

**THE EFFECT OF QUESTIONING THE AUTHOR STRATEGY (QTA) IN
TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION OF NARRATIVE TEXTS VIEWED
FROM READING MOTIVATION (A STUDY AT GRADE X SMAN 1 SUNGAI
PENUH)**

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the effect of Qta strategy in teach reading comprehension of narrative texts viewed from reading motivation. Quasi experimental with factorial design was used in this study. The study group consists of 75 students, 38 experimental and 37 control, who were attending the first grade SMA N 1 Sungai Penuh during the second term of the 2013/2014 school year. The data were obtained through reading comprehension of narrative texts test and reading motivation questionnaire. The data were then analysed using Lilifores test for normality, variance test for homogeneity, t-test and ANOVA for hypothesis testing. Based on reading assessment result, it was found that Qta strategy was more effective than Three-phase strategy. The score from reading test and reading motivation questionnaire showed a significant variance. High motivated students who were taught with Qta strategy had better reading comprehension than high motivated students who were taught with Three-phase strategy. In addition, low motivated students who were taught with Qta strategy had better reading comprehension than low motivated students who were taught with Three-phase strategy. The results also indicated that there was no interaction between strategies used in teaching-learning reading and students' reading motivation. This finding highlights Qta strategy as an effective way on students' reading comprehension compared to Three-phase strategy and the students who have high and low motivation can improve their skill in language learning with Qta strategy. Future research is encouraged to explore Qta strategy on other kinds of texts as well as larger population and sample.

Keywords: *Questioning the Author strategy (Qta), Reading Comprehension, Reading Motivation, Narrative Texts*

Introduction

Reading is one of the most essential skills to be mastered in language learning. This idea is supported by the fact that reading has become a part of our daily life. Since reading is a basic and vital part of the learning process at almost every level of education, improving students' reading comprehension must be a major goal of all educators. Through comprehending and understanding the reading text, the students can get new knowledge, information, enjoyment and even problem solution.

Some problems were found during preliminary research in SMA N 1 Sungai Penuh. The students there found reading material in their subject matter classes difficult to understand. Their ability to understand the text was limited by their lack of prior knowledge. They were unable to develop their idea in order to improve their reading skill. Moreover, there was lack of students' participation in teaching and learning process. It could be seen from their classroom activity. When they tried to solve the difficulties in reading a text and did discussion about the texts, some students preferred to be passive and did not involve actively in discussion and reading activity. When the teacher asked the students to read the text, some students would rather do other activities, like talking with other students. It indicated their lack of reading motivation. As the result, this condition made their comprehension and achievement decreased as indicated by the empirical data of students' reading test score. Many students got the reading test scores below 70 especially in reading narrative texts; meanwhile the passing grade for English subject was 70. They could not pass the target score of the minimal mastery level criterion (KKM).

The act of reading involves the interaction between reader and writer in building the meaning. As Farris (2004: 321) states that "reading comprehension is the process of understanding the message that the author tries to convey". In short, interaction and communication between a reader and an author must be built through reading experience.

In order to explore the students' prior knowledge and to get the great participation in reading activities during the teaching process held in the classroom, it is needed to present the strategy that can engage the students with the text to improve their reading comprehension. One strategy for helping the students to understand the important information in the text is Questioning the Author (QTA) strategy. This is a strategy for engaging the students with the text with the author as a person who is attempting to convey some messages. The

students can determine the message using their prior knowledge and ability to understand the texts. Regarding the explanation above, a quantitative research was conducted to find out the effect of Questioning the Author (QtA) strategy and students' reading motivation towards students' reading comprehension of Narrative Texts.

Review of Related Literature

QtA and Reading Comprehension

Questions can be used for a variety of purposes in constructing students' understanding toward the lesson. Questions are considered as one of the most influential teaching acts. Important and influential are questions that Hunkins (1976: 2) states, "the question is of paramount importance...without the question there is no processing of information". Thus, questions can be used to make the students thinking and directing the students to think about a topic. Questioning the Author (QtA) strategy is one of the strategies that use questions to encourage students' involvement in classroom activity.

Questioning the Author is the strategy designed to engage students in the ideas of the text and to build understanding by asking some questions related to the authors' intention and message. Beck and McKeown (2006: 24) state that QtA is "an approach for text-based instruction that is designed to facilitate building understanding of text ideas". By using questions that suggest authorial fallibility, QtA seeks to emphasize the reader's own agency in developing ideas by disturbing assumptions of authorial and textual. Therefore, QtA focuses on a series of questions that are not about the information but rather about the author's intension.

