

## THE EFFECT OF USING 3-2-1 STRATEGY ON STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT

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### Abstract

Reading comprehension means the ability to know the meaning of the information provided in the reading text. This comprehension is influenced by various aspects. This research focused on the use of reading strategy as one of many aspects that affect reading comprehension. The researcher determined to investigate the effectiveness of the 3-2-1 strategy when employed in reading comprehension especially on narrative text. This research aimed at investigating the effect of using 3-2-1 strategy on students' reading comprehension achievement. The design of this research was a quasi-experimental research. The participants were the eighth grade students of junior high school. The result in the form of post-test scores was analysed by using Independence sample t-test in SPSS computing system. Based on the calculation of the data analysis, the significant value was 0.046 which was less than 0.05 ( $p < 0.05$ ). The result indicated that there was a significant difference. Therefore, it can be concluded that the 3-2-1 strategy gave a significant effect on the students' reading comprehension achievement.

**Keywords:** Metacognitive reading strategy, 3-2-1 strategy

### INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension means the ability to know the meaning of the information provided in the reading text. To comprehend the text, the readers should understand about word meaning, sentence meaning, paragraph meaning, and also the text meaning. Zoghi, Mustapha, Rizan, and Maasum (2010) stated that reading comprehension is the process of unlocking meaning from connected text. It means that comprehension occurs when readers can successfully know what they are reading. The process in which readers can comprehend a text is complex (Gurning & Siregar, 2017; Zygouris-Coe, Wiggins & Smith, 2004). Readers should recognize various text genres and understand how to interact with the text. This complex process causes readers especially those who are struggling in reading fail to comprehend the text.

There are various aspects that affect reading comprehension. Those aspects are background knowledge, vocabulary, active reading skills, reading strategies, and critical thinking. This research focused on the use of reading strategy as one of many aspects that affect reading comprehension. This is in line with Alsamadani (2011) who said that the use of strategy affects reading comprehension positively. There are so many strategies that can be applied in reading; they can be divided into cognitive strategies such as skimming, scanning, reasoning, analysing and summarizing, and metacognitive strategies such as planning for learning, monitoring comprehension, evaluating learning achievement and assessing strategy use (Boghian, 2016; Madhumathi & Ghosh, 2012). This fact leads many researchers to determine a strategy to be used as an attempt to diminish the failure in reading comprehension.

The effectiveness of the 3-2-1 strategy appears to be interesting to investigate because according to Zygouris-Coe et al. (2004) it is an active and meaningful strategy that aids students' engagement and interaction with the text in order to construct their comprehension. Furthermore, it is a multi-strategy that involves more than one strategy (Alsamadani, 2011). It encompasses the occurrence of transactional literature discussion and includes monitoring comprehension strategies. Monitoring comprehension strategies include setting purpose for reading and previewing text (Mistar, Zuhairi & Yanti, 2016). Due to this, the 3-2-1 strategy may be good to be applied in classroom reading because it can help students to build their comprehension and active participation in reading.

The current study investigated the effect of using strategy in reading especially 3-2-1 strategy. The strategy was proposed by Zygouris-Coe et al. (2004). It could increase students' engagement and participation and also could lead them to get full understanding of the text and how to relate it to their prior knowledge. However, a research related to the use of 3-2-1 strategy at junior high school students has been under-explored. Dealing with the text genre, the application of 3-2-1 strategy in narrative reading had been conducted by one previous study. The strategy is also assumed to be more effective to conduct along with cooperative learning approach. Therefore, this current study was done further in relation to the use of 3-2-1 strategy at junior high school level which concerned in narrative text and cooperative learning approach as an attempt to fill the gap.

### **Reading comprehension**

Cognition is the ability to process information through perception. Brandimonte, Bruno, and Collina (2006) define cognition as not only a process, but a mental process. It allows individual to acquire knowledge through the information received from different sources. Cognitive process is the process of acquiring knowledge through thought, experiences and sense. It involves perception, attention, memory coding, thought and learning (Brandimonte et al., 2006). Reading as a cognitive process involves a cycle information processing. In reading, cognition is needed to understand written information to reach comprehension.

Reading is a complex process of understanding a text. This is in accordance with Pang, Muaka's, Bernhardt's, and Kamil's (2003) idea that within its complexity reading involves perception and thought. The complexity contains guessing, predicting, checking, and asking question to the readers themselves (Grellet, 1996). Zoghi et al. (2010) define reading as an interaction between reader and text. Readers should interact with the text since they should develop, modify and even reflect on all or some of the ideas displayed in the text (Anastasiou, & Griva, 2009). According to Lipson and Cooper (2002), to understand what we read is the aim of reading. While reading, readers are expected to understand the text well and make sense of what they read. When readers succeed in extracting ideas and obtaining information from reading text,

reading comprehension is achieved. In other words, reading and comprehension are always related to each other. Therefore, an active interaction between the reader and the text is needed to construct comprehension about the text meaning.

