

The Effectiveness of Kumon Learning Method Toward Student's Reading Comprehension Skill

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Keywords: <i>[Kumon Learning Method Reading Comprehension English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Reading Skills English Education]</i>	English proficiency has become increasingly important in supporting students' academic and future professional success, encouraging parents to seek additional English learning opportunities outside formal education. One of the widely adopted institutions is Kumon, which applies an individualized and self-paced learning approach. However, studies discussing the effectiveness of the method in Kumon course in improving reading comprehension skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes remain limited, particularly in the Indonesian students. Therefore, this study aims to examine the effectiveness of the Kumon Learning Method toward students' reading comprehension skills at Kumon course that is located in Ahmad Yani street, Purwokerto, East Java, Indonesia. This research employed a descriptive qualitative design involving six students aged 11–12 years old enrolled in the EFL Class. Data were collected through interviews, observations, questionnaires, and documentation. The findings reveal that the Kumon Learning Method effectively enhances students' reading comprehension through individualized learning, leveled worksheets, repetitive practice, and Oral Reading Check (ORC) activities. Students demonstrated improvements in vocabulary acquisition, reading fluency, comprehension ability, confidence, and learning independence. In conclusion, the Kumon Learning Method provides an effective supplementary approach for improving reading comprehension skills in EFL learning and may serve as an alternative model for supporting English language development among young learners.

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1. Introduction

It is an essential necessity for the future of children, both in their education and in the workforce. Particularly as time progresses, the advancement of more complex technology necessitates using English as the medium of instruction, which is extremely important (Husna & Murtini, 2019). Basic English proficiency is essential for students who plan to pursue middle and higher school. Therefore, they won't be shocked when junior high and high school pupils are compelled to take English classes.(Jumaira et al., n.d.).

With English no longer being a mandatory subject in primary schools currently, this decision is viewed as increasingly significant. Parents worry that their children will lose the chance to establish a solid groundwork in English if they don't get extra tutoring (Camerroz et. al., 2024). This groundwork is essential for gaining entry to advanced education and future employment opportunities. Parents think that having their children participate in tutoring or language classes will provide them with extra, targeted support, particularly in developing English language abilities, which can frequently pose difficulties in formal education. Parents are eager to rely on tutoring organizations that assist their children in learning more effectively than in school (Halimah, 2019). They see this as a calculated step to provide their kids with a future competitive advantage.

Kumon is one of the English language tutoring facilities that has expanded globally. Toru Kumon established Kumon, also known as Kumon Educational Japan Co. Ltd., a non-formal tutoring organization in Osaka, Japan, in 1958. It grew thru a franchise structure. (Ardiansyah et al., 2022). In essence, math is taught in Kumon more than English. The founder was looking for a way to help his primary school-aged son, Takashi, with his learning issues. As a father and math teacher, he wanted to create a model or learning system that would make it easier for his kid to grasp and learn. (Indah, 2023). This led to the creation of the Kumon method, which is currently being studied by over 4 million 200,000 students in 51 countries. With its slogan "Bring Success," Kumon eventually made English the Institute's second focus because it is thot to be the key to success that must be learned and mastered.

Kumon stands out from other educational establishments thanks to its distinctive teaching approach. As a result, the researcher chose Kumon to be the subject of this investigation. Kumon employs an individual or autonomic approach, which allows each student to get instruction based on their own aptitude and speed rather than age or grade level. This enables pupils to fully comprehend subjects without placing undue pressure on them. Thru regular self-practice, Kumon's English program also seeks to assist pupils in gradually improving their vocabulary, grammar, and reading abilities. Its emphasis on teaching solid principles and enabling students to learn independently sets it apart from other educational institutions that still employ old methods (Indah, 2023). Children studying English benefit greatly from this approach since it fosters better comprehension, self-learning, focus, study habits, self-confidence, and motivation. (Orcos et al., 2019).

