
**USING SQ3R STRATEGY TO IMPROVE THE STUDENTS' READING
COMPREHENSION OF EXPOSITORY TEXT AT THE SECOND YEAR
STUDENTS OF SMAN 10 PEKANBARU**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research was to know whether SQ3R strategy can improve students' reading comprehension of expository text at the second year students of SMAN 10 Pekanbaru. Expository/Exposition text is a piece of writing that tries to convince the readers to agree with the author's viewpoint by analyzing a certain issue within the text. Communicative purposes of this text are to persuade the readers by presenting arguments and analyzing how and why arguments given. The researcher was helped by a collaborator in conducting this research. The researcher used reading test to see the improvement of students' reading comprehension on each cycle, while observation sheets and field notes was used to reflect teacher and students activities. The research started from March 12, until May 13, 2013. At the beginning of cycle 1 the average score of the students' reading comprehension was 46.67. At the end of cycle 1, it improved to 57.26, at the end of cycle 2 it improved to 75.24, and at the end of cycle 3 it improved to 79.88. The factors of SQ3R strategy that influence the students' reading comprehension are: (1) activation of background knowledge; (2) making inference; (3) having rich experience. Based on research finding, it was concluded that SQ3R strategy can improve students' reading comprehension at the second year students' of SMAN 10 Pekanbaru.

Keywords: *reading comprehension, SQ3R strategy, Expository text*

INTRODUCTION

English is an international language which has significant roles in the various fields of activities, and it also has wide influences in the world. In Indonesia, English is well known as a foreign language, because Indonesia is a non-English speaking country. English is taught at elementary school as a local content, and as a compulsory subject for junior high schools and senior high schools students

Based on KTSP (2006), there are four language skills that have to be mastered by the students in learning English. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. There are various skills in mastering of language, receptive skill: listening (understanding the spoken language), reading (understanding the written language), and productive skills: speaking and writing. As Vasilopoulos (2008) stated that by drawing on four skills; reading, writing, listening, and speaking, it provides students with the opportunity to work independently to evaluate their progress in understanding, replicating, and reproducing the language forms taught.

Reading needs to be acquired by the students in learning English. According to Kamil et al (2010), there are some reasons why reading is very important in learning new language. Reading can help learners to find information, to learn new words, concepts, or practices, using the ideas to carry out a task. The ability of reading English as foreign language is fundamental to the language proficiency of senior high school students because the most typical use of reading in a foreign language class is to teach language itself. Though most of the students have learned English for several years ago, they are seldom trained to learn reading strategies in order to improve their reading comprehension.

Teaching reading of English language is quietly affecting the students' reading skill. The aim of teaching reading is to guide the students to comprehend and to react to what is written. It helps students to read text effectively and efficiently. The students are not only to understand the structure of the text, but also to comprehend the content of the text. Based on KTSP (2006) the aim of teaching reading for senior high school student is generally to enable students to comprehend various kinds of text. The material for the reading is various of text

types (Genre), such as Procedure, Recount, Spoof, Report, Narrative, News Item, Descriptive, Anecdote, Exposition, Explanation, Discussion, and Review. From these various of text type, in the teaching and learning process, teacher and students will discuss about : the social function, the text organization and the language features of each text type.

In this case, the researcher observed some difficulties in comprehending the expository text. According to Djuarie (2007), Expository/Exposition text is a piece of writing that tries to convince the readers to agree with the author's viewpoint by analyzing a certain issue within the text. The Communicative purposes of exposition text are to persuade the reader by presenting arguments and to analyze how and why arguments given. The text organization of exposition text consists of thesis, argument, reiteration/recommendation. The language features of this text are general noun, abstract noun, modal verbs, emotive words, thinking verbs, passive verbs, present tense. However, comprehending text is not easy to learn, students had difficulties when they asked to predict what is the text about by using prior knowledge, to find main idea, to find factual information, to find the meaning of vocabulary, to give argument/opinion based on the text.

The result of observation that is done by the researcher shows that the second year students of SMAN 10 Pekanbaru have problems in comprehending expository text. The problems were the students had limited vocabulary that contain in the text, the students felt difficult to predict the text because lack of background knowledge, the students were not interested in topic. The researcher also found that teaching strategy that is used by the teacher was monotonous and not suitable for the students to increase their comprehension. The researcher found that among 36 students in class XI IA 2, only 9 students could answer the questions of the text correctly and gave their arguments about the content of the text. Only about 25% of them could reach the Minimum Criteria of Achievement (78).

