THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING QUESTIONING THE AUTHOR STRATEGY IN TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION OF RECOUNT TEXT

RESEARCH ARTICLE

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Abstract
This research is a pre-experimental design on Teaching Reading Comprehension to Students of Junior High School. The aim of this research is to see the effectiveness of using Questioning the Author strategy in teaching reading comprehension of recount text. This research was conducted to the eighth grade students of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Swasta Darul Ulum Pontianak. The population of this research was 128 students, which consist of class A, B, C and D. The sample of this research was class B with 33 students. The selection of this sample used the purposive sampling technique. This research covers dependent variable (students' reading comprehension achievement) and independent variable (the use of QtA strategy). There were three times of treatment (teaching process) conducted by the researcher based on the procedures of pre-experimental design. The use of QtA strategy indicated that the students' achievement on reading comprehension of recount text was improved and it was found that the students had good enough enthusiasm and understanding in reading text through this strategy. It was also proved that the significant score of students' achievement was 5.7. The size effect of the use of QtA strategy toward the students' reading comprehension achievement of the recount text was 20.8. This result indicated that the use of QtA strategy strongly improved the students' reading comprehension of the recount text. The interpretation of hypothesis of this research, the null hypothesis was rejected because the result of t-test score was higher than t - table. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted in this research.
Keywords: Questioning the Author Strategy, Reading Comprehension, Recount Text.

INTRODUCTION

Reading as the one of receptive skills is an activity in which there is interaction between reader and the author of the text. Again, the students of the junior high school level should be also more efficient at recognizing and recalling facts, recognizing and inferring main themes and relationships, drawing conclusions, making judgments and generalizations, predicting outcomes, applying what has been learned, and following directions. The comprehension goals of the intermediate grades address these abilities as well as those required for independent study: skimming, using reference materials, outlining, summarizing, altering reading rate and focus as the purpose of reading changes, use of headings, note taking, and so on.

According to Zare and Othman (2013:188), reading is a cognitive activity in which the reader takes part in a conversation with the author through the text. Reading is common source in achieving and developing learner's knowledge. Indonesian learners need to have a good reading skill in order to improve their knowledge in English as their foreign language and their ability to access the information. According to Yildirim and Ates (2012:79), skilled reading is the ability to extend meaning from text accurately and effectively. In the context of English learning, the main purpose of teaching reading is comprehension.

Nowadays, English was taught, not only at junior high school, but also at elementary schools although it was not compulsory subject. For junior high school level, English was taught as a compulsory subject covering the four language skills; speaking, listening, writing and reading. At this level, the students must learn reading comprehension because reading is a skill needed to get information (the Body of National Education Standards, 2006). It is stated that one of the main objectives of English lessons at this level of education is comprehension of various short functional types of text, monologues and also essays

concerning procedures, descriptions, recounting, narratives, and reports.

By having the needs to comprehend the various short functional types of text, the teaching of reading comprehension is essential for preparing students with the basic reading skills in order to be able to gain information and knowledge from reading more effectively. The students are also expected to be able to extract meaning from specific cues in the text.

Related with the present study, reading comprehension is not as simple as people imagination to achieve it. There are many aspects that must be considered if the teacher wants to successfully conduct the teaching learning process. One of the important aspects is giving the students a chance to read during the lesson and also make sure that they completely understand what they read. Most of the students, however, only read the text without thinking and paying attention to every single sentence that they read. Besides, most of the students do not have much time to read because when teachers give a text and get the students to answer the questions of the text; they only focus on how to answer these questions quickly. They ignore the important part of being able to answer the question and they finally fail.

In relation to the reading skill to be mastered, the writer intended to solve the problem of reading comprehension particularly in extracting the ideas of the reading text. Therefore, the writer applied the Questioning the Author technique in reading comprehension, particularly to support the process in understanding the text. According to Beck and McKeown (2006: 25), Questioning the Author (QtA) is designed to facilitate building understanding of text ideas through the use of queries and discussion. QtA is the activity designed to deepen students' comprehension of the text, it interrupts reading with queries and the teacher facilitated discussions in order to help students integrate and extend meanings of the text in process.

