AN OVERVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PRE-QUESTIONING STRATEGY IN TEACHING READING

Rusmiati[1]

ABSTRACT

In reading, to comprehend the text the readers should be able to manage every part of the text, because it is easy to gain the comprehension in reading when the readers are able to organize the text. Sometimes, they may find form of pre-questioning and it is important for them to comprehend a reading text with having knowledge in general view of the text. Theoretically, pre-questioning itself can build the students' interest and motivation before students read the whole text. Moreover, the students can predict what will be discussed on the text. In line with this study, students may improve their reading comprehension if they know about pre-questioning and it is very important to understand about pre-questioning in order to get good comprehension in reading. Based on the explanation above, it is interested to figure out an overview of the effect pre-questioning in teahing reading comprehension and to know the rule of pre-questioning that tends to build the students' interest and motivation to read the text.

Key words: *Pre-questioning, Reading*

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[1] Rusmiati, Dosen Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris – STKIP Bina Bangsa Getsempena

INTRODUCTION

Concerning reading comprehension, Singer (1985:23) defined it as an interpretation of written symbols, the apprehending of meaning, the assimilation of ideas presented by the written, and the process of thinking while deciphering symbols. It implies that a reader when reading tries to pick up the construal of the text and to acquire thoughts conveyed by the reader. Similarly, according to Cooper (1986:11), comprehension is a process in which the reader may construct meaning by interacting with the text. To get understanding, a reader should identify the passage deeply and he or she should have knowledge about understanding the reading passage.

Similarly, reading with comprehension means understanding what has been read. It is an active thinking process that depends not only on comprehension skills but also on the student's experience and prior knowledge. Comprehension involves understanding the vocabulary, seeing the relationships among words and concepts, organizing ideas, recognizing the author's purpose, making judgements, and evaluating (Kustaryo, 1988 :11-12).

To know the extent of the understanding of a reading that has been reached by students, some questions can help to recognize. The common questions on the passages are primarily about the main ideas, details, and an inference that can be drawn from the passages. It is a means of language acquisition, of communication, and of sharing information and ideas. Likewise, it is a complex interaction between the text and the reader which is shaped by the reader's prior knowledge, experiences, attitude, and language community which are culturally and socially situated. The reading process requires continuous practice, development, and refinement.

To figure out the idea of a text, a reader can associate the text to the prior knowledge by applying pre-questioning. This is used to activate the background acquaintance and to connect it to the information stated in the text which can lead the reader create the meaning based on what is gotten from it. For this circumstances, skimming and scanning can be applied when reading to get the meaning, information, and messages efficiently from reading passage.

Skimming

Skimming is defined as a technique used to look for the "gist" of what the author is saying without a lot of detail (Hancock, 1987:147). This reading technique is used when the reader needs to get a general indication of a literary product such as book, essay, article, paper, thesis, et cetera which later guide the reader whether to examine it more thoroughly. Likewise, Nuttal (1982:34) states that by skimming we mean glancing

rapidly through a text to determine its gist, for example, in order to decide whether a research paper is relevant to our work, or in order to keep ourselves superficially informed about matters that are not of great importance to us.

It is essential to note that skimming is a skill that necessitate concentration, a superior vocabulary, and adequate comprehension skill other than a great deal of practice. Besides, the students can learn the key words and phrases which can cover all the reading material that help to know the content of it at a glance. In performing skimming, the reader should go through a passage quickly and jump over parts of it in order to get a general idea of the text. Therefore, through this technique, the students may develop the skill in strengthening the comprehension of main ideas.

Scanning

Scanning is not a reading process in the true making sense of the world but quickly reading to find the specific information. Brown (2001:308) stated that scanning is quickly searching for some particular piece or pieces of information in a text. It is a searching that requires a reader to float over the material until he finds what is needed and then stops and reads as much as necessary in order to answer his question (Hancock, 1987:148). Likewise, Nuttal in Kahayanto (2005:11) says that by scanning, a reader means glancing rapidly through a text either to search a specific piece of information (e.g. name, date) or to get an initial impression of whether the text is suitable for a given purpose.

