

**IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION
THROUGH QUESTION-ANSWER RELATIONSHIP (QAR) STRATEGY
AT THE FIRST GRADE OF MTSN 2 LAMPUNG SELATAN**

(A Script)

By

Citra Mustika Zulya



**ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDY PROGRAM
ARTS AND LANGUAGE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION FACULTY
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2017**

ABSTRACT

IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION THROUGH QUESTION-ANSWER RELATIONSHIP (QAR) STRATEGY AT THE FIRST GRADE OF MTSN 2 LAMPUNG SELATAN

by

Citra MustikaZulya

The aims of this research are to find out whether there is a significant difference of students' reading comprehension before and after the implementation of QAR strategy at the first grade of MTsN 2 Lampung Selatan, and also to investigate which aspect of reading comprehension improves the most after the implementation of QAR strategy. This research was a quantitative research which used a one group pre-test post-test design.

This research was conducted on 27 February to 4 April 2017 in which the population was the first grade students of MTsN 2 Lampung Selatan in academic year 2016/2017. Class VII A which consisted of 22 students was used as the sample of the research determined through probability sampling technique and a reading test was used as the instrument to collect data. The data were analyzed by using t-test value (*Repeated Measure T-Test*) in which the criteria of accepted hypothesis were $p < 0.05$, and $t_{\text{value}} > t_{\text{table}}$ (in this research, $t_{\text{table}} = 3.819$; $df = 21$).

The result of the research shows that there is a significant difference of students' reading comprehension after the implementation of QAR strategy. It can be seen from the students' mean scores of the pre-test and post-test which improve from 54.36 to 67.81 in which the gain is 13.45 points. The statistical analysis also reveals that t_{value} is higher than t_{table} ($8457 > 3.819$) with the significant level of 0.000. Then, the researcher also finds that understanding vocabulary in reading comprehension is the aspect that improves the most. However, confirming reference in reading comprehension decreases after the implementation of QAR strategy. It can be concluded that QAR strategy can be applied to improve students' reading comprehension ability, however, not all aspects of reading comprehension can be improved using this QAR strategy.

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THROUGH QUESTION-ANSWER RELATIONSHIP (QAR) STRATEGY
AT THE FIRST GRADE OFMTSN 2 LAMPUNG SELATAN**

**By:
Citra Mustika Zulya**

A Script

**Submitted in a Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirements for S-1 Degree**

In

**The Language and Arts Education Department of
The Faculty of Teacher and Education**



**FACULTY OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF LAMPUNG
BANDAR LAMPUNG
2017**

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AT THE FIRST GRADE OF MTSN 2
LAMPUNG SELATAN**

Student's Name : **Citra Mustika Zulya**

Student's Number : **1313042021**

Department : **Language and Arts Education**

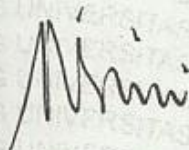
Study Program : **English Education**

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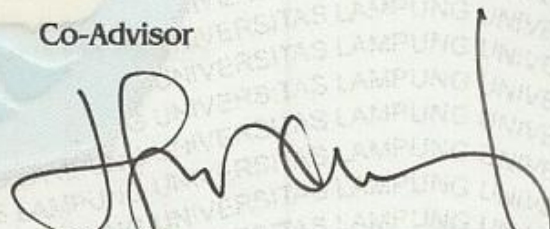
1. Advisory Committee

Advisor



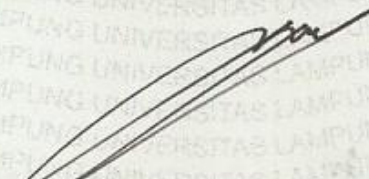
Dr. Ari Nurweni, M.A.
NIP 19630302 198703 2 001

Co-Advisor



Gede Eka Putrawan, S.S., M.Hum.
NIP 19850924 201404 1 001

**2. The Chairperson of
The Department of Language and Arts Education**



Dr. Mulyanto Widodo, M.Pd.
NIP 19620203 198811 1 001

ADMITTED BY

1. Examination Committee

Chairperson : Dr. Ari Nurweni, M.A.

Miri
.....

Examiner : Prof. Dr. Cucu Sutarsah, M.A.

[Signature]
.....

Secretary : Gede Eka Putrawan, S.S., M.Hum.