In conducting this research, the writer used pre-experimental design as the way to see the effectiveness of using QtA strategy in reading comprehension. The writer convinced that QtA could be an appropriate reading strategy in solving the students' difficulties in understanding and extracting the ideas of the text. In this research, the writer used recount text as the reading source. The idea of selecting the recount text was based on the content of reading types on the eighth grade students of junior high school level.

The Nature of Reading Comprehension, Beers (2000: 12-15) claims that reading is a process that includes three phases: before-reading, whilst-reading and post-reading. In the *before-reading* phase, the reader establishes in his mind a purpose and a plan for reading. From this notion, the reader now begins to read the written text - the *during-reading* phase. While he reads, he will think about his purpose for reading and about his prior knowledge. This may occur during short pauses he takes.

In relation to the Beers' argument, in the classroom activities the teacher might also strongly concern to the process of reading. Every teacher should help the students to make predictions about the text; compare and contrast events, ideas, and characters; visualize the information that is described in the text; and make connections to prior knowledge (Bell and McKeown, 2006: 121). Then, the teacher can help students to learn in monitoring their comprehension silently as they read; not only that, requiring the students to find a passage in the text that illustrates an example of something, such as a literary element or a technique, specified by the teacher, then discuss and defend their choices (Birch, 2002: 43).

Furthermore, Beers (2000: 12 – 15) also argues that the students retell specific events from the novel or retell the plot in its entirety, either written or spoken form. The teacher can provide a strategy for students to engage in critical thinking and reflection as they read, discuss, and respond to the book. Again, McWhorter (2005: 24) claims that collaboration between critical thinking and reflection is the heart of this approach. This approach implies that the teacher will help the students to improve their reading comprehension by emphasizing the importance of careful, repeated readings of material.

The Reading Skill for Reading Comprehension, reading is important skill in human life; it becomes essential because it is one way of communications. People can enlarge their experience and enhance their ability and knowledge by reading, even

finding the solutions of their life problems through reading. Through printed pages, a reader communicates with great minds of the past as well as the present (Duke and Pearson, 2002: 210-213).

Reading is just like conversation and involves the sides, writer and reader. As stated by Paran (1996: 25) that reading is like conversation between the writer and the reader. It means the writer expresses his idea in printed pages, and the readers try to catch the idea by using words. It is obvious that reading always involves the interaction between the writer and the reader. It is a sort of communication process, initiated by the thoughts of the writer and expressed through the symbols on page (Duke and Pearson, 2002: 205-206).

Many readers read for many different purposes. Sometimes the readers may say that they read a book just for pleasure but another will say that they read a book because they want to learn something from it (Marrioti and Homan, 2005: 36). According to Kembo (1993: 36), second language learners will want to read for the following purposes; (1) To obtain information for some purposes or because curious about some topic; (2) To obtain instructions on how to perform some tasks for our work or daily life (e.g. knowing how an appliance works); (2) To act in a play, play a game, do a puzzle; (3) To keep in touch with friends by correspondence or to understand business letters; (4) To know when or where something will take place or what is available; (5) To know what is happening or has happened; (6) For enjoyment or excitement.

Furthermore, those purposes of reading might lead the learners/students in reading comprehension. The students should be aware that comprehension is the ultimate goal of the reading process. It is constructing meaning by integrating the information provided by the author with the readers' background knowledge. It requires that the readers interact with the text to construct meaning. In the reading process, the readers do not the active attempt to understand the writer messages. There is a process in which the readers try to interpret and to understand sentences used by the writer, because without understanding the printed pages, then reading is useless because true reading is reading with understanding or comprehension.

In short, reading comprehension is a process. This process involves both the acquisition of meanings intended by the writer and the reader interpretations and evaluation on those meanings. Therefore, there are three keys point of the reading process that the students need to understand.

a. Understanding the Main Ideas

According to McNeil & Dunant (1982: 215-219), Good readers are active readers. From the outset they have clear goals in mind for their reading. They constantly evaluate whether the text, and their reading of it, is meeting their goals. Good readers typically look over the text before they read, noting such things as the structure of the text and text sections that might be most relevant to their reading goals. As they read, good readers frequently make predictions about what is to come. They read selectively, continually making decisions about their reading--what to read carefully, what to read quickly, what not to read, and what to re-read, and so on. Good readers construct, revise, and question the meanings they make as they read. They draw upon, compare, and integrate their prior knowledge with material in the text. They think about the authors of the text, their style, beliefs, intentions, historical milieu, and so on. They monitor their understanding of the text, making adjustments in their reading as necessary.

