

LAPORAN PENELITIAN

CRITICAL READING:

The Students' Problems, Strategies, and Reflections

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji membaca kritis dari aspek masalah yang dihadapi siswa, strategi yang dilakukan, dan refleksi tentang pembelajaran Reading III. Fokus mata kuliah ini adalah membaca kritis berbagai jenis teks, teks akademik dan fiksi. Membaca kritis merupakan level ketrampilan membaca yang paling tinggi, sehingga sangatlah penting untuk mengetahui lebih dalam tentang bagaimana mahasiswa melakukan pembacaan kritis terhadap sebuah teks. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah deskriptif kualitatif. Data diperoleh dari mahasiswa semester IV yang sedang menempuh Reading III. Data berupa jawaban mahasiswa terhadap kuesioner terbuka yang terdiri dari 3 pertanyaan: 1) Masalah apa yang dihadapi dalam membaca kritis?, 2) Strategi apa yang dilakukan untuk dapat membaca kritis?, dan 3) Bagaimana Reading III dapat memfasilitasi untuk meningkatkan kemampuan membaca kritis?. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa menghadapi masalah aspek linguistik (tata bahasa dan kosa kata yang kompleks, struktur sintaksis), konten (informasi detail) dan non-linguistik (minat membaca). Strategi yang digunakan terdiri dari strategi ketrampilan membaca (literal dan inferensial, analisa) dan non-ketrampilan (meningkatkan motivasi dan diskusi dengan teman). Terkait dengan refleksi, mahasiswa merefleksikan bahwa pembelajaran Reading III memfasilitasi mereka untuk membaca kritis melalui analisa teks, meringkas, dan mengembangkan pertanyaan. Selanjutnya, dapat disarankan bahwa pembelajaran Reading agar lebih melatih mahasiswa menganalisa dan mengevaluasi, dan ketrampilan mengembangkan pertanyaan dalam proses sebelum, ketika, dan sesudah membaca. Untuk penelitian berikutnya, dalam mengkaji strategi mana yang lebih efektif untuk membaca kritis.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This research is about students' critical reading problems, strategies, and reflections. This chapter presents background of the study, research problems, research objective, scope of the study, significance of the study, and definition of key terms

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Among the four reading behaviors namely scanning, skimming, thorough/comprehension, critical reading is the most sophisticated and, therefore, it is considered as the most difficult one. Critical reading means that the ability to evaluate and judge the text based on very full understanding not only the explicit information but also implicit information. Critical reading is valued as an essential part for students' future study and reading proficiency in general. It plays an important role in students' or an individual's life. Lewis (1983) states that when it is taught, there will be citizens who are able to give judgment to what they read based on logical reasoning and facts, not a subjective one. This point is a required skill for students as a member of an academic community.

The importance of critical reading has inspired ELT researchers to study it more intensively. Macknish (2011) conducted a small-scale action research for post-secondary ESL Chinese students in Singapore. The study reveals that the students engage with critical reading discourse when they were facilitated with scaffolding and opportunities to practice. The importance of critical reading for academic success is also explored by Harris (2004) through the teacher's beliefs and knowledge about critical reading and academic writing. The study reveals

that the teaching practice was influenced by the definition of research (academic writing) the students had to reach. Teacher with the belief that the ability to read critically influences the students' academic writing performance.

Having effective teaching strategy becomes the main concern to improve students' critical reading. The reading class facilitates the students with the text representing the advanced level. When the text is discussed from various dimensions, to some extent, the teaching activity misses the point about how to provide questions or points of discussion leading to read critically. A study conducted by Haromi (2014) for 60 BA junior students of English confirmed the idea about the role of teaching strategy for improving critical reading skill. The experimental study is about the effect of teaching through appraisal on students' critical reading. The study reveals that the strategy gave positive effect on the students' critical reading proficiency.

At the stage of scanning and skimming, a reader concentrates in factual information which is commonly required as the beginning stages for comprehension reading behavior. A comprehension stage is known as total understanding of the reading text. All three reading behaviors/skills are taught in Reading I and II. The students of Reading I and II are given practical strategies to gain the factual and explicit information of the text. Following the two Reading courses, Reading III is taught to facilitate the students for comprehending the content, the rhetorical aspects, and the language features of various reading texts at advanced level by implementing a range of reading strategies to achieve critical reading (Reading Syllabus, 2014).

The syllabus implies that Reading III is the time to accumulate the students' reading skills to be a critical readers. It is believed that being critical is supported by other great reading skills. An educational public service (2011) working on study guide mentions the characteristics of critical readers. First, they are honest with themselves. Second, they resist manipulation. Third, they overcome confusion. Fourth, they ask questions. Fifth, they base judgments on evidence. Sixth, they look for connection between subjects. Last, they are intellectually independent.

Focusing Reading III in critical reading is in line with stated by Harris (2004:3) that the ability to write a well-crafted, multiple-source research paper reveals the ability to read and think critically and write academically. These are necessary skills for high school and college success. However, critical reading has been not the main concern in reading classroom. A study conducted by Bosley (2008) reveals that critical reading is not explicitly taught to college freshmen students. The data from interview series with teacher and from documents become the evidence of the findings. There are two possible causes to the situation. As the research was done for freshman, it might be not the time for teaching critical reading to them, or the reading classroom did not use the idea of read to write in the classroom.

Reading or writing is part of a reader's or writer's process to gain very good literacy skills. Rosenblatt (1994) noted that goal setting (e.g. having a purpose for reading) was part of the transactional process of reading. She distinguished between efferent readings, during which readers take away information from a text, and aesthetic readings, during which readers' attentions

are centered on what they are living through during their relationship with the text. In other words, readers assume stances when reading depending upon the text being read and the purposes for reading it. Efferent reading generally occurs when a reader is concerned with taking away information from a text. Such is the case when a reader is reading for the purpose of answering a research question. During an aesthetic reading, the purpose of reading is fulfilled during the reading event.

