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Article

## The Effects of Pre-Questioning Reading Strategies and The Use of Teaching Media to Students Reading Comprehension

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### A B S T R A C T

Reading is the most common and compulsory activity that students have to do all the time and to comprehend English text is one aspect which is most required by EFL students. However, there are some issues related to this skill from the vocabulary insufficient, problems in understanding linguistics complexities, ineffective government's regulation, socio cultural differences to students' negative attitude to reading. To overcome these issues, activating content schemata by using pre-questioning and teaching media are suggested. Therefore, the goal of this present research is to investigate the effectiveness of using pre-questioning and using teaching media on students' reading comprehension. Data collection was carried out by taking the test and distributing questionnaires to second grade students from three private vocational high schools in Tangerang. The present research employed a quantitative research design to find out the effect of pre-questioning and using teaching media towards student's achievement in reading comprehension. The method used is a survey with multiple-correlational technique. The result of the research proved that using pre-questioning gives more positive effects than using teaching media.

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### INTRODUCTION

Reading is explained as a vital aspect occurred in a modern society since the ability to read is highly valued and important for social and economic advancement (Igwe, 2011). As printed language has been growing significantly in recent decades, people are always engaged with reading activities throughout the day in many ways. People read magazines, maps, novels, advertisements plus messages or email from our handphone, laptop, or tablet. People read

those written items because they contain information that they need in daily life.

In the educational domain, reading is one of the most common and compulsory activities that students and teachers have to do all the time. They are required to read various types of texts with different purposes dealing with their assignments and other academic tasks. "Comprehending English text is also a requirement for all students since English becomes the dominant language of the internet, international business, and science"

(Wijayanti, 2014:13). Therefore, this skill is very crucial and has a bigger portion to be taught in schools.

However, there are some issues encountered by students when they comprehend English texts. "The main problem faced by the students is insufficient vocabulary and problems understanding linguistics complexity including lexical and syntactic knowledge" (Medjahdi, 2014:17). For example, the students have difficulties in differentiating various meanings of the same word. As a result, the students tend to look up dictionary multiple times and to read word by word, especially if the text is difficult and this leads to the students' failure and frustration in comprehending the texts.

Rustipa (2014:50) affirms that "Ineffective governmental regulation is also another challenge that the teachers have to deal with". Insufficient time allocation in national curriculum that provides only two to four credit hours a week for English subject leads to the teachers' difficulties in managing time to teach English main skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking). Besides, inadequate various text genres in English textbook is also an obstacle that results in the students' failure in comprehending kinds of texts tested in examination (Suryanto, 2014).

In another case, some EFL/ESL teaching settings students do not necessarily value reading (Natsir and Anisati, 2016). It is a constant struggle for teachers to get students attending to reading material in and out of class. In short, students, young and old, are not always motivated to read. And when faced with such an attitudinal or motivational problem, teachers are often a loss about what to do.

Finally, comprehension is difficult for ESL or EFL readers because of socio-cultural factors (Kasim & Raisha, 2017). In reading first language material, students will not encounter any difficulties in comprehending the socio-cultural context of the material. While in almost all cases of reading foreign language material, EFL students will frequently encounter socio-cultural complexities. For example, when there are two subjects from India and the United States reading two texts describing an Indian and American wedding, both of them face difficulties in comprehending the text because each one of them has different socio-cultural background. This evidence is clear that students' ability to comprehend the content of reading material depends in part on their knowledge about the topic of the reading selection.

On the basis of some problems mentioned previously above, there are four main problems of learning process in reading English. First, students' insufficient vocabularies and comprehend linguistics complexities that makes English text becomes harder to understand. Second, ineffective government regulation and inadequate various text genres that leads to students' failure in examination. Third, students' negative attitude towards reading that makes teachers struggling to motivate them to be active in learning. And the last is the students' socio-cultural

differences that results in students' difficulties in comprehending foreign language material.

