

ACADEMIC READING: USING SQ3R METHOD TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' READING SKILL

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ABSTRACT

Reading is an active process that involves a person focusing on the reading text. It helps students improve their critical thinking skills and reading skills. The ability to read is needed in student learning today. By reading, students get a lot of information. Not only to retrieve information but also to learn grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Therefore, a method is needed to improve student's reading skills, some of which are often used, such as the SQ3R method and critical reading. This study aims to determine the role of the SQ3R method and critical reading in improving students' reading skills. This study uses a qualitative method in the form of interviews conducted virtually through a communication application (WhatsApp) with students at an Indonesian higher education. The results of this study show that the SQ3R reading method is helpful for students in improving their reading skills and critical thinking.

Keywords: Critical reading, Method, Reading Skills, SQ3R

INTRODUCTION

Reading is an activity of seeing and understanding the meaning of words and sentences by saying them orally and mentally (Oxford Dictionary, 2008). Reading is an active process that involves a person focusing on the reading text. Reading is one of the language skills aimed at gathering information. In addition, reading also aims to increase knowledge and experience that has never happened before. Reading activities also have many benefits for everyday life. Reading helps to reduce anxiety, reading can develop brain power functions, reading can make a person think critically, reading can improve one's memory, and reading can increase reading knowledge and comprehension. Reading comprehension is the ability to interpret what is read and

requires different skill patterns that are closely related in each content area (Sheldon, 1962).

In today's millennial era, technological advances have significantly changed the way people read due to the use of various digital devices and online applications (Putro & Lee, 2017; Wahyuningsih, 2021; Wahyuningsih & Afandi, 2022). With advances in technology, it should be easier for students to find reading material. However, it turns out that technological advances are not used as well as possible; even today's students are reluctant to read if it is not for the assignment from the lecturer. Many of them say that reading is very boring because the books or journals they read are not interesting. There are also those who say that some of their learning methods are considered ineffective for understanding the contents of the reading. If it continues over time, it will certainly have an impact on low reading abilities. It is clear that reading is very important for everyday life. It is better if the teacher introduces new comprehension strategies, and then students must also be supported to adapt to the demands of reading in the classroom where they are taught (McCormick & Cooper, 1991).

The ability to read is needed in student learning today. Through reading, students get a lot of information not only to retrieve information but also to learn grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Every student must master reading skills so that they can easily understand and interpret the meaning of reading (Miskiyah & Amalia, 2022). Reading is the key to understanding during the learning process. In terms of learning English, reading is very important because it is one of the most important skills that must be mastered, especially by university students, in order to be able to learn English as a foreign language successfully (Fauzi et al., 2022). The language teaching resource centre is a supporting dimension of language training programs and enriches knowledge of other activities (Mulumba, 2016).

There are several ways to improve reading skills, namely the SQ3R method and critical reading. The SQ3R (survey, question, read, recite, review) method is an effective approach to reading and further learning that uses headings as tools to facilitate reading comprehension (Scott, 1987). Meanwhile, critical reading is an approach in which readers use high-level cognitive skills such as the ability to analyze, synthesize, solve problems, and think metacognitively to negotiate meaning with writers and construct new meanings from texts (Sutherland & Incera, 2021).

Previous studies have discussed that over the last 20 years, researchers have focused on documenting how a person's purpose in reading influences the way they process and understand it (O'Reilly et al., 2018). But students need to read material they can read, understand, and enjoy if they are to become competent readers (Graves & Philippot, 2002).

According to the research cited above, students' reading comprehension is influenced by their own goals. But there is no specific method to improve reading skills. Without methods and encouragement, students will not be able to consistently improve their reading skills. Therefore, this study explores the role of the SQ3R method and critical reading in improving students' reading skills.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative research method, where the research aims to know and understand the experiences of the informants. This research was conducted virtually through a communication application (WhatsApp) with four informants from a state Islamic university in Indonesia in the English study program. Sources were specially selected to get responses in a transparent and accurate manner. In this study, the names of the informants were pseudonyms to protect privacy. Four students (student 1, student 2, student 3, and student 4) aged 18 and 19 study at the same university and in the same study program. The informants are willing to be involved in this research, and they have given permission to conduct interviews without coercion. This research was conducted on December 24, 2022, at 9.44 a.m.