The complexities of critical reading inspires the researcher to have an exploration in the students' problems and strategies in critical reading, and their reflection on how reading III helps them improve their critical reading skill. The research is based on Reading III course taught by the researcher. This is in line with the research theme from the faculty, that is, evaluating the teaching activity. The study becomes one of key findings about the teaching of critical reading in EFL context. The findings strengthen the importance of critical reading for students' academic success.

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEMS

This study focuses on the students' reflection on their critical reading skill covering the problems they face and the strategies they use in doing critical. Meanwhile, the students' reflection on the contribution of Reading III is also investigated. Therefore, the research questions are:

1. What problems do the students of Reading III course face in critical reading?

2. What strategies do the students of Reading III course employ in critical reading?
3. How does Reading III course help the students improve critical reading skill?

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Researches on teachers' professional development gain significant interest from ELT practitioners. Through this research, it is expected to be an exploration towards real situation about:

1. The students' problems they face in reading the English text critically.
2. The students' strategies they use in reading the English text critically critical reading
3. The students' reflection about how the reading activity in Reading III course can improve their critical reading skill.

1.4 RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE

Research on critical reading now becoming research interest of educational researchers. By conducting research on critical reading, we can identify what problems faced by students, the strategies they used to read critically, and the contribution of Reading Comprehension III course in improving their critical reading skill. The findings is the essential for having initial identification about critical reading. The study has practical contribution as

well as pedagogical implication in English Language Teaching, particularly reading comprehension teaching.

Therefore, by referring to the data about the three areas investigating in this study, Reading Comprehension III classroom can be managed appropriately. The appropriate practice for teaching critical reading is something that cannot be ignored.

1.5 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

To avoid misunderstanding on the ideas of the research topic, it is necessary to define the key terms:

- Critical Reading is the reading skill that is try to read and evaluate the text.

In the Reading III course, students are directed or guided to be able to not only comprehend but also evaluate the text. The result of critical reading are the students are able to distinguish between fact and opinion, to figure out the author's intention, and to evaluate the text.

- Students' critical reading problems are any difficulties in reading and comprehending the text which leading to students' failure to make interpretation, to find the most important information, and to make evaluation about the text.
- Students' strategies are any effort to critically read the text with high complexity, the strategies could be started from very basic reading behaviors to sophisticated one. To be able to read critically, the students firstly must be able to find the general and specific information, then make inference/draw conclusion leading to evaluate the text.

- Students' reflection is the way they see and evaluate the classroom activity representing critical reading activity. It is about how the activity make them aware of critical reading and how the activity improve their critical reading skill.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Critical reading has been considered as important skill for university students. This chapter is divided into several parts discussion critical reading and its scope. The coverage of the discussion are: defining critical reading, how to read critically, reading at EFL university.

2.1 DEFINING CRITICAL READING

Critical might be defined diversely Edge (2011) gives clear definition which can distinguish between non-critical reading and critical reading. Non-critical (or pre-critical) reading is concerned with recognizing what a text says about the topic. The goal is to make sense of the presentation as a sequence of thoughts, to understand the information, ideas, and opinions stated within the text from sentence to sentence, paragraph to paragraph. This is a linear activity. Critical reading is an analytic activity. The reader rereads a text to identify patterns of elements -- information, values, assumptions, and language usage-- throughout the discussion. These elements are tied together in an interpretation, an assertion of an underlying meaning of the text as a whole. It is important to read critically. Wang and Gierl (2011, p. 169) also define that critical reading is the reading skills that involve a higher level of thinking in which the reader uses a questioning attitude, logical analysis, and inference to judge the worth of what is read.

As the sophisticated level of reading, critical reading can be recognized based on the following characteristic features stated by Huijie (2010): a) examine

the evidence or arguments presented, the evidence given in most written text is objective evidences. The evidence is taken from general truth, statistical data or authoritative statement. Knowing the evidence or arguments can allocate the reader about the position of the writer, b) check out any influences on the evidence or arguments. It means that the ability of the the students to see how strong the evidences used to strengthen the author's idea; c) check out the limitations of study design or focus which means that the students examine the missing points from the text or examine the points that weakes the arguments, e ; d) examine the interpretations made meaning that the students also carefully evaluate how the author interpret the topic being discussed, is it positive or negative interpretation, and e) decide to what extent you are prepared to accept the authors' arguments, opinions, or conclusions.

Critical reading can be divided into several stages or hierarchical structure as what has been proposed by Wang and Gierl (2011). They have 3 hierarchy of critical reading which is developed through three cognitive processes; the surface code, the textbase, and the situational model. The surface code is the exact words and syntax existing in the text or it is commonly known as literal reading. Meanwhile, the textbase requires basic inference to establish text interconnection. The situational model refers making inferences through connecting the text and background knowledge. Critical reading is considered as cognitive demand. The cognitive demand means that a reader will do evaluation and synthesis while reading. They make clarify the cognitive attribute in the first hierarchy:

1. determining the meaning of words;
2. understanding the content, form and function of sentences;
3. understanding the situation implied by a text;
4. understanding the content, form, and function of larger sections of text;
5. analyzing authors' purposes, goals, and strategies;
6. using knowledge-based reasoning and problem solving; and
7. exercising metacognitive control over other processes by monitoring comprehension and processing capacity and selecting strategies such as task switching.