Kumon in Indonesia emphasizes three educational programs: Mathematics, English, and Indonesian. In its English language learning program, Kumon offers the EFL (English

as a Foreign Language) class aimed at children for whom English is a secondary language, learning it as a foreign language. Students will enhance their comprehension of English fundamentals, particularly in reading skills, through the resources provided in this program. In nations like Indonesia, Japan, Korea, and others where English isn't the main language, this program enjoys significant popularity. Kumon Learning Institute began developing English lessons referred to as EFL class aimed at students from countries where English is not the native language, such as Indonesia, after noticing the increasing prevalence of English as a foreign language and the growing focus on children learning it (Farani et al., 2024). Kumon's EFL program is specifically designed for kids whose first language is not English.

With the pressure on students to master English and the fierce competition for admission to elite universities, many view Kumon Courses as a way to achieve their goals. This aligns with the belief that "the language environment of a child will influence the quality and amount of the language they use." The initial Kumon Method class in Indonesia launched in 1991, and since then, the method has expanded to 50 nations and territories, covering numerous regions throughout Indonesia. By December 2016, Kumon had educated 4.26 million children (Yuliasih et al., 2018).

The presence of English is crucial in many areas, particularly in globalization and communication as an international language. The idea of language acquisition encompasses four fundamental elements that constitute the basis of the learning process. The four concepts are reading, writing, listening, and speaking. As stated by Nunan, reading is a smooth activity in which readers combine textual information with their prior knowledge to construct meaning (Nunan, D. & Carter, 2001). It describes the reading comprehension process, where readers engage with the text by combining the information given with their previous knowledge and experiences to create meaning. Proficient readers carry out reading comprehension in a smooth, effective, and instinctive way.

Reading comprehension is widely recognized as one of the most essential skills in English language learning because it enables learners to construct meaning from written texts rather than merely decode words. Reading is an interactive cognitive process in which readers combine textual information with their existing knowledge to interpret and understand a text (Anderson & Pearson, 1984). This perspective is explained through Schema Theory, which proposes that comprehension occurs when readers activate their prior knowledge or schemas and integrate new information into existing cognitive structures. Therefore, successful reading comprehension depends not only on vocabulary knowledge but also on learners' ability to connect previous experiences with new textual information.

Interactive Reading Theory, which posits that reading comprehension is the outcome of the interplay between top-down processes like background information, prediction, and inference and bottom-up processes like word recognition and decoding, further supports this viewpoint (Rumelhart, 1977; Stanovich, 1980). Rather than relying solely on linguistic knowledge, effective readers continuously integrate these processes to construct meaning. Consequently, reading instruction should provide opportunities for

learners to practice decoding skills while simultaneously encouraging active meaning-making through continuous engagement with texts.

The Kumon Method's features strongly correspond with theories of self-regulated learning (SRL). Self-regulated learning, according to Zimmerman (2002), is a process in which students actively control their own learning thru goal-setting, progress tracking, strategy selection, and learning outcome evaluation. Kumon's individualized worksheets, mastery-based progression, and self-paced learning environment encourage students to become independent learners who gradually develop responsibility for their own academic progress. Through repeated practice and continuous feedback, learners are expected to improve not only their reading ability but also their learning autonomy and confidence.

In addition, the Kumon Method reflects the principles of Constructivist Learning Theory, which emphasizes that learners actively construct knowledge through meaningful learning experiences rather than passively receiving information from teachers (Vygotsky, 1978). Constructivist learning encourages students to solve problems independently while receiving appropriate guidance when necessary. In Kumon classrooms, instructors function primarily as facilitators who provide assistance only when students encounter difficulties, allowing learners to discover patterns, construct understanding, and develop independent learning habits. Such an approach supports deeper cognitive processing that is essential for reading comprehension.

