

BRAINSTORMING, ACTIVATING, REINFORCING AND APPLYING (BARA) TO UPRaise STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION

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ABSTRACT

Reading is part of the process self-development education so that they have the ability to think rationally and academic achievement. Reading comprehension is a reading activity that is directed to gain an understanding of the reading content. This study made use of a classroom action research design with two cycles of learning activities to improve students' reading comprehensions through BARA strategy. Data were collected through pre-test, post-test, and questionnaire. The results showed that the reading comprehensions of the students improved significantly from the first and second cycles when compared to the results of the pre-test. Therefore, the BARA strategy is considered very effective for teaching reading comprehension. This study implies that teachers should consider using BARA strategy to improve students' reading comprehension.

Keywords: Enhancing; Reading; Comprehension; Strategy

I. Introduction

Learning activities are an activity that is very important in an educational process. In learning activities, teachers and students are involved in an interaction with the subject matter as the medium. In this interaction the students are more active, not the teacher. Student activity certainly includes all physical and mental activities, individually or in groups (Maba & Mantra, 2018). Therefore, it is said to be maximal if it occurs between teachers and all students, between students and teachers, between students and students, students with learning materials and media, even students with themselves, but still in order to achieve the goals that have been set together, namely learning outcomes that optimal. Teachers are expected to utilize various ways to encourage students to arouse their knowledge (Widiastuti et al., 2020).

One way that can be developed by the students to improve their knowledge is by reading various sources both printed or online materials (Mantra et al., 2020). Reading is a means for students to learn something that is not yet known and can expand knowledge, students can recognize themselves, their culture can even help recognize the culture of others, and students

can explore the written messages contained in the reading (Handayani et al., 2019). To achieve the above objectives, it is necessary to have a student's ability to read. This ability can be developed progressively by familiarising the students to read both intensively and extensively.

Reading is one of the most important language skills in addition to other language skills. Because reading is a means to learn the other world that is desired so that humans can expand knowledge, have fun, and explore written messages just by reading (Shin & Crandall, 2018). However, reading is not an easy job. Reading is a process that can be developed using approaches, techniques, strategies, and methods that are suitable for the purpose of reading (Zubaidah et al., 2018). There are several types of reading, the ability to read comprehension is part of the type of reading silently. Reading comprehension is one of the efforts to grow and hone critical reading skills (Sari & Prasetyo, 2021). Reading comprehension activity is an activity that aims to get in-depth information and understanding of what is read. The importance of reading comprehension for students is to gain a full understanding of logical arguments, students can determine the main idea in the reading, students can read the entire contents of the reading carefully, and students can restate the contents of the reading using their own sentences.

Reading skills are basic skills for students that they must master in order to participate in the entire education and learning process. The success of students in the learning process is strongly influenced by their reading ability. The ultimate goal of reading is to understand the content of the reading, but the reality is that not all students can achieve that goal. Many students can read fluently a reading material but do not understand the contents of the reading material (Mantra, & Kumara, 2018). Reading comprehension is one aspect of language skills that must be mastered by elementary school students, especially in advanced classes. Through this activity students can obtain information actively, because by reading, someone will obtain information, gain knowledge and new experiences (Sari & Prasetyo, 2021).

Reading is an interpretation of written symbols or reading is capturing the meaning of a certain set of letters. Reading is identifying symbols and associating meaning. Reading can also be translated as a process of identifying and understanding that traces messages conveyed through written language systems (Javed et al., 2015). Reading comprehension is a complex intellectual process that includes two main abilities, namely the mastery of the meaning of words and the ability to think about verbal concepts (Widiastuti et al., 2021). Understanding of reading occurs through the process of matching or interaction between knowledge in the reader's schemata with concepts or understanding or facts contained in reading material (Dilek Belet Boyaci & Güner, 2018).

To obtain optimal results, it is the teacher who plays a very important role in the learning process (Mantra et al., 2019). Teachers as facilitators must try to create effective learning conditions, so as to enable a good learning process, and improve students' ability to listen to lessons and master the educational goals they must achieve (Mantra et al., 2021). To fulfil the

above, teachers are required to be able to manage the learning process to provide stimulation to students for subjects. For this reason, teachers must be good at choosing appropriate learning methods and employ effective strategies in the classroom (Handayani, 2020). Students should be continually practice to gain various knowledge by reading, discussing with their friends and also use their knowledge to enhance their life. One of the strategies that is appropriate in developing students reading comprehension is BARA strategy. It is consisting of four stages of learning that is Brainstorming, Activating, Reinforcing and Applying.

