

## IMPROVING STUDENTS' FAIRY TALE READING COMPREHENSION THROUGH TEACHER-CONTROLLED ICT IN BLENDED LEARNING: CLASSROOM ACTION RESEARCH IN GRADE VIII NURUL JADID PAITON-PROBOLINGGO JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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### ABSTRACT

*This classroom action research aims to improve students' reading comprehension through the integration of teacher-controlled Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in a blended learning model. This study employed the Kemmis and McTaggart framework, which consists of two cycles covering the stages of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The research participants were 28 eighth-grade students from Nurul Jadid Paiton-Probolinggo Junior High School. Data were collected through classroom observation, reading comprehension tests, questionnaires, and interviews. The results showed a significant improvement in students' reading comprehension, as seen from the increase in their average scores from 60.2 in the pre-research test to 82.5 in the second cycle. In addition, students showed higher motivation, active participation, and engagement during learning activities. These findings indicate that the implementation of teacher-controlled ICT in blended learning effectively supports students' understanding of narrative texts while promoting interactive and student-centered learning in English classes.*

**Keywords:** Teacher-Controlled ICT, Blended Learning, Reading Comprehension, Narrative Text, EFL Classroom.

### INTRODUCTION

In today's digital age, technology has become an integral part of education. The use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays a significant role in creating a more engaging, interactive, and flexible learning process. Through the use of ICT, teachers can present material in innovative and creative ways, while students can adapt their learning styles to their individual abilities and needs. In English language learning, ICT not only serves as a medium for delivering material, but also as a means of fostering motivation to learn and improving students' language skills.

One learning model that integrates ICT is blended learning, an approach that combines face-to-face learning with digital-based activities. This model allows teachers to overcome the limitations of traditional learning while helping students become more active, independent, and motivated in the learning process.

At Nurul Jadid Paiton-Probolinggo Junior High School, the application of ICT in English language learning has begun to be developed, especially since the pandemic accelerated the use of technology in schools. However, most students still face difficulties in understanding English reading texts, especially narrative texts such as fairy tales. Fairy tales are an important part of the eighth-grade curriculum because they contain moral values and imaginative elements that can enrich students' critical thinking skills. These difficulties arise due to the limited availability of interesting learning resources, a lack of media variety, and minimal guidance from teachers on how to effectively manage ICT-based learning.

A number of previous studies have shown that the application of ICT has the potential to increase student motivation and learning outcomes, but its effectiveness is highly dependent on the role of teachers in designing and directing the learning process. When the

use of ICT is under the supervision of teachers, learning activities will be more focused on learning objectives and avoid distractions due to the inappropriate use of technology. In the context of blended learning, teachers act as facilitators who combine pedagogical and technological elements through activities such as guided reading, online exercises, and interactive discussions focused on text comprehension.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze how the application of teacher-controlled ICT in blended learning can improve the reading comprehension skills of eighth-grade students, particularly in fairy tale texts. Reading comprehension is one of the main skills in English language learning. According to Grabe and Stoller (2011), comprehension occurs when readers construct meaning through interaction between the text, the reader, and the context. In the context of English as a foreign language (EFL) learning in Indonesia, many students still read literally without interpreting deeper meanings or understanding the moral values contained in the text.

Through the implementation of teacher-controlled ICT, such as the use of digital platforms, educational videos, and interactive quizzes, teachers can create a more meaningful and engaging learning experience. With guidance and supervision from teachers, the use of technology can help students understand reading more comprehensively, rather than just passively following digital activities.

This study is important because it contributes to the development of research on the application of ICT in English language learning, especially in Islamic boarding school environments such as SMP Nurul Jadid. Students in schools like this often have limited time for independent study due to their busy academic and religious activities. Therefore, a learning model that combines teacher supervision and the use of technology is considered to be able to help students learn effectively in a limited amount of time. Furthermore, the results of this study are expected to serve as a practical reference for English teachers in integrating technology pedagogically, rather than merely as an additional tool.

Thus, the application of teacher-controlled ICT in blended learning is expected to bridge traditional teaching methods with more modern digital learning. Teachers continue to play a key role in guiding the learning process, while technology serves to enrich the learning experience, increase student participation, and deepen their understanding of English reading texts.

### **Related Literature Review**

#### **1. Reading Comprehension in the Context of EFL**

Reading comprehension is one of the essential skills in English language learning, especially for students who are learning it as a foreign language (English as a Foreign Language – EFL). According to Grabe and Stoller (2011), reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning from written text through the interaction between the reader's background knowledge, linguistic ability, and the content of the text being read. This process requires students to connect new information with their previous experiences and knowledge in order to understand the meaning of the text comprehensively.

