

Improving Students' Reading Comprehension Through SQ3R : A Classroom Action Research

Nurul Kamilah¹, Mustasyfa Thabib Kariadi^{2*}, Laxmi Mustika Cakrawati³

^{1,2,3} Universitas Jenderal Soedirman, Indonesia

KEYWORDS

ABSTRACT

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Reading was a fundamental language skill essential for acquiring knowledge, expanding vocabulary, and understanding textual information. This reading ability can be achieved with effective teaching, such as the SQ3R method that helps students more easily understand and remember the material. The aim of this research is (1) to describe the implementation of SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review) method in teaching descriptive texts; (2) to find out whether the implementation of SQ3R method improved students' reading comprehension skills. This research utilized a quantitative method with classroom action research design with 21 students from Grade VII C of MTs Ma'arif NU 1 Ajibarang as the sample. The study was conducted in two cycles to observed and measured the students' progress. The research instruments were classroom observations and test. The data from observation used to answer research questions about how the implementation of SQ3R method improved students' reading comprehension skills. The result of observation showed that students actively asked the terms they did not know, discussed vocabulary that they found and concluding the content of the text. This reflected that they are enthusiastic and interested in implementing the SQ3R method in the class. From the test result showed that the students' reading comprehension skill after using the SQ3R method improved their score to 18.73% from the mean pre-test 59.48 to the mean post-test I 70.62. In addition, the mean score of second post-test further improved to 86.05, with a 21.85% increase from the first post-test to the second post-test. Furthermore, the results of significance value were $0.000 > 0.05$, it means that the students' reading comprehension skills using the SQ3R method significantly improved. In other words, alternative hypothesis (H_a) was accepted while the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected. In conclusion, the implementation of the SQ3R method significantly enhanced students' reading comprehension skills. The researcher suggested the teacher and students to use the SQ3R method to teach and improve students' reading comprehension skills. Other researchers could also use this research as the guidance and reference to conduct the future research.

Keywords: Reading comprehension, SQ3R method, Classroom Action Research.

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*Corresponding author name: M.T Kariadi
E-mail address: mtkairadi_pbi@unsoed.ac.id

Introduction

Reading is one of the language skills that must be mastered by everyone, because reading is the skill of understanding and making sense of written information, it means not just recognizing words but also understanding their meaning and purpose in the text to gain knowledge,

information and expand vocabulary that is contained in textual language. In line with statement above, Brassell & Rasinski (2008) define reading as the capability of examining and understanding the meaning of written language. Patel and Jain (2008:113) also state that reading is the most beneficial and significant activity in life that can maintain and update an individual's knowledge. In this case, reading skills certainly provide great benefits for students, because they are needed to gain information and insight from books or every article that is viewed. From the description above, it can be inferred that through good reading comprehension skills, students can easily absorb information conveyed explicitly and implicitly. The researcher conducted this research at MTs Ma'arif NU 1 Ajibarang.

This school was chosen as the research location because it has conditions and characteristics that are in accordance with the focus of the research. In reference to preliminary research at Grade VII, the researcher interviewed the English teacher to identify the problems that both teacher and student faced in reading comprehension. The first problem is there are a lot of students who do not know the basic vocabulary that is often used, and they are reluctant to understand and memorize it. The second problem is the lack of interest in reading a text, students are still reluctant to read the text and too lazy to know the contents of the text. This is what influences students' difficulty in finding the main idea of each paragraph in the text as well as their difficulty in concluding the content of the text. In addition, as many as 65% of students are still guided in understanding the content of the reading.

Additionally, there are factors that affect the low reading ability of students, namely the use of ineffective reading methods such as conventional method. The conventional method is the old method in which the learning process is ruled and controlled by teacher. The teacher explains the material, and then students only listen to the material. Wang (2001) also states that in many conventional classes, students are required to commit English grammatical principles and vocabulary to memory as well as use their translation abilities. It can be concluded that, conventional method emphasizes more on teachers than on students without actively involving the learners in the process of reading.

