

Teacher's Strategies in Teaching Reading Comprehension

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to find out the teacher's strategies in teaching reading comprehension. A qualitative case study was used as a research approach. This research was conducted at SMPN 7 Palembang with one English teacher as participant using purposeful and criterion sampling. In collecting data, the researcher used observation and interviews. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis methods. The findings of this study indicated that the teacher employed two strategies in teaching comprehension. Reading aloud was a strategy where the teacher or students read a text aloud to improve comprehension. This strategy also helped students become more engaged in the learning process and enhanced their overall language proficiency. The qars helped students think critically by asking questions after reading. Students did not just look for answers within the text but also analyzed and connected information.

Keywords: *teacher's strategies, teaching reading, reading comprehension*

A. Introduction

Reading is a crucial skill to develop when learning English and an important factor that influences the quality of education because, through reading, students gain new information and insight, which can enhance their intelligence and help them think more critically. According to Sachran et al. (2022), reading is one of the fundamental skills in learning English that students must acquire, as it helps them obtain information and gain new knowledge. Furthermore, Wijaya (2022) stated that reading is primarily done to understand the concepts or messages that authors aim to convey to readers. Based on the statements above, reading is a fundamental skill in learning English that helps students gain information, develop critical

thinking, and enhance their intelligence, while also enabling them to understand concepts and acquire meaningful knowledge from educational materials written in English.

In learning to read, one of the important elements is reading comprehension. According to Oakhill et al. (2015), reading comprehension is not only about understanding a text but also plays a key role in broader learning, academic success, and career achievement. Furthermore, Komilovna (2023) argued that proficiency in reading comprehension is essential for successful and meaningful information exchange. Based on the statements above, reading comprehension is a crucial skill that enables students to understand the meaning and message of a text, depending on their cognitive abilities, skills, and talents in processing information for effective communication and knowledge exchange.

Teachers need an appropriate technique to enhance the learning process so that reading instruction becomes more effective. According to Riduawan and Santoso (2022), a teaching strategy includes: (1) a structured sequence of activities, (2) general teacher activity patterns that organize learning activities, and (3) the sequence in which predetermined goals are achieved. Furthermore, Juariyah et al. (2018) argued that various teaching strategies are essential for student success and engagement. Based on the statements above, an effective teaching strategy is essential for enhancing the learning process because it provides a structured approach that helps students achieve learning objectives and promotes their success and engagement.

Furthermore, there are previous related studies which investigate teacher's strategies in teaching reading comprehension. The first study was conducted by Gaol et al. (2019) at SMP Swasta Mulia Pratama Medan which revealed that the teacher of English implement two strategies in teaching reading, they are Reciprocal Teaching strategy and QAR strategy. The second study is conducted by Pebriantika and Aristia (2021) at SMPN 1 Jereweh which found that English teachers frequently used the Reading Aloud and QAR strategy. The third study was conducted by Matondang and Sukma (2023) at SMP Swasta Mardi Wiyata Utama Gunung Bayu which found that there are two strategies that the teacher used, they are: Scaffolding and QARs (Question Answer Relationship). Thus, the writer is interested to conduct a study in SMPN 7 Palembang, South Sumatera.

Judging from previous study, of course, the researcher found research gaps. Although some of the previous studies were conducted in the city, the research gaps of this study focused on the context of the sub-district school, which might have had different dynamics in the use of

strategies compared to schools in the city. It was evident that the teaching strategies used by teacher in the city and in the sub-district were different.

Based on the background, the research problem is formulated in the following question: What were the teacher's strategies for teaching reading comprehension at SMPN 7 Palembang?

B. Research Methods

Design

In this study, the researcher employed a qualitative research design based on a case study approach. This design served as a guide for conducting the research, providing a clear and structured framework for the investigation. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), a research design is a planned method for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data, such as in a qualitative case study. A case study was a method used to examine a specific issue within a particular context. Creswell (2007) defined a case study as an approach that focused on a specific problem by studying one or more cases within a system or across different systems, with careful and thorough data collection from multiple sources over time. The researcher chose this approach because the data collected were primarily qualitative, and the goal was to explore teacher's strategies for teaching reading comprehension. This method was useful because it provided a deeper understanding of how teacher approached reading comprehension in classroom settings.

