

Improving Students' Reading Comprehension at Zakah and Waqf Management Class Using Collaborative Strategic Reading

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Abstract: This research is aimed at finding whether or not Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) can improve students' reading comprehension in *Zakah* and *Waqf* Management class, and identifying the classroom situation when Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) is implemented in the teaching and learning process. The method used in this research was an action research. The research was conducted in two cycles at the second-semester students of *Zakah* and *Waqf* Management of IAIN Ponorogo at the academic year of 2017/2018. The research findings show that the use of Collaborative Strategic Reading could improve students' reading comprehension and classroom situation of English class. The improvement of students' reading comprehension is shown by students being able to: find the main idea of the text, find implicit information of the text, find the explicit information from the text, infer the meaning of the certain word (vocabulary), and determine references. Besides, the improvement of students' reading comprehension can be seen from the improvement of the mean score of pre-test, first post-test and second post-test that are 55.30, 66.36 and 75.06. Increasing the classroom situation is indicated by almost all students giving more attention and most students are more active during English class.

Keywords: *Reading Comprehension, Collaborative Strategic Reading.*

Introduction

English is an important subject that is taught from elementary, junior high school, senior high school and university level.¹ In teaching and learning English, there are four language skills to be mastered: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among those skills, reading becomes an important skill. Brown states that reading is a skill that teachers simply expect the learners to obtain in foreign language learning.² According to Harmer, reading is essential either for students' careers or for study purposes. In the process of acquiring language, reading is one of the important things. Reading gives the opportunity to the students to learn language and vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and how they compose sentences, paragraphs, and texts.³

However, the second-semester students at *Zakah Waqf* Management of IAIN Ponorogo still have the problems in reading. There were a number of problems concerning with reading faced by the students: (1) they got difficulty to find the main idea of the paragraph; (2) it was hard for the students to identify implicit information from the text; (3) it was not easy to find explicit information; (4) work with word reference is a difficult task; and (5) the students got difficulty to guess the meaning of certain words based on the context.

In addition, based on the observation, many of the Second-semester students of *Zakah* and *Waqf* Management of IAIN Ponorogo have different level of language proficiency. The students who have good English knowledge background are very active in the class, and the others who have poor English knowledge background are passive. Consequently, weak students begin to develop negative attitudes towards studying English even though they recognize the importance of the English language.

¹ Yohanes Bosco Seta Adi Nugraha, "Improving Students' Reading Skill through Think-Pair-Square-Share" (Universitas Sebelas Maret, 2013), 1.

² H. Douglas Brown, *Language Assessment: Principle and Classroom Practice* (New York: Pearson Education, 2004), 185.

³ Jeremy Harmer, *How to Teach English* (Essex: Longman Publishing Grup, 1997), 68.

Actually, the students need an effective learning method to overcome the difficulties in reading. Method of teaching is one of the important factors in the teaching and learning process. There are many kinds of methods, and one of them is Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR). CSR helps students learn specific strategies connected with effective reading comprehension. The steps in CSR are: brainstorming and predicting (*preview*), monitoring understanding (*click and clunk*), finding the main idea (*get the gist*), and generating questions and reviewing key ideas (*wrap up*). CSR also gives the students with the opportunity to work in small groups of students in which each student plays a critical role associated with the effective functioning of the group and the implementation of strategies (e.g., *leader, clunk expert, gist pro*).⁴ Kinberg stated that Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) can be broken down into the following components:

1. Preview

In this stage, students glance over the text they are about to read and then generate ideas about what they already know about the topic. The students also make predictions about what they are going to learn about the topic as they read.

2. Click and Clunk

This stage of CSR takes place while students are reading. "Click" refers to the students' awareness that he / she understands the reading and that everything makes sense. When students find a word or phrase that confuses them, this is called a "Clunk". Here, students are taught to go back and reread, search for context clues, and otherwise repair the misunderstanding.

3. Get the Gist

This strategy also takes place during reading. Here, students are taught to look for the most important item, person, place, or idea being discussed. They are also taught to identify the most important things that are mentioned about the main topic.

4. Wrap Up

After students are finished reading, they generate questions and answers that show they have understood what they read. Some

⁴ Jannete K. Klinger et al., "Collaborative Strategic Reading: 'Real-World' Lessons From Classroom Teachers," *Remedial and Special Education* 25, no. 53 (2004), 293.

teachers have students pretend they are the teacher and write questions about the passage that they would ask their students.⁵

There have been a number of researches that have been done on the area of Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) to improve the students' reading skill. One of them is the research conducted by AL-Roomy (20013) from the University of Sussex in his study of Collaborative Strategic Reading with Saudi medical students. His research result reported that CSR had enabled the students who had failed their first-year examinations to improve their reading comprehension. Other findings show that CSR helps students to think more critically and constructively. The results also show students report positive feedback about CSR and its strategies. CSR also changes their view of group works and recognizes its efficacy in class.⁶ Putu Prasetyoningrum (2013) in her experimental research compared the use of CSR and Direct Instruction method in teaching reading. The research result showed that CSR is more effective in improving students' reading comprehension than Direct Instruction method.⁷ Based on these statements, the researcher chose CSR to improve the students' reading comprehension at the second-semester students of *Zakah* and *Waqf* Management at IAIN Ponorogo.