Another important aspect supporting the Kumon Method is individualized learning. Individualized instruction allows students to learn according to their own abilities, learning speed, and readiness rather than following a uniform classroom pace. Research has shown that personalized instruction improves learning motivation, academic achievement, and learner engagement because instructional materials are matched to individual learning needs (Pane et al., 2017). Likewise, self-paced learning enables students to spend additional time mastering difficult concepts before progressing to more advanced materials, reducing learning anxiety and promoting long-term retention (Means et al., 2014). These characteristics closely resemble the instructional principles implemented in Kumon English classes.

Within the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), these theoretical perspectives provide a strong rationale for examining the effectiveness of the Kumon Method in improving reading comprehension. Reading comprehension requires learners to activate prior knowledge, apply effective reading strategies, monitor their understanding, and continuously build new knowledge from texts. Since Kumon integrates individualized instruction, repeated reading practice, mastery learning, and self-directed learning, the method is theoretically expected to facilitate the development of reading comprehension skills among EFL learners.

Additionally, according to Anderson et al., reading is a method for interpreting a text's significance by utilizing one's prior reading knowledge to build meaning (Neil, 2004). Tarigan, as cited by Panjaitan, defines reading as a process where a reader receives the message communicated by the writer via written language (Panjaitan et al., 2022). This process requires engaging the brain to think and deduce, merging word recognition with

existing knowledge to comprehend the meaning of the written material. Simultaneously, Goodman in Banditvilai states that reading is an active process where readers employ effective techniques to derive meaning from written material (Banditvilai, 2020). Therefore, reading is a crucial ability that everyone should have, as it allows us to communicate information effectively and precisely.

Not to mention the demands of the workplace, particularly in well-known and advanced firms where proficiency in the English language is a must for employment. This is crucial because, in addition to being an academic topic, English is a necessary life skill in the age of globalization and the workforce. Early English proficiency will give pupils a solid basis for comprehending increasingly difficult ideas at later educational levels (Kustini et al., 2012). Additionally, the teachers stated that teaching English at the elementary school level fosters critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving abilities. They contend that teaching strategies that incorporate interactive communication and vocabulary expansion can boost students' self-assurance when speaking English. Since English is the dominant language used in many educational fields and the only language used to preserve information in books and journals in both printed and electronic versions, it has been widely used by students, teachers, and researchers worldwide (Rao, 2019). Additionally, learning English at a young age gives pupils wider access to global educational resources, like articles, films, and online platforms, which expands their learning options.

Students still find learning English intimidating, which makes them unwilling to do so. Nevertheless, a number of students assert that learning English is difficult, and they provide convoluted justifications for this (Indah, 2023). The fundamental English knowledge they learn in school is at odds with the demands of the increasingly advanced technology world and the increasingly dominant period of globalization. They also become less enthusiastic and interested in learning English as a result of this phenomena. Furthermore, not every parent is capable of teaching their children English at home. In order to maximize their children's potential and English proficiency, parents adopt a variety of viewpoints and approaches to these issues. Enrolling their kids in a Kumon tutoring center is one of them.

The topic of Kumon has been studied by a number of researchers; we will give a brief summary of their findings. According to the first study, Kumon's English program seeks to make pupils more self-reliant and accountable. It does not rely on direct instruction, which sets it apart from conventional classroom teaching methods. Instead, well-organized resources, worksheets, and assistance are given to pupils so they can learn at their own pace (Indah, 2023). The second study investigated the methods of teaching English at Kumon. Specifically, it examined the curriculum, learning strategies, learning materials, learning media and assessment procedures used at the English course. By concentrating on more than just Kumon's learning approach, the researcher delved deeper into the process of teaching English at Kumon (Trihapsari, 2021). Using qualitative approaches, their study examines English language teaching methods and self-directed learning. In contrast, the author's research focuses on how the Kumon curriculum affects students' reading comprehension abilities in foreign language classes.