Participant

This study was conducted at SMPN 7 Palembang, specifically in class VIII 6. In selecting research participant, the researcher used a purposeful sampling technique, a method that involved selecting participant based on the need to study the strategies teacher used in reading comprehension. Additionally, criterion sampling was applied to ensure that participant met specific qualifications relevant to the research objective. According to Creswell (2012), purposeful sampling was a technique in which researchers intentionally selected individuals and locations to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied. In this study, the researcher applied the purposeful sampling method to select individual as participant. Additionally, criterion sampling was used to ensure that only participant who met specific predefined criteria were included. Friday and Leah (2024) claimed that this type of sampling required the researcher to establish specific criteria for participants, ensuring that only reliable sources were selected, which maintained the quality of the data obtained. These criteria could

include experience, knowledge, or attitudes that contributed to a deeper understanding of the research topic. In qualitative research, researchers needed to find one or more participants who were easily accessible, willing to share information, and capable of providing a clear understanding of the studied phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). Therefore, in qualitative research, there was no minimum number of participants required, which was why only one English teacher was selected for this study.

Data Collecting Technique

Observation

The observation was conducted to find an answer to the study problem. The researcher kept field notes on individual behavior and activities at the study site as a form of qualitative observation (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Qualitative observers could take roles ranging from non-participant to full participant. In this study, the researcher did not engage in the activities but instead observed passively. The observation took place directly in the classroom three times in class VIII 6 to gather data on the teacher's strategies for teaching reading comprehension. Throughout the process, the researcher documented all relevant information. Using non-participant observation, the researcher acted solely as a passive observer, carefully monitoring all classroom activities and drawing conclusions based on the observations, without actively participating in group activities.

Interview

The teacher interviews were conducted by the researcher as a means of collecting data to find an answer to the study problem. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), researcher could conduct qualitative interviews in person, over the phone, or in focus groups consisting of six to eight participants. In this study, the researcher conducted one-on-one, face-to-face interviews using a structured interview. According to Astrid (2022), structured interviews were often used when ensuring each participant had an equal chance to respond was a priority. The researcher aimed to gather detailed insights into teacher's strategies for teaching reading comprehension. The interview process followed several steps. First, the researcher prepared an interview guide and a voice recorder to document the session. Next, paper and notes were arranged to capture additional information. The researcher then posed focused questions about the strategies teacher used to teach reading comprehension. Finally, the session concluded with the researcher expressing gratitude to the participant. This interview was conducted once, with all conversations recorded and later transcribed.

Data Analysis Technique

Observation

After the observation data was collected, the researcher analyzed it by following the six steps of thematic analysis based on Creswell and Creswell (2018). First, the researcher transcribed the data, which came from the fieldnotes. Second, open coding was conducted by labeling each item or element recorded in the fieldnotes. Third, the researcher grouped similar or related codes into broader categories and identified potential themes or patterns that emerged from these categories. Fourth, directed coding was carried out, focusing on the categories most relevant to the research objective and findings. The researcher then reviewed the fieldnotes to ensure all important aspects had been addressed in this directed coding. Fifth, the researcher interpreted themes by identifying key themes that emerged from the developed categories and analyzed the relationships between them, looking for significant patterns or variations. Finally, the researcher interpreted and reported the findings, considering the context of the observation and research objective, and presented the analysis in a clear and systematic report.

Interview

After the interview data was obtained, the researcher also analyzed it using thematic analysis. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), there were six steps in thematic analysis for qualitative data. The first step was data transcription, where the researcher transcribed all interviews accurately and completely. The second step was selecting the unit of analysis, where the researcher identified relevant data units, such as a sentence, paragraph, or theme that emerged in the interview. The third step was coding, in which the researcher read all transcripts thoroughly to understand the content, then began grouping the data into interrelated categories or themes. The fourth step was theme development, where the researcher used the created codes to identify patterns and themes in the data, regrouping similar codes into broader themes. The fifth step was theme review, where the researcher evaluated the developed themes to ensure they aligned with the data and covered all relevant aspects of the research topic. The final step was preparing the report, where the researcher compiled an analysis report that presented the main findings based on the identified themes, providing sufficient context, clear descriptions, and in-depth interpretations of the analyzed data.

