85 | 125 | 138 | 130 |
| R | 72 | 94 | 125 | 160 |
| S | 70 | 104 | 128 | 162 |
| T | 70 | 84 | 117 | 130 |
| U | <u>69</u> | <u>74</u> | <u>117</u> | <u>90</u> |
| V | 70 | 74 | 102 | 120 |
| W | 73 | 74 | 100 | 120 |
| X | 92 | 109 | 160 | 207 |
| Y | 122 | 163 | 298 | 207 |
| Z | <u>46</u> | <u>66</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>89</u> |
| AA | 68 | 111 | 174 | 178 |
| AB | 61 | 71 | 90 | 132 |
| | 2282 | 3087 | 4144 | 4333 |

| | | | | |
|------------|-------------|---------------|------------|---------------|
| Mean score | 81.5 | 110.25 | 148 | 154.75 |
|------------|-------------|---------------|------------|---------------|

Table 2 records the base data and three successive post-data of 28 student participants' reading fluency in words per minute [wpm] across four distinct reading assessments, from the base data to the final post-data. The above data indicates that all participants have significantly improved their reading fluency in words per minute. The data reveals that the majority of the students (A, B, E, F, G, K, M, N, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Z, AA & AB) were unable to read at a pace of more than 100 words per minute. However, after implementing the intervention of reading 10 minutes in every English period and following the choral reading strategy for three months, there was a significant improvement in reading. The post-data showed that most of the participants, with the exception of participants U and Z, were able to read at a speed of more than 100–200 wpm. However, the data shows that they have steadily improved. The base-data indicates 69 and 46 wpm for students U and Z, while the final post-data indicates 90 and 89 wpm, respectively.

Similarly, the structured interview data revealed that all the participants felt curious, excited, very happy, joyful, and better and more comfortable about reading compared to previous reading (S-A, B, C... AB). Furthermore, S-A reported, "I feel happy, and at home I read out using the choral reading strategy." It shows that CR had a greater impact on reading fluency and motivation. Similarly, S-J shared that "it increases my reading speed, and I like reading more." Likewise, S-P mentioned that he is excited about CR because it improves his reading and pronunciation. For instant, the table 2 above shows the base-data and post-data of S-P revealed that base-data as 53 wpm and post-data as 153 wpm, which shows amazing significant improvement in reading fluency.

Therefore, the finding concludes that choral reading for 10 minutes in English periods has a positive impact on reading, and if given more time to read in the class, it is foreseen that it will have a huge impact on reading and motivate students.

Motivation

Research confirms that student motivation is a key factor in successful reading. Choral reading provides an opportunity for all students to participate and fosters fluency, self-confidence, and motivation. It also enables students to work in groups in unison with the teacher, and more proficient students often engage in reading.