The second hierarchy is more focused on the importance of context clues to determine the meaning of words. Another added point to critical reading placed in this hierarchy is making inference. The third hierarchy is to show that reading is an interactive process between reader and text. Critical reading requires you to evaluate the arguments in the text. A reader needs to distinguish fact from opinion, and look at arguments given for and against the various claims. This also means being aware of her/his opinions and assumptions (positive and negative) of the text you are reading so you can evaluate it honestly. It is also important to be aware of the writer's background, assumptions and purposes. All writers have a reason for writing and will emphasize details which support their reason for writing and ignore details that do not.

2.2 HOW TO READ CRITICALLY

A lot of study guides providing strategies and tips of reading critically.

The following questions listed in study guide learning development module (2009) may be usefully asked about any text you are reading:

A. Purpose and background

Why are of text is it: research report, essay, textbook, book review?, What do you know about the subject of the text?, What else has been written on the subject of the text?, What controversies exist in this area? How does this text fit in?

B. The author and the text

Who is the author?, What do you know about the author?, What authority does the author have?, Who is the intended audience?, What is the author's purpose?, Why has the text been written?, What is the source of the text?, Is it reputable?, Who is the publisher?, What reputation to they have?, What is the date of publication?, Is it appropriate to the argument?, What is the writer's attitude towards the topic?, What conclusions are drawn?

C. Evidence used

Is there a clear distinction between fact and opinion?, Is evidence used to support arguments?, How good is the evidence?, Are all the points supported?, In an experimental study, was the sample size adequate and are the statistics reliable?, Are there any unsupported points?, Are they well-known facts or generally accepted opinions?, How does the writer use other texts and other people's ideas?, Are the writer's conclusions

reasonable in the light of the evidence presented?, How do the conclusions relate to other similar research?

D. Assumptions made

What assumptions has the writer made?, Are they valid?, What beliefs or values does the writer hold?, Are they explicit?, Look at the language that is used, e.g. active/passive verbs, nominalisations, pronouns, ergative verbs, articles, etc. Is it always possible to identify participants and processes? e.g. compare: the government increased taxes; they increased the taxes, taxes were increased; taxes increased; the taxes increased, there was an increase in taxes. Look for emphatic words such as it is obvious, definitely and of course. Look for hedges: possible, might, perhaps. Look for emotional arguments, use of maximisers: completely, absolutely, entirely, or minimizers: only, just, hardly, simply, merely. How else could the text have been written?

2.3 CRITICAL READING IN EFL READING CLASSROOM

At university level, students are expected to be able to develop and pose higher level reading skill. Reading is unseparable aspect in study life. Before doing presentation on particular topic, students will support their logical reasoning by reading relevant texts. Before writing an essay, it is obviously that students will have library research which is sometime they will summarize, synthesize, and write the annotated bibliography of the articles. Therefore, critical reading should the emphasize of reading activity. However, based on an identification done by Wallace (2003), it can be stated that students did not get

sufficient exposure to experience critical reading. It was due to these following several causes; limited time allocation, large classes, teachers' knowledge, and students' reading habit.

The second challenge to develop students' critical reading skill is the fact that many ESL reading courses focus on decoding surface features of texts and teaching discrete skills for mastery of linguistic structure (Wallace, 2003, p. 4). Undoubtedly, a lack of familiarity with English texts may require students to work on more decoding at the semantic level, but this need not prevent critical engagement. Indeed, Wallace (2003) goes on to argue that "the notion of criticality cannot be linked to innate linguistic competence but is socially and educationally learned" (p. 4). That is, fluency and accuracy of language do not necessarily correspond with a critical disposition, so even some expert language users (whether native or nonnative speakers) may not read critically. In her study of ELLs in a critical reading course in the United Kingdom, Wallace found that "language awareness and language development can occur in tandem in that both the analytic reading of texts and critical talk around texts constitute learning opportunities (p. 193)". Teachers, therefore, can help students cultivate both language proficiency and critical reading concomitantly.

My own observation is that many EFL teachers do not help students develop critical reading because they do not have time. Admittedly, teaching text analysis tools, providing opportunities for critical reading practice, and discussing multiple interpretations of texts takes time away from other course requirements. Lack of time and teacher confidence, however, should not be used as excuses for failing to provide opportunities for students to read and discuss

critically. The focus of reading the text is still the literal level. This situation is influenced by the very classical students' reading problems. We cannot ignore that students have low reading proficiency. It was reflected from the initial discussion in the classroom when the teacher taught at the first meeting of reading class. Common problems that students faced were recognizing the meaning of difficult words, losing concentration when read longer texts, and finding main idea. The problems were obviously basic problems, therefore, moving to more higher level of reading was considered as very impossible thing.

At UIN Malang, critical reading is not independently taught. It is included as one of reading skills that must be taught in Reading course. Reading course has three different levels from Reading I, II, III which take 2 credits each meaning once in a week. Reading course has three levels. Reading Comprehension I is to facilitate the learners with basic reading skill such as scanning, skimming, and basic comprehension skills. It is also at the literal level. The students are given intermediate text to read and figure out the information. The test to measure the students' comprehension is reading test with cloze test. Reading Comprehension II is to facilitate the students to inferential reading. The text is at pre-advanced level in which students are encouraged to sharpen their ability to make inference/draw conclusion. Students are also equipped with skill to take note and summary, synthesize as well. Reading comprehension III is to promote students' critical reading skill. The materials are at advanced level such as journal articles, IELTS and TOEFL reading tests.

In my Reading Comprehension III course, several activities are applied. The meeting is allocated to students' presentation on different advanced text

types. The first three meetings are lecturing about the basic concept of critical reading covering the definition, the characteristics, and the steps. Then, group of four students are formed to prepare for the next meeting. The texts to be presented are academic texts, opinion column, short stories, and popular science. Two meetings are allocated for reading standardized tests, TOEFL and IELTS. When the students read, then present the content of the text, they are required to cover all aspects in great details.