[Signature]
.....

2. The Dean of Teacher Training and Education Faculty



Dr. H. Muhammad Fuad, M.Hum.
NIP 19590722 198603 1 003

Graduated on : July 28th, 2017

SURAT PERNYATAAN

Sebagai civitas akademik Universitas Lampung, saya yang bertanda tangan dibawah ini:

Nama : Citra Mustika Zulya
NPM : 1313042021
Judul skripsi : Improving Students' Reading Comprehension through Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) Strategy at the First Grade of MTsN 2 Lampung.
Program studi : Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris
Jurusan : Pendidikan Bahasa dan Seni
Fakultas : Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan

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Citra Mustika Zulya
NPM 1313042021

CURRICULUM VITAE

The writer's name is Citra Mustika Zulya. She was born on 26 March 1995 in Palas, Lampung Selatan. She is the first daughter of Zuliansyah and Yanti Kartini and has two young brothers.

Her educational background started at TK Dharma Wanita Bumi Dipasena Abadi in 1999 and graduated in 2001. After that, she studied at SDN 1 Bumi Dipasena Abadi and participated actively in Pramuka. In 2007, she enrolled in SMPN 1 Rawajitu Timur and participated in marching band club. Then, she continued her study in SMAN 2 Kalianda in 2010. In 2011, she followed National Science Olympiade for mathematics subject and achieved the second rank at regency level. She also participated actively in KIR and followed Kimia Expo Competition in Lampung University in 2012 and achieved the third rank together with her two partners. In 2013, she graduated from senior high school.

She was accepted in English Education Study Program of Teacher Training and Education Faculty in Lampung University through SBMPTN in 2013. She accomplished her KKN-KT in July to August 2016. She taught the eighth and ninth grades students of SMPN 2 Buminabung, Buminabung Timur, Lampung Tengah. And then, she had examination of her script and graduated from Lampung University on July 2017.

DEDICATION

I proudly dedicate this script to:

My beloved parents, Zuliansyah and Yanti Kartini

My lovely brothers, Duta Berliansyah, and Arzuna Daymensyah

My almamater, Lampung University

And all the seekers of knowledge in the world

MOTTO

“Success make you less intimidated by things”

-Nate Silver-

"Whenever you find yourself on the side of majority, it is time to pause and reflect"

-Mark Twain-

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Hopefully, this research would give positive contribution to educational development or to those who want to carry out further researches on the same topic.

Bandar Lampung, 03 August 2017

The writer

Citra Mustika Zulya

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I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses several points which contains the reason and the purpose why the researcher is interested in conducting the research of improve students' reading comprehension in answering questions related to the text through Question-Answer Relationship (*QAR*) strategy. It covers the background of the problem, research questions, objectives, uses, and scope of the research and also definition of the terms. The contents of the chapter are presented as follows.

1.1. Background of the Problem

At school, there are many problems faced in learning English, one of which is in answering some questions related to reading texts, for instances, in National Exam and in many other kinds of reading tests. In Indonesia, National exam is a multiple choices test where there are many questions in the form of text. Many students waste too much time to answer comprehension questions. They tend to read all the text to answer one question only then they will repeat to read the same text to answer the next questions. As the result, many students run out of time and cannot finish the test optimally.

Besides that, many students lack in mastering reading language skill. They tend to be passive learners and unable either to use their literal knowledge to deliver their

ideas or opinion in discussing such questions related to text or to use their high-level of thinking in understanding the text. They tend to be afraid to ask questions about the material they do not understand during teaching learning process and they do not really understand about elements or aspects in reading they should master. Furthermore, when they are reading, their communicative language is not exposed well, and they just understand how to answer such comprehension questions, however, they do not master the language skill in reading such as how to express their opinions or thoughts about the text they read or how to relate their background knowledge to the text they are reading. Hence, these problems relate to the one of essential skills, that is, reading comprehension.

Christian and Mary, cited in Agustina (2012), mention that reading is the most important skill of four skills for most students in mastering English. Therefore, it is important to improve students' reading ability to access much information when we face written English or when we want to learn about English literatures in written form. We have to master reading skill in order to understand what is said in the book so that it will facilitate students to comprehend texts and then be able to answer comprehension questions properly in many kinds of reading tests. Dallman (1982) also says that reading is more than knowing what each letter of alphabet stands for, reading involves more than word recognition; that comprehension is an essential of reading that without comprehension no reading takes place. It means that comprehension is the soul of reading.

