Self-Regulated Learning Phases on Reading Comprehension: Students' Perception

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ABSTRACT

The study addresses the gaps shown by researches related to the importance of reading strategies to create the generation of independent university students that can be started by implementing a Self-regulated learning strategy with its 3 phases guided with proper instructions from lecturer so students are kept working on track while building their reading comprehension skill. Related to the SRL phases, it is important to get students' perceptions of the strategy so the lecturer can decide which phase needs more attention. The objectives of this study are; to observe students' perception of each phase of self-regulated learning strategy and which phase of self-regulated learning strategy is the easiest to follow by students. It is qualitative research with a closed-questions questionnaire distributed to students after applying the self-regulated learning phases on reading comprehension activity. 15 of 20 students agreed that time-allotment helps them to finish the tasks on time in the Forethought and Planning phase. 12 students disagreed that writing the journal regularly in the Monitoring phase could help them choose which strategy worked best for them. The first half could not decide whether they can get their strengths and weaknesses by evaluating their performance in the Reflection phase and the other half agreed on the statement. 20 students agreed that the Forethought and Planning phase was easy to follow. 15 students disagreed that Performance Monitoring was easy to follow. 13 students strongly disagreed that this phase was easy. The Forethought and Planning Phase of SRL was the easiest to follow.

Introduction

With the development of the digital era where the learning process is possible to be held without face-to-face interaction, lecturer and students are facing the condition where the lecturer will not become the only source of learning required to stand in front of the students in the classroom. Students are demanded to be independent learners facilitated by the lecturer or teacher. Various learning strategies have been developed and implemented to teach language skills. One of the strategies raising popularity is the self-regulated learning strategy. In terms of teaching reading comprehension, some popular strategies have been implemented.

Strategies are proven to be effective to teach reading comprehension. Students who applied strategies along with instructions from the teacher showing positive achievement in terms of reading proficiency. Students must be aware of suitable strategies since each

student may have different preferences (Sattar & Branch, 2017). This study showed how important reading strategies are for students. The strategies will help them to comprehend various texts. In the application of the strategies, teachers are responsible for giving clear instructions so students can work on the task properly.

This correlates with another finding that implementing reading strategies in the classroom may face numerous challenges. In terms of teachers, they are required to give proper instructions to help students get access to reading activities to become literate leading to becoming self-directed and independent students. They need to be active in working on meaningful and real-world-related reading activities (Cahyono, n.d.). This shows that the teacher's instructions in guiding students' activities are helpful to guide students reading activities. This needs more development on forms of instructions that can be given by the teacher for students.

Implementing reading strategies is also seen as important to raise students' reading standards. It motivates students to read more especially when a teacher provides adequate time for students to practice more using the strategies both inside and outside the classroom (Hassan & Hamed, 2018). It can be seen that monitoring students to keep involved in reading activities is important to get students familiar with reading strategies. Based on the study, more activities working with monitoring students need to be explored.

Another finding showed that teachers play important role in helping students to reach reading competency along with students' attitude towards the learning process. Teachers need to make sure the students master the ability to predict meanings, develop knowledge about the topic while raising interest in reading (Natsir & Aceh, 2016). For example, in Two Stay Two Stray strategy, it helps students and teacher building a good relationship by increasing students' confidence, interaction, personal accountability, and teamwork skill. Students can also learn the materials better by learning them in a team (D. F. Sari, 2019). Both studies show how important the relationship between teachers and students is in building a good learning environment that will lead to students' benefit. The process of building a good relationship between teacher and students is important to be emphasized by focusing on the activities supporting the process.

In terms of reading comprehension ability, it was found that students have difficulties in vocabulary knowledge and mastery. For example, they found it difficult to guess the meaning of a word from the context of a text given or they could not use the new words they get within a new sentence appropriately based on the context. This problem may be caused by the poor habit of reading. Students may also feel that the reading comprehension course in the classroom is not enjoyable for them (Laily, 2018). These findings showed that students need proper activities to help them overcome the problems in reading.

While students are able to remember the main point of the text, answer literal or inferential questions, they still have to be trained to be independent readers so they can maintain their habit even without teachers around them (Imawan & Ashadi, 2019). The target of leading students to be independent readers seem to be raised to support the digital era where it is possible for students and teachers to not have face-to-face interaction inside the classroom.

This independency, especially for high-level learners such as university students, can be supported with the implementation of a Self-regulated learning strategy where students were involved in learning phases to build their awareness in independent learning strategies as proposed by Zimmerman and Schunk where students personally activate and maintain cognitions, affects, and behaviors to reach the learning objectives learners personally activate and sustain cognitions, affects, and behaviors (Brandmo & Berger, 2013). The strategies were implemented in 3 phases (Panadero & Alonso-Tapia, 2014);
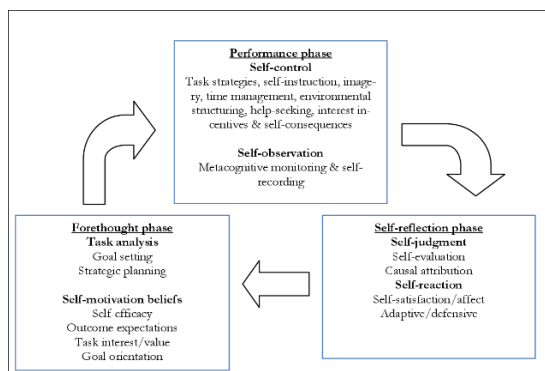

Figure 1. Phases and processes of self-regulation according to Zimmerman and Moylan (2009). © Routledge.