In order to comprehend the text, the students must be taught with some reading approaches to aid them in comprehension. Alfaki and Siddiek (2013:43) stated that "to get a good comprehension the teacher should activate appropriate schemata or background knowledge that can easily fit with the content of the text". A number of organized reading approaches and methods have been proposed in the literature for facilitating reading through activation of background knowledge. They also suggested to activate background knowledge before reading to help students get ready to read and be open to new information. Among some techniques of activating background knowledge, one of them is called pre-questioning. "In pre-questioning, the students are given some questions before they read the whole text to activate what they know about the text" (Fitriyani, Marbun and Susilawati, 2015:3). This activity can reduce students' nervousness because they are already familiar with the text before they begin reading. Theoretically, pre-questioning itself does not merely improve the students' comprehension but also build the students' interest and motivation before students read the whole text.

There are two main purposes of pre-questioning. First, it functions to motivate students to read what follows for a purpose, that is, to gain the requisite information to answer the question. This has been proved by some researchers who have been implemented this technique. Hendra (2011) implements pre-questioning in reading comprehension and conducts a quasi-experimental study that focused on the effect of pre-questioning in reading comprehension. The finding was that pre-questioning can make the students predict easily what will be discussed on the text after they read and answer the pre questioning. This technique has influenced reading comprehension achievement.

Another researcher is Mustaghfiroh (2013) who uses pre-questioning technique to enhance reading narrative text comprehension. She conducts an experimental research. It focuses on the effectiveness of pre-questioning to enhance reading narrative text comprehension. She finds that using pre-questioning technique motivates students to read because they can predict what they are going to read after they are given some questions before they read. Second, pre-questioning also functions to get students to predict within a context area what the text will be about before studying the text. Moreover, Rabiula (2014) states in her study that this pre-questioning technique can stimulate and activate students' schemata which can help them to understand the content of the text and to predict the answer of question using several questions before reading the text. There are some strategies in pre-questioning suggested by experts. In Al Rasheed's study (2014:84), "the pre-questioning strategy consists of introducing a summary that echoes the text content which both teachers and

students start asking some questions, guessing answers and drawing some inferences before reading begins". While Ajideh (2006:6) proposed that "teachers can adopt reading questions from the comprehension questions that appear in the textbook after the reading selection or in the teachers' manual". He gives comments as follows. Some pre-reading activities simply consist of questions to which the reader is required to find answers from the text. Traditionally, this type of activity followed the text and is designed to test comprehension, but in more recent materials questions often precede the text and function as scanning tasks. That is the learner reads the text quickly in order to find specific information related to the questions.

Another strategy in pre-questioning is by giving vocabulary pre-teaching (Mihara, 2011). After guessing the title of the text, the students are given a list of key words and phrases from the passage and given limited time to translate them into their first language without looking them up in the dictionary. This strategy is very helpful because when they start reading the text, they already know the meaning of difficult words from the text and it increases their comprehension and also confidence in reading. Qolisoh (2015:26) also suggests that "Pre-questioning is taught by having the instructor asks questions about a passage and the students answer the questions, through pre-questioning students set purposes for reading, the method is supported by".

According to Harmer (2015), there are some kinds of pre-questioning, namely: pre-questioning before reading to confirm expectations, pre-questioning before reading to extract specific information, pre-questioning before reading for general comprehension, and pre-questioning before reading for detail comprehension. Pre-questioning before reading to confirm expectations refers to the use of pre-questioning as a tool for placing great emphasis on the lead-in stage (where students are encouraged to become interested in the subject matter of the text), encourages students to predict the content of the text, and gives them an interesting and motivating purpose for reading.

Furthermore, pre-questioning before reading to extract specific information is used as a tool to force the students to extract specific information from the text. They are going to answer before reading the text. If they do this it will be possible for them to read in the required way, they should see the text only to extract the information the questions demand. The other type, pre-questioning before reading for general comprehension, in this case pre-questioning is used to build up the students' prior knowledge. Lastly, pre-questioning before reading for detailed comprehension. This kind of pre-questioning intends to give the students some detailed information that should be found by them in the whole of the text.

However, the student's success in reading is not solely because of its teaching strategies and techniques.