To improve students' reading comprehension, there are many ways that can be used. A teacher can apply some methods, techniques, or strategies to make

students' reading achievement better than before. Teacher can also choose an appropriate method, technique or strategy that should be applied to teach reading to the students suitable with the reading test used. Many English tests use some kinds of reading texts with general questions such as: What is the main idea of the third paragraph?; What is the conclusion of the last paragraph?; What is the meaning of the first sentence in the second paragraph?; and many others. Therefore, the researcher tried to examine Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy to help students improve their reading comprehension since this strategy is an appropriate strategy in improving students' reading comprehension ability, especially in answering comprehension questions.

Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy is designed as a method for a deliberate and common way of thinking and talking about effective sources of information when answering questions in which QAR is a during reading strategy that improves comprehension. This strategy teaches students that all questions are not alike and that knowing how to identify the types of questions will help them answer the questions in which this strategy presents a three-way relationship between questions, text content, and reader knowledge (Raphael, 1982, 1986).

In the previous research conducted in Singapore in an elementary school, Peng *et al.* (2007) tried to find out whether the explicit teaching of QAR improves pupils' performance in the open-ended comprehension questions and in the higher-order open-ended comprehension questions. As the result, they found that students taught by the QAR strategy showed some improvements in their reading comprehension test scores after intervention compared to the control group and

the greatest improvement was in the “Think and Search” questions. In another research, Cummins *et al.* (2012) also examined whether QAR could assist secondary students in text-based learning of scientific idea. Through the study, they identified that QAR strategy gave a positive effect in which there was an increase in test score of lower-level students of the fourth grade class in a high poverty urban school in Western New York. The students were increasingly able to create questions in all four sub-categories of QAR and its implication, and they were becoming more confident in their own knowledge.

Then, Furtado and Pastell (2012) also conducted a study in California to see how explicit instruction of QAR could enhance reading comprehension among kindergarten students. This study shows that QAR could be successfully implemented for kindergarten students in which the students overwhelmingly scored higher on the post-test of reading comprehension after the read-aloud of *The Jay and the Peacock* with some receiving perfect scores. Moreover, Agustina (2012), examined QAR strategy for Senior High School students to find out whether QAR strategy was an appropriate strategy for teaching reading, students’ response toward this strategy, and kinds of problems students faced in aspects of reading. She also found that QAR strategy could be used to improve the students’ reading comprehension at the first grade of senior high school in which students gave a positive response toward this strategy through cycles that were applied in this research. Through this strategy, Agustina found that the problems mostly faced by students in reading comprehension were in finding main idea and specific information and understanding vocabulary.

However, Stafford (2012), who examined to what extent direct instruction of the QAR taxonomy influences the ability of ninth-grade students to accurately answer reading comprehension questions after reading, found that QAR strategy had a negative effect on students' question-answering ability and raised questions regarding comprehension instruction, length of interventions, and the role of scaffolded support for a target population of adolescent readers where this study was conducted for the ninth grade students who would have a final test in summer school. Seeing Stafford's findings, it makes the other studies having a doubt in their theories. It arises several questions like "Why did it give the negative effect?", "Was it caused by the subject of the research?", and so on. In addition, the previous researches have not examined yet about what kind of reading aspect that improves the most after applying QAR strategy in teaching learning process.

Hence, the researcher decided to emphasize which one of the theories is applicable. This can be done by conducting a study with the same case, that is, the implementation of QAR strategy for junior high school students to see if there is a significant difference of students' reading achievement and what aspect of reading improves the most after applying QAR strategy. This strategy can help to reveal the problems both in this research and previous researches.

It is expected that this study can give some contributions to the readers and also teachers about strategy in teaching reading to help the students achieve their goals in their reading. The findings of this study can complete and convince the findings of previous studies about the use of QAR strategy. It can also give information

how to improve students' reading comprehension ability in its five aspects. Thus, there are some benefits which can be obtain from this research.