In scanning the reader uses the eyes to explore over the text until getting there to what is searched. This can be done for example : when looking for a name of person, place, etc., the word which is begun with capital letter can be a trace and when seeking date or year numbers can be the clue, and so on. Hence, the reader can quickly fulfill his inquiry by focusing his sight exactly to the specific information that is hunt for in the reading text. For this reason, in order the student scan effectively, he or she should already know what information is needed to find in the text.

Factors that Influence Students' Reading Comprehension Achievement

There are some factors that affect the students' attainment in reading comprehension which are grouped into two, those are external factor and internal factor.

1. External factor

External factor takes account of reading material and teacher of reading which are related each other. It is the factor which stems from outside of the reader or from the reader surroundings.

Reading material affects the students achievement in reading because each reading text passage has its level of difficulty. Therefore, in giving material of text to the students, the teacher should choose the appropriate reading text for his or her students based on their level.

Meanwhile, the most fundamental responsibility of schools is teaching students to read. Learning to read is not natural or easy for most students. Reading is an acquired skill, unlike spoken language, which is learned with almost any kind of contextual exposure. As cited by Moats (1999:26),

> "If learning to read were as natural as acquiring spoken language, the result is that the writing systems would have been invented long time ago. The prolonged, gradual, and predictable progression of skill in print translation attests to the difference between processing spoken and written language. Although surrounding students with books will enhance reading development, a literature-rich environment is not sufficient for learning to read. Neither will exposure to print ordinarily be sufficient for learning to spell, unless organized practice is provided."

Thus, teachers must be reflective and knowledgeable about the content they are teaching, that is, the symbol system itself and its relationship to meaning. Besides, she also should be careful in choosing the text and giving the tasks because they are related to the students' reading comprehension achievements.

2. Internal Factor

Internal factor constitutes the factor which comes from inside the reader, without the influence of the environment around. It is not supported or encouraged by anything outside the reader. Kahayanto (2005:13) defines, "Internal factor as the factor which comes from the reader himself, or usually it is known as personal factor due to it subsists inside the reader which is dealt with self-motivation and interest".

Motivation takes essential part in working out the reading text. The students are eager to read when they think that it can fulfill their need. When they have inquery about certain issues, it motivates them to find it out in the passage. Motivation is devided into two categories, namely intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Brown, 2001:75). What's more, Edward Deci in Brown (2001:76) states about intrinsic motivation as follow:

> "Intrinsically motivated activities are ones from which there is no apparent reward except the activity itself. People seem to engage in the activities for their own sake and not because they lead to an extrinsic reward. It is aimed at bringing about curtaining internally rewarding consequences,

namely, feelings of competence and self-determination."

Besides, he also states about extrinsic motivation, that is "extrinsically motivated behaviors that carried out in anticipation of a reward from outside and beyond the self. Such as; money, prizes, grades, and even certain of positive feedback."

Furthermore, interest is also an important aspect for students to have in reading to improve their achievement and it is defined as a state of engaged and curiosity. When the students are engaged in reading something, it indicates that they find interested things in the reading passage and this makes the students' curiousity increase so the students as if did not want to put the reading down before it can accomplish their inquiry. In other words, it can be stated that interest affects the students achievement in reading.

Regarding with the explanation of motivation and interest above, in this study it is fascinated to use pre-questioning to build up the students' motivation and interest in order to see the effect of using pre-questioning in relationship with the students' reading comprehension achievements. It is hard for students to understand the text when they do not have interest and motivation to read. Therefore, it can be concluded that good interest and motivation result in good achievement of the students.

DISCUSSION

1. What is Pre-questioning

Pre-questioning tells the teacher what the students need to know from the passage and how much knowledge they already have about the lesson. In the explanation of display questions, schema theory, and students' background knowledge, Brown (2001:42) defines pre-questioning as some questions which are provided before the students read the whole text in order to build the students' interest, motivation, and cognitive factors. It is very useful to activate the schemata, thus the students can predict what will be faced in the reading text.

In the same way, the questioning technique which is selected and used by the teacher should maximize students' participation and success. By knowing the reasons for questioning, the teacher will encourage his/her students to participate in classroom activity. Ur (1996:229) gives some reasons for questioning, those are: the first, it is to provide a model for language in which the students will learn from the example of a teacher whom they observe and imitate. Next, it is to find out something from the learners facts, ideas, and opinions. Questioning enables the teacher to determine whether students understand what has been taught in the class, to get to know their ideas and opinions toward something.