In this study, the data collection process was carried out by conducting virtual interviews through a communication application (WhatsApp) by sending questions to the informants in the form of text messages, with a total of 5 questions. Responses from sources are then copied into a document file for proper analysis. Then the data was analyzed in the following way: The researcher re-read the response text repeatedly, understood the response text by interpreting the words and sentences from each source, and discussed the responses with the informant about the intent and correctness of the data with the aim of ascertaining whether the data accorded with the

experience of the informants. Then the researcher builds credibility with the data by asking sources for advice on interpreting it (Wahyuningsih, 2022).

DISCUSSION

The Utilization of the SQ3R method to Improve Students' Reading skills

The SQ3R (survey, question, read, recite, review) method is an effective approach to reading and further learning that uses headings as tools to facilitate reading comprehension (Scott, 1987). Meanwhile, critical reading is an approach in which readers use high-level cognitive skills such as the ability to analyze, synthesize, solve problems, and think metacognitively to negotiate meaning with writers and construct new meanings from texts (Sutherland & Incera, 2021).

Student1:

"As the name suggests, SQ3R stands for survey, question, read, recite, and review. First, I survey the reading, then make questions, continue reading the entire reading, then retell the story, and finally review the reading earlier" (Student1, 2022).

Student 2:

"Survey by looking for information about the book we will read. Like reading about the cover of the book, the attractiveness of the book, the benefits of the book, the synopsis of the book, and the table of contents of the book. Question, At this stage, we will change the title, topic, or subtopic into a question form to find out every detail of the reading material. Read, carrying out reading activities guided by the questions that have been formulated. Recite, making important notes about the parts read, these notes can be in the form of quotes, conclusions, or our comments. Review, after reading the book as a whole, the important things we have read, and find important parts that need to be recalled" (Student2, 2022).

Student 3:

"As the name implies, namely SQ3R. The first is S (survey), I briefly read the identity in the book. The second is Q (question), making questions according to the chapters in the book. The third is R, the first R implies read, I read the book as a whole to answer that question. The second R means recite, I remember what I read and then I retell it. In order to remember the sequence of the plot, I usually write down the key points. The third R means review. I re-read the book while adjusting the answers to the questions that have been made. And then give a little review about the book that has been read" (Student3, 2022).

Student 4:

"By reading academic literature that requires reading critically to better understand the contents of the reading" (Student4, 2022).

The quotation above explains that the process of the SQ3R method begins with a survey, which is to find information about a book or journal that is read from the synopsis, abstract, or table of contents. Second, the question is whether to infer

information about the book's or journal's contents from the title or the sub-chapters. Third, read the contents of a book or journal as a whole to get answers to questions. Fourth, recite, namely, making important notes in the form of conclusions from several sub-chapters to be studied again. Finally, the review is to review the book that has been read and find some important parts to remember. While the process of critical reading involves reading books or journals critically and focusing from the title to the end with the aim of understanding the contents of the reading.

Discussing reading methods, of course there are many other methods, one of which is faster reading. However, several sources state that these methods are less effective for university student learning. Therefore, with the SQ3R method and critical reading, it is hoped that it will be effective for university students. Following are student responses to the effectiveness of the SQ3R method and critical reading.

Student1:

"It's very effective because we really understand and can focus because we have to answer questions and retell so that we really get into the reading" (Student1, 2022).

Student 2:

"Very effective, the SQ3R method can encourage us to review, ask questions, read, restate, and review what we read" (Student2, 2022).

Student 3:

"For me, it's effective, especially when it's used to do tasks. Because with the SQ3R method, I can determine whether the book I am going to read really needs to be worked on or not" (Student3, 2022).