In this research, MTsN 2 Lampung Selatan was chosen as the place of the research since this school is one of the favourite *madrasah* schools in South Lampung region. However, based on a short interview with the English teacher, the students' English proficiency in this school was still poor. It was proved by the result of students' try-out the researcher administered in this school. The students' mean score of the try-out test did not reach the standard score in this school (KKM: 74), that is, only 43.67. The highest score student got was 74.28 in which only one student who got the highest score by answering 26 out of 35 questions correctly (see *Appendix 7*). Besides that, some teachers still use a conventional way to teach English especially reading that the students did not really understand, and then, got bored easily when they faced reading texts. The students had lack in mastering English skills especially in reading. They had no interest in reading English texts which made them difficult to understand the meaning of texts they read so that they faced some difficulties in answering comprehension questions of reading test. They put assumption on their mind that English was a difficult subject to study and the language made them confused. Thus, to overcome these problems, the teachers should apply another way such as a strategy which can make the students learn English easily.

By the reasons stated above, the researcher focused on improving students' reading comprehension by using Question-Answer Relationship strategy at the first grade of MTsN students, especially MTsN 2 Lampung Selatan.

1.2. Research Questions

Based on the background above, the researcher formulated some questions as follows.

1. Is there a significant difference of students' reading comprehension at the first grade of MTsN 2 Lampung Selatan before and after the implementation of Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy?
2. Which aspect of reading comprehension improves the most after the implementation of Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy?

1.3. Objectives

The objectives of the research are:

1. To find out whether there is a significant difference of students' reading comprehension at the first grade of MTsN 2 Lampung Selatan before and after the implementation of Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy.
2. To find out which aspect of reading comprehension improves the most after the implementation of Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy.

1.4. Uses

The uses of the research are as follows:

1. Theoretically, it is expected that the finding of this research can support and complete the previous theories related to improving students' reading comprehension through Question-Answer Relationship strategy.

2. Practically, the researcher expects that the finding of this research can be useful for:

a. Teacher

It can be used as a new strategy and information in teaching English to improve students' reading comprehension, especially in answering the comprehension questions concerning five aspects of reading comprehension.

b. Student

It can be used as a new way to give more opportunities in improving students' reading comprehension in which the students can find the answer related to the text without wasting too much time because they know the good way to find the answers in the text and they become more active in the class.

1.5. Scope

This study was conducted at the first grade of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 2 Lampung Selatan. The researcher investigated the difference of students' reading comprehension and also its improvement by applying Question-Answer Relationship strategy in the teaching learning activity and what aspect of reading improves the most after applying this strategy. The researcher focused on descriptive texts with the comprehension questions applied related to the texts used.

1.6. Definition of Terms

Improvement

In this research, improvement is occurred when the score of post-test is higher than the score of pre-test.

Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is indeed a very elaborate procedure which involves a balance of many elements in a passage and their organization in the proper relation to each other comprehension in reading depending on knowing the literal meaning of words in various contexts. It means that reading comprehension is the understanding of a text (Loban *et al.*, 1969).

Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy

It is a strategy used after students have read which teaches students how to decipher what types of questions they are being asked and where to find the answer to them in which there are four types of questions: Right There Questions, Think and Search Questions, Author and You, and On My Own (Raphael, 1986).

In brief, this chapter has explained about the reason why the researcher chooses this topic including the background of the problem, research questions, and the objectives, uses, and scope of the problem, and also the definition of terms used in this research.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter deals with several concepts of this study as the background how the research is conducted and how the researcher will formulate the assumption from her own research at the end. This chapter will explain review of previous studies related to QAR strategy, concepts of reading and reading comprehension, aspect of reading comprehension, concept of teaching reading, and then concept, advantages and disadvantages of Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy, the procedures of teaching reading using QAR strategy, and also the theoretical assumption and hypothesis of the research.

2.1. Review of Previous Studies

The Question Answer Relationships (QAR) strategy was developed by Taffy Raphael (1982) that is used to help reading students learn how to decipher what types of questions they are being asked, and where to look for answers. It is believed that this strategy can improve students' reading achievement especially in answering comprehension questions related to text. There have been several studies of using QAR strategy in improving students' reading achievement that have been conducted in various areas.