In the context of English language learning in Indonesia, many students still face difficulties in understanding texts due to limited vocabulary, a lack of effective reading strategies, and minimal exposure to authentic reading materials. These difficulties become even more apparent when students encounter narrative texts such as fairy tales, as they must not only understand the literal meaning of the words, but also grasp the moral message, implied meaning, and characters in the story.

Snow (2002) states that good reading comprehension involves three main components, namely the reader, the text, and the reading activity itself. These three

components interact with each other and are influenced by external factors such as teaching methods and the learning atmosphere in the classroom. Therefore, to improve text comprehension skills, teachers need to design learning activities that engage students, provide clear context, and encourage them to interact directly with the text.

## 2. Fairy Tales as Reading Material in Junior High School

Fairy tales are a type of fictional text that usually contain moral messages through imaginative characters and events. In the Merdeka Curriculum for eighth grade, fairy tales are used as a medium to develop an understanding of moral and cultural values, as well as the ability to understand narrative structure and language. Through these texts, students are expected to learn about the moral messages contained in the stories while expanding their language knowledge.

However, in practice, many students still experience difficulties when reading English fairy tales. This is due to limited vocabulary, difficulty understanding complex sentence structures, and passive reading habits—where students simply translate word for word without trying to understand the overall meaning of the story.

Previous studies, such as those conducted by Nurhayati (2018) and Pratiwi (2020), show that interactive and creative learning approaches can help students understand narrative texts better. For example, the use of media such as images, animated videos, or digital texts has been proven to increase students' interest in reading and engagement. Thus, the use of ICT in presenting fairy tales has the potential to make reading activities more enjoyable, contextual, and easier for students to understand.

## 3. ICT in English Language Teaching

Technological developments have brought about major changes in the way teachers teach and students learn English. Various ICT devices, such as online learning platforms, digital texts, interactive videos, and educational applications, enable the learning process to be more interactive and student-centered. Warschauer (2004) asserts that the application of ICT in language classes can increase learning motivation, foster independence, and provide a more realistic language experience.

However, the success of ICT implementation greatly depends on how teachers design and manage the learning process. In many schools in Indonesia, the use of ICT is still limited to simple things such as PowerPoint presentations or online exercises. The use of such media is helpful, but it may not be effective if it is not accompanied by clear and focused teaching strategies. Therefore, teachers have a key role in ensuring that ICT is used not only as a technical tool, but also as a pedagogical tool that supports the development of students' language and thinking skills.

## 4. Teacher-Controlled ICT in Blended Learning

Blended learning is a learning model that combines face-to-face teaching with online learning activities. Its main objective is to combine the advantages of both approaches to achieve optimal learning outcomes (Graham, 2013). In this model, teacher-controlled ICT means that teachers play an active role in providing guidance and supervision of students' use of technology, rather than allowing students to learn independently without direction.

The teacher-controlled ICT concept offers several pedagogical advantages. First, this approach helps maintain student focus and discipline, so they are not easily distracted by the entertainment aspects of technology. Second, teachers can provide step-by-step guidance in navigating digital materials, which helps students understand the text more deeply. Third, this approach also encourages collaboration and discussion among students through structured online activities.

Research conducted by Rahma (2019) and Fitriana (2022) shows that the application

of teacher-controlled ICT in blended learning can increase student engagement and strengthen understanding of reading texts. At Nurul Jadid Junior High School, this concept can be applied through activities such as guided reading using digital platforms, vocabulary exercises through online quizzes, and discussions on moral values through the school's Learning Management System (LMS). With active guidance from teachers, ICT can be used more meaningfully and not become a source of distraction for students.

## 5. Previous Studies

Various previous studies have shown that the application of ICT in English language learning has a positive impact on students' reading skills. For example, Yuliana (2021) found that the integration of ICT tools such as Google Classroom and interactive quizzes can improve students' reading comprehension at the junior high school level. Similar results were also reported by Nugraha (2020), who stated that students who learn using the blended learning model have better motivation and reading outcomes compared to students who are taught using traditional methods.

However, there is still little research that specifically examines the application of teacher-controlled ICT in the context of fairy tale comprehension. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by examining how the targeted and teacher-guided use of ICT can help students understand the content and meaning of narrative texts in learning English as a foreign language.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This study uses a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach that focuses on improving classroom learning practices through continuous action and reflection. This CAT model refers to the cycle developed by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988), which consists of four main stages, namely planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.