At the brainstorming stage, students are asked many questions related to the reading text to around students' prior knowledge of the reading text. At the activating stage, students were provided with some more detail information about the reading text being discussed to activate what they have known from the the text and also from the brainstorming stage. At the reinforcing stage, students were given several exercises to develop their reading comprehension and also followed by whole classroom discussion. At the applying stage, students were asked to apply their reading comprehension in form of several learning activities. Therefore, understanding the phenomenon as described above related with the importance of reading comprehension and the usefulness of BARA strategy, this study intends to investigate the effectiveness of BARA strategy in improving students' reading comprehension.

II. Methods

Classroom Action Research (CAR) is research conducted by teachers (educators) in their classrooms or places where they teach that focuses on improving learning processes and praxis. Classroom Action Research serves as a tool for solving problems that arise in the classroom and also as a tool for in-service training, where teachers use new skills and methods and sharpen their analytical skills. Furthermore, as a tool to create innovative learning, as a tool to improve communication between teachers and scientific researchers, as well as a tool that provides an alternative to problems that occur in the classroom. CAR is carried out through a cycle consisting of four stages, starting with action planning, followed by learning actions and observation activities and ending with reflection to analyze the data obtained through action. This research design consists of two cycles in which in every cycle there are four interconnected activities as follows: planning, action, observation, and reflection.

This study was conducted in the fourth semester of university students during their face-to-face learning process studying English advance reading comprehension. There were two types of research instruments that were used in this classroom action research, they were a set of tests (pre-test and post-tests), and a questionnaire administered to the teachers. The pre-test and post-test were used to collect the data that dealt with students' reading comprehension after BARA strategy was implemented in the classroom. Besides, the questionnaire was administered to figure out the students' responses toward the implementation of the BARA teaching strategy.

A pre-test was used to know the pre-existing reading comprehension of the students, and post-tests were used to know the reading comprehension improvement achievement of the students after being taught by BARA strategy. The data were analyzed using the mean score formula to figure out students' increasing ability in reading comprehension and the questionnaire results were analyzed using a rating scale to figure out students' changing behaviour during the learning process using BARA strategy.

III. Findings and Discussion

Understanding of a reading material does not only depend on what is contained in the reading, but also depends on the previous knowledge that the reader has. In this process, the reader actively builds his understanding of the reading. Reading is essentially a process of building an understanding of written discourse. This process occurs by matching or connecting schemata of knowledge and experience that have been previously possessed with the information content in the discourse so as to form an understanding of the discourse that is read.

Reading comprehension is an activity or activity carried out by the reader to connect new information with old information with a view to gaining new knowledge. In addition to connecting information and gaining new knowledge, the activities carried out by readers in understanding reading material can be classified into literal understanding, interpretive understanding, critical understanding, and creative understanding. To gain the pre-existing ability of the subjects in reading comprehension, the preliminary study was conducted by conducting interviews with the teachers currently teaching in the class chosen as the subjects of the study. Thus, before the teaching and learning process, the researchers administered a pre-test in the pre-cycle phase. The pre-test was administered to know the subjects' pre-existing reading comprehensions before the implementation of the BARA strategy.

The mean score of the pre-test was 50.50, followed by 30 students. Moreover, among 30 subjects who fulfilled the pre-test, there were only 3 subjects who could pass the minimum passing grade that had been determined. In fact, the pre-test result showed that most of the subjects could not answer all questions correctly based on the criteria mentioned in the pre-test. In cycle I, after implementing the BARA strategy, the subjects showed their improvement in constructing a descriptive text. The mean score of post-tests 1 that was followed by 30 subjects was 70.50 and there were 20 subjects who could pass the minimum passing grade that had been determined. Moreover, it showed significant improvement of the subjects' reading comprehensions after implementing the BARA strategy. Most of the subjects could answer correctly based on the criteria required in the scoring rubric. It was shown that the subjects could answer and described their answer in appropriate content and grammar.

