

IMPROVING READING COMPREHENSION USING THE SURVEY, QUESTION, PREDICT, READ, RESPOND, SUMMARIZE (SQP2RS) STRATEGY

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the research was to improve students' reading comprehension through the Survey, Question, Predict, Read, Respond, Summarise (SQP2RS) strategy. Based on problems in the field, the researcher formulated three research questions: (1) Will implementing the SQP2RS strategy improve the reading comprehension of tenth grade students at SMA N 1 Sawang? (2) What will be the results for reading comprehension from students after implementing the SQP2RS strategy with tenth graders at SMA N 1 Sawang? (3) How will the students respond to the implementation of the SQP2RS strategy for improving' their reading comprehension? This research was a collaborative classroom action study. The subjects of the research were tenth grade students at SMA N 1 Sawang. The study was conducted in three cycles by following the procedure for action research, via: planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting. To collect the data the researcher used instruments, via: tests, observation sheets, field notes and a questionnaire. The data was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The mean score from the students' test results after cycle 1 was 63, this increased to 69 then 78 after cycle 3. The students had positive responses toward the use of the SQP2RS strategy for learning reading comprehension in their class. This was proved by the overall mean score for approval of the five factors measured which was 3.67 out of 4.

Key words: *SQP2RS Strategy, Reading Comprehension.*

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INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is fundamental for EFL senior high school students. It is really essential to enhance the students' knowledge and information; therefore, these learners need to be prepared with good reading skills. Reading comprehension is incredibly complex and multifaceted, that is why many students do not comprehend texts easily, quickly and independently (Rayner, et al., 2000: 31). In other word, there are many aspects of the reading process where difficulties may arise and affect reading comprehension because comprehension involves the interaction of a wide range of cognitive skills and processes. Such skills include phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, and fluency. These components are the basics or the prerequisites needed for good reading comprehension. The instructions for these components do not end when students can decode the meaning of the words. They need other instructions that will support their understanding of what they are reading.

For example, while reading, the ability to derive meaning is normally enhanced when there is a reduction in the cognitive load of a reader's working memory, and the reader can decode the words and phrases fluently and bring meaning to the unfamiliar vocabulary encountered in texts because they have a greater existing vocabulary, more experience using context clues, and greater background knowledge. In contrast, less skilled readers have more difficulties to integrate reading text information due to the fact that strong contextual cues are not always found in many texts, and poor readers will have more difficulty, understanding the writer's intentions.

The development of reading comprehension skills is a long-term development process, which not only depends on world knowledge, knowledge of language and text experiences from early in life but also on learning how to decode the meaning of vocabulary encountered in texts and to abstract meaning from texts using comprehension processes.

So a fundamental responsibility of an English teacher is that she makes an effort to teach good reading comprehension. According to Moat (1999: 23) the future success of all students hinges upon their ability to become proficient readers because teaching-learning reading is a complex skill that requires a teacher to have a deep understanding of content and instructional practices. This argument is understandable since reading always connects with knowledge, maturation of thought,

innovation, advancement, modernization and so forth (Hamdan, et al., 2010: 1). It can be said that the students need to be actively engaged in reading a variety of texts for multiple purposes to become successful in learning anything.

The arguments described above are consistent with the expectancy from the senior high school curriculum which is called KTSP 2006 which expects students to be able to comprehend a variety of genre of texts to access information, knowledge and science in their daily activities, especially to comprehend written texts to get information and to understand short functional texts, monologues and essays which are taught at senior high school in the form of recount, narrative, descriptive, procedural, news items, reports, spoofs, analytical expositions, hortatory expositions, explanations, discussions, and reviews. That list indicates that students must read a lot in order to elevate or upgrade their knowledge, to get new information and to learn supporting competencies to understand the reading materials and texts given to master reading comprehension.

