

IMPROVING READING COMPREHENSION OF THE STUDENTS OF ECONOMIC DEPARTMENT AT STIS NURUDDHALAM SUMENEP THROUGH SQ3R STRATEGY

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Abstract

This research was conducted to improve the reading comprehension ability of the students of Economic Department at STIS Nuruddhalam, Sumenep through SQ3R strategy. Due to the problem found that the reading comprehension ability of the students to comprehend the text was unsatisfactory. This research employed two –cycle’s classroom action research and implemented in the 20 students of the first semester of the Students of Economic Department STIS Nuruddhalam, Sumenep. The instruments to collect the data were observation sheet, field notes and the reading comprehension test. The result of this research dicated that SQ3R strategy improved the student's reading comprehension ability that can be seen from the student's score in *post test* through their gain compare with their score in *pretest*. In cycle I there were 10 out of the students (50%) achieved 10 points greater than their score in pretest. While in cycle II, there were 15 students out of 20 students (75%) achieved 10 points greater than their score in pretest. Besides, the implementation of the SQ3R strategy was successful in improving the students' participation.

Keywords: *SQ3R Strategy, Reading comprehension ability*

INTRODUCTION

The main reason for students in university to learn English is to help them acquire information in their field of study through textbooks, articles, lecture notes,

technical instructions and others. Many students want to be able to read texts in English either for their careers, for study purposes or simply for pleasures (Harmer, 1998).

Learning to read is an important educational goal. In the academic fields, teachers and students are requiring to read a lot of information in the process of transferring knowledge. By reading, it is expected that they are able to extract the ideas conveyed in their reading textbooks. Read opens up new worlds and opportunities. It enables us to gain new knowledge, enjoy literature, and do everyday things that are part and parcel of modern life, such as, reading the newspapers, job listings, brochure, instruction manuals, and so on.

Different forms of text structure and organization might create trouble for the students. Their lack of knowledge interferes with their comprehension and memory. So, nothing different forms of text structure and organization will help students to set their goal of reading, grasp the ideas is the text about and comprehend its content . Therefore, teacher should be able to create suitable strategies that will be apply to aid their comprehension.

In “The Framework of STIS Nuruddhalam Sumenep”, it is stated that foreign languages especially Arabic and English are very important for the students to prepare them communicating in those languages. Economics is one of the departments at STIS Nuruddhalam Sumenep taught to provide students with larger opportunities to learn English, so that they can develop their English skills (Pedoman Penyelenggaraan Pendidikan STIS Nuruddhalam Sumenep, 2015).

In the 2015 Curriculum of STIS Nuruddhalam Sumenep, English is one of the foreign languages offered to students in order that they can communicate in English. The total credit for English subject at STIS Nuruddhalam Sumenep is 8. This is intended to give larger opportunities to students to learn English. However, the teaching of English at STIS Nuruddhalam Sumenep has a number of problems that need to be taken into account, such as: (1) the achievement of the students in English especially in reading course is not satisfactory, (2) the motivation and interest of the students in learning English are still low, (3) the learning activity is not supported with enough facility, and (4) The students are not aware of the benefits of learning English.

In line with the problems mentioned above, according to the researcher's preliminary study, she found that there are some problems faced both by the lectures and students in the teaching and learning process in Economic Department. The lectures do not have particular strategy in teaching reading.

Then, most students find difficulties in identifying the word's meaning, phrases and sentence. Besides, the students also have difficulties in understanding the content of the text, answering the questions and they were also passive and relied much on the lecture's explanation.

Regarding the problems mentioned, something has to be done in order to change the unfavorable situation into a better one. Since strategy plays a very important role that they determine the success of any teaching and learning process, it is considered important to implement suitable strategy that will help students to improve their ability in comprehending the text. One of the reading strategies that can be used to bring an improvement on the students' reading comprehension is SQ3R strategy.

SQ3R strategy is a five-step system originated by P. Robinson (1941) and it has recently earned the title "the grandfather of study strategies" (Lipson & Wixson, 2003). SQ3R can be broken down into many different and separate skills, which are necessary for successful implementation.

As stated in Huber (2004) each of the steps in SQ3R stands for *Survey, Question, Read, Recite* and *Review*. The "S" asks students to *survey* the text they are about to read. This may include, skim the text for an overview and gathering the information necessary to focus. In *Question step (Q)* students should generate questions that they expect might be answered in the reading. Then, in *reading steps (R)* students should interact with the text and answer their self-generated questions. *Recite (R)* means that students should periodically stop to reflect on what they've read. Lastly, through *Review step (R)* students perform a post-reading review, which may include making summary or notes by recording the information they have judged to be the most important and/or relevant.