Peng *et al.* (2007) conducted a research in Singapore which was carried out to Primary 6 pupils with 23 boys and 21 girls that focused on finding whether the explicit teaching of QAR could improve students' performance in the open-ended comprehension questions and in the higher-order open-ended comprehension questions. From the research, the findings showed that students taught by the QAR strategy showed some improvement in their reading comprehension test scores after intervention compared to the control group. It was proved by the *mean* of experimental group and control group. At the first study, the *mean* of experimental group was 12.76 while the control group was 11.48. After the treatment given, the experimental group demonstrated better comprehension in all types of questions than control group in which the greatest improvement was on the "Think and Search" questions. In addition, the qualitative data analysis also showed that more than half students taught by QAR strategy felt more confident about answering comprehension questions after learning the strategy.

Moreover, Kinniburgh and Prew (2010) also did a study about the implementation of QAR strategy in the primary grades that focused on finding out whether the QAR strategy could be successfully implemented in grades K-2 to increase students' reading comprehension. This study was conducted in Title I School in the Southeastern United States. Four teachers, a kindergartener, first and second primary graders, K-2 special education teacher, and students of K-2 special class participated in this study. There was a total of 69 students who participated in the study. From this study, the result indicated: (1) that the QAR strategy can be successfully implemented in kindergarten, first and second primary grades with proper staff development and support; and also (2) that the QAR strategy can lead

to growth in reading comprehension of primary grade students. It was proved by students' result of pre-test and post-test and students' interviews. For the first and second primary graders, they took a pre-test and post-test in which the result of the test showed students growth in reading comprehension as the result of QAR instruction. The average mean of score on post-test increased than on pre-test. And for all graders included in this research, they took interview in which the students' interviews resulted in all of the students state that they enjoyed learning using this strategy, and they all felt it helps them understand the stories.

Furthermore, related to the application of QAR strategy in increasing reading comprehension especially for kindergarten students, Furtado and Pastell (2012) found that students overwhelmingly scored higher on the post-test reading comprehension after read-aloud of *The Jay and the Peacock* with some receiving perfect scores after applying QAR strategy in teaching learning activity. They conducted this research at the elementary school in southern California which has a split-day and a full-day kindergarten to see how explicit instruction of the QAR strategy over a four week (18 days intervention) period can enhance reading comprehension among kindergarten students. The result of this study showed that twenty out of twenty three students scored considerably higher on the post-test than they did on the pre-test. The class's average score for pre-test was 9.15 and climbed to 11.02 (on a 13 point scale) on the post test. This showed a 14.39% improvement, but more significant was that the class reached 84.77% accuracy in scores with the intervention.

In addition, Cummins *et al.* (2012) examined how QAR could assist secondary students in text-based learning of scientific idea especially for the fourth grade

class students in their study. The participants for this study were four girls and two boys enrolled in a high school poverty urban school in Western New York. Through the implementation of this strategy, the students were increasingly able to create questions in all four sub-categories of QAR and its implication, and they were becoming more confident in their own knowledge. Besides that, QAR strategy gave positive effect where there was an increase in test scores of lower-level students.

Then, Stafford also did research in Central Florida related to the QAR strategy in the same year, 2012. His research was conducted to examine the effects of the direct instruction of QAR taxonomy, when embedded within summer school, on ninth-grade students' ability to accurately answer comprehension questions after reading. However, in his research, QAR strategy had a negative effect on students' question-answering ability and raised question regarding comprehension instruction, length of interventions, and the role of scaffolded support for a target population of adolescent readers. Results of this study indicated that the QAR treatment did not increase students' ability to accurately answer comprehension questions. It showed that the scores between pre-test and post-test of experimental group and control group decreased.

In spite of Stafford's research, Agustina (2012) conducted a classroom action research about QAR strategy for the first grade of senior high school, that is, in SMA Negeri 8 Bandar Lampung. This research proved that QAR strategy can be used to improve the students' reading comprehension. It could be seen from the reading test scores earned by students after being taught by QAR strategy through three cycles conducted in this research. At the first cycle, only 29% of students

exceeded the passing grade, then in the second cycle, it increased to 64.51% of students who achieved the passing grade and in the last cycle, 83.87% of students passed the passing grade. In teaching learning process, Agustina also found that students gave positive response toward the implementation of QAR strategy in which their response changed to be better and they became more active and started to enjoy learning using QAR from the cycle 1 to cycle 3. Moreover, she also found that the students mostly had problem in finding main idea, specific information, and vocabulary in learning reading.