The results from the teaching-learning of reading comprehension at SMA Negeri 1 Sawang with the tenth grader students still did not reach the level of expectation as required by the curriculum. This unsatisfactory outcome was caused by the ineffective strategy that had been used by the researcher whereby the researcher taught the students by asking them to read texts and then asked the students to answer questions. They were not able to connect their reading with their prior knowledge hence the students were unable to decode the written words and unable to comprehend the texts well. In addition, they did not know how to find the main idea and the supporting details. This impacted on the students' motivation to love reading. The second problem was the reading materials were not related to their background knowledge. They did not have a schema for them or had never heard of it before. The last was the lexical problems. The students had poor English vocabulary and the researcher could not help the students to comprehend the reading texts which were integrated with the vocabulary and so they translated most of the words out of context. These conditions did not motivate the students to love reading EFL which they then felt was boring. These problems had a negative impact on the students' competency in comprehending the EFL reading texts. The result of these conditions could be seen in the students' achievements which were below standard as only 45% of them got a minimum score of 75 which was the minimal standard for reading.

Based on the situation described above, the English teacher really had to find an effective strategy to help the students to comprehend reading, train them continuously, and make them accustomed to answering questions especially when facing national final exams or UAN to get the passing grade (more than 3). For this reason, the researcher chose the SQP2RS (Survey, Question, Predict, Read, Respond, Summarize) technique to try to overcome these problems in an effort to improve the students' reading comprehension.

According to McLaughlin and Vogt (2000: 329) SQP2RS is a reading strategy that can be used when students are expected to comprehend the content of study material. This strategy is able to be used to develop students' reading competency and it is an effective strategy for teaching-learning reading, stimulating the students' prior knowledge, and stimulating the students' creative thinking to develop their reading competency. By being more active and creative in thinking, it can motivate and stimulate the students' desire to develop their reading competency for various genres of texts. The SQP2RS strategy procedure consists of six steps Survey, Question, Predict, Read, Respond and Summarize in which the implementation can stimulate students' prior knowledge, make them more active and thoughtful.

To support this study, the researcher has reviewed some previous research using the SQP2RS strategy. The first research was conducted by Huang and Nisbet (2012). This research applied the SQP2RS strategy and resulted in the students' becoming effective readers in ESL. It not only facilitated the learners becoming more efficient in their efforts to learn a second language, but it also motivated and empowered them to function as autonomous learners. The second study was conducted by Nilawati and Alicia (2013) at STAKIP of PGRI West Sumatra. The subjects of her study were junior high school students. The result of this study was that the strategy enabled the students to share their ideas with others. Then, the students learnt to think quickly. Besides that, it made the students confident to put forth their ideas in discussion. So, if the teacher uses this strategy well with suitable procedures it will improve the reading ability of the students.

The previous researches above were done outside of Aceh, the subjects of the research were junior and senior students, they used action and experimental research to improve reading comprehension through the SQP2RS strategy; in contrast, in this research the researcher used SQP2RS strategy to improve her students' reading

comprehension in her classroom by doing collaborative classroom research with tenth graders from SMA Negeri 1 Sawang, North Aceh. The researcher wanted to improve herself and her students by using this strategy and to see whether the same results could be obtained when this strategy was practiced in a different area and in a different situation.

Based on the facts above, the researcher felt it was important to do a research study entitled *Improving Students' Reading Comprehension through using the Survey, Question, Predict, Read, Respond, Summarize (SQP2RS) Strategy* by applying a collaborative classroom action research approach with tenth graders from SMA Negeri 1 Sawang, North Aceh. This strategy may prove successful in improving students' reading comprehension. The students may then comprehend reading more effectively and may keep focused on what they are reading and be able to answer well the questions given.

The Research Problems

The problems investigated in this study were as follows:

1. Will using the SQP2RS strategy improve the reading comprehension of tenth grade students at SMAN 1 Sawang?
2. What will the reading comprehension result be after implementing the SQP2RS strategy with tenth grade students from SMAN 1 Sawang?
3. How will the students respond to the implementation of the SQP2RS strategy for improving the reading comprehension of tenth grade students from SMAN 1 Sawang?

Objectives of the Study

Referring to the research problems above, this study is intended:

1. To describe the process of implementing the SQP2RS strategy in improving the reading comprehension of tenth grade students from SMAN 1 Sawang.
2. To find out what the ability in reading comprehension of tenth grade students from SMAN 1 Sawang will be after learning using the SQP2RS strategy.
3. To find out what the responses of these students will be to using the SQP2RS strategy for improving their reading comprehension.

