

## **The Uses of PQ4R and SSR Strategies in EFL Reading Classroom**

**Merie Agustiani**

Baturaja University, South Sumatra

[merie\\_piecery@fkip.unbara.ac.id](mailto:merie_piecery@fkip.unbara.ac.id)

**Abstract.** This paper reports an experimental study which investigated the use of Preview, Question, Read, Reflect, Recite, Review (PQ4R) strategy and Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) strategy to the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 1 OKU. Two classes consisted of 30 students in each class were chosen randomly and assigned as PQ4R group and SSR group. Reading comprehension test that consisted of 35 multiple choice questions was used to collect the data. Meanwhile, t-test was used to find out the significant results of the two strategies and stepwise regression was used to find out what aspect of reading comprehension that mostly contributed on students' achievement. Findings of this study showed that there were significant different achievement of the students after the interventions using PQ4R and SSR strategies which means that the two strategies were proved significantly effective to improve the students' reading comprehension achievement, but the independent t-test result showed that SSR strategy gave more significant improvement toward students' reading comprehension achievement.

### **Introduction**

Reading is one of the language skills which has important role because by reading people can get much information which they need. However, reading is not a simple activity. Reading deals with a process of constructing meaning that is formed by two basic components: decoding and comprehending. Decoding is the ability to decode written print into words. It leads to a word's meaning, but not to comprehending beyond the word directly (McKeown & Kucan, 2010). Reading is an activity that encourages students to engage with the texts in order to build meaning, grasp the main ideas, facts, and information presented in the texts. In addition, reading is the identification of the symbols and the association of appropriate meaning with them. Reading is a process of thinking, evaluating, judging, imagining, reasoning and problem solving. It needs identification and comprehension. Comprehension skills help the learner to understand the meaning of words both in isolation and context (Palani, 2012).

There are several issues related to reading habit and reading comprehension achievement. Reading is a crucial thing for knowledge transfer and the habit of reading is an academic activity that increases skills in reading strategies. To know about the world and its environment, a child helps himself through reading books, newspapers and other magazines. Once the child has been taught to read and has developed the love for books, he can explore for himself the wealth of human experiences and knowledge through reading. Children, who miss the chance of getting in touch with books in their early stages of life, find it hard to acquire good reading habits in their later years (Deavers, 2000). According to Zwiers (2004, p.3), reading habits more clearly describes the automatic and unconscious processes that are involved in constructing meaning from text. Thus, by this activity the readers can improve their reading ability. Moreover, National Endowment for the Arts of USA (2007, p.3-4) proved that habit of

daily reading, for instance, overwhelmingly correlates with better reading skills and higher academic achievement. Indonesian students show poor performance of reading internationally (PIRLS, 2011; PISA, 2012). Meanwhile, in the context of Indonesian EFL teaching, especially in South Sumatera province, students also showed dissatisfied result of reading. The study conducted by Diem in 2011 which investigated 200 fifth graders in Palembang found that the average of mean score of English reading was 51.18, suggesting that the reading achievement of students in Palembang is poor. Furthermore, Diem (2011) also found that the mean score of students' reading habit was 65.34 which also means that the reading habit of students in Palembang is in average level. Another study conducted by Diem (2012) which investigated 306 students from 36 schools in South Sumatera aimed to see the influence of school libraries on students' reading achievement showed that most of the students were still in the low and mediocre categories, suggesting that the students' reading habit and reading achievement need improvement. Diem's finding in 2012 was similar to what she found in 2011; based on the KKM (Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal) both studies showed that the students' reading achievement and reading habit were still under the minimum score for the KKM, which was 75.

It can be seen from many research findings above that reading is a complex process. Reading is concerned with the recognition of the printed symbols that represent speech and to respond emotionally or otherwise to their sounds and meaning. But, at this level, we must establish the fact that reading is more involving; much more than the recognition of words. Reading is similar to driving in the brain, from processing pages

and pages of text, develop a variety of strategies and connections that facilitate efficient comprehension (Akabuike & Asika, 2012).

These strategies and connection are the habit which is clearly describes as the automatic and unconscious processes that are involved in constructing meaning from text. The reading strategies, however, cannot be taught in isolation. According to Kiewra (2002, p.21), "students can learn how to learn when they are taught strategies in the context of subject matter. Instructors can teach the students how to learn by embedding strategy instruction within their content courses". A great number of study skills and learning strategies have been identified for use. Cognitive and metacognitive strategies are proven strategies for deep understanding and reconstructive learning.