The SQ3R method has been widely discussed by educators and it is commonly used to aid student comprehension of reading material. The successful application of SQ3R strategy in improving students' reading comprehension can be seen through several previous researches as follows:

Sujak (2002) conducted a study at SLTP 2 Ngimbang Lamongan. In his research, he implemented the strategy into three phase activities. In pre-reading stage, he employed survey and question steps. Then, in whilst-reading stage, he employed reading and recite steps, and the last was review which was carried out in the post-reading stage. The result of this research showed that SQ3R strategy could improve students' critical reading comprehension ability in classroom learning.

Sahriadi (2005) conducted a study that aims at improving students' reading comprehension at SMP 2 Samaturu Kolaka-Southeast Sulawesi. The implementation of SQ3R strategy did not run well since the researcher as the teacher still dominated the classroom activities. This was done because the students at that school still were not familiar yet with the English instruction. In shorts, the result of the research showed that SQ3R strategy could improve students reading comprehension achievement although the students' scores did not reach the criteria of success. .

In accordance with the strengths of the SQ3R strategy, and the succeed of this strategy in improving reading comprehension ability, the researcher chose this strategy to be used in her research to improve the ability of the students in comprehending the text in Economic Department STIS Nuruddhaham, Sumenep.

METHOD

The design of this research is Classroom Action Research (CAR). This means that the research is conducted in the classroom. Latief (2009:3) states that Classroom Action Research is aimed at developing innovative instructional method that can help improve the students' learning. Classroom action research in this study is directed to adapt a strategy to solve the classroom, especially improving students 'skill and ability in teaching reading comprehension.

The subjects of the research were 20 students from the first semester of Economic Department STIS Nuruddhaham ,Sumenep regarding their achievement in English especially in reading course which is not satisfactory. The instruments of the study were reading comprehension test, observation sheet, and field notes. The reading comprehension tests were used for gathering data about the students' learning result while the observation sheet and field notes were used to help the researcher doing the reflection stage in every cycle.

In this case, the success is determined by the following criteria. First, the research is considered succeed if the majority of the students of the whole class achieve 10 point greater than the previous score they are obtained in the preliminary study. Second, the majority of the students are actively involved during the teaching learning process.

In relation to the research design, this study employs a classroom action research model developed by Kemmis and Mc Taggart which covers four steps, namely: planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting (Koshy, 2007:4).

Planning

In this stage, the researcher made a careful preparation to the implementation of the action. Here, the researcher used SQ3R strategy which was developed by Robinson (1941) and assumed as one of the strategies which promote active reading and help students to focus. It covers five steps, namely: *Survey, Question, Read, Recite and Review*. Some preparations in this stage were:

1. Explaining the reading course outline and its general objectives (GO).
2. Discussing the strategy and its procedure that will be used in the classroom
3. Preparing the reading materials and brainstorms student's prior knowledge.
4. Asking the students to work in group of four to *survey* the text, by skim the title, introducing paragraph, body of the text and closing paragraph.
5. Asking the students to find the difficult word from the text, looking for its meaning and check together with the whole class
6. Helping students to formulate *question* of the text by
7. Monitoring the students to *read* carefully and answer the previously formulated questions
8. Guiding the students to recite the text by reading silently and make note of the important point they found in the text.
9. Motivating the students to discuss the content of the text with their group and encouraging the speaker of the group to make report in front of the class.
10. Insisting the students to have class discussion by expressing their opinion, asking question or making suggestion of the report that already presented by their friend.
11. Asking the students to make final summary of the text
12. Doing reflection by checking the group task
13. Making conclusion of the topic and closing the class.

Implementing

In this stage, the researcher used four meetings consisted of three meetings of the teaching learning process of implementing the SQ3R strategy. The first meeting is considered the preparation, since the researcher did not use the strategy before and it was a new strategy for the students, so the students need to adapt the situation. Then, the second and the third meetings were considered the real implementation of SQ3R strategy while the fourth meeting was administered the reading comprehension test for cycle 1.

In cycle 2, the researcher implemented the strategy in three meetings regarding the the students have already familiar with the strategy and considered that the improvement of the students' in cycle 1 was almost meet the criteria of success of the study.

Observing

In this stage, the researcher recording and gathering all relevant data about any aspects during the instructional process is carried out. This observation is carried out simultaneously with the implementation of the action. In this case, the researcher implemented the lesson plan and observed the students' activities in the instructional process of reading comprehension by using SQ3R strategy.