There are so many teaching strategies that can be applied in teaching reading for senior high school students but the researcher is interested to apply SQ3R. Conner (2006) stated that SQ3R are the initials of the five important steps in the reading strategy : *Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review*. By using SQ3R

strategy, the students will survey the material through the title before they start reading, make some questions as they read by using their prior knowledge, start reading the material, recite the material while stop reading periodically, and review what they get from the material.

According to Conner (2006), SQ3R serves several purposes: elicits prior knowledge, sets a purposes for reading, allows students to monitor their comprehension, and allows students to assess their comprehension of the text. The researcher uses this strategy to help the students to comprehend the expository text easily and systematically.

Based on the explanation above, the purposes of the research are: (1) to investigate whether the use of SQ3R can improve the students' comprehension in reading expository text; (2) to know what aspects of reading comprehension can be improved by using SQ3R strategy.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Reading and Reading Comprehension

Based on KTSP (2006), reading, which is well known as receptive skill, is one of language skills that have to be mastered by the students in learning English. According to Sleem (2008), reading is the receptive skill in the written mode. Reading seems like psycholinguistic guessing game, there is an essential interaction between language and thought in reading. The writer encodes thought as language and the reader decodes language as thought.

Comprehension in reading is to understand what readers have read. As stated by Richard (2003) reading comprehension provides readers with opportunities to make connection between what they read to their own lives. Comprehension is a construction process because it involves all of the elements of reading process working together as a text is read to create a representation of the text in the readers' mind.

Based opinions above, it proves that reading is a complex interaction between the text, the reader and the purposes for reading, which are shaped by the reader's prior knowledge and experiences, the reader's knowledge about reading and writing language and the reader's language community which is culturally

and socially situated. In order to gain the information and to make the readers understand what they read.

Reading is an activity with a purpose. A person may read in order to gain information, verify existing knowledge, or critique a writer's ideas or writing style. A person may also read for enjoyment, or to enhance knowledge of the language being read. The purposes for reading guide the reader's selection of texts. The purpose for reading also determines the appropriate approach to reading comprehension.

As Tovani (2000) stated that Reading is thinking. When readers construct meaning, they do so by way of deliberate, thoughtful cognition. They must do more than decode words. Decoding is important, but it is only one part of the process by which readers comprehend. They must also understand what the purpose of the author in delivering the text. They need to determine what is important as well as connect their knowledge and experience to what they read.

According to Snow (2002), reading comprehension is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. We use the words *extracting* and *constructing* to emphasize both the importance and the insufficiency of the text as a determinant of reading comprehension. Comprehension entails three elements: the reader who is doing the comprehending, the text that is to be comprehended, and the activity in which comprehension is a part.

As Steve mentioned on the *Teaching Reading Page*, comprehension is the only reason for reading. Without comprehension, reading is a frustrating, pointless exercise in word calling. It is no exaggeration to say that how well students develop the ability to comprehend what they read has a profound effect on their entire lives. A major goal of teaching reading comprehension, therefore, is to help students develop the knowledge, skills, and experiences they must have if they are to become competent and enthusiastic readers.

Teaching reading comprehension was viewed as a mastery of these skills. Comprehension instruction followed what the study called mentioning, practicing, and assessing procedure where teachers mentioned a specific skill that students

were to apply, had students practice the skill by completing workbook pages, then assessed them to find out if they could use the skill correctly. One of the exact strategies to get more understanding is questioning. In questioning, readers asking themselves questions throughout the reading of text. The ability of readers to ask themselves relevant questions as they read is especially valuable in helping them to integrate information, identify main ideas, and summarize information. Asking the right questions allows good readers to focus on the most important information in a text.

Expository text structures are more varied, complex, and unfamiliar to students. Understanding expository text is necessary not only for reading to get new information but for developing multiple perspectives about issues (Moss, 2004). There are two main reasons why readers have difficulty in comprehending expository text: (1) the organization of expository text is often unfamiliar, and (2) the content of expository text is often unfamiliar. The combination of an unfamiliar organization and unfamiliar content makes information in expository texts difficult to comprehend.

Morris and Mather (2008) stated that reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning by coordinating a number of complex processes including word reading, word and world knowledge, and fluency. King and Stanley (1989) stated that reading has five components contained in reading texts. They are: (1) Finding factual information; (2) Finding Main Ideas; (3) Finding the meaning of vocabulary in context; (4) Identifying references; (5) Making Inference.

According to Day and Park (2005), they present and discuss five forms that comprehension questions may take to stimulate students' understanding of texts. They are: (1) Yes/no questions; (2) Alternative questions; (3) True or false; (4) Wh-Questions; (5) Multiple-choice.