This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to directly apply learning strategies in the classroom and then evaluate their effectiveness based on the results obtained. The main focus of this study is to improve students' reading comprehension skills in fairy tales through the application of teacher-controlled ICT in a blended learning context.

The research was conducted in two cycles, each cycle covering the four stages mentioned above. This process aimed to ensure continuous improvement in both the implementation of learning strategies and the improvement of student learning outcomes.

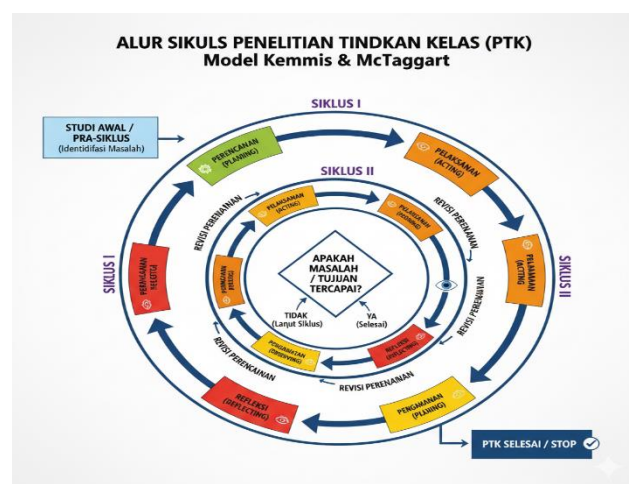


Figure 1. Classroom Action Research (CAR) cycle based on Kemmis & McTaggart (1988).

## **Research Settings and Participants**

This research was conducted at Nurul Jadid Paiton Junior High School, Probolinggo, East Java, a private school located in the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School complex. This school is known for its integration of general education and Islamic values and has begun to implement technology-based learning in its academic activities.

The research subjects were 28 students in class VIII-G of the Language Intensive Program (LIPS). This class was selected purposively because the researcher had conducted a field experience program (PPL) in the same class, thereby understanding the characteristics and learning habits of the students. Some students in this class are accustomed to using English in their daily interactions, both in class and in the dormitory environment. However, they still face difficulties in understanding English reading texts, especially narrative texts such as fairy tales.

This research was conducted collaboratively between researchers and English teachers at the school. This collaboration was important to ensure that the learning process was carried out in accordance with the needs of the class while maintaining the validity of the actions taken.

## **Research Instruments**

To obtain accurate and comprehensive data, this study used several types of instruments, namely:

### **1. Observation Sheet**

Used to record student participation, enthusiasm, and engagement levels during the ICT-based learning process. Observations were conducted by collaborating teachers and researchers.

### **2. Reading Comprehension Test**

The test was administered in the form of a pre-test and post-test in each cycle. This test was used to measure the improvement in students' ability to understand fairy tale texts after the implementation of learning actions.

### **3. Field Notes**

Contains documentation and reflections recorded by researchers and collaborating teachers regarding the implementation of learning, including obstacles that arose and student responses in class.

### **4. Student Questionnaire**

Used to obtain data on students' perceptions and attitudes towards the application of ICT in reading comprehension learning. The questionnaire contains statements with a Likert scale to assess the level of student motivation and engagement.

### **5. Interview Guide**

Interviews were conducted with several students and English teachers to obtain more in-depth qualitative data on the effectiveness of the learning model applied.

## **Research Procedure**

The research was conducted in two cycles, each lasting two weeks with four meetings in each cycle. The following steps were taken:

### **Cycle I:**

In the initial stage, teachers introduced the use of various ICT-based tools such as digital fairy tales, Google Classroom, and online quizzes (Quizizz, Wordwall). The teacher played an active role in providing step-by-step instructions, guiding students in accessing materials, and monitoring their participation in online and face-to-face activities. The main focus of the first cycle was to help students adapt to digital learning and identify initial

obstacles that arose, both in text comprehension and learning engagement.

### **Cycle II:**

The second stage was designed based on the results of the reflection from the first cycle. Teachers added more interactive activities, such as guided moral value analysis, watching animated fairy tale videos, and vocabulary exercises using digital flashcards. Teachers continue to control the learning process by giving clear instructions, maintaining student focus, and ensuring that each activity supports the learning objectives. The main objectives of the second cycle are to deepen students' understanding of the text and to increase their confidence through more varied and collaborative activities.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

The data obtained was analyzed using a mixed methods approach, namely quantitative and qualitative analysis simultaneously.

- **Quantitative Analysis:**

Data from the pre-test and post-test was analyzed to calculate the increase in the average reading comprehension score of students in each cycle. The percentage increase was calculated to assess the extent to which the implementation of teacher-controlled ICT affected student learning outcomes.