Table 1. Stages of BARA strategy

BARA Learning Model (Brainstorming, Activating, Reinforcing, Applying)	
Phase	Activity
Brainstorming	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The teacher/lecturer asks students what they know about the topic being studied; 2. The teacher/lecturer provides opportunities for all students to express what they have understood about the topic being studied 3. The teacher/lecturer provides opportunities for students to ask questions about the topic being studied 4. The teacher/lecturer gives other students to answer other questions. 5. The teacher/lecturer emphasizes and adds to the students' answers
Activating	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The teacher/lecturer explains the subject matter/lecture 2. The teacher/lecturer gives students to ask questions about the material being explained 3. The teacher/lecturer gives other students to answer their friend 4. The teacher/lecturer provides additional explanations to the students' answers 5. The teacher/lecturer provides exercises to develop students' understanding
Reinforcing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The teachers/lecturers provide exercises to deepen their understanding (tasks, problem solving, projects) 2. The teachers/lecturers provide opportunities for students to discuss in small groups 3. The teachers/lecturers provide opportunities for students to present their results the discussion in front of the class 4. The teacher/lecturer provides an opportunity to ask questions about student presentations 5. The teacher/lecturer provides the opportunity for other students to provide additional explanations 6. The teacher/lecturer gives additional emphasis and explanations to complete the student's explanations
Applying	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The teachers/lecturers provide exercises to students/students to apply what has been understood in the form of products/works (monologue/dialogue, products, for example: sentences, paragraphs, speeches, conversations, conferences, paragraphs, text, pictures, designs, concepts, objects, etc.) 2. The teachers/Lecturers provide opportunities for students/students to present or demonstrate their work 3. The teachers/Lecturers provide opportunities for students/students to ask questions about the presentation of the theme? 4. The teacher/lecturer gives additional emphasis and explanations to complete the student/student explanations

In cycle II, the post-test 2 results showed that the mean score of the subjects was 80.50. The results of post-test 2 showed a significant improvement in the subjects' reading comprehensions. It was much better than pre-test and post-test 1. The result of cycle II also showed that subjects' reading comprehensions could be improved through the implementation of the BARA strategy. All the students could answer the questions correctly and appropriately both in term of grammar and content.

Besides, in the second cycle, the students were more active, enthusiastic and enjoyed the teaching-learning process. The observation also showed that the subjects looked more active and serious during the teaching and learning process. Besides, the result showed that all students achieved the minimum passing grade. Since the present study had already reached the success indicator that all students passed the minimum passing grade, the present study could be ended.

As the supporting data, the researcher administered the questionnaire to know the subjects' responses toward the implementation of the BARA to improve their reading comprehension. The questionnaire percentage showed that the total of the respondents who responded strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree were respectively 85%, 10%, 5%, 0%, and 0%. These figures established that the subjects gave positive responses to the implementation of the BARA strategy in improving reading comprehensions. In other words, most of the students agreed that the implementation of the BARA could improve their reading comprehension. The students' responses proved that the BARA strategy could help them develop reading comprehension.

The present study utilizing BARA strategy to improve students reading comprehension was regarded as successful in reaching the success indicator. This can be seen from the pre-test result, post-test one, and post-test two, which increased significantly after being taught by the BARA strategy. The data were also highly supported by the results of the questionnaire which showed the positive responses of the subjects toward the implementation of the BARA strategy as an effort to improve the students' reading comprehensions. In other words, the subjects agreed that the BARA strategy could help them improve their reading comprehensions. This strategy allows students to maximize their potential to comprehend the text and also provide opportunities for the students to apply their compression in various language activities, consequently, the students are rich in language exposures.

IV. Conclusion

The present study was in the form of classroom action research. The objective of the present study was to know whether or not the reading comprehensions of the students could be improved through the BARA strategy. This study was conducted in two cycles, and each cycle consisted of two sessions in which each session had four interconnected activities: planning, action, observation, and reflection. Firstly, the researcher conducted initial reflection by giving

the subjects a pre-test. The mean score of the students showed that students' reading comprehension have improved significantly after the implementation of the BARA strategy. Moreover, the questionnaire results also showed that students' learning motivation in learning reading comprehension after the implementation of the BARA. BARA strategy is consisting of four stages of learning that is Brainstorming, Activating, Reinforcing and Applying which all stages are really effective to develop students' active participant in learning. This study suggests that teachers should consider using the BARA strategy

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