

# IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION THROUGH QUESTION-AND-ANSWER RELATIONSHIP (QAR) AT MAN 2 KOTA MAKASSAR

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## **Abstract**

*This study is a pre-experimental research that aims to find out the use of Question-and-Answer Relationship (QAR) to improve students' reading comprehension ability. The participants were the students of XI MIPA 1 MAN 2 Kota Makassar for the academic year 2021/2022 with as many as forty-four students. Cluster random sampling was used as the way of selecting the sample and a reading test was administered as the way of collecting data. The result showed that the score of students' reading comprehension tests were increasing after conducting QAR in the reading class. The mean score of students' reading comprehension test before and after applying the QAR strategy improved by 35.96%. This means that the students' reading comprehension ability can be improved by using Question and Answer Relationships as a teaching strategy in reading class.*

**Keywords** — Reading, Comprehension, QAR.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Reading is a part of English skills that focuses on the process of increasing understanding by observing the contents of the reading to get information and knowledge in a text.

English is one of the most important languages as it is known as the most commonly spoken language in the world. There are four skills which are needed to be learned, including reading, listening, speaking, and writing. One of the main skills in learning English is reading. Reading is about how to get information from the text we are reading. Reading also can make people widen their knowledge by learning ideas, and it can also make the readers know how to use grammatical rules properly.

Reading is an extraordinary achievement where there are some kind of stages and elements of it that should be known and mastered. It is not just reading the text but also requires a

process of thinking including vocabulary mastery, comprehension and interpretation, or even critical reading.

According to Wallace (2004), reading has an important role in almost every course of study. Reading is one of the prominent skills from four basic skills in English and reading should be acquired by students who learn English to get information and knowledge. Readers are usually trying to get meaning from written text through keywords or vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, and the experience they have related to the topic of the materials. It is a process of understanding a text based on the words and the sentences written in the passage to get the ideas or message which the writer trying to deliver to the reader.

Amalia and Devanti (2016) said that comprehension is about understanding words and ideas in a text based on our background knowledge and also discussing and constructing the overall meaning behind them. It is not only about comprehending words but also connecting the context between words, paragraphs and text. When the readers finally could tell some of the ideas that are connected to the text, they will finally be able to understand what it tells about.

Based on Curriculums 2013 about reading comprehension, students are expected to identify general information and specific information from a text, to find out the main ideas in a paragraph. Based on this learning purpose, the researchers aim to apply some strategies that can make students improve their reading skills. The teachers should use some kind of strategy so that the students will have more chances to improve their comprehension in reading class.

According to the explanation that has been made before, the researchers would like to use Question and Answer Relationship (QAR) to help students increase their skills in reading comprehension. Many strategies have been examined to enrich students' comprehension to help students' interest in reading activities. English teachers are hoped to choose an appropriate strategy in their teaching process. According to Raphael, Highfield, and Au (2006), Question and Answer Relationship (QAR) is one of the reading strategies which can help students to be more engaged with the text they are reading. By applying this strategy in teaching reading, teachers can help their students to be more critical and strategic readers.

Additionally, some researchers who researched QAR found that if it is implemented effectively, it could provide a strong foundation for reading comprehension (Kinniburgh, 2010). Peng and Isabel (2007) also found that the students tend to be more confident about their answers after applying this strategy.

Based on the explanation above, the researchers used the Question-and-Answer Relationship (QAR) as a strategy in teaching reading comprehension to find out whether it can improve the comprehension skill of the students in the second grade of MAN 2 Kota Makassar.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. Definition of Reading

Reading is a kind of activity people do to gain some information from any written materials, especially in language learning. Reading is an English skill that is related to some kind of activities including guessing, predicting, checking, and questioning. According to Grellet (2010) guessing in reading means that the readers' background knowledge about the text is sometimes more important than what the thing they will find in the text.

A reading comprehension based on Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, and Wilkinson (1985) is the process of constructing meaning involving complex processes that include background knowledge, vocabulary mastery, and fluency. According to those definitions, reading comprehension is about how to understand the written text by making sense of each word or sentence and connecting them.

According to Westwood (2008), there are three different types of levels in reading comprehension such as literal, inferential, and critical comprehension.

- a. Literal comprehension
- b. Inferential comprehension
- c. Critical comprehension

According to Duffy (2009), there are many strategies for reading comprehension, such as:

- a. Predicting
- b. Monitoring
- c. Questioning
- d. Re-predicting
- e. Imaging

Question and Answer Relationship (QAR) is a questioning strategy that emphasizes a relationship exists between the question, the text, and the background of the reader.