Motivation is also an important factor in encouraging students to read. Teachers need to create an atmosphere in class that encourages reading. This becomes possible if teachers use more media in their teaching. Nevertheless, many teachers in Indonesia still use teacher-centered teaching style and discourage them from using teaching media. Many one-hour lessons consist only of the students reading the textbook and answer some questions. The teachers do not realize that textbook has many weaknesses. Rahimi and Hassani (2012:68) claim that "Teachers who depend on textbook in their teaching process can become deskilled may give negative effects to students". Refer to this, one of the most common problems with textbooks is that they are designed to be used by an entire class or grade and do not reflect the interests and needs of students (Basturkmen, 2010). This kind of education does not take into account the fact that many students in the same grade have different reading levels. While some students may find the textbook too easy, other students may find themselves struggling to comprehend the information that the textbook is trying to teach them. From the two opinions above, it is obvious that teachers should use innovative teaching techniques that attract students' interest in learning rather than depend too much on textbooks.

Another problem is that the teachers did not use other media that could support the learning to become more interesting to learn, so that it attracts and helps students to learn English. Teaching and learning activities do not run effectively because most of students keep silent when the teacher ask them some questions about the text since they have no idea about why they read and without caring what they are reading. Some students also play and cheat other friends then make the class so noisy when they do the exercise that the teacher always gets mad with them. Some teachers also merely follow a particular text or materials provided by the government. When this happens, teachers feel unnecessary to be creative with materials and media and simply follow the prescribed lessons. Moreover, some teachers think that following texts and media provided can save time. However, following materials without considering the needs of the students can trivialize the experience of the students. These problems will lead to the students' failure in achieving the objective of their learning. Therefore, the teachers should be able to choose an appropriate strategy when teaching their students.

Effective learning must begin from direct experience or experience in the concrete and toward a more abstract experience. Learning will be more effective if assisted with the aids in teaching than in unassisted with a teaching tool. In order to teaching and learning process can work well, students should be encouraged to utilize all the tools senses. The teacher tries to show the stimulus (stimulus), which can be processed in many senses. "The more sensing devices used to receive and to process information, the

more likely the information is understandable and can be maintained in memory” (Patesan, Balagiu and Alibec, 2018:115). Hamalik in Azhar (2011) pointed out that the use of teaching media in teaching and learning can generate new desires and interests, encourages motivation and stimulation and learning activities, and even brings psychological influences on students. Thus, students are expected to be able to receive and to absorb easy and good messages in the material presented.

Media also play an important role in reading classroom. Reading is a very complex activity that involves almost all psychological processes including sensation, perception, motor behavior, motivation, attention, emotion, cognition, and all kinds of memories. Since these psychological functions are far from perfectly understood, a true understanding of the reading process must wait the further development of psychological and linguistic knowledge. Therefore, students’ interest should be created and coped by the teacher in teaching learning process, because in teaching involves relation of psychological between students and the material. If their interest has developed, they will have emotion, sensation, attention and they will be ready to receive the materials. If this condition has been shaped, the students’ achievement will appear. In other words, if the students’ interest in learning something has been shaped and existed in their soul, they will give their achievement as better as they can. Therefore, it seems that it is very important to use media to teach reading for students now.

A reading course can be interesting if a variety of creative and interesting media are used. If teaching media are appropriately chosen and designed, are skillfully produced and are effectively used, they have great influence on teaching and learning because they produce impact of: save time, increase interest, hold attention, clarify ideas, reinforce concepts, add tone, prove a point, and also aid memory (Yunus, et. al., 2014). Furthermore, the visual aids are believed to be able to help English-language learners building their vocabulary, speaking, listening as well as the writing skills and making them more creative and developing their deep thinking (Marioara, et. al., 2018). Ghulam, et. al. (2015) mentions some advantages of using media for teaching reading. The first, media can help students to retain more concepts permanently. The second, they can make students interested to the material. The third, they give accurate image when the students see and hear properly. The fourth, they give the real experience. Then, they provide complete example for conceptual thinking. The last, they give understanding to help students in acquisition of language.

Media in teaching and learning process are defined as tools to match the learning objective and the learning product (Sugeng, 2010). In other words, media are tools that connect between the knowledge transferred by teachers to students’ comprehension. Bertram, et. al. (2010:19) define

“media as those resources that are deliberately used to communicate with us. The purpose of the communication may be to entertain, inform, educate or persuade”.