In the form of power point presentation, students should cover the details of general, specific, explicit and implicit, purpose, fact and opinion of the text. Moreover, at the end of the presentation, students' analysis and evaluation on what strong and weak aspects of the text should be given. With this kind of teaching scenario, the students are exposed and trained how to read different advanced reading texts critically.

2.4 RESEARCH IN CRITICAL READING

Patching, et. al. (1983) compared a control and two experimental treatments, i.e. a direct-instruction approach and a workbook-with-corrective-feedback approach, in training three critical reading skills. The skills were the ability to detect instances of faulty generalization, false causality, and invalid testimonial. Thirty-nine fifth-grade students were randomly assigned to one of three groups. When a 3-day instructional intervention was completed, students were given specially designed tests: one main measure, a domain-referenced test geared to the material taught, and two supplementary measures. Significant differences were found on performance on the main post-test between the direct-

instruction sample and both the workbook-with-corrective-feedback and no-intervention samples.

Results from the two supplementary tests were either non-significant or favoured direct instruction. In a descriptive study, Akbari (2008) highlighted the applications of critical pedagogy for L2 classrooms and provides hints as to how FL teaching can result in the improvement of the lives of those who are normally not considered in ELT discussions. Stressing on certain requirements for implementing critical pedagogy such as decentralization of decision-making (as of content, teaching methodology and testing), he calls for the application of the potentials of critical pedagogy by reviving the required attitude and encouraging the significance of learners' experiences as legitimate departure points in any meaningful learning enterprise. In an attempt to detect the effect of raising students' critical reading ability through explicit teaching of some techniques of critical discourse analysis (CDA), Koupae Dar, et. al. (2010) conducted a research on 60 junior BA English students. Three paired news articles were selected from online editions of BBC, Press TV and New York Times, each pair being on the same subject. Prior to the study, the participants were asked to analyse the articles critically. Once the teaching was carried out, they were asked to analyse the same articles for a second time. Moreover, they responded to a questionnaire to reveal any change in their attitudes towards or motivation to English critical reading comprehension. Overall, the study recorded a significantly positive effect of explicit teaching of CDA techniques on developing critical reading ability among EFL learners.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is aimed at revealing the kinds of reading problems, strategies, reflections in critical reading process. This chapter explains research design, research participants, research instruments, data collection procedure, and data analysis.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research use descriptive qualitative method as it is to describe, explore, and find personal subjectivity which is socially constructed. The use of qualitative method helps to gain better and deeper understanding about the students' problems and strategies in critical reading. Reading III course is to facilitate students' critical reading skill as it is considered as the highest reading course allocated for the highest reading skill/behavior.

3.2 DATA AND DATA SOURCE

The data of the research are the students' response to open-ended questionnaire about critical reading involving the critical reading problems they have and the strategies they use to improve their critical reading skill. Additionally, the data are also about the students' reflection on activities employed in the classroom. The participants are 76 students of Reading III classes of English Department classified into high, middle and low. The classification is based on the score on the final project.

They are at the fourth semester in which the academic expectation for them are high as they will prepare to choose their academic mainstream, linguistic or literature, and to study more substantial content courses such as Introduction to Applied Linguistics, Literary Criticism, Semantics, Syntax, English Drama, Cultural Studies, etc that all requires more intensive reading activities. Therefore, students will be at the situation that requires them to read intensively to cope with the academic expectation for the following semesters. Students' critical reading becomes primary means to master content courses on both Linguistic and Literature. As we know that, the texts on pure content courses have high complexity. Students are really challenged with these list of reading materials. They can survive and perform better academic achievement through better reading skill, especially critical reading.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION

The data are collected through open-ended questionnaire and interview with each student based on the appointment. Data for research question no. 1 on the students' problems in critical reading are collected based on the question on "What problems do you face in doing critical reading?". The data for research question no. 2 on the students' strategies in critical reading are collected by addressing a question "What reading strategies do you use to read critically?". Data for research question no. 3 are collected by asking a question "How does Reading III Course improve your critical reading skill?". Semi-structured and unstructured interview are used in this research. Semi-structured interview helps researchers do knowledge-producing and potential dialogue about how students

view critical reading and other relevant issues about critical reading.

Unstructured interview functions as the tool to have deeper exploration about students' self-evaluation/reflection in their critical reading skill and experiences towards critical reading, and to find influential circumstances supporting critical reading process. Classroom practice documents will be another important research instrument to have the real picture about what have been done so far in improving students' critical reading.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis done through several stages. Firstly, data are categorized based on the three research questions. RQ 1 is about the problems on critical reading. The problem are categorized into linguistic and non-linguistic problem. The linguistic problems deal with vocabulary, sentence structure, content and organization, topic and main idea which all are analyzed based on the aspects of reading, those are content, language, and rhetoric. RQ 2 is about the strategies to critical reading. Almost the same with the problems, the strategies are categorized into reading and non-reading strategies. These are analyzed based the key concept of reading from the basic to the highest level of reading behaviors. RQ 3 is students' reflection which mostly are analyzed based on their evaluation on the course. Interpretative devices such as interpretation and understanding on data are mostly done to analyze the data. As this is qualitative research, there is no effort to make generalization on the data, but it generates the concept of EFL students' critical reading by having statement of relationship among the theories.