There were two kinds of data collected in this research, primary and secondary data. The primary data was the test scores of the students administered at the end of every cycle. While the secondary data were the result of observation sheet and field notes which were taken during the teaching and learning process in every cycle.

Reflecting

In this stage, the researcher reflects the research by carrying out data analysis of each cycle. The data were compared with the criteria of success to see whether the data meet the criteria or not. In other words, the reflection is aimed to know whether the action is succeed or fail so that she can think what are the possible aspects that should be improve in every cycle. Thus, this stage helps the researcher to decide the strengths and weaknesses of the action.

FINDING

The research was conducted in two cycles during odd semester (first semester) in 2018-2019 academic year. The researchers did the preliminary study by doing the test and gathering others data from interview and observation. From the test administered in the preliminary study, it found that the student's average score was low, that is 53.65. While from the interview, it found that the students' participation was low either because they thought that reading is boring subject and they thought that the lecture used inappropriate strategy to teach reading, which they called it conventional. As the teachers' way of teaching was still monotonous and teacher-centered, the students were become passive and they relied much on the teacher's explanation.

The first cycle was done in October 2018. There were four meetings used in this cycle including the reading comprehension test that administered in the end of the cycle. The test was conducted on October 29th 2018. From the data of the document, it was found that the average score of the students' test in Cycle 1 was 61.66. The average score was increased 8.01 point higher than the average score in the preliminary study. However, not all students pass the passing grade. 10 students (50%) of 20 achieved 10 point greater than their score in the preliminary study and 10 out of 20 students (50%) did not yet achieve 10 point greater than their score in the preliminary study. In detailed, there were 4 students whose score were increased but it did not yet reach 10 point greater than their score in preliminary study and 4 students whose scores were stables. Unfortunately, there were also 2 students whose score lower than their score in the preliminary study. Since not all of the students percentage did not meet the criteria of success in cycle 1, so the researcher then decided to continue implementing the strategy in cycle 2.

The second cycle was implemented in the third week of November 2018. The reading comprehension test was administered on November 19th. It was only three meetings including the reading comprehension test. The researcher considered that three meetings were enough since the students have already familiar with the strategy used in the previous cycle and that only 50% of the students need few more improvement to gain 10 point greater than their score in preliminary study.

From the data, it was found that the average score of the students' test in Cycle 2 was 72.88. That means that the average score was increased 19.23 point higher than the average score in the preliminary study. Hence, all students passed the minimum passing grade. As the result of cycle 2 had met the criteria of success, the researcher decided to stop the research.

From the data presented in the observation sheet in cycle 1, it was found that in *Survey Step* when lecture prepared the material and brainstorm students prior knowledge only 50% of the students pay attention. In the skimming process there were 13 students (65%) from the total number in the classroom. Then, when they were identifying unfamiliar words from the text 16 out of 20 students (80%) did it and finding its words meaning was done by 15 students or 75% of the number of the students. In *Question Step*, only 8 students (40%) who formulated the question, In *Read Step*, all of the students read the text silently, however when students should answer their previous questions merely 50 % of the students who did it. In *Recite Step*, there were 14 students (70 %) out of 20 did the activity. there were

only 5 students (25 %) out of 20 who discuss the material and gave report. In *Review step*, there were 50 % of the students made summary of the text. In general, the students participation in cycle I was only 63.2 % (equal to good).

Meanwhile, the data presented in the observation sheet in cycle 2, it was found that

In *Survey step* there were 13 out of 20 students (65%) who pay attention to the lecture brainstorming. While in the skimming process, there were 15 out of 20 students (75%) who participated actively. In *Question step*, there were 16 out of 20 students (80%) who did the activities. In *Reading step*, there were 15 out of 20 (75%) who read carefully and looking for the answer of the previously formulated question. In *Recite step*, there were 14 out of 20 students (70%) who did the activities of making note of the important point of the text, meanwhile in the activities of discussing and giving report there were 10 students (50%) who gave the report. In the last step, *Review step*; all of the students did rereading text silently and there were 15 out of 20 students (75%).

Besides, the data from the field note, it shown that there were improvement students' participation during the cycles of the action research. It seems that students are able to comprehend the text and understand its content when the teacher patiently guided them with different method that promote active reading and helped them to focus.