Besides, it is used to check or to test understanding knowledge or skill. Through questioning, the teacher will know how far the

students have improved their knowledge or skill about their present topic. What's more, questioning functions to get learners to be active in their learning. Owning in condition by the culture and the educational system, however, many language students are passive, accustomed to being spoon-fed, and not knowing how to start to be involved in the classroom activity, but once they know how to ask and answer questions, they can get involved actively in group work.

Furthermore, the teacher questions can give immediate feedback about students' comprehension so that the teacher recognize about the students knowledge. And the last is that the teacher's questions provide students the opportunities to find out what they think. As they are nudged into responding to questions about, say, a reading, they can discover what their own opinions and reactions are. Perhaps the simplest way to conceptualize the possibilities is to think of a range of questions, beginning with display questions that attempt to elicit information already known by the teacher and the students.

Therefore, as asking the students to read, it is essential for teacher to offer them some matters about the text in order to know what the students have already recognized. In other words, the teacher tries to get information about the existing knowledge of students by questioning them formerly. This information helps the teacher emphasize them more about certain aspects when reading that

allows the students to develop their existing knowledge further.

However, students themselves can generate questions as well. Teaching students to generate their own questions about material to be read is an important prereading instructional goal. Singer (1978:63) contends that whenever readers are involved in asking questions, they are engaged in active comprehension. Teachers can use an active comprehension strategy when they ask questions that beget questions in return. The teacher might, for example, focus attention on a picture or an illustration from a story or book and ask a question that induces student questions in response, "What would you like to know about the picture?" In return, invite the students to generate questions that focus on the details in the picture or its overarching message.

2. Kind of Pre-questioning

According to Harmer (1985:153), there are some kinds of pre-questioning used in reading comprehension. These are aimed at confirming expectations, extracting specific information, knowing general comprehension, and getting detail comprehension.

Pre-questioning to confirm expectations is used as a tool for placing great emphasis on the lead-in stage where students are encouraged to become interested in the subject matter of the text, encourages students to predict the content of the text, and gives them an interesting and motivating purpose for

reading. Then, there is also pre-questioning to extract specific information. It is pre-questioning as a tool to force the students to extract specific information from the text. They are going to answer before reading the text. If they do this it will be possible for them to read in the required way, they should see the text only to extract the information the questions demand.

Moreover, pre-questioning to know general comprehension. In this case, pre-questioning is used to build up the students' prior knowledge so that the students have general comprehension about the passage before they start reading. Concisely, pre-questioning to get detailed comprehension. This kind of pre-questioning intends to give the students some detailed information that could be found in the whole of the text after they read it.

3. The Role of Pre-questioning on Reading Comprehension

Pre-questioning have played a central role in the learning process. If a teacher utilizes questions effectively, students will discover that the question is a very valuable learning tool. It is a device through which they can organize their thinking to achieve certain objectives. Students who ask themselves questions as they deal with various learning situations will provide themselves with data and will develop an awareness of where there are deficits in data. This type of knowledge is

essential if students are to assume major roles in their learning processes.

Likewise, questions should also play an important role in every classroom both student and teacher questions. Teachers can create an active learning environment by encouraging students to ask and answer the questions. Questions in the classroom are the cornerstone of education.They provide the stimulus for critical thought and deep-level understanding. The learners engage and excite in asking questions while providing them with new insights and ideas about the material being learned. Brown (2007:221) says that encouraging students to develop their own strategies is an excellent means of stimulating the learner tools of interaction.

Questions are important since themes themselves do not engage students as well as good questions. The best questions will be those that link students' interests and abilities to content goals and expected outcomes. Students enjoy creating their own questions after themes have been developed. Brown (2007:221) argues that "responding genuinely to student-initiated questions is essential. Encouraging students to develop their own strategies is an excellent means of stimulating the learners to develop tools of interaction." This process can help them to ask significant questions and gives them ownership of the responses they create. An entire lesson may be devoted to formation of questions that can then guide students' work and it also helps students

ask the right questions for any topic. Groups can list their questions on the board, and the class can choose the best ones from the questions listed.