As can be seen from the explanation above, the author selected Kumon as the tutoring facility to be the subject of the study because it was founded in 1958 and has a large global footprint. Parents may believe that their children are looking for additional assistance outside of the classroom since English is one of the subjects that students find most difficult and because mastery in the language is becoming increasingly important in both education and the workforce. Many parents enroll their children in Kumon courses in an attempt to address the issue because they have high expectations for the quality of education in schools, especially when it comes to EFL (Trihapsari, 2021). There are Kumon courses in practically every area of Indonesia, which is evidence that Kumon is a very popular tutoring service and that parents are interested in enrolling their kids there. Additionally, Kumon offers a reliable, organized, and tried-and-true learning approach called the "Kumon Method."

Regretfully, the researcher only discovered a small number of studies that addressed reading comprehension abilities in EFL classes among the numerous earlier Kumon studies. The majority of the earlier research on Kumon had to do with math courses. According to researchers' Google Scholar searches, only one of the 70 articles published with the keyword "EFL reading comprehension" directly addressed reading comprehension skills in Kumon EFL classes, and only twelve of the 97 articles with the keyword "Kumon learning method in EFL" addressed the Kumon learning method in EFL classes. Out of over 100 articles, over 50 of them address the "Kumon program in mathematics." This indicates that there is still a dearth of study on the English language subject of reading comprehension skills in EFL classrooms, particularly in Indonesia. To support this claim, the researcher will provide an outline in the form of a table.

Table 1. The Comparison of Kumon's researches

Keyword	Total Results Found	Relevant Results	Explanation
Kumon EFL reading comprehension	70	1	This topic is rarely discussed, with only 1 relevant article out of 70 results.
Kumon learning method in EFL	97	12	Research focuses on Kumon learning methods in EFL, with broader coverage.
Kumon program at mathematics	100 50		This topic is the most researched, showing the dominance of Kumon in mathematics.

They frequently emphasize the growth of mathematical abilities based on the narratives and tables detailing earlier research on the subject of the Kumon program. In the meanwhile, there are still very few research publications that address Kumon in EFL classes, particularly when it comes to the topic of reading comprehension. This implies that research on the reading comprehension abilities of students enrolled in EFL classes at Kumon tutoring centers is necessary, especially in Indonesia.

2. Methods

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design to explore how the Kumon Learning Method supports students' reading comprehension in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. A descriptive qualitative approach was chosen because it enables researchers to obtain an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences and perceptions in natural settings while preserving the authenticity of educational practices (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Sandelowski, 2000).

2.2 Research Site and Participants

The study was conducted at Kumon Ahmad Yani Purwokerto, Banyumas Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. The site was selected purposively because it implements the standardized Kumon English program and provides a suitable context for examining individualized learning. Participants were selected using purposive sampling (Patton, 2015). They consisted of six students enrolled in the Kumon English program (five Grade 6 students and one Grade 5 student), one English tutor, and the owner of the learning center. These participants were chosen because they possessed direct experience with the implementation of the Kumon Learning Method and could provide rich information relevant to the research objectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

2.3 Data Collection

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, non-participant classroom observations, and document analysis to obtain comprehensive evidence and enhance methodological triangulation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the students, tutor, and owner to explore their experiences, perceptions, and views regarding the implementation of the Kumon Learning Method and its contribution to reading comprehension. The flexible interview format enabled the researcher to probe participants' responses while maintaining consistency across interviews (Kallio et al., 2016).

Non-participant classroom observations were carried out during regular learning sessions to examine students' learning behaviors, tutor guidance, classroom interactions, and the implementation of individualized worksheet-based learning. Observation findings were documented through field notes. Document analysis complemented the interview and observation data. The analyzed documents included students' worksheets, learning progress records, instructional materials, and classroom photographs, which

provided additional evidence of students' reading development and the implementation of the Kumon program.

2.4 Research Instruments

In qualitative research, the researcher served as the primary research instrument responsible for collecting, interpreting, and analyzing the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Supporting instruments included semi-structured interview guides, observation sheets, field notes, audio recordings, and documentation checklists. These instruments facilitated systematic data collection and strengthened the credibility of the findings through multiple sources of evidence (Asipi et al., 2022).

