

Using Baroque music to improve reading comprehension skills

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Abstract. This article aims to improve students' reading comprehension skills using classroom action research with a collaboration between the researcher and the teacher. This research was conducted in three cycles, each consisting of planning, implementation, and reflection. In language learning, students still find it difficult to find main ideas, to make an inference, or to determine the elements of a story. Therefore, the researcher together with the teachers tried to improve students' reading comprehension skills with baroque music-based learning, which was evidenced by the results of the pretest with the Completed category of only 40%; then, it increased to 60% in the first cycle, 73.33% in the second cycle, and 90.00% in the third cycle. The teacher and students were very enthusiastic about baroque music during learning because it can help the students focus, make them more confident, and make the teacher more enthusiastic in teaching.

Keywords: Learning, Baroque music, reading comprehension skill

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INTRODUCTION

Language is a very influential factor in communication. It has a central role in intellectual, social, and emotional development. Therefore, good language skills are important to be possessed. Learning language is discussed at every level of education, starting from elementary schools, junior high schools, senior high schools to colleges.

The purpose of language learning, especially in schools, is for the students to have the skills to communicate effectively and efficiently following applicable ethics, both verbally and in writing. Therefore, through language learning, students are directed, guided, and assisted to have the skills to communicate both verbally and in writing.

One type of reading skills that students master is reading comprehension skill. Oakhil, Kain, and Elbro (2015: 1) argue that reading comprehension is important, not only reading but also understanding the purpose of the text. Reading comprehension is also very important for today's social life because it can be used to read e-mails, texts, and social networks. Reading comprehension is a complex ability that requires various abilities including cognitive abilities.

Reading comprehension is a flexible and ongoing cognitive and constructive process. This confirms that reading comprehension can contribute to the development of science (Woolley, 2011: 15) Reading comprehension is more than just recognizing and understanding words. True comprehension means understanding what is read and linking ideas to the text with what is already known, as well as remembering what has been read, or understanding how to think while reading (Mikulecky and Jeffries, 2007: 74)

The reading comprehension skill is an interpretation which includes answering questions based on the contents of the text, understanding the meaning of the text, finding main ideas, making conclusions, analyzing the text, generalizing, synthesizing, and building a cause and effect relationship (Gooden, *et al.*, 2007). Reading comprehension is generally regarded as one of the most important cognitive skills acquired by students at school and is an important prerequisite for lifelong learning in adulthood (Alvermann & Earle, 2003; Mason, 2004). Woolley (2011: 15) states that it is very important to help and guide students in reading comprehension because they still have difficulty balancing their understanding with what they are reading.

Reading comprehension starts from elementary school level. Students aged 10-11 years have entered the stage of interpretive and critical understanding (Ismawati, 2012: 52) In Indonesia, students aged 10-11 years are in the fifth grade of elementary school. Therefore, this research focuses on the reading comprehension of the fifth-grade students of elementary school. The reading comprehension material is adjusted to that of the fifth graders.

Based on the above statement, it is known that reading comprehension has a very important role and needs to be mastered by students. However, the researcher found that reading skills, especially reading comprehension, were still not optimal. Students still have difficulty finding main ideas in reading, making, or answering questions according to the reading text, explaining the elements of the story, responding to the content of the reading, and concluding the contents of the reading. Based on observations, learning is still teacher-centered. Lack of student involvement is one of the reasons for meaningful learning that affects students' understanding. As stated by Tivnan & Hemphill (2005), conventional classes do not provide the learning skills and strategies students need to learn to understand texts.

They only listen to the teacher's explanation and do the task, both individually and in groups, according to the teacher's instructions. The teacher lacks guidance on students to understand the reading. They only go around the class once to ask if the students find difficulties at the beginning of working on the assignment. In fact, students encounter many difficulties amid the problem-solving process. In addition, the results of the 2015 PISA study further strengthen that students' reading comprehension skills are not optimal yet. The following are the reading scores of Indonesian students in 2015 according to PISA.

Montenegro	411	1	427	10	418	6	2.5	33.0
Georgia	411	23	401	16	404	15	2.6	36.3
Jordan	409	-5	408	2	380	-1	0.6	35.7
Indonesia	403	3	397	-2	386	4	0.8	42.3
Brazil	401	3	407	-2	377	6	2.2	44.1
Peru	397	14	398	14	387	10	0.6	46.7
Lebanon	386	m	347	m	396	m	2.5	50.7
Tunisia	386	0	361	-21	367	4	0.6	57.3

FIGURE 1. PISA results 2015 (source: OECD, 2018: 5)

Figure 1 shows the reading skill score of Indonesian students of 397, which means below the average score set by PISA, 493. Sari (2015) found that one of the most important aspects to improve reading comprehension scores was "teacher's strategies". Strategies to improve students' understanding can include linking learning materials with daily events experienced by the students, providing homework that involves text, and involving reading activities in each class activity.