Duke and Pearson (2002) stated that effective teaching reading includes explicit instruction and time to practice, which helps students understand better. Therefore, teaching reading in a language is vital and essential since it influences students reading abilities. In connection with the problems above, the researcher is interested in implementing SQ3R method. The SQ3R (survey, question, read, recite, and review) method is one of the teaching reading methods to help readers recall and comprehend the reading contents using a systematic process. This statement is strengthened by Davis and Davey (2014) who stated that SQ3R is a reading comprehension method that can assist students in creating a structured framework. In this study, the researcher used descriptive text to support the teaching of reading using the SQ3R method, as descriptive texts are the texts studied by seventh grade students. By learning this text, students are assumed to be capable to comprehend the definition, purpose, characteristic, functions, and content of the text they read. This statement is strengthened by Gerot and Wignell (1995), who state that descriptive text is a text type we can use when we want to tell how something looks, smells, feels, acts, tastes, sounds, etc. Moreover, descriptive text aims to describe to the reader something about a person, animal, or object. In conclusions, descriptive text is text to describe something that can be seen from their physical form, habits, and detailed

characteristics.

In connection with all the explanation above, the researcher is interested in implementing the SQ3R method which aims to explore how the SQ3R method can improve reading comprehension for grade VII C students at MTs Ma'arif NU 1 Ajibarang in the academic year of 2023/2024. The thing that distinguishes between previous research from this research is the researcher added a focus on vocabulary building. At the survey stage, students list unfamiliar words and find their meanings, then review this vocabulary with a seatmate in the final stage. This addition is intended to help students expand their vocabulary which had not been explored in previous research.

Method

In this research, the researcher used a quantitative method. The quantitative method is statistical research that focuses on presenting findings. In line with statements above, Creswell (2012:13) defines quantitative research as a method of gathering numerical data from a large number of individuals using pre-set questions and responses.

The population of this study was all the students of the grade VII at MTs Ma'arif NU 1 Ajibarang in academic year of 2023/2024. There were three classes in the grade VII, with a total of sixty-three students. Therefore, the researcher chose VII C as the sample of this research. There are 20 students in seventh- grade C. The class consists of 7 females and 13 males. Related to the preliminary research, the class has characteristics that match with the sample criteria such as students who lack interest in reading, had difficulty in understanding the content of the text and the main idea and do not know the basic vocabulary. This was proven by the daily descriptive text test score grade

The research design used in this study was classroom action research (CAR). Action research design concentrated on specific issue to find solution a problem (Creswell 2012:576). The researcher used this research design because the researcher interested in finding out how the implementation of the SQ3R method in the classroom could help students improve their reading comprehension abilities.

Kemmis and McTaggart (2013), suggested that action research consists of four steps: plan, action, observation, and reflection, as follows:

1. Plan

Plan is the first and crucial initial step. At this stage, the researcher determined the issue and arranged action plans to solve the problem. This phase aims to find out the needs of the researcher, what had to be monitored, and to create a lesson plan.

2. Action

The next step is action. The researcher started the implementation of class activities based on the lesson plan.

3. Observing

During this step, the researcher conducted a systematic observation of each aspect of the SQ3R method with students. The outcomes of these observation reflected the true state of the class and serve as a basis for reflection and data collection.

4. Reflecting

Reflecting is an activity to analyze all the information obtained from action and observation activities. In this step, the researcher focused on studying

and considering the outcomes of the action research and also examined the relevance of the research results to the theory. So that the researcher drew conclusions from the results of his research.

The researcher modified the Classroom Action Research design from Kemmis and McTaggart, according to the research plan. In Cycle 1, the Planning stage involved creating a lesson plan to teach descriptive texts using the SQ3R method, along with preparing materials and observation sheets. During Action, the plan was carried out over three meetings, where the teacher introduced SQ3R and gave a post-test to check students' progress. In Observation, the teacher noted students' reactions to the method and how well it was taught. Reflection involved reviewing the results and identifying improvements needed for the next cycle.

In Cycle 2, Planning included revising the lesson plan to make SQ3R clearer and more engaging. The Action phase again had three meetings, this time using the improved approach, followed by a post-test. Observation focused on students' responses to the updates, and Reflection showed that these changes improved students' understanding of descriptive texts.

In this study, the researcher collected the data from classroom observation and test (pre- test, post-test and t-test). For the pre-test, the researcher gave 30 questions to the students about descriptive text with the theme Culinary and Me. 30 questions were provided for the descriptive text entitled Culinary and Me in post-test I and Home Sweet Home in post-test II.

The researcher also used classroom observation to find out the implementation of the SQ3R method in class and to ensure the steps of the SQ3R were followed correctly. The researcher observed the teaching delivery start from apperception, while teaching activity in learning descriptive text by using the SQ3R method and the post-activity, which involved reflection activities and a summary of the material that had been studied.

In this research, SQ3R method was implemented 4 times in two cycles. First, the researcher conducted a survey by asking students to read the title of the descriptive text. After that, the students look at the picture and read the subtitles for 5 minutes. Next, the students found and wrote vocabulary that they did not know and then wrote the meaning on the worksheet for 5 minutes. Second, the researcher asked the students to write 5W + 1 H questions based on the texts. For example, where does the Gado-Gado come from?