2.5 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), consisting of data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data from interviews, observations, field notes, and documents were transcribed, organized, and repeatedly reviewed before being coded inductively. Similar codes were grouped into categories and synthesized into four themes: (1) students' initial reading comprehension challenges, (2) individualized worksheet-based learning, (3) the collaborative role of tutors in supporting independent learning, and (4) increased motivation and reading confidence (Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2021).

The identified themes were then organized into thematic displays to facilitate comparison across participants and data sources. The findings were continuously verified by revisiting the original data and comparing evidence obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation to ensure consistency and credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

2.6 Trustworthiness

To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, methodological triangulation was applied by comparing evidence obtained from interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Data were analyzed iteratively through repeated review of transcripts, field notes, and documentary evidence to ensure that the interpretations accurately reflected participants' perspectives. This process strengthened the credibility and dependability of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

3. Result

This section presents the findings obtained from classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with tutors, parents, and students, as well as document analysis conducted at Kumon Ahmad Yani, Purwokerto. The data analysis generated four major themes regarding the contribution of the Kumon Learning Method to students' reading comprehension development, they are (1) Students' Initial Reading Comprehension Challenges, (2) Individualized Worksheet-Based Learning, (3) The Collaborative Role of

Tutors in Supporting Independent Learning, and (4) Increased Motivation and Reading Confidence.

3.1. Students' Initial Reading Comprehension Challenges

The analysis of interviews and classroom observations revealed that students entered the Kumon English Program with varying levels of reading comprehension ability. Although most students were able to decode individual English words, they encountered difficulties in constructing meaning from sentences and short passages. These initial challenges appeared consistently throughout the placement process and the first learning sessions, indicating that students' reading difficulties extended beyond pronunciation accuracy.

During the initial observations, several students frequently paused when encountering unfamiliar vocabulary, reread sentences multiple times, and waited for tutor confirmation before answering comprehension questions. Rather than attempting to infer meaning from context, many students focused on understanding individual words first, which interrupted the overall reading process.

a) Tutor 1 described this pattern as follows:

"Most new students are able to pronounce the words correctly, but they usually do not understand the meaning of the sentences. When they find unfamiliar vocabulary, they tend to stop reading and wait for assistance."

b) The students themselves expressed similar experiences. One student explained, *"Sometimes I know how to read the words, but I don't know what the passage is talking about."*

c) Another student admitted, *"When I find difficult words, I usually stop because I am afraid my answer will be wrong."*

The classroom observations further illustrated this pattern. During one placement activity, a student reread the same paragraph several times before attempting to answer a comprehension question. Instead of identifying the main idea, the student repeatedly searched for the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary. Similar behaviors were observed among other students during the early meetings, suggesting that vocabulary uncertainty frequently disrupted meaning construction.

Taken together, the interview and observation data indicate that students' initial reading comprehension challenges followed a similar pattern. Difficulties in vocabulary understanding, sentence interpretation, and limited confidence interacted with one another, preventing students from reading texts fluently and comprehending them as complete units of meaning. This initial condition became the starting point for the individualized learning process implemented in Kumon.

3.2. Individualized Worksheet-Based Learning

Following the identification of students' initial reading difficulties, the learning process centered on Kumon's individualized worksheet system. The findings demonstrate that the worksheets functioned not merely as learning materials but as a structured pathway through which students gradually developed reading comprehension.

Classroom observations showed that every student worked independently according to his or her current achievement level. Students were not required to progress at the same pace; instead, advancement depended on successful completion of the previous worksheet. This individualized progression enabled students to experience gradual improvement without feeling pressured by classmates' performance.

- a) Tutor 2 explained,
"Students only move to the next worksheet after mastering the previous one. The repetition may look simple, but it helps them understand the text little by little."
- b) The owner also emphasized that the worksheets were intentionally designed to support incremental learning.
"The worksheets are arranged from simple to more complex levels. Students build their understanding step by step instead of learning everything at once."