Student 4:

"By reading critically, we can more easily understand the contents of the reading, and therefore, to improve reading comprehension, it is necessary to read critically, this really functions to improve reading skills" (Student 4, 2022).

SQ3R is one of the most recommended techniques to facilitate learning from textbooks. Originally developed by Robinson in 1941 and designed for student book chapters, the SQ3R consists of five stages: survey, question, read, recite, and review. Although intuitively recognized as superior to conventional student learning methods, several studies comparing the effectiveness of SQ3R with other learning methods do not provide conclusive empirical evidence for the use of SQ3R (Orlando, 1980).

Regarding reading ability, research related to the SQ3R method and critical reading for improving reading ability has received some attention. In other studies, it has been

explored that low reading ability is caused by several factors. However, this research does not provide specific solutions, it only provides general solutions. Therefore, the results of this study provide a solution to improving reading skills through the SQ3R and critical reading methods.

In addition, students must apply the SQ3R method and critical reading more often in order to improve their reading skills. It would be even better if students could learn to make reading a hobby, not just a task. Finally, this study shows that teachers need to provide direction so that students are able to apply the SQ3R method and critical reading in teaching reading in everyday life, such as by giving book or journal analysis assignments. This can make students familiar with the method.

To improve reading skills, of course, a method or strategy is needed. Learning activities generally use methods such as speed reading. However, learning activities at universities in academic reading courses require special methods such as SQ3R and critical reading. The methods most often used by students can be seen in the quotation below.

Student1: *"I often use the SQ3R method" (Student 1, 2022).*

Student2: *"I use the SQ3R method" (Student 2, 2022).*

Student3: *"I prefer to use the SQ3R method" (Student 3, 2022).*

Student 4: *"I often use critical reading to improve my understanding of the academic texts I read" (Student4, 2022).*

The data above shows that the best-known method in the world is the ubiquitous SQ3R. Over the past decade, since Robinson first introduced the SQ3R in 1946, the SQ3R has become a staple of both learning strategies and content reading texts (Stahl & Armstrong, 2020).

In applying the SQ3R or critical reading method, several things are needed, such as books, journals, stationery, computers, and others. As well as preparing yourself so that later you can concentrate and understand the text to be read. Below are the things students need to apply the SQ3R method or critical reading.

Student1:

"Journals or books and stationery for writing answers to questions" (Student1, 2022).

Student2:

"Journals, reading comprehension, and critical thinking" (Student2, 2022).

Student3:

"We know deeply about the method and understand the steps that must be taken" (Student3, 2022).

Student4:

"In critical reading, several critical reading skills are needed; this includes the ability to focus, gather information, remember, organize, analyze, generalize, integrate, and evaluate" (Student4, 2022).

The quotation above explains that there are a lot of preparation for applying the SQ3R method and critical reading. In terms of objects, students need journals, books, and other writing materials. Meanwhile, in terms of ability, it requires understanding and reading skills.

CONCLUSION

This study concluded that every student has difficulties improving their reading skills. They find it difficult to focus on reading, have difficulty understanding reading, and have low motivation to read. As reported above, the average student uses the SQ3R method more often. Then, the things they need to prepare to apply the SQ3R method and critical reading are books, journals, stationery, and comprehension preparation. The process of applying the SQ3R method is by surveying information on books, journals, or other reading texts; making questions about the contents of the reading text from the title or from the sub-chapters; reading the reading text in its entirety to get answers to the questions made; reciting by making important notes to be studied again; and reviewing reading texts by remembering the important parts so that they are easy to understand. While the process of applying the critical reading method only involves reading the entire text with focus and really understanding everything that is written in the reading text. The SQ3R and critical reading methods are equally effective in improving reading skills. This is because students feel more focused when reading and understanding the contents of the reading text. Then, this method encourages students to really review the reading text in detail and can determine whether the book or journal is needed later for learning in other fields. This study interprets that the SQ3R method and critical reading are needed by students, especially in academic reading. It would also be better if students could work together with the teacher to practice the method more often, so that later their reading skills could improve quickly.

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