Expository Text

Based on social function, generic structure, and language feature dominantly used, texts are divided into several types. They are narrative, recount, descriptive, report, explanation, expository/exposition, procedure, discussion, review,

anecdote, spoof, and news item. These variations are known as genres/types of text.

According to Guzzeti (2002), expository text is designed to inform, rather than simply entertain, and communicates information about the natural or social world. Expository texts are written to convey, describe, or explain non-fictional information. It is more difficult for the readers to understand these types of materials, because they have specific text structures, contain technical vocabulary, and require readers to have background knowledge. Expository texts include biographies, essays, how-to books, encyclopedias, reference books, experimental books, scientific reports, newspaper articles, and so on (Reutzel & Cooter, 2007).

As Guzzeti (2002), Expository text is also known as informational text, the primary purpose of expository texts is to inform, explain, or persuade the readers. Students of all ages, from elementary to high school, have difficulty comprehending expository or informational text.

Furthermore, the text organization of analytical exposition text is as follows: Thesis – Arguments – Reiteration/Recommendation.

Linguistically, analytical exposition has some language features as follows: emotive words, words that qualify statements, words that link arguments, the use of present tense, and the use of compound and complex sentences.

Iwai (2007) stated in order to get more understanding in reading expository texts, the readers need to understand the features/elements of expository texts: *text structure, technical vocabulary, and background knowledge*. There are three characteristics skillful readers have when they read expository texts: *activation of their background knowledge, making inferences, and having rich experience*.

SQ3R Strategy

Shields (2010) stated that there are various strategies that have been developed for the best way of reading and getting the most out of academic literature. One of the techniques is *SQ3R Reading Strategy*. This strategy was first introduced by Francis P. Robinson in 1946 in a book called *Effective Study*. It has stood the test of time and is a useful strategy for reading academic texts as it helps the readers to fully understand what they are reading and to take notes for later use.

According to Rizvi (2005), SQ3R is a well-trying and widely used reading technique. It has been recommended by a number of communication experts and ESL researchers as it ensures a high degree of understanding and remembrance. SQ3R has five steps, i.e., *Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review*.

The decrease in the teaching of informational texts causes a lot of students to have difficulties in understanding these materials. To illustrate the use of the five steps, take an example that the readers consider to read an expository text. They should be ready with pencil and paper/SQ3R worksheet before reading the text (Shields, 2010).

S : Survey (before the students begin the actual reading). The students check out the text. This should not take too long and will give them a good overview. This first step survey is a combination of three different way of reading : skimming, scanning, and reading for an overview. Students quickly survey or scan the material, to get an overview of the assigned topic.

Q : Question (make a note of the questions the students have). Once students have completed their survey, they use their general understanding of the topic to help generate a list of questions, which should serve to direct their efforts and to focus their attention during a more thorough reading of the material. Change the headings and subheadings in the chapter to questions or, if there are end of chapter questions. Their questions will ensure that they will not read passively but instead initiate a dialogue with the text, as it were. They will also begin to read critically as will want satisfactory answer.

R1: Read. The first of the three Rs requires the students to find the answers to their questions (taking notes of the main idea and any related information). Students read the material more thoroughly, making a concerted effort to find the answers to questions they generated in step 2. During the reading phase, students should utilize the annotation services to make inexplicit annotations (such as highlighting and underlining) on emphatic text or answer to their questions within the text.

R2 : Recite (write out the students' notes or say them out loud). The students can say out loud what they remember from their notes or write out roughly in linear or diagrammatic form, depending on their preference. They can

go through R2 as many times as necessary. Why would they do this? Because by recalling the content as accurately as possible they will ensure that they have understood what the the text is saying. By annotating the text with notes based on paraphrasing or summarizing, students not only increase their ability to recall key pieces of information, but also deepen their understanding of the same.

R3 : Review. The students finally review the material by rereading portions of the assignment in order to verify the answers given during the previous step. In order to consolidate their knowledge and help them to identify any gaps in their knowledge and to refine any annotations completed earlier.

By implementing those steps, the teacher can help the students to train themselves in comprehending expository text easily and systematically.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was a Classroom Action Research. This research is held with the purposes to solve problems in teaching learning process and to improve students' ability. Amin (2011) stated that action research is a form of collective self reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in teaching learning process, it is used to solve and to improve the way teacher teaches in the classroom by using some strategies.

The process of action research is a form of cycle. There are four steps in this cycle based on Kemmis, he states that there are four fundamental aspects of action research; planning, action, observation, and reflection. Decided to conduct an improvement in teaching learning process, writer did an action research.