Observation data further revealed that tutors consistently encouraged students to solve reading problems independently. During one learning session, a student asked about the meaning of a sentence. Rather than translating the sentence immediately, the tutor instructed the student to reread the previous paragraph and identify keywords that could help infer the meaning. Only after the student had attempted several strategies did the tutor provide additional guidance.

This instructional pattern was repeatedly observed throughout the learning sessions. Students were encouraged to revisit the text, reconsider their answers, and identify textual clues before receiving direct assistance. Consequently, learning became an active process in which students gradually developed strategies for constructing meaning independently.

- c) One student reflected on this experience by stating,
"The worksheets become more difficult slowly, so I don't feel overwhelmed."

These findings suggest that individualized worksheet-based learning did not simply increase reading practice. Instead, it gradually shifted students from relying on tutor explanations toward becoming more active readers who attempted to solve comprehension problems independently.

3.3. The Collaborative Role of Tutors in Supporting Independent Learning

As students progressed through increasingly challenging worksheets, tutors played an essential role in maintaining learning consistency while preserving the principle of

independent learning. Rather than functioning as knowledge transmitters, tutors acted as facilitators who continuously monitored students' progress and adjusted their guidance according to individual needs.

- a) The owner explained,
"Independent learning does not mean students learn alone. Tutors observe every student's progress and provide guidance only when it is needed."
- b) Similarly, Tutor 1 stated,
"We do not immediately tell students the answers. We first encourage them to think again, reread the passage, and identify the clues by themselves."

These instructional practices were consistently reflected in the classroom observations. During several learning sessions, tutors responded to students' questions with guiding prompts instead of direct explanations. Students were encouraged to reread passages, compare sentences, or identify keywords before discussing their answers. Such interactions allowed students to remain actively engaged in the comprehension process while still receiving sufficient support to prevent frustration.

- c) Students also recognized this learning approach.
"If I make mistakes, the tutor asks me to read again first. Usually I can find the answer by myself."

These findings demonstrate that tutor support was closely integrated with the individualized worksheet system. Rather than reducing students' independence, tutor guidance functioned as temporary assistance that encouraged learners to become increasingly responsible for their own reading comprehension.

3.4. Increased Motivation and Reading Confidence

The progressive learning process observed throughout the Kumon program was accompanied by noticeable improvements in students' motivation and reading confidence. Changes became increasingly evident across the observation period. Students who initially hesitated to read aloud gradually demonstrated greater willingness to participate in Oral Reading Check (ORC) activities and attempted to answer comprehension questions with less hesitation.

- a) One student explained,
"At first I was afraid of reading English because I thought I would pronounce the words incorrectly. Now I feel more confident because I practice every day."
- b) Another student stated,
"When I finish difficult worksheets by myself, I feel proud and want to continue learning."
- c) The tutors also observed similar changes.

"Students who were initially reluctant to read aloud eventually became much more confident after completing several worksheet levels."

Observation notes further supported these interview findings. During the early meetings, several students spoke quietly, paused frequently, and waited for tutor confirmation before continuing to read. By the later meetings, these students completed longer passages more fluently, volunteered to read aloud, and corrected minor mistakes independently without waiting for tutor intervention.

The findings indicate that increased confidence emerged as a gradual outcome of repeated learning experiences rather than as an immediate result of instruction. Students' successful completion of progressively challenging worksheets appeared to strengthen their willingness to engage with English texts, while continuous tutor guidance helped maintain persistence throughout the learning process.

Overall, the four themes illustrate a coherent developmental process. Students initially entered the program with limited reading comprehension, particularly in vocabulary understanding and meaning construction. Through individualized worksheet-based learning supported by structured tutor guidance, they gradually developed greater independence in reading. As these successful learning experiences accumulated, students demonstrated increased motivation, stronger reading confidence, and greater willingness to participate actively in English reading activities.