Furthermore, good readers try to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words and concepts in the text, and deal with inconsistencies or gaps as needed. They evaluate the text's quality and value, and react to the text in a range of ways, both intellectual and emotional. Good readers read different kinds of text differently. For example, when reading narrative, good readers attend closely to the setting and characters; when reading expository text these readers frequently construct and revise summaries of what they have read.

For good readers, text processing occurs not only during 'reading' as we have traditionally defined it, but also during short breaks taken during reading, and even after the 'reading' itself has commenced. Comprehension is a consuming and complex activity, but one

that, for good readers, is typically both satisfying and productive.

Addition, at the end of the reading comprehension activity, the readers are supposed to define and to understand the main ideas and supporting ideas from the reading text. Understanding the main and supporting ideas is a skill that the readers can find what is the reading text telling about in general. The concept of general or main ideas of the text can be described within three characteristics, they are; (1) Inductive process, the process of searching the main ideas of the text that is assumed in the beginning lines of paragraph; (2) Deductive process, the process of searching the main ideas of the text that is assumed in last lines of the paragraph; (3) Beyond the lines, the process of searching the main ideas of the text is assumed that the ideas are not mentioned in lines (written) however, it is required from the higher understanding on the text.

The way to find out the main ideas of the text can be searched by connecting the other information in the text that related to support the ideas we assume. Here, supporting ideas are very important to know because we cannot find out the main ideas whenever the supporting ideas are missed to get. Therefore, the supporting ideas of the text should be considered as the way how the reader comes to the main ideas of the text.

b. Understanding Details of Information

Good reading strategy helps the students to read in a very efficient and effective way. Using it, the aim to get the maximum benefit from the reading process/activity will spend the minimum time. It means that with strategy applied, the students can minimize the time-consumed during they are reading the text. To get the specific or detail ideas of the reading text, the students may seem to scan the text till they get what they are searching.

c. Understanding the words/phrases interpretation

When the students have mastered how to find out the main idea and details information, they actually have also mastered how to interpret the words/phrases in the sentences.

Interpreting the words/phrases refers to how the readers to recall and to understand the words/phrases in another meaning (McNeil & Dunant, 1982: 234). It means that the readers find the meaning of the words/phrases by using the context clues. The clues are not from the meaning from dictionary but it is from the process of connecting the words/phrases into the sentences. It is also called using the context clues.

The ability to understand the meaning of words/phrases is depended on how frequent the readers spend the time to read. When the students are very familiar with the reading text, it is important to know how to read without looking up the dictionary. Reading by thinking will give the exciting experience in order to explore the ideas and thoughts of the reading text.

The Use of Questioning the Author Strategy in Teaching Reading Comprehension, Questioning the Author (QtA) is a strategy developed by Isabel Beck, Margaret. G. McKeown, Hamilton. R. L and Kucan. L. According to Beck and McKeown (2002: 44), Questioning the Author is one of the instructional approach to comprehension focuses on students' attention on building understanding of text ideas. This approach builds understanding in a way different from the traditional approach to comprehension in which students wait until they finish reading to deal with the texts' ideas.

According to Beck and McKeown (2006:24) Questioning the Author is an approach for text-based instruction that was designed to facilitate building understanding of text ideas. Questioning the Author is a good strategy to teach reading comprehension like a previous study from Asti Fetiningrum in 2014 with her title "The Effectiveness of Questioning the Author Strategy for the Seventh Grade Students in Kecamatan Pleret", the result shows that Questioning the Author strategy can improve students' reading comprehension achievement.

Questioning the Author is a during activity designed to deepen students' comprehension of the text, it interrupts reading with queries and the teacher facilitated discussions in order to help students integrate and extend meanings of the text in process.