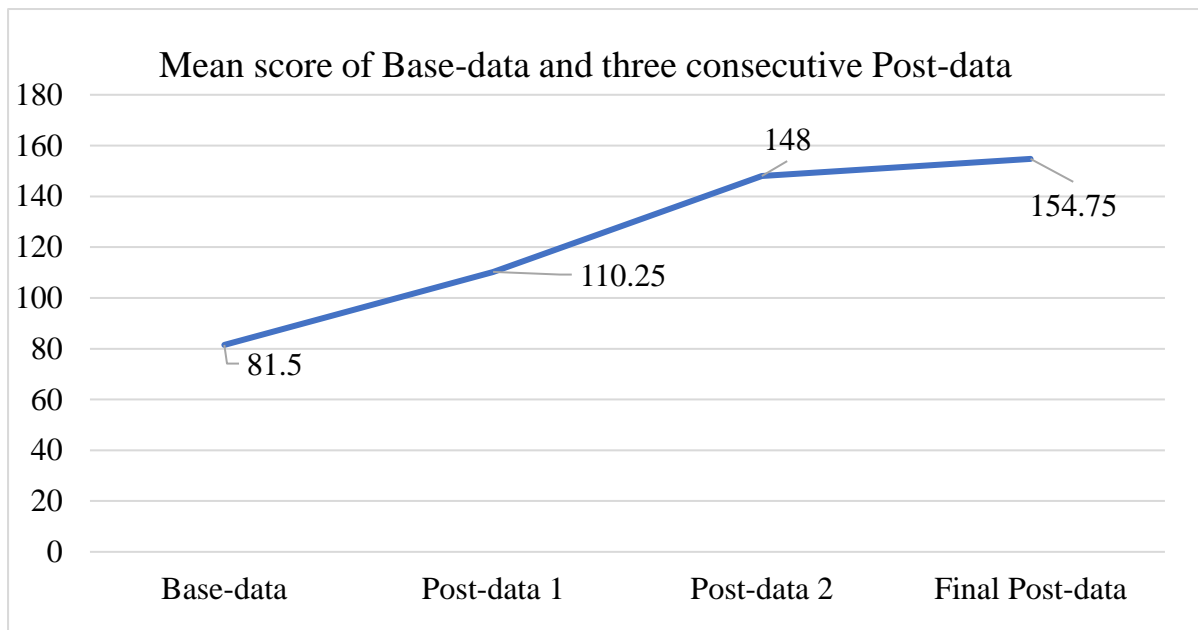


Figure 2. Base-Data and three consecutive post-data

Figure 2 displays the average score from the base data and three consecutive post-data sets. Surprisingly, it reveals that there has been a steady improvement in reading fluency. The mean score for base data was 81.5 wpm. The researcher applied intervention to enhance reading fluency. The post-data 1 and post-data 2 demonstrate a consistent improvement in reading fluency. The data shows that post-data 1 sprouts to a mean score of 110.25 wpm, and post-data 2 shows 148 wpm. Lastly, the final post-data demonstrates a significant improvement in reading, reaching a mean score of 154.75 wpm. It also signified that choral reading had motivated students to read. Similarly, the structured interview data reveals that students were motivated to read. All the student participants shared that they feel curious, very happy, excited, feeling better, and enjoy reading as it improves their reading (S-A to S-AB). Furthermore, S-A mentioned, 'I feel happy, and at home I read out, applying the choral reading strategy.' Similarly, S-G expressed, "I find it fascinating that my friends correct me when I mispronounce words." The finding shows that choral reading has motivated and improved reading fluency. Every English period, the majority of students enjoyed reading for ten minutes. Surprisingly, 98% of the participants shared their excitement about choral reading [CR].

However, the observation revealed that a few students were not taking their reading seriously and were reading at a slow pace. The structured interview data revealed that 2% of the students expressed dissatisfaction with choral reading. Interestingly, S-N declared, "I feel irritated because of the loud sound, and I feel as if we are in the vegetable market." Similarly, S-T revealed, 'I feel a little bit awful about CR because I don't understand what I am reading.'

However, both the base-data and the post-data indicate that S-N has consistently improved their reading skills. The base data was 54 wpm, 92, 127, and 110 wpm. Surprisingly, S-T's data displays reading speeds of 70 wpm, 84 wpm, 117 wpm, and 130 wpm. The results indicate a consistent improvement in their reading fluency.

Therefore, the results clearly demonstrate that choral reading (CR) significantly improves and motivates students to read. Similarly, we observed students actively participating in reading. Thus, it confirms that choral reading has influenced comprehension and developed reading fluency.

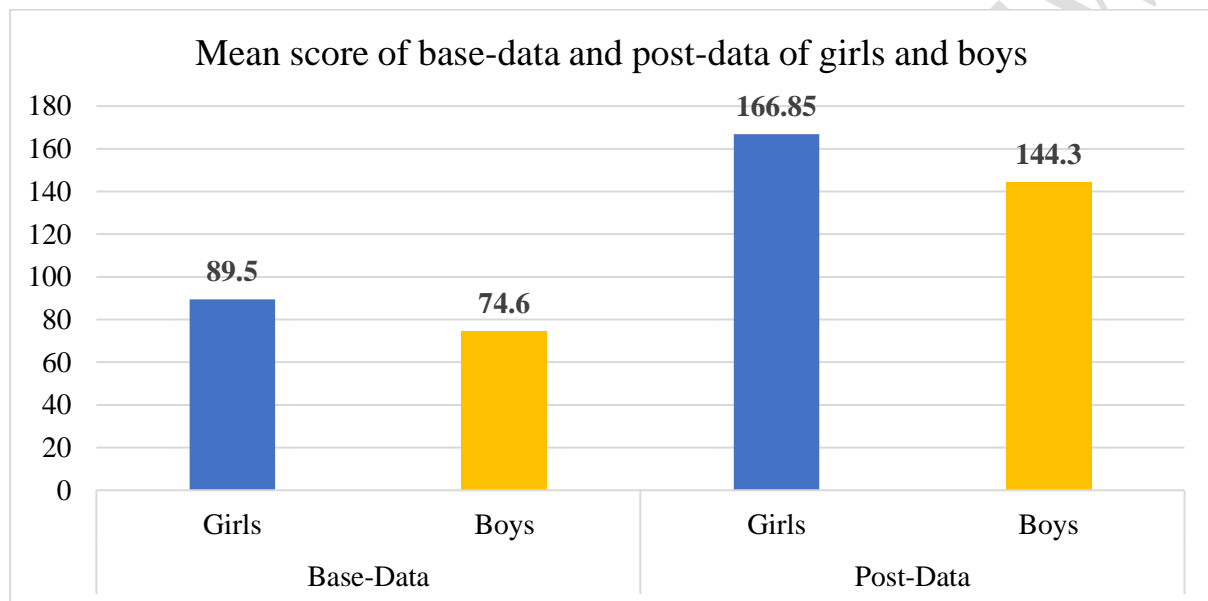


Figure 3. Comparative study of male and female reading fluency of base-data and post-data