Building understanding in QtA is supported through the use of queries and discussion. The specific wording of queries is not set. Some typical questions while questioning the author according to (Beck and McKeown, 2006: 35) are divided into three types of queries as initiating queries, follow-up queries, and narrative queries. Initiating queries are used to launch discussion. Meanwhile, the follow-up queries focus content and direction of discussion and scaffold integration, inferencing and connection of ideas in meaning-building. The narrative queries are similar to follow-up queries, but there address special features of narrative texts in terms of structure, authorship, and purpose. Queries may often deal with characters, theme, and plot. These queries alert students to the ideas that author are trying to convey meaning and the need for *is taught at junior high school level and senior high school level*.

Reading Motivation and Reading Comprehension

Motivation is one of the most important factors in studying English. "Motivation means having a real purpose in learning English or really wanting to learn English for a reason" (Brown, 2002:17). Motivation to learn English may come from self-motivation and or come from others. Self-motivation is called as intrinsic motivation and motivation from others is called as extrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation is caused by any number of outside factors, for example, the need to pass an exam, the hope of financial reward, or the possibility of future travel. Intrinsic motivation, by contrast, comes from within individual.

Reading motivation is one factor influencing reading comprehension. Jamestown (2006:7) states "reading motivation is an effort to create certain conditions in order someone want and willing to read and gain the meaning from the text". Students' reading motivation naturally deals with the students' desire to participate in the reading activity. Reading motivation determines students' positive or negative opinions about reading. The high reading motivation students show greater perseverance and sustained effort in their activity of reading. Meanwhile the low reading motivation students are generally not interested in participating in their classes and are like to put forth less effort on challenging task.

Reading motivation may have a positive impact on students' reading comprehension. As Reza (2013: 10) states that "reading motivation is an important factor which supports students to read more, and it has a significant relationship with reading and understanding texts." It means that students with stronger reading motivation can be expected to read more in wider range. Therefore, motivating students can encourage them to make guesses, better achievement, solve problems or difficulties while reading the text.

Research Method

The design of this research was an experimental method that was classified into quasi experimental research. This research used reading motivation as moderator variable in which it was designed as factorial design 2x2. The population of the research was grade X students of SMA N 1 Sungai Penuh. There were 10 classes of grade X students of SMA N 1 Sungai Penuh. The population consists of 370 students. A group of individual chosen in this research was two classes of the grade X students at SMA N 1 Sungai Penuh in academic year 2013-2014 by cluster random sampling. The experimental class was taught by using QtA strategy; class XE. The control class was class XB which was taught by using Three-Phase strategy.

The questionnaire and reading test were used during data collection. The questionnaire was used to measure the students' reading motivation, while reading test was used to measure students' reading

comprehension. After collecting the data, normality testing, homogeneity testing, and hypothesis testing were analyzed. In this research, the first, second, and the third hypothesis were calculated by using t-test formula in order to know the differentiation of students' score between experimental class and control class. The fourth hypothesis was computed by using two ways Anova.

Data Analysis and Discussion

This research was conducted in 10 meetings for each class, both experimental and control class. After having hypothesis statistical analysis, the results are found as follow.

Students who were Taught by Using Questioning the Author (QtA) Strategy Got Better Result in Reading Skill than Those who were Taught by Using Three-Phase Strategy

Through QtA strategy, the students actively participate in the class, like sharing ideas about the text they were reading. As Beck and McKeown (2006: 24) state that by using QtA strategy, the building understanding is supported through the use of Queries and Discussion. Queries are a crucial aspect of the strategy that can be used to construct meaning. Here, queries are geared toward helping teachers become facilitator of discussion rather than just having the ability to assess students' understanding, as with questions (Smith and Zygouris-Coe, 2006:2). In the experiment class, the students actively response to the queries which were given by the teacher. Some questions related to the author's intensions were delivered to the students hence they could discussed the text collaboratively. When the students showed that the author was not conveying the intended meaning, the teacher posed a follow up query or provided information for the students to understand the text.