According to Beck and McKeown (2006: 24) the goal of building understanding in Questioning the Author is supported through the use of queries and discussion. It uses question answering and generating with students to support comprehension.

Recount text, recount Text is a text that retells events or experiences in the past. It added by Albab (2014: 63) that recount text is a piece of text that retells past events, usually in the order in which they happened. Its purpose or goal is to entertain or inform about the past activity to the reader or listener. The details in a recount text can include what happened, who was involved, where it took place, when it happened and why it occurred.

Recount text is a kind of text that the students learnt in junior high school. Recount text belongs to factual text that the students learn in eight grade of junior high school. Recount text can be factual information, such as a news story or procedural information, such as telling someone about personal information, such as a family holiday or your experiences in the past. As we know that recount text uses simple past tense as the language feature. There are generic structure, language feature, social function and an example of recount text that will explain as follow:

1. Generic Structure
   The generic structure of the text plays the rule of the story that is arranged in the text based on its characteristics. The generic structure of the recount text consists of three parts, they are: orientation, events and reorientation.
   a. Orientation
      Orientation tells the readers about the main idea of the story being discussed in the text. This part gives a setting of the story. An orientation providing background information needed to understand the text, for example who was involved, where it happened, and when it happened.
   b. Events
      Events mean the story starts from the very early stages. The story develops based on the sequence of the events. A record of events usually recounted in a chronological order.
   c. Reorientation

   Reorientation is summarizes the story and tells the impression of the experience that what has been elaborated from the personal comments or evaluative remarks on the incident.
2. Language Feature
   a. Introducing personal participant; I, my group, etc
   b. Using chronological connection; then, first, etc
   c. Using linking verb; was, were, saw, heard, etc
   d. Using action verb; look, go, change, etc
   e. Using simple past tense
3. Social Function
   Social function of recount text is to retell events or experiences in the past in order to inform or to entertain the readers.

METHOD

In accordance with the problems, the appropriate method to be used in this research is pre experimental design or one-group pretest and posttest design. This design is written O_1 x O_2, which indicates a pretest is given to all subjects; they are given the experimental treatment and the posttest.

Furthermore, according to Cohen, Luis et al (2005: 212):

In experimental design, there are three stages of research procedures that conducted by the researcher. The first stage is signed as O_1 that implies the value of pretest. The second stage is signed as X that implies the treatment of teaching and the last stage is signed as O_2 that implies the value of posttest. Furthermore, this research was conducted to the eighth grade students of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Swasta Darul Ulum Pontianak. The population of this research was 128 students, which consist of class A, B, C and D. The sample of this research was class B with 33 students. The selection of this sample was based on the certain criteria concerning the achievement of reading comprehension. Regarding this way, this research used the purposive sampling technique. Concerning this research, there were two variables of this research, dependent variable (students' reading comprehension achievement) and independent variable (the use of QtA strategy). There were three times of treatment (teaching process)

conducted by the researcher based on the procedures of pre-experimental design.

In this research, the writer used measurement technique in collecting the data. The data were taken from the test, which covered the aspects of reading comprehension in recount text. To analyze the data, the writer used t-test and effect size to see the significant value of the strategy was implemented to the students.

RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION
Research Finding

To find out the significant influence of the treatment procedure, the writer has applied the t –test formula. As a result of t-test, it was found that the **t – test** score was higher than **t – table** (see **t – table** on appendix). This significant result is at 0.05 **df** (Degree of freedom). The significant score of students' achievement was 5%, and it was proved that N – 1 (33 – 1) was 2.0369 and indicates that **t – test** score (5.7) was higher than **t – table** (2.0369). To see the significant effect of the treatment was used the effect size analysis. From the analysis, it was found that the result of the effect size was categorized as high effect to the students' reading comprehension achievement on the reading text.