Figure 3 presents a comparative analysis of the reading fluency of girls and boys, showing the results of base-data and post-data. The graph revealed that girls were generally better at reading fluency than boys. The mean score for girls was 89.5 wpm in base data and increased to 166.85 wpm in post-data, while the mean score for boys was 74.6 wpm in base data and 144.3 wpm according to post-data, indicating a mean difference of 22.5 wpm. This indicates that the reading fluency of boys was slightly lower than the girls. Therefore, the findings indicate that girls exhibited significantly higher reading fluency, as illustrated in Figure 3. Therefore, it concludes that choral reading encourages every reader to read aloud, thereby eliminating shyness and enhancing reading fluency.

Increased Confident

The majority of the students reported feeling more confident in their reading abilities after participating in choral reading for about three months. Surprisingly, all the students mentioned that they used to hate reading out loud, but revealed that they felt more comfortable, excited, good, and confident because they practiced together and their reading skill is improving day by day (A-S & S-AB). Classroom observations corroborated this theme, revealing that the majority of students had their own reading materials and actively participated in reading.

Furthermore, both the base-data and the final post-data indicate that students read with confidence and it is evident that student shows consistent improvement in their reading fluency wpm. Therefore, the data clearly indicates that students' reading confidence has increased.

Enhanced Engagement and peer support

The student participants reported higher levels of engagement during choral reading sessions. A researcher observed that students who were previously reluctant to participate are now actively joining in the choral reading activities. Similarly, S-E, S-F, S-I, S-M, S-O, S-P, S-U-X—Z, and S-AB reported that they found choral reading (CR) to be an intriguing and effective strategy. They expressed happiness and excitement about CR, as it encouraged reading and improved pronunciation. The finding is associated with the observation that the majority of the students engaged in reading.

Furthermore, the finding reveals that students frequently mentioned the benefits of reading with their peers. One student participant, S-R, commented, "I like that we all read together. If I'm unsure about a word, I can listen to how others pronounce it. Similarly, S-S, S-Z, S-AB, S-G, and S-H revealed that they learn from their friends; when they hear and read together, friends correct if a word is mispronounced, providing an opportunity for both teachers and friends to correct pronunciation. Thus, the finding aligns with the researcher's observation that the students help each other while reading with joy. Additionally, participants S-J, S-M, and S-R reported that CR has fostered a sense of competition, with friends and teachers correcting and assisting them in reading difficult words, enabling them to read and pronounce words more accurately than before, and asking friends for further learning and pronunciation enhancement. Similarly, S-K expressed, "I can read and pronounce better than before by hearing my friends pronounce well." Therefore, the finding concludes that CR had a greater impact on reading and enhanced engagement.

Discussion

Reading fluency

The findings of this action research study provide strong evidence for the effectiveness of choral reading pedagogy in enhancing reading fluency among seventh-grade students. The finding aligns with the post-data that most of the participants have read more than 100–200 wpm and have steadily improved. The findings are consistent with the findings of Hasbrouck and Tindal (2017), Brysbaert (2019), Ayuba and Kadir (2022), and Khasawneh and Fallatah (2022) who found that native readers record an average reading fluency rate of 150–204 words per minute [wpm] for grades 6th–8th, and that the choral reading method enhances students' reading fluency in the seventh grade. Further, the findings conclude that the choral reading method improves students' reading speed. Similarly, the choral reading is a major teaching and learning strategy. Choral reading, a literacy strategy where students read aloud together as a group, has gained attention for its potential to improve reading fluency and comprehension, aligning with previous research demonstrating the positive impact of choral reading on fluency development (Bessette, 2020). Likewise, the finding aligns with the study by Ashby et al. (2017) that students who participated in choral reading activities exhibited noticeable improvements in their reading rate and accuracy compared to those who did not engage seriously in reading activities.

Consequently, the results showed that choral reading significantly improved reading fluency. Thus, the majority of the participants [97.7%] recommended applying CR to teach reading fluency.