In addition, the students' responses during teaching and learning process indicated that they were trying to figure out and connect their ideas in order to comprehend the text well. QtA strategy gave opportunity for students to share their idea and their feeling about the text. All of the students worked collaboratively. When one student got confuse, others could help by giving and sharing their idea and their interpretation. In order to create more dynamic discussion, teacher played the important role in leading the discussion, developing ideas, and balancing the students' perspective with her own perspective. Here, the teacher responded the students' idea and balanced the students' perspective by giving her own perspective. Those conditions and process engaged students in the ideas of the text and built understanding.

On the other hand, the students who were taught by using Three-phase strategy did not get better result than the students who were taught by using QtA strategy. Three stages in teaching reading consist of pre-reading which prepares the students for reading the text. Such activity could include providing a reason for reading, introducing the text, breaking up the text and dealing with new language. In while-reading, the students completed as they read. While in post-reading, it was designed to provide a global understanding of the text in term of evaluation and personal response toward the text. The thing that needed to be considered was about assigning students material to be read and then posed questions to evaluate their comprehension in post reading activity. The students were left on their own until reading was completed. This activity might not lead to productive reading for several reasons. The students might have questions in their minds as they read. They might finish the text knowing only that they was lost but not sure why. Sometimes, the teacher did not aware their students had constructed misconception about the passage and only thought they understood. This weaknesses probably made the students' score in control class was lower than the experiment class.

The QtA strategy actually could solve those weaknesses through during-reading discussion and queries. The teacher read the text aloud then stopped at difficult or interesting parts that needed to be reiterated, clarify, or explained (Beck and McKeown, 2006:4). The questions related to the authors' intension while reading a text build their understanding and strengthen their knowledge. Therefore, this strategy could create a deeper meaning of text through the students' interaction and discussion in classroom.

Students with High Reading Motivation who were Taught by Using Questioning the Author (QtA) Strategy Got Better Result in Speaking than Those who were Taught by Using Three-Phase Strategy

In determining the students' motivation, the questionnaire was used before the treatment given. Based on the students' reading motivation score, there were 10 students who had high reading motivation and 10 students who had low reading motivation in both experimental and control class. They were taken from 27% of the students that got the highest score and the lowest score in each class.

After grouping students based on their reading motivation, the students who had high reading motivation in experimental class got higher score than those in control class. The mean score of high reading motivation students in experimental class was 100.3 and 99.1 for high students' reading motivation in control class. Meanwhile, the mean score of high motivated students for reading test in experimental class was 87.6 and control class was 80.8. It was proved that the strategy affected the students' reading comprehension.

Students with higher reading motivation had much pay attention on texts than given by the teacher. They tended to be active in class and have reading interest than the students who have low reading

motivation. As stated by Prayitno (1989: 33) that the students which have high reading motivation not easy being to be satisfied with the reading result, wanting to get feedback and assessment on task. It means that, the students who had high reading motivation worked hard to get good reading result.

Through Questioning the Author, the teacher helped the students in exploring the author's idea, especially when they encountered difficulties understanding the texts. The difference between QaA and others strategy is the discussion taking place during reading (Beck and McKeown, 2006: 24). There was on-going process of building meaning. That's way, the students not only just could restate what was in the text but they could actively figure out the information and related that to other information in order to build their understanding.

In contrast with QaA, through Three-Phase strategy, the students tended to receive the information that they found in the text without really understand about the text. In comprehending the text, the reader must connected and integrated information as they proceed through a text. It was supposed that the students did not only receive the information, but they were expected could connect the information found in the text to make it make sense. In addition, the questions and answer session were happen in the end of reading activity. When the students tried to summarize and comment the text, they just repeated the information on the text without knowing exactly the meaning was about. Moreover, the students-to-students interaction did not develop during reading activity.

Students with Low Reading Motivation who were Taught by Using Questioning the Author (QaA) Strategy Got Better Result in Speaking than Those who were Taught by Using Three-Phase Strategy

Students with low reading motivation who were taught through Questioning the Author (QaA) strategy got better result in reading comprehension than those who were taught through Three-Phase strategy. The mean score of low students' reading motivation in experimental class was 70.6 while the mean score of students in control class was 72.3. Meanwhile, the reading score for low motivated students in experiment class was 84 and for control class was 74.8. Although mean score of students motivation was lower than control class, the students in experiment class could reach higher score in reading comprehension test.

The research data above show that there is possibility for the students who have low reading motivation to improve their reading skill and get high score in reading through QaA strategy. Sometimes, when the students get difficulties in understanding what is in the text, they tend to blame themselves. That condition made them disengage from reading process. Beck and McKeown (2006: 30) state as a starting point in QaA strategy, the teacher lets students know that what's in a book is simply someone's ideas written down, and that this person may not have always said things in the clearest or easiest way for us to understand.