The role of media in reading classroom is very important. It can enhance the students to improve their reading skills. Bertram, et. al. (2010) stated that using media is an ideal activity through which to begin developing learners’ abilities to skim and to scan and thus improve their reading habits and speed. While some textbook comprehension exercises are excellent, many fail to ‘connect’ with the learners’ worlds and interests. In order to overcome this problem, consider to set your own questions on articles and reports from the popular media.

There are some media used in reading classroom. Broughton, et. al. (2003:107) state that “a further series of devices which help to foster better understanding are those which involve the use of pictures, diagrams, charts and models”. Similarly, a picture of a dagger, or the real thing, or a cut-away drawing of an automatic pistol showing how the ammunition clip fitted into it might help to clarify the conceptualisation of an unfamiliar bit of military technology. A time line, or diagram, showing the relationship between the time of narration and the sequence of events recounted in the story can also help to make comprehension easier—especially in longer pieces of writing like novels where the technique of telling a story in ‘flashback’ is often used.

Besides visual media, audio visual is also appropriate for learning reading. Broughton, et. al. (2003) prove that with a tape recorder or record player the roles and characters of participants in dialogue and even the context of the dialogue can be made much more vivid, since background noises and sound effects may be introduced. In particular, understanding a play can be made much easier and more enjoyable by listening to it well read—though clearly plays should really be seen in performance to arrive at the best understanding of them.

In line with this, Navarro (2008) suggests that among some strategies to activate and to build students’ schemata in order to achieve reading comprehension is by using visual aids. Pictures and other visual material can activate a students’ prior knowledge. If a student has some schema for fossils, a simple picture may serve to retrieve appropriate knowledge. Thus, a teacher may share this photograph of a fossil before students read a science textbook chapter on fossils. The picture serves to activate the students’ schemata on fossils. Besides visual media, audio visual media is also suggested to help students comprehend the text. Using audiovisuals such as videos and DVDs is a strategy which teachers often use after having students read the text however it can be very effective when used before reading the text by building students’ background knowledge and vocabulary (McCormick, 2010).

Based on the explanation above, the teacher should know what the students' perception on using media in English teaching learning process before deciding the most suitable media for students, so that media can be used effectively in class. A teacher should have responded about students' perception on using media in English teaching learning to choose what the appropriate media to minimize the barrier in delivering the message or theory in vocational high school. Because one of vocational education missions is to actualize English outcomes of occupational preparation so that individuals are able to penetrate and to challenge the dysfunctional aspects of established cultural tradition. As a result, there are some factors assumed contributing to the students' achievement in reading comprehension namely pre-questioning and teaching media. Therefore, this research aims to investigate the effects of using pre-questioning and using teaching media, both visual and audio visual, towards student's reading comprehension.

## METHOD

The research employed a quantitative research design to find out the effects of pre-questioning and using teaching media towards students' achievement in reading comprehension. It means there were two independent variables and one dependent variable; variable X1 as the first independent variable (pre-questioning) and variable X2 as the second independent variable (students' perception on teaching media) which had interconnected and influenced the variable Y as the dependent variable (student's reading comprehension). The method used was a survey with multiple-correlational technique.

The population of this research was three private vocational high schools in Tangerang. The sampling technique used for this survey research was a cluster-simple random sampling taking a sample in cluster, random, and simple ways. It was carried out because of the wide area and a great deal of population and the sample was tenth grade students from each school. As a result, 25 to 30 students from each school were chosen randomly to become samples for this research. Therefore, there were 80 students totally in grade ten were given treatment for this research.

First, the students were given pre-test to see their achievement in reading comprehension before given a treatment. The treatment of using pre-questioning technique in teaching reading was implemented for the first three weeks and it was followed by giving reading comprehension post-test. Kinds of pre-questioning used in this treatment was pre-questioning before reading to get general information and pre-questioning before reading to confirm expectations.