### **Types of reading comprehension aspects**

There are some aspects related to reading comprehension. First, word comprehension, it deals with the understanding of word meaning from the text. Grellet (1996) stated that reading involves not only intellect, emotion, and prior knowledge but also word recognition. Word comprehension is the basic unit of reading comprehension that should be mastered by students in order to help them achieve reading comprehension. This comprehension is fully supported by the vocabulary that students have. The more vocabulary they have, the easier they comprehend the word.. Second, sentence comprehension, it deals with comprehending every word that is structured in a sentence and then understanding the whole sentence. A sentence has meaning and contains the writer's thought. However, it is necessary to deal with the structure and meaning of the sentences (Grellet, 1996).

Third, paragraph comprehension deals with understanding the meaning of a paragraph which consists of topic sentence, supporting details or supporting sentences and concluding sentence. Grellet (1996) stated that the structure of longer unit such as paragraph must be understood to make reading efficient. Students are required to understand a paragraph to find the topic idea in topic sentence, the explanation in supporting sentence and the summary of a paragraph in concluding sentence. Fourth, text comprehension is understanding the meaning from the whole text. Text comprehension is an essential part of both language and other subjects that students should understand its type well in order to have good results (Bartha & Ferenczi, 2009). When the readers have a good comprehension in the text, they will be able to know the whole topic of the text.

### **3-2-1 strategy**

Teaching reading comprehension needs appropriate strategies. One of the strategies is 3-2-1 strategy. It refers to a strategy that assigns students to be critical by thinking independently and engage with the text (Zygouris-Coe et al., 2004). Alsamadani (2011) defines 3-2-1 strategy as a multi strategy that involves more than one strategy. It encompasses the occurrence of transactional literature discussion and includes monitoring comprehension strategies.

Transactional Literature Discussion (TLD) provides opportunity for integrated reading and talking session in which the interaction between the reader and the text happens (Dugan, 1997). TLD plays role on students' engagement in meaning making. TLD underlies on three theory; first, the theory of reader response which says that meaning constructed by readers when they response to a text and then reflect on their responses; second, the theory that literacy is best develops through social interaction and dialogue with others; third, TLD builds on evidence that reading and writing are reciprocal process (Dugan 1997). In classroom context, the interaction occurs between the teacher and the students, the students and other students and the students with the text.

Pitts (1983) says that comprehension monitoring is the ability to monitor and judges ones' understanding. It also involves taking monitoring (fix-up) strategies when necessary. Baker & Brown (1980) suggested a list of comprehension monitoring strategies such as: 1) identifying the important aspects of a message, 2) focusing attention on the major content and 3) engaging in self-questioning to determine whether goals are being achieved. Monitoring comprehension strategies are used in a process in which readers understand what they are reading. The three

mentioned strategies are embodied in the implementation of 3-2-1 strategy instruction and manifested in 3-2-1 chart.

As stated by Zygouris-Coe et al. (2004), 3-2-1 strategy is a strategy that requires students to summarize the text idea by using 3-2-1 chart while they read a text. Mistar et al. (2016) state that an effective reading strategy can help readers to be able to gain better comprehension. By making summary of the text idea students will be easier to understand the meaning of the text. Moreover, the 3-2-1 strategy has been proved to be effective in boosting reading comprehension (Alsamadani, 2011). Therefore, the 3-2-1 strategy was used in this research because it helped the readers to recall their understanding and construct their comprehension. The readers were provided by a 3-2-1 chart consisting of 3 things they discovered from the text, 2 interesting things they discovered from the text and 1 question they still have about the text.

## METHOD

This research was a quasi- experimental research with post-test only design. The aim of this research was to investigate whether or not there was a significant statistical difference in reading comprehension scores between the mean score of students who taught by using 3-2-1 strategy and those who did not. Based on the findings of the previous research on the effectiveness of 3-2-1 strategy in improving comprehension, the current study tested the following hypothesis: there is a significant effect of using 3-2-1 strategy on students' reading comprehension achievement. This research was conducted at SMP Negeri 5 Jember where teaching reading using 3-2-1 strategy has never been implemented. The population of this research was all the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 5 Jember. The samples were selected by considering the result of homogeneity test. The total number of the participants in this research was 66 students; 28 in experimental group and 38 in control group. The data collected in this research was in the form of reading comprehension test, interview and documentation. The result of reading comprehension test was then analysed by using Independent t-test formula in SPSS computing system with 5% significant level.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher conducted a post-test to measure students' reading comprehension achievement after teaching the same material to both groups twice. The result of post test scores of experimental group was 77.14 and the control group was 71.05. This result indicated that there was a mean difference between the two groups. Then, to answer the research question, an Independent sample t-test was conducted to know whether there was a significant different or not.