Considering that, if the students encounter some problems during understanding the text, they may see that sometimes it is an author's failure to communicate ideas clearly rather than their lack of ability to comprehend the text. It is because what someone has in his/her mind to say sometimes not always comes through clearly in their writing. This shift condition made the students tended to feel more confident in understanding the text and more willing to share their ideas as they read. Although the students had low motivation, they felt free in sharing their ideas without afraid whether they made mistakes.

It was quite different from the students with low reading motivation who were taught by using Three-Phase strategy. The students were given opportunity to active their own language and related to the topic. Then in while-reading, they focused on content and language of the text. They also analyzed the characters, setting, focusing on the use of words and other aspects of language use. In the end of the phase, they were asked reflect what they had learned. Those, the teaching and learning activities still dominated by the teacher. From those activities, it seemed that the students were not actively participating and engaging with the text. Especially for low motivated students, they tended to be passive in the class.

The high motivated students performed the best of their abilities in academic setting. These were the reasons why the students with low motivation had low reading comprehension than those who had high motivation. It is strengthened by Gattie, Wigfield and Humenick (2006) that "engagement in reading involves interactions with text that are motivated and strategic". They reviewed evidence showing that when the students are engaged in reading, they comprehend better and have stronger reading outcomes than when they are not engaged.

There was No Interaction between Both Strategies (QaA strategy and Three-Phase Strategy) and Students' Reading Motivation toward Students Reading Comprehension

Fourth hypothesis shows that $F_{obtained}$ is lower than F_{table} , hence H_0 is accepted. It means that there is no interaction between both strategies (QaA and Three-Phase strategy) and students' reading motivation toward students' reading comprehension. This result indicates that the reading motivation does not need to be considered as the prerequisite in teaching reading. In this case, it shows that reading motivation is not one of the variables that influence students' reading comprehension.

In addition, the average reading skill between experimental class and control class were different. The average of reading comprehension score in experimental group was higher than in control group. Meanwhile, the averages score of reading score which had high and low reading motivation in experimental group were higher than in control group. It showed that QTA strategy is more effective than Three-Phase strategy. It is supported by Beck and McKeown (2002: 47), Questioning the Author not only helps students comprehend specific content areas texts, but also teaches them to view reading as an active process of constructing meaning rather than a passive process of extracting information and answering question.

Based on the statistically analysis, it can be said that both of these strategies can be used in teaching reading without considering the prerequisite of students' reading motivation. Whether they had high or low motivation, it was not the variable that influenced the students' reading comprehension.

The significant interaction both of strategy used and reading motivation could be seen from the interactive graph, students who were taught by Questioning the Author (QTA) strategy had higher mean score than the mean score of students' who were taught by Three-Phase strategy. The mean score of students' reading comprehension that had high and low reading motivation in experimental class were higher than the mean score of reading comprehension that had high and low reading motivation in control class. Moreover, the differences of mean score both of experimental class and control class that had high and low reading motivation at figure below shows that the line is parallel.

Graph 1. The Interaction between both Strategies and Reading Motivation



It indicates that there was no interaction between both strategies and reading motivation on students' reading comprehension in narrative text. Comparing reading comprehension test result of QTA strategy with Three-Phase strategy, students using Questioning the Author had significantly higher score in reading comprehension. It means QTA strategy more effective than Three-Phase strategy.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that Questioning the Author (QTA) strategy gives a significant effect on students reading comprehension of narrative texts compared to Three-Phase strategy. Students with high reading motivation who are taught by using Questioning the Author (QTA) strategy have better result in reading comprehension of Narrative texts rather than high motivated students who are taught through Three-Phase strategy. Therefore Questioning the Author (QTA) strategy helps students to improve their reading comprehension of narrative texts although they are low motivated students. In addition, there is no interaction between strategies used and students' reading motivation on students reading comprehension on narrative texts.

Based on the findings and conclusions above, some suggestions will be proposed. It is suggested for students who have high and low reading motivation to improve their skill in language learning through Questioning the Author strategy (QTA). Further researchers who are taking the same strategy, they are also suggested to conduct the relevant study for other texts. Additional studies that incorporate an expanded population are needed to determine the extent to which the results can be generalized to other populations and settings.

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