The pre-questioning strategy was conducted by giving students some questions about the text to find out whether

they were familiar with the topic or not. If the students were disable to answer the questions, teachers would explain it and this would help students to get prior knowledge (schemata) before they read the text. The same treatment was also conducted for using teaching media. Teaching media used for this treatment were pictures showed in power point and a movie. After the treatment, the students were also given a questionnaire to find out their opinion about which teaching media they liked during the learning process. At the end of the treatment, students were given reading comprehension post-test consisting of 30 multiple choice problems to seek the effect of both strategies. Finally, the data collection was processed by using descriptive data analysis, data requirement test (linearity test, normality test and multicollinearity test), and hypotheses test.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To see how far the effects of pre-questioning and teaching media towards students' reading comprehension, the multiple correlation coefficients is used to measure and to analyze them. From the first calculation, it shows that  $F_{observed}$  is 20.156 and  $F_{table}$  is 3.10. Since  $Sig$  figures =  $0.000 < 0.05$  and  $F_{observed}$  is higher than  $F_{table}$  ( $20.156 > 3.10$ ). From this result, it can be concluded that combination of using pre-questioning strategy together with using teaching media gives significant effects on Students' reading comprehension. The effect is classified medium or neither too high or too low. The contribution percentage from these two strategies is 34.40% while 65.60% contribution is from other factors. From this finding, it is proved that if teachers use these two strategies, it improves students' reading comprehension.

In the second calculation, it is conducted to find out how effective pre-questioning strategy in helping students with their comprehension. The result shows that  $t_{observed}$  is 6.347 whereas  $Sig$  score = 0.000 which is lower than significance grade ( $Sig$ ) ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) or  $Sig = 0.000 < 0.05$ . In other words, using pre-questioning strategy is proved to give significant effect on students' reading comprehension. The result of this calculation is consistent with Hendra (2011), Mustaghfiroh (2013), and Rabiula (2014) who found that pre-questioning helps students in reading comprehension.

Finally, in the third calculation, it is conducted to find out how effective the use of teaching media to increase students' reading comprehension. The result shows that  $t_{observed}$  is 0.431 whereas  $Sig$  score = 0.667. since  $Sig$  grade is higher than  $Sig$  score ( $0.05 > 0.667$ ). Therefore  $H_0$  (null hypotheses) is accepted. This finding indicates that teaching media doesn't give any effect on students reading comprehension. This result is inconsistent with Bertram (2010), Broughton, et. al. (2003), Navarro (2008),

and McCormick (2007) who stated that using teaching media can improve students' reading comprehension. It proves that teaching media also has some weaknesses from distracting students' mind from subject matter, reducing the role of teachers, to failing to describe abstract words (Deepa, 2014).

From those three results, it can be summarized that using pre-questioning itself or combined with teaching media is effective in improving students' reading comprehension. While using teaching media alone does not help students to arouse their potential in reading comprehension. In other words, using pre-questioning strategy is better than using teaching media. The students said that the used of teaching media won't help them in comprehending the reading text. The students think that media only describes concrete words and cannot describe abstract words. Since there are so many abstract words in the text, therefore the use of teaching media cannot help them to comprehend the whole text.

## CONCLUSION

Reading comprehension is a complex cognitive process of decoding symbols for the intention of deriving meaning and constructing meaning. It is the mastery of basic cognitive processes to the point where they are automatic so that attention is freed for the analysis of meaning. To comprehend the text, the students need some motivation and activate background knowledge or schemata, as well as use some appropriate strategies and skills. When they have activated prior knowledge of text, students are better able to concentrate and to comprehend what they are reading. One technique to activate the students' background knowledge is pre-questioning.

Pre-questioning is a useful tool for helping readers examine their own values, attitudes, opinions or related experiences before they interact with the text and leading them to focus attention and provide for purposeful reading. To improve students' interest in reading skill, the teacher should make the lesson more interesting and efficient to decrease the students' difficulties. Therefore, the teacher needs a suitable method. The suitable method has an important role in determining the success of teaching learning process. Using media in teaching learning should be made more interesting moreover efficient to decrease the difficulties of the students and some difficulties can be minimized by selecting the tools or aids that is possible to bring in the classroom. However, based on the research findings, it can be seen that there is no effect of students' perception on teaching media towards students' reading comprehension. The students think that the use of teaching media will not help them in comprehending the reading text. The students affirm that media only describe concret words and cannot describe abstract words. Since there are many abstract words in the text, so the use of teaching

media cannot help them to comprehend the whole text. Therefore, to comprehend the reading materials, it is better to use pre-questioning to train the students' brain process rather than teaching media which has some limitation to help students understanding the text.

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