The third step was reciting, the researcher requested the students to write down the main topic of each paragraph, then continued by closing the reading text and concluding the information from descriptive text. The final step was review, where students reviewed the information of the text, remembered the points of each paragraph along with the main idea and shared unknown vocabulary with their pairs.

Therefore, for the data analysis technique, the researcher used classroom action research data collected by observation to find out the situation in the classroom, observe students' behaviors when they used the SQ3R method and observed the teaching delivery. In addition, the researcher also used pre-test, post-test and t-test to determine the significances of the students' reading comprehension. The researcher analyzed the paired samples t-test in SPSS version 25 to determine whether the SQ3R (survey, question, read, recite, review) method are effective to improve students' reading comprehension skills or not. Hypothesis testing is used to provide an answer to the researcher's hypothesis.

Results

In this research, the researcher conducted pre-test and post-test in grade VII C in two cycles. Each cycle consists of 3 meetings: the pre-test, treatment 1, treatment 2 and post-test I were conducted on cycle 1 and treatment 3, treatment 4 and Post-test II were conducted on cycle 2. The mean score of students' pre- tests before the implementation of the SQ3R method is 59.48. Then, the researcher calculated the percentage of students passed the *KKM* (*kriteria kelulusan minimal*) or criterion of minimum completeness, which is a score of 70, by used this formula:

$$P = F/N \times 100\% = 6/21 \times 100\% = 29\%$$

The data above showed that only six, or 29% of students passed the criterion of minimum completeness. In conclusion, the students' reading comprehension at seventh- grade C is low. Therefore, the researcher conducted the posttest I. The mean score of students' post-tests I was 70.62. It means that, there was improvement between pre-test and post-test I after 2 treatments. Then the researcher calculated the percentage of students passed the *KKM* (*kriteria kelulusan minimal*) or criterion of minimum completeness.

$$P = F/N \times 100\% = 11/21 \times 100\% = 52.38 \%$$

From the calculation above, there were 52.38%, or eleven students who passed the post- test. It could be concluded that, the implementation of SQ3R improved the students' reading comprehension, but it was not significant. The percentage improvement in reading comprehension from pre-test to post-test I was 18.73%. In this first cycle, it could be concluded that the SQ3R method affected to the students' reading comprehension skills, although only half of the students showed improvement. The researcher also revised the lesson plan by adding some points in the teaching to address the issues from cycle one.

To identify the students' reading improvement in this cycle, the researcher conducted post-test II, which aimed to strengthen previous test results. It showed that mean score from posttest II is 86.05. The percentage of students reading comprehension was improved from post-test I to post-test II was 21.85%. For the hypothesis testing, the researcher used a paired t-test with SPSS version 25. The result showed that the mean score of the pre-test is 59.48, while the mean score of the post- test I is 70.62. The p-value from pre-test and post- test I was 0.000. Because the p value was lower than 0.05, it indicated that there were significant differences in the students' reading comprehension skills after the second treatment. In conclusion, there was a significant effect of the implementation of the SQ3R method on students' reading comprehension skills.

This is proven by the significant scores of pre-tests and post-test I above.

For the paired sample T-test of post-test I to post-test II, the mean score for post-tests I is 70.62, while the mean score for post-tests II is 86.05. It showed that the p-value was $0.000 < 0.05$, it could be said that there were significant differences in the students' reading comprehension skills after Cycle 2. Therefore, it could be concluded that the implementation of the SQ3R method improved the students' reading comprehension skills. This is reflected in the significant values of the first post-test and the second post-

test.

Related to the result above, it can be inferred that H_a (the alternative hypothesis) was accepted, and H_o (the null hypothesis) was rejected because the p-value was 0.000 which was lower than 0.05, which means that the SQ3R method had a significant impact on students' reading comprehension skills. In conclusion, the implementation of the SQ3R method was improve the students' reading comprehension skills.