In accordance with the results of students' achievement of reading comprehension of the recount text, the students' effect size was 20.8. By having the result of this research, the use of QtA strategy significantly improve the students' reading comprehension achievement of the recount text and this also could be argued that the use of QtA strategy in reading comprehension was effective to apply to the eighth grade students of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Swasta Darul Ulum in the academic year of 2016/2017. By having this result, the hypothesis of this research was stated as the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

Discussion

This research proved that the use of QtA strategy was effective to improve the reading comprehension of the recount text. Based on the finding of this research, the entire processes of treatment have been successfully done by the writer during the teaching learning process. The processes, certainly, do not go out from the procedures of

classroom presentation, which led the writer to provide this strategy in teaching reading comprehension, and the improving the students' achievement score from pretest to posttest. The score of the increase point showed us that QtA strategy might become one of the solutions for the teachers to bring her students to a new educational paradigm that never let the teacher to be a single or one man show in the classroom activity. Fortunately, this strategy has facilitated the students to be more active in identifying and finding the ideas of the text.

As mentioned in the chapter two, the use of QtA strategy had three parts, which each part had own purposes. Discussion in the QtA strategy is an interaction among the students with peers or individual and teacher in responding to queries. The writer, in this case, tried to administer the processes using the procedures of QtA strategy. In beginning of treatment, the writer used the first procedure that students were given several question to stimulate the discussion on the recount text. In this part, the writer almost spent approximately 15 to 20 minutes in order to ensure that the students understood on what the writer's goal. This might not run smoothly because some students were still difficult to focus on ideas of the part. However, by spending more time to train them of this part, the writer could leave this part and went to the next part. Since the students had good enough understanding on the first part of this strategy, the writer then continued the process into the next parts. The idea of the QtA in the first part is to prepare the students on what the text generally tells about before they read more the text.

Entering to the next part, the students were prepared to come to the focus of discussion on the reading text. By using some questions concerning the reading text, the writer actually has generated the students to read and to think more on what they have read. Some information to answer the questions might describe the events component of the recount text. Practically, this part of the strategy has done more than one session because there were some students still had difficulties to get the ideas from the queries. Not all the students were automatically ready to answer the questions given. Some students should be waited till they understood what the writer's goal.

Entering the last part of this strategy, the writer administered the students to make group discussion to respond some queries of the question in the second part. There were six parts of the discussion session, which included some questions. These six parts of the session was the key of the QtA strategy because between the teacher and the students had some interactions concerning what the text told about. This research found that the students actually were not still comfort with the amount of questions given to them because they were not ready to respond quickly the questions.

Furthermore, in the treatment processes of this research, the writer has modified the procedure particularly in making a group discussion. The idea of modifying the original procedure because the students could not individually be able to complete the processes without assisting his/her friends. By creating the group, which consisted of the students who get high and low score, this effort can be benefit to help the students to own the better group discussion in order to follow learning process and also to get the answers from the query.

Under the results of this research, the implementation of QtA strategy was spent more time to conduct in the classroom presentation. Therefore, time consumed should be administered well in order to focus on what the purpose during the reading process. Although this strategy was time consumed in its implementation, however, the writer thought that QtA strategy was successful to improve the students' reading comprehension on the recount text.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION
Conclusion

Based on the discussion, the conclusion of this research as follows; (1) The use of QtA strategy indicated that the students' achievement on reading comprehension of recount text was improved and it was found that the students had good enough enthusiasm and understanding in reading text through this strategy. It was also proved that the significant score of students' achievement was 5.7; (2) The size effect of the use of QtA strategy toward the students' reading comprehension achievement of the recount text was 20.8. This result indicated that the use of QtA strategy could strongly improve the students' reading comprehension of the recount text; (3) The

interpretation of hypothesis of this research, the null hypothesis was rejected because the result of t-test score was higher than t - table. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted in this research.

Suggestion

Based on the research finding and discussion, there are some suggestions that the writer like to propose, they are: (1) To have better result of students' reading comprehension achievement of recount text, the teacher who teaches by using QtA strategy should be able to manage the time wisely and to conduct the discussion appropriately. (2) To keep the students' enthusiasm in learning process, the activity should involve the role play in term of competition environment toward reading comprehension activity during the process of discussion. (3) To make the QtA strategy more effective to the classroom presentation, the teacher should be able to add some media to support the process such coloured-pictures.

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