C. Findings and Discussion

Findings

The researcher discusses the results of the study in relation to the research problem that has been set out in this findings section. Following the study results, this study contains teacher's strategies in teaching reading comprehension. The researcher discovered that the teacher employed two strategies in teaching reading comprehension at SMPN 7 Palembang, namely Reading Aloud and Question and Answer Relationship based on the findings of the data analysis that the researcher collected via observation and interviews. The following explanation was provided for each theme's description:

1. Reading Aloud Strategy

Based on data collected through observation, the researcher found that the teacher employed the reading aloud strategy during reading activity when teaching reading comprehension. In during activity, the teacher reads the text aloud clearly, using appropriate intonation and emphasis to help students better understand the content (Observation 2, Observation 3). Then, the teacher enhanced students' understanding by encouraging their participation, allowing them to take turns reading the text aloud (Observation 2, Observation 3). Through this activity, students not only listened to the correct pronunciation from the teacher but also practiced reading themselves, which further improved their understanding of the text.

To confirm that the teacher actually employed the reading aloud strategy when teaching reading comprehension, the researcher conducted an interview following the observation. The interview revealed that the teacher's used reading aloud strategy not only helped students better understand the reading material but also supported their overall English language development, including reading, listening, and speaking skills. The teacher with initial R explained as follows: *"I read texts aloud clearly and adjust the pace so that students can follow along well. I use appropriate intonation and emphasize key words to help students grasp the meaning of the text more easily. This strategy helps students better understand texts, grasp sentence structures, learn new vocabulary, and comprehend the meaning through intonation"* (Personal communication).

From the interview above, it can be concluded that the reading aloud strategy helped students better understand texts, recognize sentence structures, expand their vocabulary, and comprehend meaning through intonation. The teacher adjusted the reading pace, used

appropriate intonation, and emphasized key words to make it easier for students to grasp the content of the text.

2. Question and Answer Relationship Strategy

The researcher discovered that the teacher at SMPN 7 Palembang employed the question-answer relationship in teaching reading comprehension throughout the English learning process based on the data gathered from the observation. The teacher gave the students a reading passage, asked them to read and understand the five questions at the end of the text, and then answered them based on their understanding (Observation 1, Observation 2). The teacher divided the students into small groups to discuss their answers, and at the end of the activity, the teacher provided another similar text to enhance the students' comprehensions (Observation 1, Observation 2). This strategy not only helped students understand the text more deeply but also trained them to think critically, collaborate in discussions, and expand their knowledge through repeated practice.

Following the observation, the researcher performed interviews to confirm that the teacher was indeed using question and answer in teaching reading comprehension throughout the English learning process. As a result of the interview, it was revealed that the teacher guided students to understand the text through the question-answer relationship provided after reading, and encouraged group discussions to deepen their understanding and increase student engagement. The teacher stated it as follows: *"I guide students to focus on questions before, during, and after reading by providing guiding questions and teaching them how to find answers within the text. I encourage group discussions to deepen their comprehension. These questions keep students engaged, helping them connect the text to their prior knowledge or experiences for a more meaningful understanding. I facilitate discussions by dividing students into small groups, providing guidance or questions based on the text being studied, and monitoring their participation to ensure active engagement. Through discussions after reading, students learn how to answer questions correctly and understand the text more deeply"* (Personal communication).

From the interview above, it can be concluded that the question-answer relationships strategy helped students develop a deeper understanding of the text by focusing on questions before, during, and after reading. The teacher provided guiding questions, taught students how to find answers within the text, and encouraged group discussions to strengthen comprehension. By dividing students into small groups and monitoring their participation, this strategy kept

students engaged and helped them connect the text to their prior knowledge or experiences, making their understanding more meaningful.