3.5 RESEARCH PLAN

This research is planned into the following schedule:

Time	Activities
April	Proposal Writing and Submission
May	Seminar, Instrument development
June	Data Collection
July-August	Data Analysis
August	Dissemination
September	Reporting and Submission

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This research addresses three following research questions: 1) What problems do the students of Reading III course face in critical reading?, 2) What strategies do the students of Reading III course employ in critical reading? and 3) How does Reading III course help the students improve critical reading skill?. This chapter covers data analysis on RQ 1, RQ 2, and RQ 3, and the discussion for all research questions.

4.1 DATA ANALYSIS

Research Context

This research is about an evaluation on Reading III course, therefore, it is important to describe the details of the course. These problems are basically common students' problems in reading activity. Limited vocabulary size hinders the students to comprehend the text. Texts are constructed from group of words which is situated by the topic of content areas. The more complex the text is the more difficult to comprehend. The complexity of the text is indicated by the sentence structure, the clauses, the choice of words used to convey the message. Both academic and non-academic text have its own complexity. In the classroom, the students are exposed by different text types with high degree of complexities.

The academic text involving are research-based paper/article and conceptual paper/article are introduced to the students of reading III. Reading for research-based article cover the comprehension on the background of study, the

research questions, the objectives, the significance, and the definition of key term. And then, the literature review and the method. The result and discussion is also essential part to critically read as well as the conclusion and suggestion. The main reason for assigning students reading this text type is to familiarize them with the way to read it, then, they will be able to evaluate the topic being discussed and how the research reveals the findings.

The conceptual paper is also given to make students aware of how to gain information about conceptual idea. Reading conceptual paper makes students critically see the support used by the writer to strengthen the idea. The students are assigned to find the topic of the discussion, and what are important point the discussion. Students, then, work collaboratively with the friend to present the text. In the presentation session, all members presents the details of the text using power point presentation, and there is question and answer session, and feedback from teacher. The procedures is applied to any text types.

Based on the course outline, Reading III is designed to meet the standard of competence stated in the syllabus. The first session is about inferences which is focused on making summary/drawing conclusion. This is important to be reviewed because students learned this on Reading II. As the starting point for critical reading, making inference/drawing conclusion play important part.

RQ 1: Students' problems

Based on the data analysis, the students problems are categorized based on these following areas:

Problem 1: Linguistic or Language-related problems

The problems are related to the internal components of the text. A text is constructed by group of words, group of sentences to convey the message. From the students' written responses, it can be found the following problems:

Understanding unfamiliar vocabulary and phrases, limited/lack of vocabulary, unfamiliar idioms, compound words and phrasal verb, hard to understand the whole meaning of every single words, guessing the meaning of the word without looking up in the dictionary, unfamiliar keywords, the high level of language in academic writing.

Analysis

From the mentioned problems, it can be explained that students still have very basic problems which mostly deal with unfamiliar words and its components. The students are fail to understand the meaning of familiar words from the context clues. It is shown from their ability to know the meaning of difficult word without opening dictionary. In fact, students are given some strategies to cope with unfamiliar words. When learning Reading I, students are exposed by the materials focusing on guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words using context clues. Practices referring to that strategy are given through reading comprehension questions. Therefore, when the problems appeared, it does not mean they do not how to find the meaning of the words, but it because of the complexity of the text. Another reason is the failure to guess the unfamiliar word

is because of students' sense of connection between the previous skill and the present reading activity.

The word-related problem tells that the students cannot find the connection among the words. They still think that vocabulary mastery is the most essential element to comprehend the text. It is shown by the majority of students say that it is hard to understand the meaning of every single word. The students keep thinking that knowing and understanding every word helps to gain the message of the text. It is not totally wrong, however, making connection among the words is the most important one. A text is constructed from a group of specific words representing the idea, the argument, the attitude of the author. But, knowing each word does not guarantee to figure out the information.

The complexity of the text that is indicated by students' problem on the high level of language, and grammar or syntactical structure. In Reading III, students are exposed by different text types including academic text. As stated before, the academic texts include research-based paper and conceptual paper. This is absolutely new reading material for them, of course, it invites some problems. The rationale of giving high complexity text are, firstly, it follows the syllabus that requires students to be able to read advanced reading text and academic texts. Secondly, it fills the students' need to have example of academic text, therefore, they can follow the pattern and the structure of the text they read to be a model for their own academic project such as article writing project and thesis.

Problem 2: Content-related problems

Problem 2 is about the content of the reading text. It has various dimensions, those are: interpreting text, difficult to understand the text and draw a conclusion completely, understanding the context, difficult to get all information from a whole text, need a long time to get the main idea of the text, evaluating the arguments of the text, finding the important point of the whole text, analyzing the content, misinterpreting about the author's purpose, cannot understand the author's purpose well, giving comment to text, finding the writer's explicit purpose, making interpretation, finding the implicit meaning of the text, cannot guess what the text says easily, making relevant questions, making inappropriate questions, making long summary, identifying the topic sentence in every paragraph, contextualizing the meaning, misunderstanding about the meaning.

Analysis

The second problem can be structured from the basic to the highest level of reading problem. It is started from problem in identifying the topic sentence or the main idea of the paragraph. Not all paragraphs in the text state the main idea explicitly, especially, when they are written by advanced author. In this case, the students should be able to find by themselves while reading which frequently raises many problems. Once they cannot find the main idea, the rest of reading the text will be meaningless. One of basic reading skill is being able to find the main idea which is commonly facilitated by reading comprehension question on 'what is the main idea of the passage.

Another problematic reading skill that belongs to this area is finding the explicit purpose of the text. Explicit purpose is the stated information about what

the text about is, what the author's intention is, and what for the text is written. Knowing the explicit purpose leads to comprehensive understanding about the text. When the students have this problem, as a result, they are also fail to read and comprehend the text to the further comprehension. Other stated second problems above tell that the failure to find explicit purpose results the inability to find easily what the text about is, and goes to more serious problem that is misinterpreting the author's purpose and misunderstanding the message.