Significance of Study

The result of this research is expected to be useful both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the result of this study is expected to enlarge the existing theory for using the SQP2RS strategy for improving the reading comprehension of students.

Practically, the result of this research is expected to be applied and modified in the process of teaching reading comprehension by teachers to improve the reading comprehension of their students. For LPMP (Educational Quality Assurance) and the schools, the outcome of this research may provide them with additional information for use in training English teachers, which might be significant to be disseminated to high schools. Finally, the result of this research will serve as reference for other researchers who are interested in carrying out similar research.

Success Indicators

To measure the improvement in the students' reading comprehension from using the SQP2RS technique, the researcher set some success indicators based on the learning objectives in the curriculum. The study would be considered successful if it met the following criteria:

1. A mean score above 84% would show that the use of the SQP2RS strategy had achieved very good results for reading comprehension.
2. An average score above 75% will show that the students are able to comprehend texts better after using the SQP2RS strategy.
3. Above 75% also shows that the students respond actively to the use of the SQP2RS strategy. It means that the students' responses to learning using the SQP2RS strategy should meet the *agree* or *strongly agree* category.

The Scope of the Study

This was a collaborative classroom action research study applying the SQP2RS strategy to improve the reading comprehension of students. According to the 2006 curriculum for senior high schools, the students must learn reading based on various genres of texts, but this study was focused only on narrative texts to identify the main idea, word meanings, supporting details and reference words through learning using the SQP2RS strategy.

Definitions of Key Terms

For a better understanding of this study, the following are operational definitions of the various terms used:

1. *Reading comprehension* is a process of taking meaning from a text to obtain the main idea, supporting details, word meanings, and references in order to comprehend the text well.
2. The *SQP2RS strategy* is a systematic procedure used for reading a text. It helps the students to stimulate their knowledge and construct their own creative thinking. The SQP2RS strategy has six steps, they are: survey, question, predict, read, respond, and summarize.
 - a. *Survey*: ask students to survey a reading passage by modeling your own thinking processes using a think aloud strategy.
 - b. *Question*: ask students to work in groups to formulate questions about the passage.
 - c. *Predict*: ask the students to predict answers to each question generated in the previous step.
 - d. *Read*: in small groups, read assigned sections of the text. While reading, look for the answers to any questions. Annotate the material.
 - e. *Respond*: have students work in their groups to review the questions that were posted earlier and see if they have found answers based on their reading of the passage.
 - f. *Summarize*: Ask each student to write a few sentences about the passage.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is defined as processes for extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with the written language (Snow, 2002: 11). The words *extracting* and *constructing* are meant to emphasize both the importance and the insufficiency of the text as a determinant of reading comprehension.

He has stated that comprehension entails three elements, they are:

- The *reader* who is doing the comprehending using all the capacities, abilities and knowledge that that person can bring to the act of reading.
- The *text* that is to be comprehended.
- The *activity* of which comprehension is a part.

Other researchers have defined comprehension as the extraction of information from the text (Grellet, 1981: 3). This means getting information from a text either using linguistic knowledge or using past experience. The knowledge background and past experiences of the students are very important and influential in reading. In order to comprehend the written words, the students need to recall the concepts that they already have in mind and relate them to the new materials to gain new meaning from them according to the context.

Narrative Texts

Narrative texts are a genre of texts that presents myths, legends, fables, and tales. According to Pratyasto (2011: 32) a narrative is a type of text that is written to amuse and to deal with actual and imaginary vicarious experiences in different ways; a narrative also deals with problematic events which lead to a crisis or turning point of some kind, which in turn finds a resolution.

According to Labov and Waletzky (1997: 32) narrative texts are divided into two main types, they are:

1. Fiction: Narratives can be said to be fiction if the story is untrue and did not happen in the real world. Fiction includes folk tales, fairy tales, myths and imagined events.
2. Non-fiction: Narratives are called non-fiction if the story truly occurred in actuality. Non-fiction includes factual stories, biographies, and historic events.