One strategy used by the researcher to improve reading comprehension skills is to use music. Beethoven states, "*music is a balance between the body and soul*" (Rose & Nicholl, 1997). Clynes (Jensen, 2008: 378) explains how music involves all parts of the brain. Harmonic structures, quality of intervals, tone colors, and spatial, temporal, and long-term patterns of music are recognized by the non-dominant brain hemisphere (right brain). On the other hand, short-term melodies in music, such as volume variations, accurate and fastpitch notes, pitch counts, and lyrics, are recognized by the dominant brain hemisphere (left brain). The benefits of music according to Jensen (2008: 385) include (1) for relaxation and stress reduction (stress can interfere with learning), (2) for stimulating creativity through the activation of brain waves, (3) for focusing information that is managed in group discussions, and (4) as an intermediary for transmitting information to long-term memory.

The method used is asking the students to read a text and answer questions in an oral or written form, and then the students in groups find the answers that they think are difficult and answer new questions in writing. Each group shares the results of the discussion with others. The teacher's role is to confirm the students' answers. After that, the students conclude the learning

material together guided by the teacher. During learning, the students listen to the music from the beginning to the end.

It is expected that this music-based learning can improve students' concentration and confidence that will increase their reading comprehension skills. Gardill & Jitendra (1999) said that one indicator of increased student reading comprehension is the increase in their reading scores.

The music used in this research is baroque music. The term *baroque* refers to an era around 1600-1750. Lozanov found that rhythmic baroque music is calming and has a strong impact on our ability to absorb information and remember it (Rose & Nicholl, 1997). The music produced is unique because it can bring the brain to beta and alpha conditions (Gunawan, 2003: 252)

Alpha wave frequencies in the range of 8-12 Hz are a standby condition for listening and watching but still rather passive. Beta waves in the range of 12-16 Hz are the best conditions for thinking, asking questions, and solving certain problems (Jensen, 2008: 206). Gunawan (2003: 252) also explains that baroque music is categorized into two, namely quick baroque (between 100-140 bits per minute) used for brain-storming, discussions, or tasks that demand creative output and slow baroque (between 55-70 bits per minute) used in the process of entering information. Schuster and Gritton state that most baroque music matches the relaxed human heartbeat in optimal learning conditions. The use of baroque music in education influences to regulate moods, improve desired learning outcomes, and highlight important matters (DePorter, Reardon, and Nourie, 2005: 73-74). The baroque music without lyrics (instrumental music) is used in this research. It aims to prevent students from singing along to the lyrics of the song playback during the lesson.

The issue of this research is that the students' reading comprehension scores are not optimal and they still find it difficult to understand the text. On the other hand, music in learning is considered to disrupt the concentration of student learning. Resmana & Anggraeni (2018) said that Baroque music gives positive effects to 66% of the participants. It helps them to relax and to soothe their emotion and eventually affects their brain activity to create imagery visions. However, it can also be harmful to others, where 34% of the participants consider the music as a distraction to their activity and reducing their concentration. Based on the explanation above, this article aims to improve students' reading comprehension skills and to describe students' perceptions of the use of baroque music in learning.

METHODS

This research uses a classroom action research (CAR) approach. Classroom action research is a collaboration between the researcher, the teacher, and the actions taken (Kindon, Pain, and Kesby, 2007: 9). Classroom action research requires collaboration between the teacher and the researcher to improve the quality of learning practices (Kunlasomboon, Wongwanich, & Suwanmonkha, 2015). The initial steps of the classroom action research include (1) the researcher and the teacher find the problem in learning, (2) collaborate to determine what learning process can improve or overcome the problem, and (3) do reflection to find out the obstacles encountered and find a way to minimize them for better learning. The actor in the classroom action research is the teacher who collaborates with the researcher as a learning scenario compiler. The research conducted aims to improve the quality of learning, especially language learning, which will have an impact on increasing students' reading comprehension skills.

Sample

The sample in this research included elementary-school students, especially in the fifth grade with an age range of 10-11 years. A nonprobability sampling technique was employed. One of the nonprobability sampling techniques used by the author is purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique by deliberately determining the sample based on certain criteria or considerations so that it does not go through the selection process. The sampling was conducted in one of the elementary schools in Central Java Province, Indonesia, in which there

were 2 study groups at each level. The consideration of the researcher in choosing the school is the distance to the researcher's domicile and the adequacy for the research. Based on the determination of the sample, the number of samples in this research was 30 students, which included 16 male and 14 female students.

Data Collection

The data collected in this research were in the form of quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data are the test scores of students' reading comprehension skills while the qualitative data are the results of the observations of the learning process and the results of interviews from several students and teachers about learning using baroque music.

Data collection in this research was conducted by test, observation, and interview to get the data about the students' reading comprehension skills. The main instrument in this research is the researcher himself. The instruments include (1) reading comprehension test, (2) guidelines for observation baroque music based-learning, and (3) interview guidelines. The reading comprehension test is used to find out the students' reading comprehension skills according to the steps of baroque music-based learning. The observation guidelines were used to observe the process of baroque music based-learning by the teacher and students. The interview guidelines were used to find out the perceptions of the teachers and students about baroque music based-learning and about the difficulty in understanding the text.

The reading comprehension tests take the form of multiple-choice and open-ended questions. The students' understanding of the text was measured by the questions related to the text content. Students can express the implicit information in the text. Thus, the test takes the form of both multiple-choice and open-ended questions (Caldwell, 2008). The number of questions on the reading comprehension test is 25 with 20 multiple-choice questions and 5 essay questions.