Problem 3: Non-linguistic problems

Problem 3 is non-linguistic problem involving less of concentrations, having no interest in a specific topic, cannot find the appropriate answer for her own questions, giving the comment of the text, building the curiosity of the text, confuse about what have to do related critical reading, less of carefulness, less sensitive in reading, only like reading for certain topics or theme, never feel curious about the text, feeling difficult to give comment related to the text.

Analysis

Students feel that they have poor concentration when reading a text. Concentration in reading is a basic requirement because all comprehension elements is from high quality of concentration. When the students have this problem, it does not mean that they do not have sufficient reading skills as they have learned them for 2 semesters. The lack of concentration is basically from their poor reading habit and their attitude towards reading. Their concentration is easily distracted by other things. This is also caused by the feeling of frustration reading difficult text. Once they found the language of the text is difficult, they will soon feel unhappy and cannot put their total attention to the text.

Having no interest in specific topic becomes the second non-linguistic problem which bring another problem. Some reading texts successfully raise the students interest to keep reading. When they are not interested in specific texts, it means that the topic is beyond or out of their background knowledge. Another problem resulted from lack of interest is the students never feel curious to what they read. This is crucial problem in critical reading. Being able to be critical reader, a student should be interested in the text, the more they interest the more curious they dig up the text. The uninterested behavior makes the students have only partial understanding.

The last problem is the students are not sensitive to the text. Text sensitivity means the ability to see every single part of the text. Most students will come to careless conclusion about the text. They take for granted the details. They easily ignore the real main points and busy with less important details. This situation is commonly done by EFL students. The result of being insensitive is not feeling curious, lack of concentration, and confusion.

RQ 2: Students' strategies

The findings on students' strategies are classified into reading skill and non-reading skill strategies.

Strategy 1: Reading skill strategies

Reading skill strategies are skimming and scanning technique, asking some questions, answering the questions, reviewing, using dictionary, understanding the text, rewriting the idea, re-read the text, finding the main ideas, taking notes, highlighting, paraphrasing, analyzing text, summarizing,

finding the key words, previewing, contextualizing, reflecting, evaluating, comparing related reading, making conclusion, identifying the fact and opinion, finding thesis statements, interpreting text, using SQ3R strategies, drafting and mapping, using KWL reading method, understanding the title, reading the introduction of the text first.

Analysis

The pattern of reading strategies used by the students are ranged from the very basic to the most sophisticated one. The very basic and useful strategies, scanning and skimming, that is to find specific and general information are two reading behaviors that are applied by students in their early reading process. Questions about what, when, where, who, why, and how help the students to figure out the information easily. The ability to address WH-Questions quickly is one of indicators to have good reading process. This also trains the students how to make potential or further questions for gaining more deep understanding.

Asking questions in pre, whilst, and post reading helps the students identify the information. This strategy brings benefits to the next reading process, especially the questions are the basis for writing the summary and drawing conclusion. Questioning is one of elements in SQ3R stated by one of the students as the strategy. SQ3R is reading strategy consisting of Survey, Question, Read, Recite and Review. Using this strategy is effective because at the very beginning, the students have to survey the whole text from its title, introduction, body, and conclusion. Continuing to reading that allows students to read for the details and then strengthened with reciting the text. After all done, reviewing the text lets the

students recheck whether there are some points missing and reconfirmed whether the information they gained are correct.

Finding the key points including key words, main idea, and thesis statement are also common strategies done by the students. Key words help them catch the topic being discussed and the main point that is mostly influence the content. When the students successfully gain the main idea and thesis statement in every paragraph, they are easy to guess the content and find the relationship between and within paragraphs.

Using dictionary is actually does not guarantee to solve the students' reading problem because the meaning of unfamiliar words need to be contextualized with the context of the text. However, dictionary use can be beneficial since the students easily get stuck with list of difficult words, especially the key words. The situation hinders them to comprehend the text. Moreover, when the students cannot use the context clues, using dictionary helps them much.

Taking notes and highlighting are powerful strategies in reading since both only focus on the most important points. Not all information in the text are important, when the students can identify which one is the most and which is the least, they have the key to comprehend the text. They different way to take notes through pointers, short sentences, and symbols. It depends on their style as far as they understand the notes. Continuing taking notes, a strategy of rewriting the ideas also done by the students. What makes them choose this strategy is because by rewriting ideas they can easily remember what they read. As we know that it is impossible to remember all words, ideas of the texts.

Making summary also the best reading strategy for students. They have different way to summarize the text. Summarizing non-fiction texts applies WH-questions to figure out the factual information while summarizing fiction uses chronological order such as somebody, wanted what, then, but, and so. At this strategy, the students only write important information that have been stated in the text and arrange them into several paragraphs. Different from, when the students draw a conclusion from the text. Drawing conclusion as considered as difficult strategy is also used by students. Drawing conclusion involves strong ability to distinguish fact and opinion, identify the most important, and evaluate, therefore, the conclusion is not a restatement only but also students' final thought about the text.

The findings show that two strategies relevant to critical reading, analyzing and evaluating, are applied in reading process. Both need high reading behaviors because analyzing and evaluating text not only being able to find what is stated and unstated but also being able to see what become the strengths and the weaknesses from the text. And also, evaluating means finding out the importance of the text then making connection with what other paragraphs say. Not only describing what is the text about but also what aspects can be suggested to make the discussion in the text improve.