They also said that the generic structure of narrative texts is usually as follows:

1. Orientation: This element usually describes the scene or the problematic events. It also tells the readers about the characters who will be involved, and where the events happened.
2. Evaluation: This element tells about the sequence of events, it talks about activities or events in the past.
3. Complication: This element talks about the crisis that arises in an event.
4. Resolution: This element contains an event and tells about resolving the crisis (problem solving) for better or for worse.
5. Re-orientation: This element contains a brief summary, which is aimed to provide a moral lesson for the reader.

The SQP2RS Strategy

The SQP2RS is an instructional strategy for improving students' reading comprehension. SQP2RS was developed by Vogt (McLaughlin & Vogt, 2000). At the onset this strategy was a development from the SQ3RS strategy which was very popular at that time. SQP2RS incorporated aspects of DR-TA, ReQuest, TPRC, and other similar instructional strategies.

The SQP2RS strategy gives students a sequence of steps to unpack information from a text. The strategy helps the students monitor their reading and internalize habits that proficient readers do naturally.

The SQP2RS stands for Survey, Question, Predict, Read, Respond, and Summarize. Each of these activities focuses on techniques integral to the reading process. The SQP2RS strategy includes a meta-cognitive reading strategy which involves planning, monitoring, predicting and inferring, self-questioning, monitoring, clarifying, evaluating, determining importance, summarizing and synthesizing (Vogt, 2000).

Vogt (2000) in Rudell (2005: 265) gives the steps of the SQP2RS strategy as follows:

1. Survey: Teach students to survey a reading passage by modeling your own thinking processes whilst thinking aloud.
2. Question: Ask students to work in groups to formulate questions about the passage.
3. Predict: Ask the class to predict answers to each question generated in the previous step.
4. Read: With a partner or in a small group, read assigned sections of the text. While reading, look for answers to your questions. Annotate the material.
5. Respond: Have students work in their group to review the questions that were posted earlier and see if they can find the answers based on their reading of the passage.
6. Summarize: Ask each student to write a few sentences to summarize the passage.

During the reading and responding time, the researcher can also add a step called vocabulary self-recollection strategy. During or after reading ask the students to find vocabulary that is important to the topic of the text. Ask them to be ready to say what the word means according to the context and why the word is important to the study of the topic discussed in the text. These words are then shared and discussed during the response time. The studies show that when students select their own words for study, these words and their definitions become more

meaningful and the vocabulary self-recollection strategy process enhances their comprehension.

RESEARCH METHOD

The researcher used a collaborative classroom action research technique to study phenomena in her classroom. This research was done in a real life situation, not in a contrived, experimental study; the study was, intended to overcome problems found by the researcher in teaching-learning reading comprehension. A classroom action research study has great potential to overcome problems the teacher faces in conducting her tasks to improve her capacity. This was a situation similar to that studied by Hult and Lennung (1980: 241) who did action research to improve the quality of human action in an educational setting.

This classroom action research study was done at SMA Negeri 1 Sawang in North Aceh. The subjects of this research were the teacher who conducted the research and the tenth grade students of SMA Negeri Sawang who were the sample for this research study. The design of this study follows that referred to by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988: 22-25) with four phases, via: (1) Planning the action, (2) implementing the action (3) observing the action (4) reflecting. To collect the required data, the researcher used some instruments via: tests, observation sheets, field notes, and a questionnaire.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section deals with findings and discussions of the important activities in the teaching-learning process for reading comprehension using the SQP2RS strategy. This discussion covers the three research problems stated earlier. The activities done during the reading comprehension exercises were first the survey, then the questions, the predictions, the readings, the responses and finally the summary of the text. This reading comprehension study was done with second year (11th grade) students at SMA N 1 Sawang, North Aceh to: (1) improve their reading comprehension ability, (2) to improve the students' results, and (3) to find out the students' response to the use of the SQP2RS strategy for learning reading comprehension.

Implementation of the SQP2RS Strategy for Teaching Reading Comprehension

The researcher implemented the SQP2RS strategy during teaching-learning reading comprehension with her reading class for nine meetings in three cycles. The teaching-learning activities were based on the procedures during three phases via: (1) pre- teaching activities, (2) while teaching activities, and (3) post- teaching activities.