### 2. Question and Answer Relationship

According to Raphael et al. (2006), Question-Answer-Relationships (QAR) train the students about the ability in finding answers that can be stated in the passage, between

sentences, or answers that need to find outside the information stated in the text. The strategies can help the students to search for any information about the text to make them understand it whether it is provided literally in the text or even more advanced than that.

In this strategy, students are taught to use four question/answer relationships (QAR) to find the information they need to answer the question. According to Raphael et al. (2006), there are four types of questions to their answers:

- a. Right Their Questions
- b. Think and Search Questions
- c. Author and Me Questions
- d. On My Own Questions

Questioning is divided based on what kind of thinking levels they need to answer them, which are some needs literal thinking and others need higher levels of thinking. In this research, the researchers will conduct research using Question and Answer Relationship (QAR) because it is one of the effective strategies used in reading comprehension improvement.

## **METHODS**

### **1. Research design**

This research used a pre-experimental design in the form of one group pretest-posttest design with a quantitative approach. The study used a pretest and posttest which were conducted two times, before and after conducting the treatment. The pretest was before the treatment and the posttest was after the treatment. The researchers applied the treatment to one group and then used pre-test and post-test to know the result after applying the treatment.

### **2. Participants**

The participants were students of class XI MIPA 1 MAN 2 Kota Makassar, totaling forty-four students. The researchers used cluster random sampling in selecting participants, where a group or class represented the target population based on the study that was observed (Creswell, 2002).

### **3. Research Instruments**

In this research, the researchers used tests as the instrument for collecting the data. Based on Bachman (1990), the test is some questions given to people to show the condition or the level of development of people. There was one kind of test in this research which was a reading

comprehension test. The reading comprehension test was in a form of multiple choice with a total of 40 items.

#### 4. Techniques of Data Analysis

The data were analyzed by the scores of the pretest and posttest whether there was a significant difference in the students' scores before and after being taught by the questioning technique. The t-test was calculated using Statistical Product and Service Solution 25 (SPSS 25) version software to see the difference in the data and to test the hypothesis.

## RESULTS

### 1. Students' Reading Comprehension Ability

The pre-test was given on the first meeting to know the student's prior knowledge before conducting the treatment and the post-test was given to know the student's reading comprehension skill after conducting the treatment. The mean score of both the pre-test and post-test were compared to see whether or not there was a significant difference in the students' achievement before and after giving treatment using Question and Answer Relationship (QAR).

Table 1. Students' Reading Comprehension

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PRE-TEST	64.8409	44	11.83008	1.78345
POST-TEST	88.1591	44	10.54105	1.58912

Table 2. The Frequency and Rate Percentage of the Students' Pre-test and Post-test Score

Classification	Score	Pre-test		Post-test	
		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Excellent	96-100	-	-	1	2.27%
Very Good	86-95	-	-	33	75.00%
Good	76-85	2	4.55%	5	11.36%
Fairly Good	66-75	22	50.00%	2	4.55%
Fairly	56-65	13	29.55%	2	4.55%
Poor	36-55	5	11.36%	1	2.27%
Very Poor	0-35	2	4.55%	-	-
<b>Total</b>		44	100%	44	100%

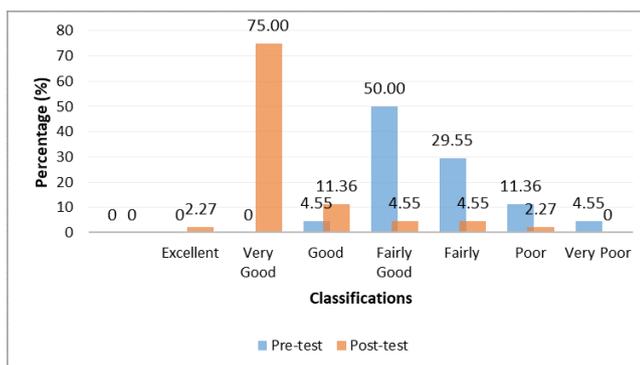


Chart 1. Students' Percentage

Chart 1 showed the percentage of the students' pre-test and post-test. In the pre-test, there were 2 students or 4.55% classified as good, 22 students or 50% classified as fairly good, 13 students or 29.55% classified as fairly, 5 students or 11.36% classified as poor and 2 students or 4.55% classified as very poor. While in the post-test there was 1 student or 2.27% classified as excellent, 33 students or 75% classified as very good, 5 students or 11.36% classified as good, 2 students or 4.55% classified as fairly good, 2 students or 4.55% classified as fairly and 1 student or 2.27% classified as poor.