- **Qualitative Analysis:**

Data from observations, field notes, questionnaires, and interviews were analyzed to identify patterns, themes, and students' perceptions of learning. The analysis was conducted through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

To ensure data validity, the researcher used triangulation techniques, which involve comparing findings from various sources and instruments so that the research results are reliable and accountable.

### **Success Criteria**

The success of the actions in this study is determined based on two main indicators, namely:

1. **Quantitative Indicators:**

At least 75% of students achieve a score of 70 or more on the post-test of reading comprehension.

2. **Qualitative Indicators:**

Students show improvement in motivation, engagement, and confidence during the ICT-based learning process. This improvement is observed through classroom participation, teacher reflections, and student responses in questionnaires.

If both indicators are met, then the implementation of teacher-controlled ICT in blended learning is considered successful in improving students' reading comprehension skills.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Research Results**

This classroom action research was conducted in two cycles, each covering the stages of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The main objective of this study was to examine the extent to which the application of teacher-controlled ICT in blended learning could improve students' reading comprehension skills in fairy tale texts at Nurul Jadid Junior High School, Paiton–Probolinggo.

### **Cycle I**

In the first cycle, teachers introduced several ICT tools such as Google Classroom, digital reading texts, and interactive quizzes (Wordwall and Quizizz). Teachers gradually

guided students in accessing materials and completing reading comprehension exercises both online and face-to-face.

The pre-test results administered before the intervention showed that the students' initial abilities were still relatively low. The average score obtained by students was 60.2, and only 8 out of 28 students (28.6%) achieved the Minimum Passing Grade (KKM) of 70. Based on the observation results, the main obstacles found included limited vocabulary, difficulty identifying moral messages in fairy tales, and a lack of confidence when asked to express opinions in class.

Nevertheless, learning activities showed positive signs. Most students appeared enthusiastic when interacting with digital texts accompanied by images and sound effects. These media created a more engaging and contextual learning environment. However, some students still experienced technical difficulties when using the online platform and preferred conventional activities.

At the end of the first cycle, a post-test was administered to measure progress in reading comprehension. The results showed an average score increase to 70.8, with 18 out of 28 students (64.3%) achieving the minimum passing grade. Although these results showed significant improvement, the teacher's reflection indicated the need for additional guidance, particularly in expanding vocabulary and understanding the moral messages of the texts. Therefore, improvements were made in the next cycle by adding more interactive and in-depth learning activities.

## Cycle II

Improvements in the second cycle were made based on reflections from the first cycle. Teachers added more dynamic learning elements, such as animated fairy tale videos, vocabulary exercises using digital flashcards, and guided moral value discussions conducted online through Google Classroom.

During the activities, teachers continued to control the learning process by providing clear directions, monitoring student activities on the digital platform, and ensuring that each activity was in line with the learning objectives. The results of the observation showed an increase in student participation and confidence. They began to be more active in discussions and were able to better express their understanding of the story content.

At the end of the second cycle, a post-test was conducted to measure the final results. The average score increased to 82.5, and 25 out of 28 students (89.3%) successfully achieved the minimum passing grade. This improvement shows the success of teacher-controlled ICT implementation in improving students' reading comprehension.

**Table 1. Improvement in Students' Reading Comprehension Scores**

Cycle	Average Value	Number of Students Reaching the Minimum Competency Standard ( $\geq 70$ )	Percentage
Pre-test	60.2	8	28.6%
Cycle I	70.8	18	64.3%
Cycle II	82.5	25	89.3%

Table 1 shows a consistent improvement from the pre-test to the second cycle.

This improvement reflects that the teacher-controlled ICT-based blended learning strategy was able to help students understand the content of fairy tales more effectively, while also increasing their learning motivation.

## Discussion

The results of the study indicate that the implementation of teacher-controlled ICT has a positive effect on improving students' reading comprehension. The significant increase in post-test scores between cycles I and II reinforces the finding that the active role of teachers in directing the use of technology can improve student learning outcomes in both cognitive and affective aspects.

First, these results emphasize the importance of the teacher's control role in managing technology-based learning. Clear guidance and focused instructions help students stay focused on learning objectives and reduce digital distractions. These findings are in line with the results of Rahma's (2019) study, which confirms that the success of ICT integration in the classroom is greatly influenced by the role of the teacher as an active facilitator and director of learning activities.

Second, the use of digital media such as animated stories and vocabulary flashcards has been proven to create a more engaging and meaningful learning experience. These media not only increase learning motivation but also help students understand the context of the story through visual and audio support. This is in line with Warschauer's (2004) opinion, which states that ICT can build a more interactive learning environment and encourage students' emotional engagement with the material.