In the pre-teaching activities, the researcher and her observer entered the classroom, greeted the students, did apperception activities to open the teaching-learning processes, and attracted the students' attention to starting learning. The researcher also checked the attendance list.

Next, the researcher opened the lesson by explaining the narrative text to the students - a text that was built by using a generic structure, first orientation followed by the complication, and finally the resolution. The researcher then explained the SQP2RS learning strategy that would be used for learning reading especially for comprehending when reading a text. Next, the researcher explained the steps of the SQP2RS strategy and how to use the SQP2RS worksheet. After that the researcher gave the students a chance to ask questions related to the researcher's explanations.

In the while teaching activities, the researcher distributed the narrative text materials and the SQP2RS worksheet as the teaching media to each student. The teacher explained in detail what each student had to do in surveying the reading material. The same treatment was also applied when the researcher implemented the second, and the third cycle of this study. During the while-teaching activities, the researcher monitored the work that the students were doing and answered any questions that they had; the students looked very enthusiastic in doing their tasks individually. They tried to look for the meanings of words in the text, they tried to write word by word in correct sentences to answer the tasks and they asked the researcher about their problems in doing the tasks. The researcher appreciated and praised the students for doing their work seriously.

The last activities were the post-teaching activities; the researcher together with the students discussed the problems faced whilst learning reading comprehension through the SQP2RS strategy. Also, the researcher gave them tests to find out if there was any improvement in the students' reading comprehension, namely the first test after the first cycle, the second test after the second cycle, and the third test after the

third cycle. The researcher also handed out the questionnaire to the students in the second cycle to find out their responses and perceptions towards the implementation of the SQP2RS process for teaching-learning reading comprehension.

Another improvement measured during the teaching-learning process was the increase in participation. Thus to start the participation in the first cycle was only 46% which is just in the fair criterion. A little bit of improvement in the students' participation was seen in the second cycle when it went up to 62%, in the good criterion, and then there was a great improvement in participation in the third cycle which went up to 78% in the very good criterion. This indicated that using the SQP2RS strategy for teaching reading comprehension successfully improved the students' participation in class.

Furthermore, another improvement was also indicated by the activities of the teacher in teaching reading comprehension in her class. The observation sheet for the teacher-researcher's activities (from her observer) showed that her actions in the first cycle were ranked at 62%. This increased in the second cycle to 73%, and increased again in the third cycle to 86%. The criteria for success stated for the teacher's actions was 85%, thus this result showed that the researcher had reached the criterion for success. In addition, the implementation of the SQP2RS strategy improved the students' reading comprehension; this was shown from the students' results. The researcher compared the students' results from the previous test held in 2015, and from the first test given in the first cycle. The students' average score in the pre-test was 58; some improvement was shown at the end of the first cycle which reached 63. The students' average score in the second test after the second cycle was 69. An increase from the result in the first cycle, and the mean score after the third cycle reached 78 which meant that the strategy had achieved the success indicator for learning reading comprehension. Based on the results above, it was found that the implementation of the SQP2RS strategy was effective in improving the students' reading comprehension especially in comprehending a narrative text.

The results from this research showed that the SQP2RS strategy was effective for improving reading comprehension of students from SMA N 1 Sawang. The result of this research confirmed the theory of Vogt (MacLaughing & Vogt, 2000: 329) that the SQP2RS Strategy is able to be implemented to develop students' reading competency in stimulating the students' prior knowledge, and their creative thinking.

The findings from this research were the same as those from some previous research. The students became more active and creative in thinking to develop their reading competency by using the SQP2RS strategy.

The Students' Responses toward the Implementation of the SQP2RS Strategy for learning Reading Comprehension

The students' responses are one of the considerations to say whether the implementation of the SQP2RS strategy was successful or not. To find out the students' responses, the researcher gave the students a questionnaire that had 20 items. The items were divided into five factors: (1) studying happily (2) becoming motivated (3) becoming helpful (4) becoming encouraged to ask questions (5) becoming competitive with friends. The questionnaires were in the close question form, the researcher prepared the options for the students by using a Likert scale.