The non-test techniques used were observation and interview. Observations were used to collect the data on learning conducted by the students and the teacher, while interviews were to collect the data on the student and teacher perspectives on baroque music in learning. The use of non-test instruments in this research is described as follows.

Table 1. *Non-test technique instrument*

No.	Technique	Instrument	No. Aspects	
			Observation	Question
1	Observation	Teacher observation sheet	13	-
		Student observation sheet	13	-
2	Interview	Teacher interview guideline	-	13
		Student interview guideline	-	13

The data collection was conducted for two months in three cycles. The collected data consist of, first, the scores of reading comprehension with the materials of the topic of the text (the similarities and differences in the contents of the two texts, summarizing the contents of the two texts), elements of a story (characters, characterization, setting, and message), and the answers to questions related to the content of the children's story and, second, the students' perceptions of baroque music in learning.

Data Analysis

The data analysis technique used is an interactive analysis technique. Bogdan & Biklen (1982) mention that data analysis is the process of finding or compiling data obtained from interviews, field notes, and other materials so that it can be easily understood and the findings can be shared with others. The data obtained in this research are then analyzed and developed to become a hypothesis. Based on this hypothesis, the next step is to collect the data repeatedly to conclude whether the hypothesis is accepted or rejected.

The data analysis process in this research was focused on the ongoing process in the field along with data collection. The qualitative data analysis was carried out interactively and continuously until the data were declared complete. The data analysis consisted of data reduction,

data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The chart of data analysis components with the interactive model analysis technique is described as follows.

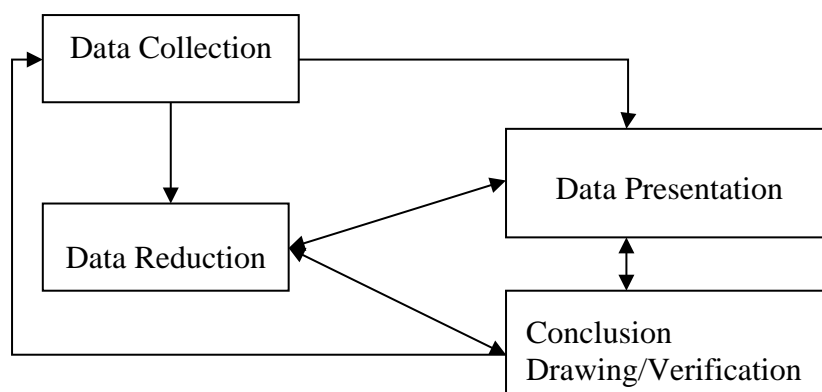


FIGURE 2. data analysis component chart (Interactive Model)
(adapted from Sugiyono (2012: 338))

The initial step to collect the data from various sources is to use various techniques. The data obtained are then selected and classified according to the criteria. They are then presented in the form of graphs, charts, or tables. From the reduced data been presented, the conclusion can be drawn.

This classroom action research consists of 4 stages of (1) planning, (2) implementation, (3) observation, and (4) reflection, carried out in 3 cycles as shown in the following chart.

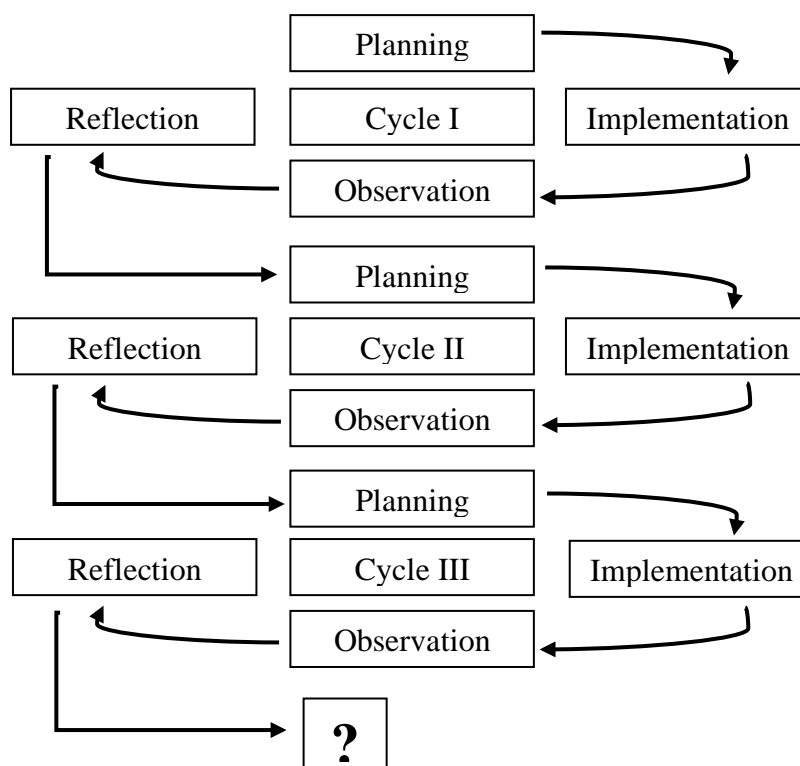


FIGURE 3. Research procedure

At the planning stage, the researcher and teachers plan the learning process. At the implementation stage, the teacher is teaching accordance with the steps of baroque music based-learning which has been agreed by the researcher. In this stage, the researcher observes the activity of the learning process. At the end of the stage, the researcher and teacher do a reflection on the learning process and discuss to improve the learning process in the next cycle.

