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FACILITATING STUDENTS' HIGHER ORDER THINKING SKILL (HOTS) THROUGH THREE-PHASE READING ACTIVITY AT EIS CLASS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to show how to facilitate students' higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) in reading activity at English for Islamic Studies class and acknowledge students' opinions on the activity. This was descriptive qualitative research, and its data were collected through observation and interview. Then the data were analyzed using interactive data analysis: data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion. The findings showed that the effort to facilitate students' higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) is by proposing not only lower-level questions but also higher-level questions. To prevent overuse of lower-level questions or higher-level questions, the lecturer employs question-answer relationships (QAR) framework of reading phase. The interview with students indicated that the students thought that the activity benefits them. Besides, the creative response questions in the post-reading phase enabled them to optimize their mind (schemata) proposing a solution to the problems found in the passage without feeling afraid of making mistake as there is no wrong or right answer to such questions.

Keywords: : *Differentiated learning, Arabic language proficiency, Classroom Action Research Students*

INTRODUCTION

In the context of English for Islamic studies, the question-answer activity may be conducted during class especially at classroom reading activity in which this kind of activity is

what often experience by the students following English for specific purposes (ESP) or English for Islamic Studies (EIS). (Abudhahir & Ali, 2018). Usually, the classroom activity of EIS is related to reading and discussing Islamic passages such as "Mecca and Medina", "Prophet Muhammad (PBUH)", "Five Pillars of Islam", "Believing in Angel" and many more (El-Sakran, 2012). However, the lecturer may utilize up-to-date authentic learning material as long as it is relevant.

Normally classroom reading activity begins by the lecturer's telling students to read the passages and then he/she questions them. yet the problem may occurs when the lecturer only focuses on proposing lower-level questions since he/she does not aware kinds of reading comprehension questions or does not know how to and when to involve higher-order questions; whereas the involvement of such level of question is beneficial to stimulate students' critical thinking (Shen & Yodkhumlue, 2012).

Facilitating students' Critical thinking at classroom reading activity is beneficial to help students to be proficient readers. Those who are proficient readers can comprehend various passages and make a reflection of what they read by proposing ideas, giving solutions, and making innovation (Biancarosa & Shanley, 2016; Ko, 2019; Ntim, 2015). In other words, the students or readers, after following reading activity, are expected to be familiar with critical thinking or higher-order thinking skill so that they will be innovative by proposing new ideas to achieve a goal or make something useful effectively and efficiently and be critical in every situation and condition especially when facing problems since they will find the solution to the problems.

Many studies reveal that it is essential to promote students' higher-order thinking skills in the reading activity. However, they do not tell how and when to do so (Anasy, 2016; Hayikaleng, Nair & Krishnasamy, 2016; Indriyana & Kuswandono, 2019; Kusumastuti, Fauziati & Marmanto, 2019; Nourdad, Masoudi, & Rahimali, 2018; Thamrin & Widodo, 2019). Hence, this research intends to depict the effort made by the lecturer to facilitate students' higher-order thinking (HOTS) during a reading activity at English for Islamic studies (EIS) class by proposing not only low-level questions but higher-level questing in reading phases: pre-reading activity, during-reading activity, and post-reading activity.

To identify students' comprehension, the lecturer can question students about what they have known after reading a passage. There are some reading comprehension questions: main idea question, detail question, vocabulary question, inference question, evaluation question, and creative question (Chen, Bolton & Manning, 2016; Madani, 2016).

First, the main idea question requires the reader to find the writer/author's main point. Usually, the main idea of a passage can be identified by reading every first sentence of each paragraph and the last sentence of the last paragraph. Based on those sentences the reader can figure out mostly discussed by the passage which is the main point of the writer. (Rosenshine, 2017).

Next, detail question is a question that can be answered by using keyword and scanning a particular sentence or paragraph. Generally, the question is what, when, and who. Such kind of question is also called as question of explicit information since the reader has to answer the question by identifying explicitly stated information in the passage (Du & Cardie, 2017). This question constitutes a literal question and is categorized as a lower-order question (Routledge, van Steensel, Oostdam, van Gelderen & van Schooten, 2016).

Third, the vocabulary question needs the reader to predict the meaning of a word mentioned in a sentence. To answer the question, the lecturer can tell the students to quest the meaning of the word by diagnosing the context (Furqon, 2013). The context is vocabulary that surrounds a word (Du & Cardie, 2017).