Harley (2001) mentions that one of the best known methods for study is PQ4R method. The PQ4R study technique was firstly designed by Thomas and Robinson in 1941. The PQ4R stands for Preview (P), Question (Q), Read (R), Reflect (R), Recite (R), and Review (R) that helps students to understand and remember what they have read (Slavin, 2008, p. 256). In addition, Sanacore (2000, p. 3) explains that PQ4R method should help the student comprehend better, concentrate better, and retain better. A research conducted by Hansclocky (cited in Sulhan, 2007, p. 69), obtained that the systematic use of PQ4R could help students to know, understand, apply, analyze, and evaluate what they have read. Logsdon (2007) also obtained that PQ4R could improve the student's understanding of text and recalling of facts by as much as 70%. PQ4R Strategy is a teaching learning concept which help teachers relate their teaching materials to be presented with their pupil's real learning, so

it can improve the comprehension of a subject matter. PQ4R Strategy represents one part of elaborated strategy. This strategy is used to assist students remember what they read, and to help teaching learning process in the classroom by reading book or text.

Besides, Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) is also another choice for teaching reading comprehension to the students. This strategy was firstly introduced by Lyman C. Hunt, Jr. in 1961. Silent Sustained Reading (SSR), a form of school-based recreational reading or free voluntary reading, where students read silently during a designated time period every day in school, has been shown to empower and motivate students to become a stronger reader (Krashen, 2011 in Noland, 2014). In addition, Sullivan (2010) elaborates that SSR provided opportunities for students to practice the reading skills they have learned through explicit instruction, thus leading to proficiency. As students gain reading proficiency, their confidence in their abilities increases. Students are unique individuals with different interests. Therefore, when teachers allow students to choose books, there is a greater chance that all students' interests will be met compared to when a teacher assigning a specific text. Thus, students will enjoy reading more. Educators teaching mandated reading curriculum are encouraged to think about incorporating student choice into their reading program not only to help increase students' reading attitudes, but to increase overall reading abilities (Rosseou,2012).

On the basis of the explanation above, this In analyzing the data, t-test was used to see the significant diferences of reading comprehension achievement among the groups and for further infomation of the results of this study, stepwise regression was

used to see what aspects of reading comprehension which mostly contributed the students' achievement of reading comprehension.

study was aimed at investigating the effects of PQ4R strategy dan SSR strategy on students' reading comprehension achievement of the Eleventh Graders of SMAN 1 OKU, Baturaja, South Sumatera.

## **Method**

This study was an experimental study. Creswell (2012, p. 295) explains that an experiment is used when a researcher want to establish possible cause and effect between independent and dependent variables. This means that researcher attempt to control all variables that influence the outcome except for the independent variable. In this study, PQ4R strategy and SSR strategy were the independent variables. Meanwhile, the students' reading comprehension achievement was the dependent one.

The participants of this study was the eleventh graders of SMAN 1 OKU which were choosen randomly and equally assigned into two groups. The first group was taught using USSR strategy (30 students) and the second group was taught using PQ4R strategy (30 students).

Furthermore, reading comprehension test that consisted 35 valid and reliable (the result of cronbach alpha was 0.84) questions with different kind texts was used to obtain the data. The questions constructed through six categories that measure students' comprehension. Those categories are about main idea (MI), detail (D), sequence (Seq.), inference (Inf.), cause-effect (C/E), vocabulary (Voc.), and study skills (SS). Beside measuring the validity and reliability of the test, the difficulty level and discrimination index of test items were also

analyzed. It was obtained that 82,2 % of the test items was in moderate level and 76,8% of the test items was in good category of discrimination index.

In analyzing the data, t-test was used to see the significant differences of reading comprehension achievement among the groups and for further information of the results of this study, stepwise regression was used to see what aspects of reading comprehension which mostly contributed the students' achievement of reading comprehension. 3.

### Finding And Discussion

After the interventions using SSR and PQ4R Strategies had been completed, it was found that the reading comprehension achievements of the students were in average level, with the mean of 71.99. See Table 1.

Interval	category	Pretest			Posttest		
		frequency	percentage	mean	frequency	percentage	mean
86 – 100	excellent	-	-	-	10	16,67%	92,30
71 – 85	Good	8	13,33%	72,13	34	56,67%	77,59
56 – 70	Average	33	55,00%	61,64	13	21,67%	64,08
41 – 55	Poor	19	31,67%	50,00	3	5,00%	54,00
< 40	very poor	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL		60	100%	61,25	60	100%	71,99

As shown in table 1, most of the students (55%) in the pretest were in average category. The rest of the students were in poor category (31.67%) and good category (13.33%). After the interventions using SSR and PQ4R strategies, although there were three students (5%) were still in the poor category, the rest of the students could reach the average (21.7%), good (60%), and excellent (13.3%) categories.