Strategy 2: Non-reading strategies

Non-reading strategies are forcing to read everyday, keep relaxing and enjoying, finding a quite place, vocalization, reading with a pen in hand, sharing with friends, becoming part of writer's audience, be an open-minded reader,

reading from the interesting part, reading slowly, trying to be familiar with journals, activating background knowledge, imitating classmates' strategies, searching to another article with relevant topic, motivating to keep reading,

Analysis

The data reveal that students apply various strategies to make them reach critical reading. By improving the intensity to read everyday helps them to be familiar with any kinds of reading materials, and affects their reading speed. Reading everyday provides some benefits such as adding vocabulary size, recognizing sentence pattern, content and organization of the text, and text types. To know how good and bad the text is through increasing the reading quantity and quality. Next, keeping relaxing and enjoying the reading activity is no more doubt to be one essential factor for improving reading skill. When students enjoy reading, they do any reading process well. No pressure, no stress, and burden to find any information they need.

Interesting strategy is finding a quite place to read. A place to read influences a reader to keep reading, therefore, quite place makes students are not easily distracted by a crowd. One problem faced by students is lack of concentration. It might be caused by the place to read. In a quite place, the students can do vocalization, another strategy that some readers prefer to do because it is easy to comprehend the text while vocalizing. For some students, sharing with friends is beneficial. Reading alone, sometime, can cause missing some points which can be filled by other friends. Sharing is to have similar point

of view and thorough understanding. By sharing, other students can also imitate other reading strategy and choose which one is more effective to apply.

Becoming a part of writer's audience is chosen as one of the strategy. Feeling involve in the text being reading is effective way to get into the text. Once, a student can be the audience, s/he is able to follow the idea of the text, find what the writer wants, and feel free to see good and not good points from the text. The more involvement to the text, the more easy to know all about the text. Another student says that reading interesting parts is powerful strategy. In a text, there are various ways to present the idea. A writer uses quotation, figures, pictures or illustration to attract reader's attention.

Every student has background knowledge about some topics. A student chooses a text to read when s/he is familiar with the topic. She will activate the knowledge when reading something she knows. By connecting the background knowledge and the topic being discussed, at least, finding the topic of the text is easy. Keeping motivation to read is good strategy because it is an asset to feel enjoy and relax, therefore, every single part of the text can be smoothly accessed by the student.

RQ 3: Students' reflection

Reading III helps to understand and analyze journal articles, to answer TOEFL and IELTS test, to evaluate and understand the author's ideas, to be more sensitive and curious while reading a text, to give better understanding in doing paraphrasing, to help in understanding the author's writing style, to make better understanding in distinguishing research article and non-research article,

to analyze the text deeply and read critically, rarely get some practices, quizzes and tasks, also need some feedbacks and evaluation for the assignment given, to improve the quality and quantity of reading, to make more confidence in sharing ideas in the classroom, Only learn few things from reading III (how to read and understanding the text), helps to be more critical reader, helps to stimulate to make some questions related to the text, and helps to be more open-minded reader

Analysis

The data explain that overall students' reflections are suitable with the main goal of Reading III course. Students found that the course makes them familiar with journal articles. This is good because students are member of academic community, therefore, they have to know academic text and the way the text should be read. Reading journal articles need higher order reading skills. It involves literal, inferential, and critical reading. It is also in line with, one of the students' reflection that the course trains the students to evaluate the author's idea. Evaluating is very strong feature of critical reading. Students find which points make the text valuable, and which points weaken the author's argument.

By following the course, students have more sensitivity and curiosity toward the text. Students are aware of the way to read the text thoroughly from its literal information to more inferential information. Being able to see every detail of the text affects students' reading behavior to be more curious to explore more the text. It is indicated by the questions made by the students. Curiosity is important element in reading process because every single detail can be found when the students want to know more, more and more. The increase of curiosity

is also caused by the different text types given to the students. The rhetorical features of different texts make the students curious to know how a text is organized. Therefore, the students know about the authors' writing style which also one of the students' reflections. Exposed by different text types also makes the students have correct approach to read academic and non-academic texts critically.

Students find that the course facilitates them to be able to analyze the text. Assignment for text analysis and presentation ask students to comprehend and share all details of the text. Deep analysis includes figuring out the content of the text, giving the reason why the text is chosen, the significance of the discussion, and what makes the text become a good resource to read. In line with facilitating the students being able to analyze, the course also helps them to recognize how critical reading should be done.

Following the course improves the students' quantity and quality in reading. The quantity is indicated by the number of the text the students should read. During the semester, students are exposed by various different reading texts. This makes read a lot meaning that the number of the reading text increase. Meanwhile, having sufficient reading exposure affects the students' reading quality. The students can read the text with high reading skills, therefore, they have high quality of information. They can find literal information as good as their inferential and critical reading.

Being open-minded reader is another advantage from the course. Reading many texts train the students to have different approaches. And, they get used to open with any arguments presented in the text. When they analyze and

evaluate the text, they should position themselves as a reader who appreciate any ideas without focusing only on negative judgment. As an open-minded reader, having a balanced perspective about the text is important. Of course, the students cannot avoid judging view, but they remind themselves to be objective reader that a single text has strengths and weaknesses.

In stead of reflecting that the course gives some improvements for students, they also reflect that the course needs to facilitate them to have more practice, quiz, and task. So far, in the course, students are assigned to analyze deeply a text in a group, then have a presentation. This functions as a starting point to have more analytic and critical reading. Students also reflect that the feedback on students' assignment need to maximize.