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Then, the inference question requires the reader to find information or messages in several sentences or paragraphs to conclude and then answer the question (Tarchi, 2015). Similar to the detail question, the inference question is also literal yet it is a higher-order question. Characteristically, the question is 'why' e.g. why something happens, or why someone does something (Xu, Liu, Gao, Shen & Liu, 2017).

Fifth, the evaluation question is a question aimed to evaluate a reading passage or text for instance "What is the moral message of the writer?" "What is your opinion/the reader's opinion on the augmentation or ideas proposed by the writer/author?" such a question is a higher-order question (Freeman, 2014).

The last question is the creative question which is a higher-order question. The purpose of the creative questions is to stimulate students to use their minds to give an idea when reading a passage. For example, when the students find problems in a passage they will be told to give solutions to the problems (Paul & Elder, 2019). This question is also considered as background knowledge question because its answer cannot be found in the passage but the reader's mind, or it can be answered using the reader's schemata (Li & Clark, 2015).

The pre-reading phase is the phase before reading the passage. In this phase, the lecturer can activate students' prior knowledge by questioning them something related to the title of the passage(Azizifar, Roshani, Gowhary & Jamalinesari, 2015), for example, if the title is about "Relieving Our Muslim Brothers and Sisters in Palestine", the lecturer can question the students "What do you know about Palestine?" and "Why does Israel occupy Palestine?". Besides, the lecturer can arouse students' reading interest by asking them to make prediction: "What will be discussed by the passage according to its title?" this is intended to arouse students' reading interest and purpose: knowing more information in the passage to check whether or not their answer is correct (Chai, 2017).

After questioning and helping students formulate students' reading purposes in the pre-reading phase, the lecturer, in during-reading phase, distributes reading passage to students and tells them to read to the passage silently. Afterward, to evaluate students' comprehension, the lecturer can ask them to answer literal questions: "What is mainly discussed by the passage?", "When something happens?" "Who makes something?" "Why something occurs/why someone does something?" and so on (Ali, Javed & Shabbir, 2017).

Further, in post-reading, as the reflection, the teacher may purpose following questions: "What is your opinion about the writer's or author's idea?" and "Can you give other solutions to the problems found in the passage?" these questions is aimed to stimulate students to use their mind to answer. To avoid students' misunderstanding, the lecturer should tell the students that they cannot locate the answer inside the passage but inside their heads. Such questions are considered as creative response questions (Wilhelm, 2016).

RESEACH METHOD

This descriptive qualitative research conducted at IAIN Pontianak and the subject of the research was students following English for Islamic Studies class. Its data were collected through interviews and observation. The researcher interviewed several selected students, through a purposive sampling technique (Sharma, 2017), about their opinion on the reading phases involving higher-order-questions, and observed the classroom reading activity.

To analyze the data, the researcher utilized interactive model data analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1984) he collected the data and reduced them by focusing on the engagement of Higher-order question to facilitate students' higher-order thinking during classroom reading. He then displayed the focused data, and based on that, he concluded.

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RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The classroom reading activity involved students' higher-order thinking skills consisted of five meetings: meeting one, meeting two, meeting three, meeting four, and meeting five. Meanwhile, the researcher acted as a lecturer.

1. Meeting One

In meeting one, the lecturer provided students with a passage entitled "Marriage in Islam". Before distributing the passage to the students, he questioned students: "What do you know about Marriage?", S18: "Marriage is a formal relationship between woman and man"; S7: "it is a religious bond of a man and a woman"; and S23: "marriage is when a spouse has a serious intention to live together forever according to the rule of religion". The answers were varied as students based on their schemata. Then the lecturer told the students that they would read a passage entitled "Married in Islam" and afterward he asked the students about what the passage probably discuss based on the title. This was aimed to formulate reading purpose: knowing more information in the passage.

In while-reading, the lectured told students to read the passage silently. To check students' comprehension, he then purposed some questions: "What is the main idea of the passage?" "What Imam Shafi'i said about marriage?" "What is Mahr?" "How to marry a widow?" and "Mention the husband's obligation!". The lecturer showed the students how to answer questions by telling them the strategy such as how to find mind ideas, scan keywords of explicit information, and skim particular paragraphs or even whole passage for making an inference.

After reading the passage, in post-reading, the lecturer question students about their opinion on arrange marriage and told them that the answer to the questions could not be located inside the passage but in their heads based on their background knowledge. "Do you agree with the arranged marriage?" S16: "I very agree with arranged marriage especially if the girl is beautiful, ha.ha.ha" S12: "I think it is acceptable as long as both of the parties consent to it" "What is your preference on arranged marriage and courtship?" "Why?" S5: "through courtship, we can know each other before seriously to commit each other so that I choose to maintain courtship with my girlfriend, and I am sure I can take care of myself." S21: "I prefer to arrange a marriage to courtship especially when my father or mom finds the girl for me, I do believe that he/she will find the best girl for me". To mediate different point of view, the lecturer said: "Quran says that "wala takrobuzzina, and you know that being involved in a courtship or having a special relationship with a different sex can lead to adultery, and the Islamic way or arrange marriage can be a solution to find future wife or husband".