RESULTS

Pre-action data

The score of the student's skills to understand the content of the text during the pretest is still far below the average. The agreed average score is 70. The student obtaining a score lower than 70 is considered to have optimal reading comprehension. The results of the students' reading comprehension pretest are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. *Pretest scores of students' reading comprehension skills*

No.	Score Interval	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Remark
1	≥90	1	3.33	Completed
2	70-89	11	42.30	Completed
3	50-69	13	42.30	Incompleted
4	30-49	4	7.70	Incompleted
5	10-29	1	3.85	Incompleted
Total		30	100	
No. Completed Students				12 Students or 40%
No. Incompleted Students				18 Students or 60%
Mean Score				64.27

Based on Table 2, it is known that 12 Students or 40.00% reach the average score, but 14 others or 60.00% do not. The research starts with planning until reflection. In the planning stage, the teacher and researcher collaborate to create learning scenarios accompanied by baroque music with the reading comprehension material. In the second stage, learning is implemented accompanied by baroque music. At this stage, the teacher teaches while the researcher acts as an observer. In the third stage, the teacher and the researcher analyze the difficulties and obstacles encountered during learning accompanied by baroque music; then, they look for alternative solutions to minimize these obstacles.

Based on the results of the pre-action, most students found it difficult to make conclusions, determine the main ideas, and explain the elements of the story. They could not distinguish between the main ideas and conclusions in a reading. Also, they did not understand how to find the main idea of each paragraph in the reading and the meanings of character, characterization, message, and setting.

The learning steps agreed between the teacher and the researcher are as follows: (1) the teacher directs students to enjoy baroque music at the beginning of learning; (2) the teacher explains the learning objectives and learning materials briefly; (3) the students work together in groups to solve problems regarding reading comprehension; (4) the students communicate the results of their group works and respond to other groups' works; (5) the students take notes of important information obtained in the text; and (6) the students and the teacher conclude what has been learned together. After carrying out learning accompanied by baroque music, the students' understanding of the text began to show an increase. This can be seen from the posttest scores of the students' reading comprehension skills. The following are the results of the students' posttest scores of reading comprehension skills in three cycles.

First Cycle

The material in cycle 1 is "the topic of the text, the similarities and differences in the contents of the two texts and summarizing the contents of the two texts". Learning was divided into an initial activity for about 5 minutes, a core activity for about 45 minutes, and the final activity for about 20 minutes. Learning was accompanied by baroque music from the beginning to the end of learning. The posttest scores of students' reading comprehension skills in cycle 1 are as follows.

Table 3. *Posttest scores of students' reading comprehension skills in cycle I*

Score Interval	Frequency	%		Remark
		Relative	Cumulative	
≥90	6	20.00	20.00	Completed
70-89	12	40.00	60.00	Completed
50-69	9	30.00	90.00	Incompleted
30-49	3	10.00	100.00	Incompleted
10-29	-	-	-	-
Total	30	100		
No. Completed Students				18 Students or 60%
No. Incompleted Students				12 Students or 40%
Mean Score				76.00

Based on Table 3, the posttest results in the first cycle have shown an increase. The number of students in the completed category increased from 12 to 18. The average score also increased from 64.27 to 76.00.

Learning began with greetings, praying, and checking student attendance. Then, the teacher motivated the students to be more enthusiastic about learning by listening to the opening music played. After that, the teacher made an apperception to relate students' prior knowledge with the material to be learned by asking questions about the contents of the reading text the students had read. Then, the teacher divided the students into 6 groups of 4-5 students. In this step, the teacher had not implemented optimally, which could be seen from the teacher not asking whether the students enjoyed the music to feel relaxed. Besides, the teacher had not conveyed the steps of learning to the students so that they did not understand about the kind of learning.

In this second step, the teacher distributed one reading text entitled "Mengenai Kuda (About Horses)" or "Poni (Ponies)" to each group. Each group got a different text. Then, the students were directed to silently read the text they received and understand its content for 5 minutes. After reading, the teacher distributed 6 question cards and 4 answer cards to each group and asked them to discuss it with the group. Then, the teacher explained the directions to fill in the worksheet in front of the class. Each group made questions based on the answer cards and answered the questions based on the question card they got. They were also asked to write an outline of the contents of the text they got before having group discussions for 10 minutes. In this step, the teacher had done well. Unfortunately, the teacher did not explain the directions to fill in the worksheet before the students have discussions, which made them not understand what to do when discussing and how to work on the worksheet

After the group discussion, the teacher appointed group 2 and group 3 to present the results of their discussion in front of the class. Then, the teacher confirmed the results of the students' discussions. The students with the teacher discussed and concluded the results of the discussion, and then the teacher asked for the student's confirmation about whether the results of the discussion were correct. After they had concluded the results of the discussion, the teacher explained that to determine the main idea of each paragraph of a reading text, they should read the first, middle, and end sentences of the paragraph and determine which sentence contains more important information. This important information is the main idea of the text. At this stage, the teacher directly appointed the group to present the results of the discussion in front of the class. The teacher did not condition the students to listen to the group's presentation so that they did not pay attention to their friends delivering a presentation. Also, the teacher had not given the opportunity to other groups to ask questions or respond to the results of the discussion, making the students look passive. During the activities of notetaking, the teacher only directed the students to prepare notebooks and stationery without guiding them to take note of important points relating to the outline of the reading content in their notebooks. Thus, the students did not understand the material well. This notetaking activity is important for students to understand the contents of a reading.