Motivation

The study's findings strongly suggest that CR not only provides an opportunity for all students to participate but also fosters fluency, self-confidence, and motivation. The finding aligns with the final post-data and demonstrates a significant improvement in reading, reaching a mean score of 154.75 wpm. The outcome is consistent with the findings of Hasbrouck and Tindal (2017) and Brysbaert (2019), who found that native readers in grades 6th to 8th record an average reading fluency rate of 150–204 words per minute [wpm]. Furthermore, the findings confirm that all the student participants, from S-A to S-AB, feel curious, very happy, excited, feel better, and enjoy reading as it improves their reading skills. Similarly, S-A expressed that

she feels pleased and uses the choral reading strategy at home. The data revealed that choral reading created a supportive and collaborative learning environment, which likely contributed to increased confidence and engagement. Furthermore, the finding reveals that 98% of the participants shared their excitement about choral reading. The findings align with those of Ayuba and Kadir (2022) that choral reading can be an effective strategy for improving reading fluency in students of all ages. Likewise, Sheela and Premalatha (2023) and Mendaros (2022) studies found that students could use choral reading to enhance reading fluency and expression.

Therefore, the findings strongly indicate that CR is motivated to read, and 98% of the participants expressed excitement about CR. Thus, the findings suggest that CR has motivated the learners to improve their reading skills.

Confidence and engagement

The results clearly show that most students reported feeling confident in their reading abilities after participating in choral reading. The finding aligned with the structured interview; all the students mentioned that they used to hate reading out loud, but now they feel more comfortable, excited, good, and confident because they practice together and their reading skill is improving day by day (S-A to S & S-AB). The results also align with the base-data and post-data, indicating a consistent improvement in reading fluency among the majority of student participants. These results align with the studies conducted by Midi et al. (2024) and Dolean et al. (2017) that the choral reading strategy significantly enhanced the reading fluency of the students.

Furthermore, the result shows that students frequently mentioned the benefits of reading with their peers. In addition, the finding reveals that CR has fostered a sense of competition, with friends and teachers correcting and assisting them in reading difficult words, enabling them to read and pronounce words more accurately than before, and asking friends for further learning and pronunciation enhancement. The findings align with the structured interview where S-R commented, "I like that we all read together. If I'm unsure about a word, I can listen to how others pronounce it." Additionally, S-S, S-Z, S-AB, S-G, and S-H revealed that they learn from their friends. When they hear and read together, friends correct if a word is mispronounced, providing an opportunity for both teachers and friends to improve pronunciation. The post-data, demonstrated a steady improvement in reading fluency, corroborates the findings. Further, the observation documents align with the finding that enthusiastic readers read well and are motivated to read even at home. Moreover, the observation documents corroborated

the findings, showing that most students actively participated in a reading program for 10 minutes, documented in their reading logs, and encouraged the timid students to read out loud. These results align with the study conducted by Jenkins et al. (2015) and Midi et al. (2024), which found that choral reading significantly improved reading fluency and comprehension among seventh-grade students, particularly those with lower reading proficiency.

Therefore, it concludes that CR has a significant effect on enhancing reading fluency and recommend applying CR to teach reading fluency and motivate readers.

Recommendation

1. Recommends the school to conduct larger-scale studies across multiple sections or classes.
2. Recommends to includes a control group (Cosy-experiment) to compare the effectiveness of choral reading interventions in future.
3. Researchers recommends implementing a longer-term study to investigate the sustainability of fluency gains and their influence on overall academic achievement.
4. Investigating the effectiveness of choral reading with diverse student populations could be better.
5. The result finding recommends that CR is effective and 97.7% of the students' participant recommended to apply CR to enhance reading fluency. However, the result finding cannot be reliable since AR focused on limited participants.

Limitations of AR

Although this study offers significant insights into the efficacy of choral reading in seventh-grade classrooms, it is important to acknowledge several limitations:

- **Sample size:** The relatively small sample size (13 girls and 15 boys) limits the generalizability of the findings.
- **Lack of a control group:** The lack of a control group makes it difficult to attribute the observed improvements solely to the choral reading intervention.
- **Duration:** While the 12-week intervention period was longer than many previous studies, it may not be sufficient to assess long-term effects.

Conclusion

This action research study demonstrates that implementing choral reading pedagogy can significantly enhanced reading fluency, comprehension, and engagement among seventh-grade students. The findings contributed to the growing body of evidence supporting the use of choral reading as an effective instructional strategy in middle school settings.

The success of this intervention highlights the importance of continuing explicit fluency instruction beyond elementary grades and provides practical insights for teachers seeking to implement choral reading in their classrooms. It also fostered a supportive and collaborative learning environment, and choral reading not only improves students' reading skills but also cultivates positive attitudes toward reading, which could be crucial for long-term literacy development.

Choral reading emerged as a promising approach to support adolescent readers, which educators can readily integrate into existing literacy programs. Furthermore, research and refinement of choral reading practices helped ensure that all students have the opportunity to develop the fluency skills necessary for academic success and lifelong learning.

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