Figure 1. Self-regulated learning phases

In the application of reading comprehension skill, self-regulated learning is presented with proper instructions stating time allotment of completing the tasks, stating objectives of the tasks, monitoring students' learning process, motivating students to interact with lecturer and peers, and doing self-evaluation to determine certain reading strategy suiting them most (Nurjanah, 2020). This study presents the examples of instructions that may be given by the lecturer in integrating self-regulated learning (SRL) with reading comprehension skills.

SRL is proven to be effective in teaching reading that the students taught with SRL showed better achievement than those who were not (Nejabati, 2015). In addition, SRL improved students' metacognition in terms of metacognitive awareness and regulation (Roohani, 2015). Using SRL in the classroom can be effective since it deals with students' awareness of the text reading and regulation.

This study addresses the gaps shown by researches above researches related to the importance of reading strategies leading to the generation of independent learners, especially the high-level learners of university students, that can be started by implementing a self-regulated learning strategy with its 3 phases guided with proper instructions from lecturer so students are kept working on track while building their reading comprehension skill. Related to the implementation of the phases, it is important to get students' perceptions of the strategy so the lecturer can decide which phase needs more attention.

The novelty stated in this paper is the perception of students on 3 phases of SRL. Understanding the students' perception will create a good relationship between lecturer and students and also build a conducive learning environment.

The objectives of this study are; 1) to observe students' perceptions of each phase of self-regulated learning strategy, 2) to observe which phase of self-regulated learning strategy is considered the easiest to follow by students.

Research Methods

This research applies a qualitative research design to answer the research questions as described that qualitative research aims at gaining insight into the specific meanings and behaviors in social phenomena through subjective experiences of participants (Bolderston et al., 2018). This study describes the results of a closed-questions questionnaire distributed to students after applying the self-regulated learning phases on reading comprehension activity.

The subjects were 20 students of third-semester students of English Literature Department at Universitas Ngudi Waluyo Semarang. The students were on the level of interpretive reading where this level requires them to overview the significance of the text, to be aware of relations such as cause-effect or part to the whole, to compare, to conclude, to infer, and to generalize(D. P. Sari, 2015). They were chosen because they were considered as students on the level of being able to work more independently without being guided by the lecturer.

A questionnaire with closed-questions was distributed covering perceptions on 2 points of view; 1) whether or not the activity given in each phase of SRL is helpful, 2) whether or not the phase is easy to follow. The questionnaire was presented with a Likert scale from Strongly disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). Likert scale is defined as preferable numbers pointing the scale and the analysis of the scales (Joshi & Pal, 2015).

The questionnaire was distributed after students applied SRL in their reading activities. The steps of working with the self-regulated learning phases in this study were applied based on the SRL in Reading Comprehension Instructions to give students precise guidance and keep them work on track (Nurjanah, 2020);

1. Forethought and planning phase:
   Students were given time-allotment on each task. For example, they were given a text completed with 10 questions to answer in 10 minutes. It means students had to be able to manage the 10-minute time given by dividing it to the questions and time they had to read the text. The time given was varied based on text length and the numbers of questions given.
2. Monitoring Performance phase:
   Students were given a journal where they have to fill a journal stating when and which task they worked on, the strategy they used to complete the task, the time given, and the time they spent.
3. Reflection on Performance phase:
   Students were assigned to evaluate their performance by deciding which parts need to be improved and which one has reached their goals. The former may need further assistant or feedback from the lecturer.

After following the phases, a questionnaire was distributed presented as follow:

Table 1

Questionnaire

Phase	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Undecided (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)

Forethought and Planning Phase	1. Following the time-allotment helps me to finish the tasks on time
	2. This phase is easy to work with
Performance Monitoring	1. Writing the journal regularly helps me to choose which strategy works best for me
	2. This phase is easy to work with
Reflection on Performance	1. Evaluating my performance helps me to determine my strength and weakness in comprehending text
	2. This phase is easy to work with

The results of the questionnaire then were analyzed descriptively.

Results and Discussion

The results describe the students' perceptions of the activity given by the lecturer in each phase of SRL strategy and their perceptions of which phase is mentioned as the easiest one to follow. The results of the questionnaire were presented as;

Table 2

Questionnaire Results

Phase			Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Undecided (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Forethought and Planning Phase	1.	Following the time-allotment helps me to finish the tasks on time				15/20 (75%)	5/20 (25%)
	2.	This phase is easy to work with				20/20 (100%)	
Performance Monitoring	1.	Writing the journal regularly helps me to choose which strategy works best for me		12/20 (60%)		8/20 (40%)	
	2.	This phase is easy to work with		15/20 (75%)	2/20 (10%)	3/20 (15%)	

Reflection on Performance	1.	Evaluating my performance helps me to determine my strength and weakness in comprehending text			10/20 (50%)	10/20 (50%)
	2.	This phase is easy to work with	13/20 (65%)	7/20 (35%)		

What did students think about the phases of Self-regulated learning?