In this step, the teacher tested the students' reading comprehension skills through the test. The teacher distributed evaluation sheets to each student which consists of 5 multiple-choice and 4 essay questions to be answered by the students independently for 15 minutes. After completing

the test, the teacher directed them to exchange evaluation sheets with their peers in one group. The teacher and the students checked and discussed the students' answers, and the teacher asked them to return the evaluation sheets that they checked to their friends. After that, the teacher reviewed the results of the correction on the evaluation sheet, such as "who answers all the questions correctly?". The students who could answer correctly all the questions raised their hands, and the teacher confirmed the students' answers if there were still some incorrect ones.

Based on the results of the interviews with the students, it is concluded that students gave a positive impression on the learning they had experienced with the teacher. They enjoy learning with music, making them feel more energized and relaxed. They are not disturbed by the music during learning even though it is their first time learning with music. During group discussion, the students admit experiencing difficulties because they do not understand what they have to do with the worksheets, question cards, and answer cards distributed by the teacher. They think that there are too many question cards distributed and they are difficult. The students said that they were bored during the presentation activities, so they preferred to chat with friends next to them instead of listening to their friends who were delivering a presentation. The students also did not take note of important points related to the outline of the reading content. The teacher did not guide them to take notes, and while working on the evaluation, the students found it difficult because they did not understand well the material they had just learned.

The obstacles found during the first cycle included the teacher had not directed the students to enjoy baroque music at the beginning of the lesson; the baroque music played was less audible to the whole class; the teacher had not explained the learning objectives; the students were not active when working in groups; the teacher had not directed and guided the students to take a note of important information regarding the text. An alternative solution obtained by the researcher and the teacher was that before learning began, the teacher directed the students to listen to music for a moment, explained the new learning objectives, explained the learning material, and guided the students in communicating the results of their group works.

Second Cycle

The material in cycle 2 is "mentioning the characters of children's stories, characterization, setting, message, concluding the content of the story". Learning was divided into an initial activity for about 5 minutes, a core activity for about 45 minutes, and the final activity for about 20 minutes. It was accompanied by baroque music from the beginning to the end of learning.

The alternative solution agreed was used as the reflective material to improve the learning process in cycle II. The students' reading comprehension test scores in cycle 2 are as follows.

Table 4. *Posttest scores of students' reading comprehension skills in cycle II*

Score Interval	Frequency	%		Remark
		Relative	Cumulative	
≥90	6	20.00	20.00	Completed
70-89	16	53.33	73.33	Completed
50-69	5	16.67	90.00	Incompleted
30-49	3	10.00	100.00	Incompleted
10-29	-	-	-	-
Total	30	100		
No. Completed Students			22 Students or 73.33%	
No. Incompleted Students			8 Students or 26.67%	
Mean Score			82.65	

Table 4 explains the posttest results in cycle 2, which show an increase from those in cycle 1. The number of students included in the completed category increased from 18 to 22. The average score also increased from 76.00 to 82.65. In this second cycle, the students began to enjoy the accompaniment of baroque music during learning. Baroque music could already be heard clearly by the students in the classroom, and group discussions looked more active than before.

Learning began with greetings, praying, and checking student attendance. Then, the teacher motivated the students to be more enthusiastic about learning by asking students to close their

eyes and breathe deeply and to listen to music calmly. After that, the teacher asked the students to open their eyes and asked whether they were ready to learn, and the students responded enthusiastically that they were. Then, the teacher conveyed what to be learned and the theme of the reading before dividing the students into 6 groups of 4-5.

In this step, the teacher distributed the reading text about the Bawang Merah and Bawang Putih (Onion and Garlic) story to each student. The students did silent reading for 10 minutes. During the reading activity, some students were reading the story while putting their heads on the table. After reading, the teacher distributed the worksheets to each group and explained the direction to complete the worksheets in each group. Then, 4 question cards were distributed to each group. The teacher directed the students to discuss with the group. Each group answered the questions based on the question cards they got on the worksheet. Then, the students discussed in groups for 10 minutes.

After the group discussion, the teacher gave the opportunity to all groups to present the results of their discussion in front of the class. Group 5 raised their hands; then, the teacher chose them to come forward to present the results of the discussion. After that, the teacher asked the other groups whether the answer of the presenting group was correct, and they responded yes. The teacher also asked whether their answers were different from the presenting group. Because no student dared to express their opinions, the teacher asked the answer of each group, and it turned out that group 1 and group 6 had different discussion results from the presenting group. After the discussion, the students and the teacher discussed and concluded the results of the discussion. When the students were given the opportunity to respond to the group presentation, many of them looked shy about expressing their opinions.

In this step, the teacher asked the students about the conclusion of the discussion, such as "So, what are characters?". A student answered, "People". Another answered, "Characters in the story". The students' answers to the questions regarding the characterization, setting, and message also differed. To make the students have the same perception, the teacher explained the definitions of characters, characterization, setting, and message in the story with examples. After that, the students with the teacher concluded the material on the elements of the children's story. Then, the students were guided to take a note of the material on the elements of children's stories that had been explained by the teacher in the notebook. After the students had finished taking notes, the teacher asked again the questions, and all the students could answer them correctly.