In calculating the result of the questionnaire, the researcher found that the mean score for factor 1, studying happily was 3.80, in the strongly agree-criterion; factor 2, becoming motivated to study was 3.53 in the strongly agree-criterion, factor 3, becoming helpful in finishing tasks was 3.58, in the strongly agree-criterion; factor 4, becoming encouraged to ask questions was 3.63, in the strongly-agree criterion and for factor 5, becoming competitive with friends was 3.65, again in the strongly-agree criterion. And becoming helpful in understanding texts was 3.83, again in the strongly agree-criterion.

Based on these results, the researcher concluded that the students had positive responses toward the implementation of the SQP2RS strategy for learning reading comprehension in their class. This was proven by the overall mean score for the five factors measured above, which was 3.67 out of 4 in the strongly agree criterion. Thus, it could be said that the students' responses toward the implementation of the SQP2RS strategy for learning reading comprehension processes in their class reached the success indicator of 75% on the agree scale criterion.

CONCLUSIONS

These conclusions are the answers to the research questions stated earlier. The conclusions are as follows: first, the researcher implemented the SQP2RS strategy in teaching reading comprehension to tenth grade students at SMA N 1 Sawang. She gave them clear

instructions with simple information before asking the students to follow the steps for the SQP2RS strategy. She guided the students how to work in their groups; how to survey a reading passage by thinking using thinking aloud processes; how to formulate questions about the passage; how to predict the answers to each question generated in the previous step; how to review the questions that were posted earlier, and how to observe if they had found a correct answer based on their reading of the passage. Eventually, the students were able to apply these responses and to summarize the text with confidence. The teacher-researcher was also more able to manage her students effectively and to make the students more active and more motivated to share with their friends. So, the implementation of the SQP2RS strategy made a significant improvement in the researcher's treatment for teaching reading comprehension. This can be seen from the results from the observations. The observation score for the researcher's activities in the first cycle was 62%, in the second cycle was 73% and in the third cycle was 86%. This showed that the researcher improved the quality of her teaching in the reading class when implementing the SQP2RS strategy. The students became more active from one meeting to another. This could be seen in the results from the observation sheet. In the first cycle the students' participation was 46%, which increased to 63%, and then increased again to 78%.

Secondly, the implementation of the SQP2RS strategy improved the students' achievements in reading comprehension in finding out the main idea, word meanings, detailed information, and references. This was shown by the results from the tests done by the students who got improvements after each cycle. Their mean scores increased from 63 to 69 to 78. This showed that the implementation of the SQP2RS strategy was effective in improving their reading comprehension for narrative texts.

Third, the students had positive responses toward the implementation of the SQP2RS strategy in learning reading comprehension in their class. This was proven by the overall mean score for the five factors measured above where the students average positive response, was 3.67 out of 4. This means that the students responded very positively towards using the SQP2RS strategy during the teaching-learning process. This strategy made the students become more active thinkers while reading, it gave them specific things to look for, and had them reflect on what they had learned when they finished reading.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the research findings and discussions above, the researcher would like to make some suggestions. It was proven that using the SQP2RS strategy in a reading comprehension class was a good teaching strategy for teaching-learning reading comprehension of narrative texts. The students were able to improve their reading comprehension and their participation in learning. Besides that, the researcher as their English teacher could improve the quality of her teaching by applying this strategy.

Based on the facts above, the researcher would like to make some suggestions as follows:

1. It is suggested that English teachers use SQP2RS as a strategy for teaching-learning reading comprehension to eliminate or overcome some of the problems encountered in reading classes. This strategy has been designed to help students to understand and comprehend texts by activating their background knowledge, helping them to find out the main idea, word meanings, detailed information and references. Therefore, it is suggested that English teachers should apply this strategy for teaching EFL reading comprehension.
2. For other researchers, since this was a Collaborative Classroom Action Research study, where the success of the research depends on the researcher's competence and performance in the classroom, the researcher realizes that there are some limitations and weaknesses in the classroom treatment both in her skills and attitudes. Therefore, it is hoped that other potential researchers will do other similar research applying this or a similar strategy to get better results.

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