4. Discussion

The findings indicate that the Kumon Learning Method supports reading comprehension through a sequential learning process rather than through worksheet practice alone. Students' initial reading difficulties were addressed through individualized worksheets, reinforced by tutor-guided independent learning, and gradually transformed into increased motivation and reading confidence. These interconnected findings suggest that reading comprehension develops through the interaction of individualized instruction, continuous practice, and learner autonomy.

The first finding revealed that students' primary challenges involved constructing meaning from texts rather than simply decoding English words. Limited vocabulary knowledge and uncertainty in interpreting sentence relationships often interrupted comprehension, causing students to focus on individual words instead of the overall message. This finding is consistent with Panjaitan et al. (2022), who reported that vocabulary limitation remains a major obstacle to reading comprehension among Indonesian EFL learners. Likewise, Banditvilai (2020) emphasized that effective reading requires learners to employ comprehension strategies rather than relying solely on word-by-word translation. These findings suggest that students required instructional support that gradually developed both vocabulary understanding and meaning construction.

These initial differences explain why individualized worksheet-based learning became essential in the Kumon program. Allowing students to progress only after mastering each worksheet enabled them to build comprehension according to their own readiness and reduced the pressure of learning at a uniform pace. This finding supports

the principles of personalized learning proposed by Pane et al. (2017) and is consistent with Orcos et al. (2019), who found that Kumon's incremental progression promotes mastery learning through structured practice. Unlike previous studies, however, the present findings indicate that the worksheets served not only as learning materials but also as a mechanism for developing independent reading strategies through repeated interaction with texts.

The findings further demonstrate that individualized learning was strengthened by tutor facilitation. Rather than providing direct answers, tutors guided students to reread passages, identify contextual clues, and evaluate their own responses. Such guidance enabled students to solve reading problems independently while maintaining learning consistency. This finding agrees with Trihapsari (2021), who described tutors as facilitators of self-learning, and with Indah (2023), who found that learner autonomy develops progressively through guided practice. Therefore, learner independence in the Kumon Method emerged through continuous instructional support rather than through learning without teacher involvement.

As students experienced repeated success in completing progressively challenging worksheets, they demonstrated greater confidence and motivation to read English texts. Increased participation during Oral Reading Check (ORC), greater willingness to read aloud, and improved persistence reflected the cumulative effects of gradual learning. Similar findings were reported by Husna and Murtini (2019), who argued that achievable learning goals enhance students' motivation, and by Farani et al. (2024), who found that structured independent learning increases learners' confidence and engagement. The present study further suggests that confidence developed as a consequence of repeated mastery experiences supported by individualized instruction and tutor feedback.

Overall, this study extends previous research on the Kumon Learning Method (Yuliasih et al., 2018; Trihapsari, 2021; Indah, 2023; Farani et al., 2024) by explaining how reading comprehension develops rather than merely confirming that the method is effective. The findings propose a developmental learning process in which students' initial comprehension challenges are addressed through individualized worksheet progression, supported by tutor-guided independent learning, and reinforced through repeated mastery experiences that foster motivation and reading confidence. This integrated explanation contributes to a deeper understanding of individualized learning in EFL reading instruction and provides practical implications for implementing learner-centred reading programs.

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that the Kumon Learning Method supports students' reading comprehension through an integrated learning process consisting of four interconnected stages: initial reading comprehension challenges, individualized worksheet-based learning, tutor-guided independent learning, and increased reading motivation and confidence. The findings indicate that reading comprehension develops not merely through repeated worksheet completion but through the interaction of individualized progression, guided learning, and continuous practice that gradually promotes learner

autonomy. These findings contribute to the understanding of how individualized learning facilitates reading comprehension development in EFL contexts.

This study was conducted in a single Kumon learning center with a limited number of participants; therefore, the findings should be interpreted within this context. Future research is recommended to involve multiple learning centers and a larger number of participants or employ longitudinal and mixed-methods designs to examine the long-term impact of the Kumon Learning Method on students' reading comprehension and other English language skills.

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