In this step, the teacher tested the ability of the students by giving evaluation questions to each of them consisting of 5 multiple-choice and 3 essay questions. The students were given time to work on the evaluation for 15 minutes. After completing the test, the teacher asked the students to exchange their evaluation sheets with their friends from different groups. The teacher and the students checked and discussed their answers by giving the opportunity to the students to read the questions and answers on the evaluation sheet that they checked. After that, they were asked to return the evaluation sheets that they checked to their friends. The teacher then asked about the correct answers of the students. The teacher also confirmed the students' incorrect answers.

Students began to be able to enjoy the rhythm of the music during learning. Some even said that the music that was played was pleasant to hear. Some students admitted being lazy to read the story. During the presentation of the discussion results, the answers of each group were different, but they were still ashamed to express them. When presenting the results of the test, there were still some students who felt insecure because the test results were not satisfactory.

The obstacle encountered during the second cycle was the teacher's explanation of the learning material was not optimal. An alternative solution obtained by the researcher and teacher was to explore the reading comprehension material to be taught before learning started.

Third Cycle

The material in cycle 3 is "answering questions based on the content of the children's story". Learning was divided into an initial activity for about 5 minutes, a core activity for about 45 minutes, and a final activity for about 20 minutes. Learning was accompanied by baroque music from the beginning to the end of learning.

The alternative solution agreed was used as the reflective material to improve the learning process in cycle 3. The scores of students' reading comprehension test in cycle 3 are as follows.

Table 5. *Posttest scores of students' reading comprehension skills in cycle III*

Score Interval	Frequency	%		Remark
		Relative	Cumulative	
≥90	13	43.33	43.33	Completed
70-89	14	46.67	90.00	Completed
50-69	3	10.00	100.00	Incompleted
30-49	-	-	-	-
10-29	-	-	-	-
Total	30	100		
No. Completed Students			27 Students or 90.00%	
No. Incompleted Students			3 Students or 10.00%	
Mean Score				90.10

Table 5 explains the posttest results in cycle 3, which show a significant increase from those in cycle II. The number of students included in the completed category increased from 22 to 27. The average score also increased from 82.65 to 90.10.

Learning began with greetings, praying, and checking student attendance. Then, the teacher motivated the students to be more enthusiastic about learning by asking students to close their eyes and breathe deeply and to listen to music calmly. After that, the teacher asked the students to open their eyes and asked whether they were ready to learn, and the students responded enthusiastically that they were ready. Then, the teacher explained what the student would learn and did apperception by asking how many questions there were and divided the students into 6 groups consisting of 4-5 students.

In this step, the teacher explained that they could get much information from the reading text. Especially in this learning, after reading and understanding the contents of the story, they could answer the questions more easily during the discussion and understand the material about questions based on children's stories well. Afterward, the teacher distributed the text of a picture story entitled "Misteri Kakek Berjanggut Putih (Mystery of A White-Bearded Old Man)" to each student. The students then read the story silently for 10 minutes. After that, the teacher distributed worksheets to each group and explained the direction to fill in the worksheets in them. Then, the teacher distributed 5 question cards to each group and asked them to discuss it with the group. Each group answered the questions based on the question cards they got on the worksheet. After finishing answering the question cards, the teacher asked the students about how many forms of question words they found on the question cards, and the students answered that there were 4, what, who, why, and where. The teacher then asked about how many question words were not on the question cards, and the students answered 2, when, and how. Then, each group was asked to make questions based on the content of the story using the question words of when and how. After that, they exchanged questions and answered the questions from the opposing groups, group 1 with group 3, group 2 with group 5, and group 4 with group 6. Students did group discussion activities and exchanged questions for 15 minutes.

After finishing writing the answers to the questions from the opposing group, the teacher guided the students to mention the answers to the opposing groups' questions. Each group answered the questions from the opposing group well. Then, the teacher gave the opportunity to all groups to present the results of their discussion in front of the class. All groups raised their hands. Group 5 was the first to answer. Then, the teacher chose group 5 to present the results of the discussion in front of the class. The teacher asked all groups to check their answers. Each group might argue if they found different answers. After group 5 finished reading the results of the discussion, groups 1, 2, and 4 raised their hands to put forward different answers and express why their answers were different. After the discussion, the students and the teacher discussed and concluded the results of the discussion, and the teacher rewarded each group by giving applause together.

In this step, the teacher asked the students about the uses of 6 question words they had learned during the discussion. The students answered compactly, but there were 2 question words that still made them confused about their use. Then, the teacher explained 6 forms of question words, their uses, and gave examples. After that, the teacher asked what the students did not understand the material they had learned. All of them answered that they had understood. Then, the students with the teacher concluded the material learned. The students were then guided by the teacher to take a note of the material explained in their notebook. After they had finished taking notes, the teacher asked again how many forms of question words and the use of question words, and the students could answer them correctly.