Table 3. Students' Improvement from Pre-test to Post-test

Pre-test	Post-test	Improvement (%)
64.84	88.16	35.96%

Table 3 showed that the students' improvement to post-test in which post-test was greater than in the pre-test. Where is pre-test adverb was 64.84 and the post-test was 87.41 the improvement from the pre-test to the post-test was 35.96%.

### Hypothesis Testing

To know the level of significance of the pre-test and post-test, the researchers used t-test analysis to measure and examine the significance between the means of both pre-test and post-test with the level of significance ( $p$ ) = 0.05 with the degree of freedom (DF) = 43 because the sample was 44 students ( $N-1=43$ ). If the t-test value is higher than the value of the t-table (2.016), it means that there is a significant difference between the result of the pre-test and post-test. The t-test statistic, analysis of the sample was applied.

The value of the distribution table at 43 as a degree of freedom is 2.016 (significant level of  $\alpha = 0.05$ ). The table showed t-test value (26.62) was found greater than the t-table value (2.016). Based on this result, it can be concluded that the null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected and the alternative Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) was accepted. It means that there was a difference in the

students' scores before and after using the QAR strategy in the reading class of XI MIPA 1 of MAN 2 Kota Makassar.

## DISCUSSIONS

The description of the data collected which was explained in the previous section showed that the mean score of students on pre-test was 64.84 and the mean score of post-tests was 88.16 with a total of 35.96% improvement. Regarding the above findings, the researchers found that the students achieved higher score in reading test by using QAR in reading class. This is relevant to the previous invention. Previous researchers found that only few students could achieve high score on the reading test before applying QAR (Amalia & Devanti, 2016).

The data taken from the pre-test and post-test also showed that students improving their reading comprehension by using Question and Answer Relationship (QAR). Before applying the treatment, there were students who can easily understand the English text they read but that was only the small part of them. Others were tending to be quiet all the time, did not engage much to the class. In this case, the problems were difficulties in understanding the meaning of the text, capturing the information across the sentences and paragraphs and relating the information that come from the text with their own knowledge. In addition, teachers still used techniques promoted in grammatical transition method to solve problems that had an impact on students' boredom, therefore it took a lot of time to understand them. This is relevant to the previous study by Muthalib (2018) which teachers usually do not encourage their students about how to comprehend a text. After conducting pre-test, the result showed that most of the students had low scores.

After the pre-test, the treatment was beginning to be conducted. It was applied in four meetings in total. At the beginning of the treatment, most of them were still quiet, because they still have yet to understand the method and it was also still hard for them to make up questions on their own. However, as the time went by, the students tend to be more engaged with the teaching and learning process, they gave more responses to the class by constantly asking and answering questions through online platform. This strategy also helped them in understanding the text better because they have to read the sentence carefully so that they can make up questions based on it. This means that they began to start capturing information across the sentence and paragraphs and also relating the information that come from the text. This is relevant to the previous study. The study showed that the use of QAR strategy gave

students more willingness and interest in reading (Khasanah & Cahyani, 2016). After finishing the treatment, the post-test was conducted. The result showed the increasing score of the students compared the previous one. Most of the students had higher score than their pre-test. Based on the students' test result, the implementation of Question-and-Answer Relationship (QAR) can help the students improve their reading comprehension. This strategy was very useful to help students to improve their lack of comprehension of English text.

Based on the finding of this research, Question and Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy can help students improve their reading comprehension achievement by significantly increasing the students' scores before and after applying this strategy.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the result of the research, the use of Question-and-Answer Relationship (QAR) in teaching reading can improve the students' reading comprehension skill because is proved by the mean score of the students' test in reading comprehension which was improving from 64.84 to 88.16 after conducting QAR strategy in reading class. It means that there is a significant improvement in the students' reading comprehension of the eleventh grade of MAN 2 Kota Makassar. It can be concluded that the use of QAR as a strategy for teaching reading improve the students' reading comprehension skill of the eleventh-grade students of MAN 2 Kota Makassar.

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