Third, the application of blended learning models gives students the opportunity to continue the learning process outside the classroom. Through platforms such as Google Classroom, students can review material, repeat vocabulary, and discuss the moral values contained in the stories. This flexibility helps students maintain long-term understanding. These findings are in line with Graham (2013), who emphasizes that blended learning is able to bridge the advantages of traditional and digital methods, as well as expand students' learning space.

In addition, teacher reflection at the end of each cycle plays a role in improving the quality of learning. Through reflection, teachers can assess the strengths and weaknesses of the actions they have taken and then adjust their strategies. This is in line with Kemmis and McTaggart's (1988) spiral model of action research, which emphasizes the importance of reflective cycles in continuously improving learning practices.

Qualitative data from questionnaires and interviews support these quantitative results. Most students stated that ICT-based learning was more enjoyable, easier to follow, and motivating. They also admitted to feeling more confident when reading English texts because digital activities and group discussions created a less stressful learning atmosphere. These findings are consistent with the results of Husain's (2024) study, which found that a structured blended learning environment can significantly increase student engagement and reading comprehension outcomes.

Overall, this study confirms that teacher-controlled ICT is able to provide a balance between learning structure and active student participation. Teachers remain the main guides in the learning process, while technology serves as a medium that enriches the learning experience. With the right activity design, ICT not only acts as a tool, but also as an effective means of improving students' understanding, motivation, and confidence in reading English texts.

## CONCLUSION

This classroom action research aims to examine the effectiveness of teacher-controlled Information and Communication Technology (ICT) application in a blended learning context to improve the fairy tale reading comprehension skills of eighth-grade



students at Nurul Jadid Junior High School, Paiton–Probolinggo. The research was conducted in two cycles following the model proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988), which consisted of the planning, action, observation, and reflection stages.

The results showed that the implementation of teacher-controlled ICT had a significant positive impact on students' reading comprehension. The average score increased consistently from 60.2 in the pre-test to 70.8 in cycle I and 82.5 in cycle II. The percentage of students who achieved the Minimum Passing Criteria (70) also increased sharply from 28.6% to 89.3%. This increase shows that the integration of ICT under the supervision and direction of teachers can strengthen student learning outcomes in a measurable way.

In addition to cognitive improvement, the results of observations, questionnaires, and interviews also show positive developments in affective and participatory aspects. Students have become more confident, enthusiastic, and active in reading and discussion activities. ICT-based learning provides a more engaging learning experience, especially as it is supported by digital media such as animated fairy tale videos and interactive exercises.

The role of teachers as the main controllers of technology use has proven to be very important. The supervision and guidance provided help students stay focused on learning objectives and avoid digital distractions. Thus, the teacher-controlled ICT model can be considered an effective and balanced approach between pedagogical control and digital flexibility.

Overall, the results of this study confirm that the integration of technology in learning is not intended to replace traditional methods, but to complement them. With the right activity design, ICT can serve as a bridge between conventional and modern learning, improving reading comprehension, learning motivation, and the overall learning experience of students.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the results and findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed for relevant parties as follows:

a. For English Teachers

Teachers are advised to continue integrating ICT into reading instruction while maintaining clear pedagogical control. Activities such as online guided reading, digital vocabulary quizzes, and video-based moral value discussions can help students understand texts more deeply. Teachers also need to provide continuous feedback so that students can reflect on their learning progress.

b. For Schools and Educational Institutions

Schools need to provide adequate ICT facility support, such as a stable internet network, multimedia devices, and training for teachers on digital learning strategies. This type of training is important so that teachers are able to utilize technology not only as a tool, but also as part of effective learning design.

c. For Further Researchers

Further research is recommended to expand the focus to other English language skills, such as writing or listening, while continuing to use a teacher-controlled ICT approach. In addition, comparative research between education levels or between school contexts (e.g., public schools and Islamic boarding schools) can provide broader insights into the effectiveness of this model. Long-term studies are also needed to assess the sustainability impact of ICT use on student learning independence.

### **General Conclusion**

The successful implementation of teacher-controlled ICT at Nurul Jadid Junior High

School, Paiton–Probolinggo, proves that a combination of technological innovation and pedagogical guidance can create effective, enjoyable, and meaningful English language learning. Teachers remain a central element in the teaching and learning process, while technology acts as a supporting instrument that enriches students' learning experiences in the digital age.

These findings are expected to serve as a practical reference for educators in developing technology-based learning that remains grounded in humanistic, focused, and student-centered teaching principles.

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