Furthermore, *there were significant difference in students' reading comprehension achievement both in SSR group and PQ4R group.* It could be obtained

from the result of paired sample t-test that the mean difference of pretest and posttest score in PQ4R group was 10.95, the  $t_{obtained}$  was 4.662 with  $df = 29$  ( $> T_{table} = 1.699$ ), and the significance value was 0.000 ( $< 0.05$ ). This result was in line with Wahono's study (2014) which found that PQ4R strategy gave positive contribution on the students' reading comprehension especially for finding main idea, specific information, and inference. Meanwhile, In SSR group the mean difference of pretest and posttest score was 22.00,  $t_{obtained}$  was 6.909 with  $df = 29$  ( $> T_{table} = 1.699$ ), and the significance value was 0.000 ( $< 0.05$ ). This significant result strengthened Dowd's study (1985, in Mabry, 2005) that reviewed research on SSR and concluded that SSR has a positive effect on reading comprehension and reading attitudes at all grade levels.

In addition, when comparing the reading comprehension achievement between the groups, it was obtained that *there was significant difference in students' reading comprehension achievement between students in SSR group and PQ4R group.* The result showed that the mean difference of posttest scores between SSR group and PQ4R group was 10.66, the  $t_{obtained}$  was 4.662 with  $df = 29$  ( $> t_{table} = 1.699$ ), and the  $p$ -values was 0.000 ( $< 0.05$ ). Table 2 shows the summary statistics of mean difference, the value of t-obtained and Significant Results.

**Table 2**  
Result of Paired and Independent Samples t-test of each Variable and the Aspects

ASPECT	Pre test		Post test		mean difference pre and post test within	mean difference pre and post test SSR within	T-Value and sig between pre and posttest PQ4R within	T-Value and sig between pre and posttest SSR within	T-Value and sig between PQ4R & SSR
	Mean (PQ4R)	Mean (SSR)	Mean (PQ4R)	Mean (SSR)					
Reading Test	59,53	59,14	70,68	81,14	10,95	22,00	4,662 ,000	6,909 ,000	4,662 ,000

In addition, for further information of this research result, a stepwise regression analysis was used to find out the contribution of reading aspects toward students' reading comprehension achievement. The result indicated that the students' reading comprehension achievement was most contributed by the aspects of vocabulary (55.1%) and then followed by the main idea (20.1%), inference (9.9%), cause effect (5.9%), sequence (5.6%), and the least contributed by detail (3.4%). Meanwhile, in PQ4R group, the aspect of inference (57.2%) made the highest contribution toward students' improvement of reading comprehension achievement. The other contributions were from cause effect (16.3%), main idea (12.9%), vocabulary (6.3%), sequence (4.4%), and the least is detail (2.9%).

Concerning the significant improvement on reading comprehension of the SSR group who have achieved most in the good level at the end of the study, some affecting factors need to be explained. Reading activities through SSR strategy allowed the students to choose their own reading material which enabled them to change the materials if they did not interested in. Besides, SSR was an in-classroom reading activity in which students and teachers are regularly provided with a fixed period of time for the silent reading of self-selected materials for the purpose of practice, pleasure, or information. Kaur, Chuah, and David (2012) mentioned that "individuals who read regularly exhibit a wide range of vocabulary, heightened writing abilities, improved spelling, and enhanced knowledge of grammar and punctuation rules. All these indicate overall stronger literacy skills". The development of vocabulary that the students got from reading regularly can influence their comprehension. Stanovich (2008) also

identified that higher level reading skill advancement correlated with reading quantity.

## Conclusions

Referring to the results of the study, it was concluded that both PQ4R strategy and SSR Strategy could significantly improve the students' reading comprehension achievement. In addition, when comparing the significant improvement of reading comprehension achievement of the students who were taught using PQ4R strategy and those who were taught , it was obtained that the students' comprehension achievement was significantly improved using SSR strategy and vocabulary was the aspect that mostly contributed to the students' reading comprehension. This caused probably as impact of the teaching steps through SSR strategy that allow the students to read frequently and choose reading material based on their personal interest. The more the students read, the more they developed their vocabulary that automatically influence their text comprehension.

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