The research was conducted at SMAN 10 Pekanbaru from March 12, until May 13, 2013. The Participants of the research were the second year students of SMAN 10 Pekanbaru 2012/2013 academic year, class XI.IPA.2.

The instruments which were used in this research: (1) reading test; (2) teacher and students' observation sheets; (3) field notes. Then all of the data were analyzed in quantitative and qualitative form.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

To know the the improvements of the students' reading comprehension, the researcher together with the collaborator analyzed observation sheets, field notes,

and students' answer sheets. The researcher used reading test to see the improvement of students' reading comprehension, while observation sheets and field notes was used to reflect teacher and students activities. At the beginning of cycle 1 the average score of the students' reading comprehension was 46.67. At the end of cycle 1, it improved to 57.26, at the end of cycle 2 it improved to 75.24, and at the end of cycle 3 it improved to 79.88.

After conducting cycle 3, the finding indicated that teaching reading through SQ3R strategy at the second year students of SMAN 10 Pekanbaru improved the students' reading comprehension. The improvement for the three cycle can be seen at the following table:

Students' Activities during Teaching and Learning Process

No	Students ' Activities	Cycle 1				Cycle 2				Cycle 3			
		1st Meeting		2nd Meeting		1st meeting		2nd Meeting		1st meeting		2nd meeting	
		Std	%	Std	%	Std	%	Std	%	Std	%	Std	%
1	Survey	25	59.52	27	64.29	33	78.57	35	83.33	36	85.71	38	90.48
2	Question	28	66.67	30	71.43	32	76.69	34	80.95	35	83.33	37	88.10
3	Read	32	76.19	34	80.95	36	85.71	38	90.48	39	92.86	40	95.24
4	Recite	23	54.76	25	59.52	31	73.81	35	83.33	37	88.10	38	90.48
5	Review	26	61.90	28	66.67	34	80.95	36	85.71	38	90.48	40	95.24
Total Average		27	63.81	29	68.57	33	79.05	36	84.76	37	88.10	39	91.90
		28 Students (66.19%)				34 Students (81.9%)				38 Students (90%)			

Teacher's Activities during Teaching and Learning Process

No	Teacher	Cycle 1		Cycle 2		Cycle 3	
		1 st meeting	2 nd meeting	1 st meeting	2 nd meeting	1 st meeting	2 nd meeting
1	Teacher introduces the materials	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Teacher distributes SQ3R worksheets to the students	✓	✓				
3	Teacher builds background knowledge of the students by surveying the title of the text.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	Teacher asks students to make questions based on their background knowledge on title.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	Teacher ask the students to read the text silently.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	Teacher asks students to write down any information they read.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
7	Teacher asks students to review and check their questions, whether answered or not.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
8	Teacher asks students to do the task.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The Average Scores of the Students' Reading Ability in Comprehending Expository Text

The Components of Reading Comprehension	Students' Base Score	At the End of Cycle 1	At the End of Cycle 2	At the End of Cycle 3
Main Idea	60.32	72.22	73.81	80.95
The factual Information	44.29	55.71	74.8	79.05
The meaning Of Vocabulary	41.07	55.36	70.24	73.81
Reference	38.89	33.33	71.4	80.16
Inference	50	65.71	82.9	84.8
Average	46.67	57.26	75.24	79.88

After doing the reflection, the researcher and the collaborator agreed that action research in using SQ3R strategy can improve the level of students' reading ability in comprehending expository text and reach the Minimum Criteria of Achievement. They also agreed that the research was successful. Therefore, they decided to end the research.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

After conducting the classroom action research in teaching reading by using SQ3R strategy for three cycles, it can be concluded that: (1) SQ3R strategy can improve the students' reading comprehension of expository text of the second year students at class XI.IPA.2 of SMAN 10 Pekanbaru. (2) The improvements of the students' reading comprehension are in term of finding main idea, finding the factual information, the meaning of vocabulary in context, identifying reference, and making inference. Based on the result of this research, it is suggested that: (1) Teachers need to be creative in teaching and learning process. Do not use the monotonous strategy. (2) SQ3R or any other reading strategy is a good strategy in teaching reading. However, no matter how good a strategy is, it will not be helpful if the teachers cannot apply the strategy well. Therefore, the teachers have to be able to apply the strategy well in order to reach the goal of teaching. (3) For students, they should practice their English, especially in reading by using the strategies that had been taught by the teacher. Read any kind of English reading texts, so that they will have rich prior knowledge which will make they easier in comprehending texts.

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