Similarly, Brown (2001:169) says that the most important key to create an interactive learning is the initiation of interaction from the teacher by using question. Appropriate questioning can fulfill a number of different functions, specifically: the first is that the teacher's questions give students the opportunity to produce language comfortably without having to risk initiating language themselves. It is very scary for the students to have to initiate conversation or topics for discussion. Next, the teacher's question can serve to initiate a chain reaction of students interaction among themselves.

Vacca and Vacca (2002:194) emphasize about the importance of arousing curiousity. They said that arousing curiosity and activating prior knowledge are closely related to instructional activities. Curiosity arousal gives students the chance to consider what they know already about the material to be read. Through the teacher guidance, they are encouraged to make connections and to relate their knowledge to the text assignment. And further, they will recognize that there are problems and conceptual conflicts to be resolved through reading. Arousing curiosity helps students raise questions that they can answer only by giving thought to what they read.

In addition, they also stated that prediction strategies activate thought about the content before reading. Students must rely on what they know through previous study and experience to make educated guesses about the material to be read. Smith (1988:163) defines predicting as the prior elimination of unlikely alternatives. He stated:

> "Readers do not normally attend to print with their minds blank, with no prior purpose and with no expectation of what they might find in the text. ... The way readers look for meaning is not to consider all possibilities, nor to make reckless guesses about just one, but rather to predict within the most likely range of alternatives. ... Readers can derive meaning from text because they bring expectations about meaning to text."

In addition, questioning is also function to provide weaker learners with an opportunity to participate. Mostly, questioning technique is applied in classroom interaction so that it makes the weaker learners to interact in pairs or small group work by asking and answering questions without losing face. In this condition, the possibility for them to risk taking is higher, because any mistakes made by the students will be tolerated or even helped by their fellows personally. Besides, it is to get

learners to review and practice previously learnt material. The students tend to get more information from their previosly learnt material, because they do not want to put themselves into trouble by talking unfamiliar and difficult material that they have never learnt at all yet, so reviewing from the previous material is a thoughtful choice for them. The last is that questioning is used to communicate to learners that the teacher is genuinely interested in what they think. Questioning will help the teacher to communicate with the students by asking their ideas and opinions about something.

Besides, the teacher might also decide to read to students an opening paragraph or two from a text selection, enough to whet their appetite for the selection. Then ask, "what else would you like to know about the topic?" Complete the question by focusing attention on some aspect of the selection that is pivotal to students' comprehension. Active comprehension questions not only arouse interest and curiosity but also draw learners into the material. As a result, students will read to satisfy purposes and resolve conceptual conflicts that they have identified through their own questions.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

After a great deal of thought and discussion, there are some conclusions and suggestions as well contributed for further improvement of teaching reading. First, it is clear that the goals of Pre-questioning in reading stage are to

activate the student's knowledge of the subject, to provide any language preparation that might be needed for coping with the passage and, finally to motivate the learners to read the text. It provides students with the necessary background to organize activity and to comprehend the material. These practices involve understanding the purpose for reading and building a knowledge in dealing with the content and the structure of the text. Second, pre-questioning helps students identify the key elements of information. Students develop good questioning skills from the questions that are modeled by the teacher, so it important to help students learn to ask questions that answer *who, what, why, where*, and *how*. It also help students to compare and contrast that finally bring a deeper understanding to text. Furthermore, pre-questioning is important to the educator because it helps to determine what information the students have learned or understands. Teachers can use this information to track a student's real-time progress and plan future lessons based on the needs of the students.

Similarly, there are some suggestions provided in this discusion. First, the teachers are suggested to analyze the curriculum, learners' language proficiency level in order to make a right choice of the type of pre-questioning activities. The teachers who teach reading courses should be aware of the benefits of pre-questioning in enhancing students' social interaction, confidence,

creativity, and motivation. Second, the teacher can help students become more proficient by modeling this process for them and encouraging them to use it when they read independently. As students begin to read a text independently, the teacher should continue to model the questioning process and encourage students to use it frequently. The students can be grouped to answer one another's questions and generate new ones based on discussions. Be sure the focus is not on finding the correct answers, because many questions may be subjective, but on curiosity, wondering, and asking thoughtful questions.

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