DISCUSSION

Based on the data presented in the proceeding chapter, it was found that SQ3R strategy which consists of *Survey*, *Question*, *Read*, *Recite* and *Review* during the instructional process basically giving a good progress in the reading comprehension. The appropriate procedures of SQ3R strategy give beneficial contribution both in improving students' reading comprehension achievement and participation in the instructional process. The implementation of the SQ3R strategy for teaching reading comprehension was applied in three phase's activity namely, opening activity, main activity and closing activity.

In the opening activity, the lecture brainstorm students' prior knowledge by asking some questions to connect with the content of the text. As this study found, teacher applied both English and Indonesian to ask the students. He tried to adjust his language with the students' capability. Brown (2007:223) stated brainstorming is a technique to initiate some sort of thinking process that often put to excellent use in preparing students to read a text, to discuss a complex issue or to write on a

topic. In this activity, the students were given a chance to express their ideas freely about the topic. Based on the findings, it was discovered that students could express their ideas concerning to the topic discussed and they were also feel more relax and enjoy to learn.

In main activity, it covers all steps of SQ3R strategy they are: *Survey*, *Question*, *Read*, *Recite* and *Review*. In *Survey Step*, the students were asked skim the text by to read title, introductory and concluding paragraph to get the overview of the content of the text. By having the students to read the text quickly, the students were helped to make prediction about the content of the text. This was in line with Kuther (2007) stated that we can survey the material by glance through the topic headings to get an overview of the reading. After that, the students were asked to list unfamiliar words from the text and looking for its meaning. Based on the findings, it was found that the students had difficulties in finding the Indonesian equal meaning from the English words even though they have used dictionary. This case may happen due to their insufficient of vocabulary mastery. For that reason, lecture guided students to find the meaning patiently. By identifying unfamiliar word and find its meaning, the students could improve their ability to understand the text, enrich vocabulary items and activate their prior knowledge. In *Question Step*, lecture helped students to formulate question. In this research, lecture helped students to formulate some questions related to the text by turning the title, introductory and concluding paragraph into some questions that will be answered in the reading step. Kuther (2007) stated that *Question Step* requires conscious effort, but is worth it as it leads to active reading as the best way to help the student's focus and concentrate on what need to learn or get out of reading. In *Read Step* teacher monitored the students to read the text carefully to find the answer from the previously formulated questions. As stated by Eanes (1997:107) during the reading steps the candidates have to read the text in order to find the answer of previously formulated questions. Based on the research finding, it is easier for the students to go directly searching the information of the text since they have understood about question thy have made before. Lecture assigned the students to work in pairs so that they can share ideas and help each other in searching the answer of the previously formulated questions. In this case, the lecture guided them patiently especially those were belonging to slow achiever students at completing the task. In *Recite Step*, the students were insisted to read the text carefully and make a note about the main points and all the important information of the text. This important information can be uses as the basis of the

discussion that will be presented orally in report session. Lastly, the students were motivated to get involved in discussion and were encouraged to do report. When one of the other students reports their discussion the other students should pay attention and give responses on the report given by their friend by expressing their opinions about the text, asking question, or giving suggestion. In *Review Step*, the students were insisted to read the notes they have made before and discuss it with their partner. Finally, they had to make summary about the text which might include their own view and they were also encouraged to use their own sentences.

In the closing activity in the implementation of SQ3R strategy include: checking group task, reviewing the content of the text, encouraging the students to keep study and remind them about what they have learnt in every meeting.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the research, it was concluded that SQ3R strategy is effective to improve the students reading comprehension because: (1) SQ3R strategy encourages students *to get a solid overview on the material being learnt*, (2) SQ3R strategy helps students to set their own purpose on reading, (3) SQ3R strategy could maintain concentration, and (4) SQ3R strategy could enhance students to be an active learner and (5) SQ3R could improve retention.

Considering that the implementation of SQ3R strategy in teaching reading comprehension could improve the students' learning process as well as their achievement in reading comprehension, lecture were suggested to give feedback on the students' work. It will continuously enhance student's future motivation that can be done by giving intensive monitoring when they were engage doing the task, giving attention to their problem, responding to their question and giving clear confirmation on the instruction given etc.

The researcher suggests the other lectures to implement SQ3R strategy as an alternative strategy in teaching English, especially reading comprehension in other Departments. It is better for lecture to consider some aspects that might help them to conduct better teaching and learning process in reading comprehension, such as the familiarity of the strategy, time management, the material given, the classroom interaction, the lesson plan and the students arrangement

Finally, it is recommended to the further researchers who want to do similar research about eclectic method to utilize the outcome of the study as relevant reference for their researches.

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