In this step, the teacher tested the ability of the students by giving evaluation questions to each student consisting of 4 multiple-choice and 4 essay questions. After completing the test, the teacher asked the students to exchange their evaluation sheets with their friends from different groups. The teacher and students checked and discussed the students' answers by asking the students to read the questions and answers on the evaluation sheets that they checked. After that, they are asked to return the evaluation sheets to their friends. Then, the teacher asked who could answer all the questions correctly and who answered incorrectly and gave reinforcement to the students whose test results were not satisfactory. The teacher also confirmed the students' incorrect answers.

Based on the interviews with the teacher, it can be concluded that the learning carried out is in accordance with the agreed learning scenario. The teacher claims to have mastered the learning steps and carried out all activities at each step properly. The teacher also said that learning can make students active and happy. The classroom atmosphere becomes more enthusiastic when learning is accompanied by music.

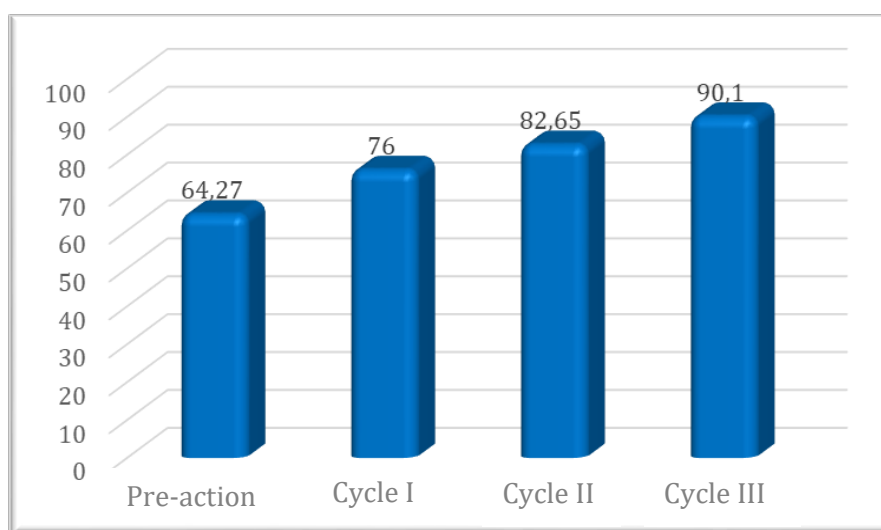


FIGURE 4. *Histogram of the increase of the students' reading comprehension scores*

Based on the results of the interviews with the students, it is concluded that students gave a positive impression on the learning they had experienced with the teacher. The students said that the music they heard during learning made them happy and learning became more active. They began to dare to express their different answers with other groups confidently. They also claimed to be able to answer all the questions posed by their teachers well. They did not feel afraid when answering the teacher's questions. When doing the test, they were very confident with their answers as evidenced by the very satisfying test results. During the learning accompanied by baroque music, students claimed to be more enthusiastic and did not feel bored studying in the classroom.

In this third cycle, the students began to enjoy the accompaniment of baroque music during learning. Baroque music could already be heard clearly by the students in the classroom, and group discussions looked more active than before. There were no obstacles found during the

learning process both from the teacher and students. The following is the histogram of the increase in students' reading comprehension scores from pretest to cycle 3.

Baroque Music in Learning

Baroque music has accompanied learning to read from the beginning to the end. Music was more emphasized during student activities, such as silent reading, discussion, taking note of important points, and doing assignments. The reading comprehension test materials include the topic of the text, the similarities, and differences in the contents of the two texts, summarizing the contents of the two texts, mentioning the characters of children's stories, characterization, setting, message, concluding the content of the story, and answering questions based on the content of the children's story.

At the beginning of learning, the teacher directed students to enjoy music. The students were still unfamiliar with the music during the learning process. After enjoying the music, students felt relax and ready to receive information to understanding the content of the text. Lozanov (Rose & Nichool, 1997) stated that baroque music is calming and has a strong impact on the ability to absorb information and remember it.

The students admitted enjoying learning accompanied by music. This made them more enthusiastic to learn and they were not disturbed by the music during learning. The students' reading comprehension skills during the pretest had not shown any improvement. They did not understand the material well. It can be seen when the teacher asked questions about the topic of the text, the students were confused to answer it. Yet, according to Gooden, *et al.* (2007), reading comprehension skills can be measured by answering questions about the content of the text. If students cannot answer the question correctly, they do not understand the reading text and they do not know the contents of the text.

In the second step of leaning, students discussed to answer the questions about reading comprehension. First, they read the text in 5-10 minutes. Then, they divided the tasks to find the answers from the question cards regarding understanding the text. Third, they discussed with their group whether the answer found was the most appropriate. Finally, the students wrote the answers to the reading comprehension questions. In this step, the students actively divided the tasks and exchanged opinions. They could answer the questions well indicating that they could understand the text well. This is as stated by Ali (Effendi, 2016) that group discussion makes the classroom atmosphere alive because the students fully direct their attention and thought to the problem.

In the third step, the teacher gave an opportunity for the groups to present in front of the class. The teacher guided the audience to respond by directing them to state the difference in the group answers and the reason. These activities made the students more active to show their opinions and able to find their understanding of the text. This is in line with what Meier (2000) stated that activity-centered learning is often more successful than achievement-centered learning. Activity-centered learning shows how students find their own understanding, and, as we know, some students have reasons to choose the answer, and they can explain it well.