2. Meeting Two

In meeting two, the title of the reading passage was "Muslims Fired by Wisconsin Firm". To activate students' prior knowledge, the lecturer questioned them: "Can you tell the class about Islam or Muslim in the United States of America?" S10: "Muslim is minority in America", S4: "I once watched VoA about Muslims in the USA, and it showed that Muslims can live peacefully and perform pray according to their belief freely", S6: "Some Americans do not like Muslims as they think that Muslims are terrorists and are going to kill other people using bomb". Afterward, the lecturer told the students the title of the passage and asked them about what the passage be about based on it. This was intended to formulate reading purposes.

In while-reading, the lecturer told students to read the passage silently and afterward, to check students' reading comprehension, the lecturer questioned them: "What the passage mainly discusses?" "What country of the fired Muslim Immigrant workers at the Wisconsin firm is from?" "How many worked are fired during the unscheduled prayer-break dispute?" "How the company handles the problem?" "What did the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)

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say about the problem?" After that, he reminded students of the strategy to answer those questions. In post-reading, the lecturer purposed some creative response questions and told the students that the answers can only be found in their mind or in other words they have to activate their schemata to answer the questions: "If you were the fired Muslim workers, what will you do?" S1: "If I were the worker I will resign and ask the company to give me pesangon that I can use to do a business"; lecturer: "Good solution I think…pesangon in English is called as unemployment benefit"; S29: "I and other Muslims workers will march down the street to protest the company's policy"; S15: "I will discuss the problem with the boss for the win-win solution". Then the lecturer purposed another question: "Can you give a solution to the dispute of prayer-break in the Wisconsin firm?" S13: "The workers should go the court to complain about this problem"; S25: "the workers and the company must discuss the prayer schedule so that the workers can pray according to Islamic teaching, and the company will not lose out".

3. Meeting Three

In meeting three the lecturer provided students with a reading passage entitled "5 ways to deal with the dilemma of Riba". Before reading the passage, he activated students' background knowledge by questioning them. "What do you know about Riba?" S27: "Riba happens when we lend someone money then we told him to return it bigger"; S18: "Riba is like when we borrow money from a bank and then we have to pay more than what we borrow". Next, the lecturer told the students to predict what the passage most probably discusses based on the title: "What will the passage be about?"

In the while-reading phase, the lecturer told students to read the passage silently, and he then purposed several comprehension questions. "What the passage mainly discusses?", "Why a credit card system considered as a riba system?", "Why the Muslim in the passage refuses to pay the charge of the credit card?", "What happens to the Muslim when he denies paying the charge?", and "What some Muslims do to avoid interest from their bank account?". Before answering those questions, the lecturer reminded the students reading strategies: the way to find mind ideas, scan particular sentences of paragraphs for explicit information, and skim across the sentences or paragraphs to make an inference.

In post-reading, the lecturer questioned some students as a reflection of the classroom reading activity. "What will you do to avoid bank interest?"; "Do you have an account in an Islamic Bank (Yes or No)?" "Why?" S12: "I have an Islamic bank account because I want to stay away from interest or riba even though some of the scholars consider that the Islamic bank still involve riba system"; S17: "I once had an Islamic bank account, but now is not anymore since the bank, especially its ATM facility, cannot be accessed in my hometown, moreover I don't think I am benefited with its interest for I only have very little saving I the sum of the bank administration fee is equal to or less than that".

4. Meeting Four

In meeting four, the passage employed for classroom reading activity was entitled "Hajj: The Annual Muslim Pilgrimage To Mecca Explained". To bride students' prior-knowledge with the passage, the lecturer questions the students: "What is Hajj?"; S15: "Hajj is the fifth pillar of Islam that must be performed if we can afford to go to pilgrimage to Mecca". Then the lecturer told the students to read this internet authentic reading material silently.

In the while-reading phase, the lecturer proposed several questions: "What is the passage mostly addresses?"; "When Muslims go to Mecca to perform Hajj?"; "What Muslims must not do during Hajj?"; "What does the day of tarwiyah mean?"; What does the day of Arafah mean?; "Please mention the brief history of hajj!"; "When Muslims stone jamrat al-Aqaba?", and "How long does the hajj last?".