This study is based on the statement of the problems "Does the use of Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) improve students' reading comprehension at the second semester students of *Zakah* and *Waqf* Management of IAIN Ponorogo in the academic year of 2017/2018?" and "What happens to the class situation when Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) is implemented in the reading class at the at the second semester students of *Zakah* and *Waqf* Management of IAIN Ponorogo in the academic year of 2017/2018?"

Method

In conducting the study, the researcher used action research. Classroom Action Research is a method of finding out what works is

⁵ Margot Kinberg, *Teaching Reading in the Content Areas for Elementary Teacher* (New York: Shell Education, 2007), 147.

⁶ Muhammad AL-Roomy, "An Action Research Study of Collaborative Strategic Reading in English with Saudi Medical Students" (University of Sussex, 2013), <http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/>, iv-v.

⁷ Putu Prasetyoningrum, "The Effectiveness of Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) Method to Teach Reading Viewed from Students' Self-Esteem." (Universitas Sebelas Maret, 2013), 89.

the best for your own classroom so that you can improve student learning and achievement.⁸ According to Robert P. Pelton, a simple way to understand action research is to separate the term into "action" and "research". In terms of action research, "the action" is what you do as a professional teacher in your classroom. It covers creating the learning environment, interacting with your students, developing lesson plans, assigning homework, and almost everything you do in your daily routine of teaching. The "research" refers to the methods, habits, and attitudes. The methods cover of data collection, the habits of observation, the attitude of searching for new and better ways to present material for your students and to be a reflective practitioner. Furthermore, with intention, you will develop the ability to reflect on your actions. Your reflections will shape your future actions.⁹ In conducting action research, Anne burns adopts Kemmis and McTaggart stages that are planning, action, observation, and reflection. The description of each stage in one cycle is as follows:

Planning

In this phase the researchers identifies a problem or issue and develop a plan of action in order to bring about improvements in a specific area of the research context. In this research, the problems were related to reading comprehension mastery. After identifying the problems, the researcher designed an action plan. Furthermore, the researcher prepared everything dealing with the action research requirements.

Action

It is done by the researcher based on the planning in order to improve, increase, or make any changes intended. The description of this stage is as follows:

1. The teacher taught in two cycles. Every cycle was held in three meetings and each of them lasted 100 minutes.

⁸ Gwynn Mettetal, "The What, Why and How of Classroom Action Research," 2001, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/242179106_The_What_Why_and_How_of_Classroom_Action_Research.

⁹ Robert P. Pelton, "An Introduction to Action Research," in *Action Research for Teacher Candidates: Using Classroom Data to Enhance Instruction* (New York: R&L Education, 2010), 4.

2. The teacher made and prepared the pre-test and post-test. For the pre-test, the teacher gave material that never been taught before. After the pre-test, the teacher applied Collaborative Strategic Reading method in learning reading. The researcher provided another test called a post-test which was given at the end of the cycle. The researcher defined the difference between the results of those tests. The data was analyzed to answer the research problem.

Observation

This phase involves you in observing systematically the effects of the action and documenting the context, actions and opinions of those involved. The researcher observed important occurrences during the teaching-learning process by using Collaborative Strategic Reading, and observed how the teaching-learning processes run.

1. Reflection

The researcher reflected on, described, and evaluated everything she did to find weaknesses in the activities that had been carried out in using the Collaborative Strategic Reading to teach reading. Evaluation provides an advantage in deciding what to do in the next cycle and deciding whether the strategy used is appropriate for the purpose. The researcher changed the strategy if necessary. Finally, the researcher revised the plan for the next cycle.¹⁰

The subject of this research is the second semester students of Zakah and Waqf Management at IAIN Ponorogo in the academic year of 2017/2018. This class consists of 17 male and 15 female. The data collection techniques in this study are test, study document, and observation. Study document is in the form of photographs. The test was used to obtain the data of the learning result from the students' learning process. Pretest and Post-test, are used to find out the students' achievement in reading comprehension and to know the students' reading comprehension before and after teaching reading using Collaborative Strategic Reading. The purpose of these tests is to figure out whether the students' reading comprehension improves or not. The form of this test was reading comprehension questions.