Discussion

Based on the findings of the observations and interviews, the researcher employed theme analysis to analyze the data and discovered that there were two strategies that the teacher applied found by the researcher. The first strategy was reading aloud. The reading aloud strategy was a learning method in which the teacher or students read a text aloud to enhance reading comprehension, improve speaking skills, and introduce sentence structures and vocabulary. In this strategy, the teacher first read the text with proper intonation to help students understand its meaning by emphasizing key words, using appropriate pauses, and expressing emotions that supported the content. After that, the students were asked to take turns reading the text to practice their understanding of sentence structure, grammar, and vocabulary enrichment. Besides improving their reading skills, this strategy also helped students pronounce words correctly and develop confidence in speaking. According to Supraba et al. (2021), reading aloud helps students expand their vocabulary, gain more knowledge, and improve their pronunciation skills, which are essential for comprehension. In addition, Pamuji (2019) stated that by reading aloud, students not only practice recognizing words but also strengthen their comprehension skills, making it easier for them to grasp the meaning of texts.

The second strategy was question-answer relationship. The question-answer relationship strategy was a reading comprehension technique that helped students understand the relationship between questions and answers in a text. This strategy not only trained students to find answers within the text but also taught them how to analyze, connect information, and think critically. After reading a text, the teacher asked various types of questions to assess students' understanding, ranging from questions with direct answers found in the text to those requiring deeper analysis. Additionally, the teacher encouraged students to engage in discussions about their answers, compare their thoughts with classmates, and explain the reasoning behind their responses. Through these discussions, students were able to gain a better understanding of the text and improve their critical and analytical thinking skills. According to Muzammil (2016), question-answer strategy, the teacher helps students develop a deeper understanding of the material, enhance their thinking skills, and encourage active participation in the learning process. Furthermore, Corner (2006) highlighted that students can improve their

reading comprehension more effectively as they learn to understand different types of questions and the best ways to find their answers.

D. Conclusion and Suggestion

Conclusion

Data from observation and interviews were examined using theme analysis, revealing that the initial research problem was to determine strategies that the teacher used while teaching and learning English at SMPN 7 Palembang, as discovered by the researcher. The findings of this study indicated that the teacher employed two strategies in teaching comprehension, namely reading aloud and question-answer relationship strategy.

First, reading aloud was a strategy where the teacher or students read a text aloud to improve comprehension. Listening to the teacher read with proper intonation helped students understand the meaning of the text more easily. When students read aloud, they were able to practice sentence structure, expand their vocabulary, and improve their speaking skills. This strategy also helped students become more engaged in the learning process and enhanced their overall language proficiency.

Second, the question-answer relationship strategy helped students think critically by asking questions after reading. Students did not just look for answers within the text but also analyzed and connected information, which encouraged deeper understanding and active participation in the learning process.

Suggestion

For Teachers

The researcher assumes that this study will provide essential information and knowledge, allowing them to understand various strategies that will be effectively implemented in teaching reading comprehension. It is also recommended that other English teachers learn more about the importance of selecting appropriate strategies that will align with their students' needs, proficiency levels, and learning styles. Thus, teachers will create more engaging and meaningful reading activities that will foster better comprehension and critical thinking skills among students.

Prospective Researchers

The researcher will provide suggestions for future researchers who will conduct studies on the use of teaching strategies in teaching reading comprehension. Future researchers can

explore the advantages and disadvantages of the strategies used by the teacher when teaching English and analyze how these strategies impact students' reading comprehension abilities. Therefore, it is hoped that this study will serve as a useful reference for future studies interested in learning more about teacher's strategies in teaching reading comprehension. However, there are a few limitations that should be considered. In this study involved only one English teacher as a participant, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Future studies involving more teachers could provide broader insights. The researcher will present suggestions for prospective researchers who will conduct study on the use of teachers' strategies in teaching reading comprehension. Future researchers will be able to explore the advantages and disadvantages of the strategies that will be utilized by teachers when teaching English and analyze how these strategies will impact students' reading comprehension abilities. Thus, it is hoped that this study will serve as a useful reference for future studies interested in learning more about teachers' strategies in teaching reading comprehension.

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