Discussion

The SQ3R method was implemented through various steps and activities during the learning activities as follows:

1. Before the treatment, the teacher conducted a pre-test to determine the students' reading comprehension skills.
2. In the beginning of learning activities, the teacher explained the descriptive text briefly, then introduced and implemented the SQ3R method.
3. The teacher chose a theme for the descriptive text that was related to the material and learning objectives.
4. Students followed the SQ3R steps in learning descriptive text.
5. By using the SQ3R method, students were able to increase their curiosity about the text they were going to read, improve their ability to identify the main concept of the paragraph, remember every point of the information, and expand their vocabulary.
6. The teacher gives the exercises after carrying out two treatments in each cycle to figure out the extent to which students understand the information from the text.
7. In the end of the lesson, the teacher asked the students to recall the things they had learned.
8. Students did post-test I in cycle I after the second treatment and do post-test II in cycle 2 after the fourth treatment of the SQ3R method.
9. After the learning activities in each meeting, the teacher conducted a reflection activity that contains feedback from the students regarding the difficulties they faced during the treatment, exercises, and the test (pre-test, post-test I, and post-test II).

Thus, the implementation of SQ3R method to improve the students' reading comprehension was carried out through various activities in the class. Such as finding the vocabulary and the key idea of the paragraph, remembering, and discussing all the information in the text, and engaging in reflection activities. The most important aspect of the implementation of the SQ3R method was actively engaging students in the reading process to enhance their understanding and retention. This research was supported by the theory of Duke and Pearson (2002): effective teaching reading involved explicit teaching and time to practice, using strategies such as summarizing, questioning, and predicting to improve students' reading comprehension. These strategies helped students organize and understand the information well, which was critical to the development of their reading skills.

The implementation of SQ3R method for teaching reading was effective to improve students' reading comprehension skills proven by the data of pre-test and post-test. The mean score of pre-tests was 59.48, with only 6 or 29% students passed the criterion of minimum completeness (KKM:70). Then it became 70.62 in cycle 1 with eleven students or 52.38 % of students passed the

criterion of minimum completeness (KKM). Then it improved in the cycle 2, with the mean score 86.05 in twenty-one students or 100% of students that pass the criterion of minimum completeness (KKM). Furthermore, the researcher examines the significances of the changes from pre-test to post-test using paired T-test, to identify whether the hypothesis was accepted or not. The result of the paired t- test on Table 9. it showed that, t count was = -7.446, d= 20 with the p-value (sig.2- tailed) was 0.00 that lower than 0.05. So, the pre-test score was smaller than post-test I which means, there was a significant effect on students' reading comprehension skills after the SQ3R treatment. Moreover, based on the table

11. Paired samples differences in post-test I to post-test II found that, t count was = - 11.583, d = 20 with the significances (2-tailed) was $0.00 < 0.05$. From the result above, it means that H_0 (Null hypothesis) was rejected and (Alternative Hypothesis) was accepted. Hence, it can be said that the SQ3R was effective method in improving students' reading comprehension skills.

In conclusion, the findings of the study confirm the findings of previous studies, that demonstrated using the SQ3R method can improve the students' reading comprehension. In the previous study by Anjuni and Cahyadi (2019), the study found that the students' reading comprehension significantly improved after the implementation of the SQ3R with the results value of t-table with degree of freedom (df) 29 and the level of significance at 0.05 was 1.69. The t-test result was 2.42, it was higher that t-table ($2.42 > 1.69$). It means the alternative hypothesis was accepted and null hypothesis was rejected.

Furthermore, Lipson and Wixson (2003), stated that the SQ3R method had several important advantages. This method was effective in improving reading comprehension because it helped students organize and remember the information. The SQ3R also encourages independent learning by actively involving students in the reading process. Therefore, it can be concluded that, the SQ3R method is effective in improving the students' reading comprehension skills.

Conclusions

Based on the result, the implementation of the SQ3R method in the grade VII C of MTs Ma'arif NU 1 Ajibarang was successful in improving the students' reading comprehension skills. It could be viewed from the observation results that student actively participated in class; they asked about the terms they did not know, actively summarized the content of the text, and actively discussed the vocabulary they found. This reflected that they are enthusiastic and interested in implementing the SQ3R method in class.

The implementation of the SQ3R method for teaching reading was effective in improving students' reading comprehension skills. This was proven by the fact that the mean score was 59.48, then increased to 70.62 in cycle 1, with a percentage improvement in students' reading comprehension of 18.73%. In post- test 2, the mean score increased again to 86.05, with a percentage improvement in students' reading comprehension from post-test I to post-test II of 21.85%. The test score of students' reading comprehension skills from pre-test to post-test II improved by 45% compared to before the treatment. In addition, the researcher also conducted statistical analysis using a paired T-test to determine whether the hypothesis was accepted or not. The result of the

significance value (sig. 2- tailed) was 0.00, which was lower than 0.05, which means that H_a (the alternative hypothesis) was accepted. Therefore, it could be said that the SQ3R method was effective in improving students' reading comprehension skills.

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