To answer the first objective of research about students' perceptions of activity given in each phase, the questionnaire results showed that 15 of 20 students agreed that following the time-allotment helps them to finish the tasks on time in the Forethought and Planning phase. 12 students disagreed that writing the journal regularly could help them choose which strategy worked best for them during the Monitoring phase. It is difficult for them to keep writing the journal, moreover, to evaluate the strategies they used. When it came to the activity of evaluating their performance to determine strengths and weaknesses in the Reflection of Performance phase, students were divided into 2 sides; where the first half could not decide whether they can get their strengths and weaknesses by evaluating their performance, and the other half agreed on the statement.

Which is the easiest phase to follow?

Related to the second objective of this study, 20 students agreed that the Forethought and Planning phase was easy to follow. 15 students disagreed that Performance Monitoring was easy to follow and 13 of them strongly disagreed that the Reflection phase was easy for them.

The Forethought and planning phase became the easiest one for students because, in this phase, they were only required to manage the time given to them. By following the time-allotment, they set their plans on which one to do first; reading the text or checking on the questions.

The Performance and monitoring phase was mentioned as a difficult phase because students felt that writing the journal was boring and not challenging enough. They often forgot to fill the journal right after the reading activity which made them had to write the activities of several days in only one day.

The Reflection phase was considered a difficult phase because students could not conclude which strategies work best for them. Sometimes they did not feel that they applied certain strategies for them. They commented that their ability to comprehend the text was also based on their familiarity with the vocabulary in the text instead of due to certain strategies.

Discussion

The implementation of these phases was in line with the previous study stating that schema theory, language skills and automaticity, vocabulary development, comprehension strategy training, and reading-writing relations are considered important (Hesham Suleiman Alyousef, 2006). The automaticity in the phases is reflected where students were consciously controlling the process of learning by managing their time so they could finish their task on time.

Being strict and motivated to follow the time allotment to finish the task correlates with the findings where motivation is helpful on reading comprehension activities (Ahmadi, 2016). It is also supported by the finding where even non-verbal motivation is also seen as a prominent aspect (Rahman et al., 2020).

From the questionnaires, although not all phases are considered as easy to follow by students, they showed a positive perception of how each phase activity helps them in reading comprehension skills.

The activity of following time-allotment, given in the first phase of SRL in this study, reflects the idea from previous research where the lecturer needs to provide an anxiety-free atmosphere, time to practice, and pressure in terms of persuasion and timing (Habibullah, n.d.). By giving time allotment, the lecturer tries to keep the students set their goal and keep them focus on the task given since they know they have limited time to complete the task. The time they spend to finish the task is then noted in their journal so they can see whether or not they have reached the target time.

Unfortunately, the activity of keeping their process recorded in the journal is seen as difficult activity. This can help them determine a suitable strategy for them to study as what stated in previous research that mastering reading strategy means students are able to comprehend what they read, what they do not perceive, and when to apply proper strategies to increase their understanding. Successful readers attempt to use numerous strategies in reading instead of using the same strategies over and over again for different texts. They tend to be creative in applying strategies. (Pourhosein Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). Though keeping a record is not considered helpful, evaluating performance, as the third activity, is taken as a helpful activity for students.

Seeing that students have a positive perception of SRL phases in reading comprehension skills, it is possible to make SRL one of the popular reading strategies in the learning process. It is similar to what was stated in another study that SRL works by building a framework of instructional scaffolding (El-henawy et al., 2018).

The activities given in the phases of this study were assigned by considering the aspect of discipline, awareness, creativity, and persistence. Those aspects were also stated in another study with names of attention, persistence, flexibility, motivation, and confidence as results of implementing SRL for effective teaching and learning (Salter et al., 2009)

This also emphasizes the aspects of elements of effective reading comprehension activities that can be implemented in every teaching and learning process where they are aimed at building discipline and knowledge, giving exposure to a wide range of texts, giving encouraging texts and context, teaching strategies, teaching text structures, getting students

involved in a discussion, building vocabulary and language knowledge, integrating reading and writing, observing and evaluating (Duke et al., 2011).

Conclusion

Students have a positive perception that the Forethought and Planning Phase of SRL helps them to finish the tasks on time by following the time-allotment. This phase is also mentioned as the easiest phase for students to follow. The Performance Monitoring phase is not considered helpful by students since they had to write the journal regularly. They did not see this second phase as an easy phase. Evaluating performance, in the Reflection phase, to determine strength and weakness in comprehending text also gained positive perception from students. This phase is considered more difficult than the second phase. Further studies were expected to evaluate the teachers' perspective related to the implementation of the SRL phases in teaching reading comprehension and to investigate the success of applying SRL strategy from gender perspectives.

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