The result of the Independent sample t-test showed that  $t_o = 2.036$  with 0.046 significance value (Sig. 2-tailed),  $df = 64$ . The value of  $t_{table}$  ( $df = 64$ ) was 1.669. It revealed that  $t_o > t_{table}$  ( $2.036 > 1.669$ ) and the significance value  $0.046 < 0.05$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). The result proved that there was a significant mean difference between the two groups (experimental and control groups). The result indicated that the 3-2-1 strategy helped students achieved reading comprehension. According to Zygouris-Coe et al. (2004), teacher's role and students understanding constructed in reading are the key factors that affect students' comprehension. Therefore, this finding led to the idea about how the 3-2-1 strategy could be successful in assisting students' reading comprehension achievement.

The students filled the first element of the chart mostly by describing the personality or the appearance of the characters. The students analysed the characters and the setting of the story and then wrote the result of their analysis in the chart as their 3 discoveries from the text. By filling the first element, the students gained advantages in constructing early comprehension of the story because they had analysed the characters and the setting of the story. In line with Dymock (2007), in order to enhance story comprehension, students can be taught to analyse character, plot, theme and setting of the story. On the other hand, students faced difficulty on constructing sentences because they lack of vocabulary. Kusiska, Clarry and Urai (2014) acknowledged that the students they studied were lack of vocabulary and then suggested a directly or indirectly vocabulary teaching to the students. In this research, to solve the problem, the teacher guided the students by asking what they want to write and then giving suggestion of the sentences. In the group, there were also some students who tend to copy the other member's discoveries. Therefore, prompting was done by the teacher to the students who copied their friends' discoveries to check their comprehension, the result showed that the students were actually understand the story but they were less able in English writing so that they just copied their friend's discoveries. There were various responses on the second element of 3-2-1 chart from the students. This happened because as stated by Zygouris-Coe et al. (2004) there were endless possibilities for students sharing what interested them in the text. In this research, the responses were mostly dominated by the problem happened in the text and the moral value of the text. The students looked at the complication part of the story and then identified the problems that happened to the characters of the story. They inferred the moral value of the story by understanding the whole story. The students' different responses were brought out to the discussion session by the teacher. The teacher facilitated the discussion by collecting those perceptions and discussed it to make conclusion. The students were benefited by knowing what appealed to be interesting by their friends and realize that it helped them to get deeper understanding of the story. Zygouris-Coe et al. (2004) stated that the discussion within the use of 3-2-1 strategy motivates students as it is based on their ideas they found, addressed, and brought to class.

The last element of the chart requires students to generate a question which can help to establish their comprehension. There were three findings about students-generated question. First, the students generated a question about something that the answer needed to be inferred from the text. This kind of question was called as comprehensive question; it needed interpretation of statements (Miciano, 2004). Second, the students generated a question that the answer was explicitly stated in the text. This kind of question called as recall question. Miciano (2004) explained that the students prefer to generate recall questions because they are easier to form. Third, the students did not generate any questions. The students faced difficulties in generating question because there might be some factors that affect it so that the question part was left blank. The factors could be, in Miciano (2004), the students skills, level, and responsibility for learning. In this research, the level of the students indicated the difficulties that students faced in generating question. Besides, the students showed improvement in generating question in the second meeting although the sentence still grammatically incorrect.

In contrast to the control group, after asking the students to discuss the text within group, the researcher conduct question and answer session by asking them the content of the story followed by finding unfamiliar words. The question answer strategy which was usually taught in the teaching and learning process was no longer interesting for the students. Therefore, it made the students less engaged. At the end of the question and answer session, the students were asked to do the reading comprehension test. Therefore, there was no pause occur to construct understanding before completing the reading comprehension exercise.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the data analysis, hypothesis verification, and discussion in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that there is a significant effect of using 3-2-1 Strategy on the eighth grade students' reading comprehension achievement at SMP Negeri 5 Jember. The result of this research, hopefully, may be used as a consideration to teach reading comprehension by using 3-2-1 strategy because it was proved to be effective strategy. This strategy helps students to become active and meaningful reader. It is also suggested to be taught along with vocabulary teaching directly or indirectly. The English teachers are suggested to apply this strategy in their teaching and learning process of English.

The strategy helps students to become engaged with the text and activate their metacognition ability. This strategy is also flexible to help them facilitate their reading by generating their own chart. Therefore, the students are suggested to apply this strategy in their reading activity. Finally, the findings of this research can be used as the information or reference to conduct a further research dealing with similar problems by using different research design or the same research design with different text genre and different level of subjects and schools. Future researchers are suggested to conduct a classroom action research to know whether the use of 3-2-1 strategy can improve students' reading comprehension achievement.

Although this research has reached its aim, there were some unavoidable limitations and shortcomings. First, the research was conducted in two eighth grade classes which have lasted after two times of treatment. Conducting the treatment twice was not enough for the researcher to observe the students' reading achievement. It would be better if it was done in a longer time. Second, since the students were all the eighth grade students with a limitation in vocabulary, there was a difficulty to fill 3-2-1 chart using their own words. It would be better to teach vocabulary to help students filling the chart in their own words. Third, students were not quite capable to write grammatically correct sentences. There were some grammatical errors in their 3-2-1 chart. Therefore, teaching grammar is also needed to enable students to fill the chart using grammatically correct sentences.

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