4.2 DISCUSSION

After analyzing the students' reading problems, strategies, and reflections, this part discusses how those three aspects are related to any reading theories and previous research findings. At the level of students' linguistic problems, students have problem with vocabulary size that makes them unable to get the meaning of some words and, consequently, it hinders their comprehension. Vocabulary mastery plays important role in reading, as stated by Şen and Kuleli (2015) in their study about the effect of vocabulary size and vocabulary depth on reading performance in EFL context. The study reveals that vocabulary size and vocabulary depth were both significantly correlated to reading performance, but vocabulary depth predicted reading performance better.

The students' problem on understanding text complexity which is

indicated by the grammatical and syntactic structure also another common problem. This problem should be taken seriously because syntactic/grammatical knowledge becomes one of key factors to have successful reading. Nergis (2013) states that depth of vocabulary knowledge was not a strong predictor of academic reading comprehension for English for Academic Purposes (EAP) students. However, it was found that syntactic awareness was a significant predictor of academic reading comprehension in second language (L2).

All the problems result another problem, that is, anxiety to read. Being afraid of difficult words, complicated sentence structure, and unclear content make students hesitate to keep reading as they are easily frustrated and stop reading once they found the problems. Rajab, et al (2012) state that not many know that reading process is not just one person understanding of each word and the surface structure represented in the reading text, but it also involves the comprehension process and the ability of the reader to actually interact with the reading text by making its own interpretation on the meaning of the text. Most people also do not realize that during this progression, anxiety has been stated as one of the factors which could impede the reading process.

The need of appropriate reading strategies is a must. A lot of written information available today, hence, students are required to access. Perry (2013) reminds that it is especially true for university students who, in the context of their studies, often need to search for and use information in English. However, it is also the case that the English proficiency level of many students renders this task a laborious and frustrating experience. Furthermore, the use and awareness

of comprehension strategies is priority requirement. Lee (2012) shows differences between male and female students on the types of reading strategies were significant, male students reported greater strategy use than their female counterparts regarding memory, cognitive, compensation strategies, while fewer males than females used strategies of meta-cognitive and social-affective while reading. In addition, males were more worried about unknown words compared to their counterparts while reading.

One of effective reading comprehension strategy is summarizing. It encourages students to figure out the details, and restate them using their own words, therefore, the information will be easy to remember. Summarizing is applied differently based on the text types. Students need to be aware of that to gain the expected information. Zafarani and Kabgani (2014) examine the possible outcomes of the effectiveness of a main idea strategy, summarization strategy, and the explicitness of the training on improving comprehension of English textual materials of Iranian ESP learners.

Reread and reviewing the text is helpful for students to be more familiar with the text. Reading is not an instant activity which is impossible to read only once. Back and forth reading process is an absolute process to do as confirmed by Yeganeh (2013) that repeated reading (RR) can affect reading fluency and comprehension among monolingual and bilingual EFL students. The RR process affects to another reading strategy, that is, questioning. Reviewing and questioning are the manifestation of SQ3R used by students. Urlaub (2012) confirms that reading and discussing literary texts in a second language (L2) is a significant component of intermediate and advanced level collegiate language

education. Therefore, generating questions before, while and post reading as comprehension strategy are beneficial for reading development in the L2.

When the students enjoy reading, they can get any information they need. It means that they keep motivating to figure out the text and to read more and more. And also, there is a positive attitude towards reading. This is another reading strategy making the students explore the text. Walker (2015) states A framework was developed which showed how L2 reading self-perceptions can be linked in important ways to personal histories, motivational processes and the situational context. The findings included insights into how self-concepts of reading differed according to competence perceptions and levels of English language ability, as well as an analysis of the ways in which these self-views changed over the duration of the course.

Students' positive reflections show that reading is seen as the key way for university academic success. They keep struggling to follow every activity in the course by seriously finding the text to present, sharing ideas, and asking questions. Good reading environment plays important role to shape students' positive reflection. Morni and Sahari (2014) explore the impact of living environment in fostering good reading habits. The more read, the better and the leisure time is used to read. There is also a positive relationship between reading environment with average hours students spent on reading.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1 CONCLUSION

Based on research questions investigating in this study, it is found that students' reading problems are categorized into language-related problems and non-linguistic problems. The language-related problems are identified from vocabulary difficulty, syntactic structure, the content which influence the complexity of the text. For non-linguistic problems, students say that curiosity is the most major problem. The students use various comprehension strategies to cope with their reading problems. The strategies are also categorized into reading skill and non-reading skill strategies.

After following the course, students have some reflections to share. The reflections mostly describe that Reading III contributes to their L2 reading development. During the session, the students are exposed to various reading texts which expect high level reading. Therefore, the course shapes the students' reading behaviors and attitudes which contribute to their comprehension skill.

5.2 SUGGESTION

The study brings pedagogical implications, especially, for the teaching of reading at higher level of education. It is suggested that the course should be designed to have explicit instruction on summarizing strategy because it can effectively contribute to enhancing the ability and aptitude of L2 reading learners

in comprehending reading and can help them build up a constructive attitude toward English reading in university context. The study also highlights that the course should teach students how to generate questions vis-à-vis texts to improve their ability to critically read literary texts in the second language.

Study about reading still provides some angles to explore. Exploring on which effective comprehension strategy will be insightful to improve the teaching of reading. And studying which text types that help students to read critically also another significant point to conduct.

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Questionnaire

Dear Students, please kindly participate in my research project entitled Critical Reading: Students' Problems, Strategies, and Reflection. This research is to evaluate what Reading III course so far is conducted , therefore, the findings will be used as one of essential considerations to improve students' L2 reading development and the teaching of reading quality. To achieve that goals, please answer these following questions:

1. What problems do you have in critical reading?
2. What strategies do you have to read critically?
3. How does Reading III help you to improve your critical reading?

Your participation is really appreciated,
Thank you very much for your participation.

Best Regards,
Researcher,

Galuh Nur Rohmah