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After students' reading the passage or in the post-reading phase, the lecturer questioned the students as the reflection of what they read. "What will you do if you want to perform hajj but you don't have enough money?" S9: "I will pray to Allah, especially in the midnight, and I am sure that Allah will respond my du'a, then Insya Allah I can go to Mecca someday"; S17: "there are many ways to go to Mecca, I once watched in the television a man who went to mecca by motorcycle from Indonesia, so I think as long as we have high determination to perform hajj Allah will help us".

5. Meeting Five

In the pre-reading activity, the lecturer told the students that they would read a passage entitled "Ramadan begins in the United Kingdom". To bride the students' schemata with the passage the lecturer said: "Please mention some activities during Ramadan month!" S5: "fasting and praying tarawih"; S9: "reciting 30 juz of Al-Qur'an"; S8: "Having ta'jil or iftor jama'i in mosques and eating sahur before subuh prayer".

In the while-reading phase, the lecturer told students to read the passage silently and after that, he questioned students about information provided by the passage. "What is the main idea of the passage?"; "What do Islamic organizations and businesses do during Ramadan in the UK?"; "How to avoid donating to fake charities during Ramadan?"; "The word "Ramadan" is derived from an Arabic word which means……" and "What Muslims must not do during daylight hours in the mount of Ramadan?".

In the post-reading activity, the lecturer proposed some questions as the reflection of the classroom reading activity: "What do you think of fasting for 19 hours in the UK?" S13: "The duration of fasting in England is much longer than in Indonesia, so thank God that I am a Muslim in Indonesia who only needs to last about 8 to 9 hours"; S11: "I cannot imagine if I have to fast during day hours for that so long, I must be starving".

In this fifth meeting or the last meeting, the lecturer interviewed some students about their opinion on questions asked by the lecturer in pre-reading and post-reading activity. S21: "I think it is unique as pak Muzam asked me questions about something that are not stated in the passage but still related to it". S17: "the questions are good because I can answer freely based on my knowledge"; S10: "for the first time, I do not know that the answer of the questions cannot be found in the passage, so I read the passage repeatedly but I do not find the answer, then the lecturer told me that I must use my brain to answer the questions…I like that there is no wrong answer…all All answers are correct according to students' opinions". Based on the interview, it indicated that the students thought that the questions were good and they agreed with the questions.

Referring to the findings, it can be seen that the lecturer proposed reading comprehension question according to question-answer relationships (QAR) which enabled him to question students in reading phases: pre-reading phase, while-reading phase, and post-reading phase and therefore he did not overuse of lower-level or higher-level questions (Daraini,2018; Green, 2016; Muzammil, 2017; Thohir, 2017). Moreover, he did not only tell the students to read the passage and then questions them but tell them the strategy of how to answer the questions such as detecting mind idea, u scanning particular sentence using the keyword to identify explicit information, and skimming across sentences and paragraph to make an inference. This is beneficial to assist students to comprehend the passage (Brevik, 2019; Chamot & Harris, 2019; Hughes, Morris, Therrien & Benson, 2017; Teng, 2019).

Further, the lecturer activated students' background knowledge before commencing classroom reading activity which aimed to give a brief depiction of the passage that would be recited. To do so, the lecturer questioned them about what they knew regarding something related to the passage. In other words, he bridged students' schemata with the passage, and it is

very useful for students' reading comprehension (Lupo, Strong, Lewis, Walpole & McKenna, 2018; Williams, 2019).

As the reflection of reading comprehension, the lecturer proposed a creative response question which constitutes higher-level questions that were intended to familiarize students with higher-order thinking skills (Agarwal, 2019; Kočiský, Schwarz, Blunsom, Dyer, Hermann, Melis & Grefenstette, 2018; Putra & Abdullah, 2019). Usually, the question was about the students' personal opinion about the problem mentioned in the passage and the students were asked to give solutions to the problems, and, of course, there is no wrong or right answer so that the students were not afraid to share their ideas.

CONCLUSION

The lecturer facilitated students' higher-order thinking skills by providing not only lower-level questions but higher-level questions as well. He employed there question-answer relationships (QAR) strategy to avoid overuse of lower-level questions or higher-level questions. To help students answer those questions he told students reading strategy: how to find mind ideas, identify explicit information, make an inference, and give an opinion. Also, based on an interview, students considered that the question-answer activity in reading phases: pre-reading phase, while-reading phase, and post-reading phase are beneficial, moreover the creative response questions in the post-reading phase allowed them to share their idea without feeling scared of making mistake.

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