During the learning accompanied by baroque music, the students felt happy. It seemed that they did not understand the similarities and differences of the contents of the two texts well. This was seen when the teacher asked them to explain the similarities and differences in the contents of the two texts, only a few students could explain.

Increase in Reading Comprehension Skills

The students' understanding of the content of the text increased. It was seen when the teacher asked the question about the similarities, differences, and conclusions of the contents of the two texts, the students could answer even though it was not entirely correct. The students' less motivation in learning will have an impact on their understanding of the text. This is as expressed by Tuckerman (2003) that students, who are not well motivated, cannot learn effectively.

In the first cycle, the percentage of completeness of the reading comprehension test was 60,00% with a mean score of 76.00. The students still found it difficult to understand the text.

They were not confident to answer the teacher's questions about the text, and they had not been able to determine the topic of the text precisely. Meanwhile, according to Brown (Somadayo, *et al.*, 2013), the reader is said to have understood the contents of the text if he can determine the topic. In fact, the students found it difficult to answer when asked to conclude the content of the text.

In the second cycle, the percentage of completeness was 73.33% with a mean score of 82.65. The students could answer the teacher's questions about reading comprehension. They were also active as the audience in a group presentation and more confident to answer the questions. The question and answer activities conducted by the teacher and students are supported by Nur's opinion (Effendi, 2016) that teachers often assess students' understanding by asking lots of questions, which encourage them to answer.

In the third cycle, the percentage of completeness increased to 90,00% with a mean score of 90.10. In this cycle, the students could answer the teacher's questions about understanding the contents of the texts. They dared to express their different understandings in the presentation activities and could explain the answers when discussing the evaluation questions with the teacher. Blake (2014) states that one way to improve reading comprehension skills is by doing a lot of practice. In this research, the exercises carried out include asking the questions to students, guiding them during reading, asking the groups to divide the tasks and help their friends who have difficulty doing tasks during group discussions, asking the students to present the results of discussions with their groups in front of the class, guiding them to read and answer the questions about understanding the content of the text, and asking many questions related to the understanding of the content of the texts to the students and guiding them to answer correctly. By continuing to do the exercises, the students' reading comprehension skills can improve. This is as stated by Laily (2014) that reading comprehension skills are the result of a teaching and learning process carried out diligently and well-trained.

In addition to group discussions and question and answer activities, one important learning step is taking notes. Taking notes of the material being studied can help students remember what they have written, rather than just listening. Rose & Nicholl (1997) state that notetaking activities will create a strong memory to store the information obtained. The last step was testing the students' reading comprehension skills. After finishing the test, the teacher asked again about the students' answers and why the alternative answers were incorrect. This was done to find out and measure the ability of students to understand the reading texts in the test as stated by Pritchard & Ohhara (2006) that students who can convey their knowledge understand what they have learned.

Students' Perceptions of Baroque Music

The students' perceptions of baroque music played seem to be positive. The teacher gave a positive response to baroque music played during the learning process. The teacher recognized that baroque music made the students more confident, lifted their mood, and made them enjoy the learning process. DePorter, Reardon, & Nourie, (2005: 73-74) stated that the use of baroque music in education influences to regulate moods, improve desired learning outcomes, and highlight important matters.

From 30 samples, the researcher interviewed 10 students. The following are their responses related to learning accompanied by baroque music. Based on some of these students' perceptions, we can conclude that baroque music can give a positive impression on the learning done by students. Baroque music can make students focus. This will lead to the improvement of their reading comprehension skills. Lozanov (Rose & Nicholl, 1997) argues that rhythmic baroque music is relaxing and has a strong impact on the ability to absorb and remember information.

Table 6. *Students' perceptions of Baroque music*

Student	Response
A	The music sounds so soft that it does not interfere with concentration.
C	Baroque music during learning makes me enthusiastic about learning.
C	The music is calm and does not make me sleepy, which makes learning to read more fun.
D	I become more concentrated when reading. I also become more confident to share the group's results verbally in front of the class.
E	I became more confident to speak or express my opinions in front of the class.
F	I become more concentrated when doing assignments or questions. Baroque music does not interfere with my concentration.
G	Listening to music during learning makes me not easily bored, even I can be more enthusiastic.
H	Baroque music makes me enjoy reading. Reading is no longer a boring activity for me.
I	I find it easier to understand texts because of baroque music.
J	Reading is no longer a boring activity when reading by listening to baroque music.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The research concludes that (1) baroque music played during learning can improve students' reading comprehension skills; (2) baroque music does not disrupt students' concentrations, otherwise, students enjoy the music; and (3) students' reading comprehension skills can increase in every cycle with the steps of baroque music based-learning. It is evidenced by an increase in the students' reading comprehension scores. In the pretest, 40% of the students reached the average score of the class. It increased from 20% to 60% in the first cycle, from 13.33% to 73.33% in the second cycle, and from 16.67% to 90.00% in the third cycle.

Baroque music played during learning also has a positive effect on students. Music does not interfere with the course of learning and does not disrupt students' concentrations. Reading activities in learning accompanied by baroque music can increase the students' motivations and interests in reading as well as their concentrations, which increases their understanding of the content of the text.

It is suggested that the results of the research can be an input for educators and educational activists to find appropriate learning strategies to improve reading comprehension skills using baroque music.

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