In this research, the observation is done to cover the process of implementation of Collaborative Strategic Reading in teaching

¹⁰ Anne Burns, *Doing Action Research in English Language Teaching: A Guide for Practitioners* (London: Routledge, 2009), 9.

reading. Classroom events and students' behavior and interaction in the classroom are observed by the researcher. In this research, the researcher is as the teacher who teaches reading using Collaborative Strategic Reading and also as the observer who observes the classroom activities while the implementation of Collaborative Strategic Reading is happening. In obtaining quantitative data, the following steps are conducted:

- a. Computing the students' correct answers.
- b. Calculating the students' score on reading comprehension test. It is done as follows:
 - 1) Calculating the percentage of the correct answers of each student. The percentage is used to measure the students' reading comprehension. The students' reading comprehension is found from the percentage of the correct answer. The percentage formula that is used is:

$$S = \frac{R}{N} \times SM$$

Where:

S = the students' mastery in %

R = the students' right answer

N = the maximum number of the whole answer

SM= standard mark (100)

- 2) After analyzing the scores of the reading comprehension test, the researcher uses a statistical technique to find the students' mean score as follows:

$$M = \frac{\sum X}{n}$$

Where:

M = mean score

$\sum X$ = the total score

n = the number of students

If the mean score increases, the students' reading comprehension is considered improving and the research is successful.

- c. Making conclusion and suggestion based on the data analysis.

Discussion

Based on the observation and pre-test, some students of *Zakah* and *Waqf* Management had shown unsatisfactory abilities in learning process. When the teacher was explaining the material, some students paid little attention to the teacher. They seemed uninterested to the reading material presented in the teaching-learning process. Furthermore, most of the students did non-academic activities rather than academic activities, and most of them were passive during teaching-learning process. When they had difficulty, they did not want to ask to the teacher. The students' competence of *Zakah* and *Waqf* Management class in reading comprehension was poor. This condition was identified from their pre-test scores which mostly unsatisfying. Their mean score were 53, 30. Most of the students have difficulty in finding the main idea of the text, find implicit information of the text, find the explicit information from the text, infer the meaning of the certain word (vocabulary), and determine references. Having identified the problems found in the pre-research, the researcher tried to cover those problems by implementing Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) in teaching reading lesson.

As stated previously, this research took two cycles. There are four steps on each cycle: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The texts used in the two cycles are the texts about *Zakah* and *Waqf* adopted from several books. By providing texts on *Zakah* and *Waqf*, teachers hope that students will better understand the fields of *Zakah* and *Waqf*.

In the first cycle, the teacher arranged the lesson plan using CSR as the method of teaching reading. She also prepared the reading comprehension test to measure the students' reading comprehension improvement. In this cycle, the teacher got some problems while applying CSR. The students could not perform well the steps in CSR that are: brainstorming and predicting (*preview*), monitoring understanding (*click and clunk*), finding the main idea (*get the gist*), and generating questions and reviewing key ideas (*wrap up*). The students seem unfamiliar with this method, so the teacher explains each step repeatedly, and it spent a lot of time. The test results also have not shown significant changes. Their mean score in reading comprehension test is still very low at 66.36. The percentage ultimate student' success in learning was 46 %. Since the result of the data

analysis did not show the significant improvement, the researcher decided to continue to the second cycle.

In the second cycle, the researcher used the same method in teaching reading that is CSR. She arranged lesson plan and prepared the teaching material and reading comprehension test. In this cycle, students are familiar with the stages in CSR. The classroom atmosphere was so crowded, the students looked so enthusiastic in taking a reading class, but this does not reduce their concentration. In addition, they can do all steps in CSR well. The successful indicators has reached if the students could reach the standard minimum score (≥ 70), and the percentage ultimate student' success in learning is 75 %. In this cycle the students' mean score was 75.06. There were 84 % of students who got the score above 70. From the second cycle, it can be concluded that CSR improves students' understanding in reading and can improve the classroom situation when reading lessons take place.

Conclusion

After the researcher analyzed the results of action research, it can be seen that the use of Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) in teaching reading can improve students' reading comprehension which includes reading to find main ideas, implicit information, explicit information, vocabulary both synonyms or antonyms, and word references. Increasing students' reading comprehension is also indicated by the results of their exam scores. The average pre-test value was 55.30 then increased to 66.36 in the post-test 1 and also increased to 75.06 in the last post test. This proves that the use of Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) in teaching reading can improve students' reading comprehension.

The researcher also found that during the action, students showed improved behavior in the teaching and learning process. This change in behavior can be seen from the enthusiasm of students who are high when taking a reading class. Students follow all the steps in this CRS enthusiastically. In addition, they no longer do useless things like chatting outside the topic of learning or playing mobile phones. In addition, students are not ashamed and afraid to ask questions when they experience difficulties. They tend to be active students. Students also work together in their groups well.

In addition, students were also so confident to explore their ability in reporting their group discussion result to the whole class, giving their comment on another group answer, giving their own group questions to the whole students, and also struggling with their friends in giving the answer of the questions who had been given by their friends of the other groups. Although it made the classroom situation was rather noisy, but it was a big obstacle. The noise happened in teaching learning process was actually the part of learning because it showed students' participation during teaching learning process occurred. Even, they were also more responsible and confidence to do their task for their own learning process.

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