In brief, compared to the previous studies above, this research has some differences from the previous ones such as: the subject of the research in which researcher examines QAR strategy for Islamic public school students since there is no research that has been conducted for Islamic public school dealing with the implementation of QAR strategy; and the purpose of the research, that is, to find out what kind of reading aspect that improves the most after the implementation of QAR strategy since the previous studies do not deal with this issue yet.

2.2. Concept of Reading Comprehension

Some experts contend in many ways concerning the concept of reading comprehension. Therefore, to fully understand about it, the detail explanation of concept of reading comprehension which contains of definition and aspects of reading comprehension is presented below.

2.2.1. Definition of Reading Comprehension

Reading is one of essential skills that should be mastered by students who want to achieve their proficiency in English. Reading is actually a cognitive process where a reader engages in the mental process of knowing, learning, and understanding things (Sutarsyah, 2010). Furthermore, Nuttall (in Simanjuntak, 1989) defines reading as the meaningful interpretation of printed or written word verbal symbol. It means that reading is a result of the interpretation between the perception of graphic symbols that represents language and the readers' language skills, cognitive skills, and knowledge of the world. In this process, the reader tries to create the meanings intended by the writer.

It is widely accepted that reading is begun from getting meaning from written symbols. The reader imagines transferring sounds into letters to get the meaning out. This view is strongly influenced by audio-lingual method which claims that reading a second language was viewed primarily as an adjunct to oral language skills (Fries, 1963, 1972 in Sutarsyah, 2015). According this view, decoding sound symbol-relationship was considered to be the primary steps in the development of reading proficiency (Carrell, 1992 in Sutarsyah, 2015).

These concepts basically characterize the theory bottom-up processing. This bottom-up model was proposed by structural linguists and behavioral psychologists. According to his theory reading entailed the application of automatic habit, induced response to written text. Reading is considered essentially a mechanical decoding process.

In the same way, Carrel and Eisterhold (in Sutarsyah, 2010) state that in reading, basically, there is a process of interaction between the author with his language media and the reader with his language knowledge and knowledge of the world. The reader tries to interpret what the author has expressed in the written text. Simply put, our understanding of reading is best considered as the interaction that occurs between the reader and the text, an interpretive process.

The explanations above show that reading is not only a process to read a text, but the essential thing is the ability to understand and interpret the meaning of the text. As Dallman (1982) says, reading is more than knowing what each letter of alphabet stands for, but reading involves more than word recognition and comprehension is an essential in reading. Reading is not simply making sound of the text, but it is about comprehending the idea of the text itself. It means that no reading takes place without comprehension.

Reading and comprehension are regarded as the one activity involved to each other. Teale and Yokota (in Westwood, 2001) state that comprehension must be the central focus of teaching students to read and not something to be emphasized only after students have learned how to decode and identify the words. Comprehension is a progressive skill in attaching meaning at the same level and proceeding to attach meaning into entire reading selection. All comprehension revolves around the readers' ability in finding main idea and topic sentence from the text (Doyle, 2004).

According to Rubin (in Westwood, 2001), reading comprehension has been described as a complex intellectual process involving a number of abilities.

Readers must use information already acquired to filter, interpret, organize, reflect upon and establish relationships with the new incoming information on the page. In order to understand the text, a reader must be able to identify words rapidly, know the meaning of the most all of the words and be able to combine units of meaning into a coherent message. Lyon and Scarborough cited in Westwood (2001) contend that understanding of text results from an interaction between word identification, prior knowledge and the effective use of cognitive strategies. Thus, According to Togenes (in Westwood, 2001), reading comprehension is a cognitive, motivational and effective activity.

Furthermore, Pressley (in Westwood, 2001) says that good comprehenders are effective users of comprehension strategies when they work with the text. Effective comprehension requires the reader to maintain the meaning throughout the reading of the text. If meaning is lost, the reader should be aware of this fact immediately and take necessary compensatory action.

It is essential that reading comprehension is seen as something that begins as early as the beginning of reading and not something that students move on to after they have learned the decode print. Loban *et al.* (1969) contends that reading comprehension is indeed a very elaborate procedure which involves a balance of many elements in a passage and their organization in the proper relation to each other comprehension in reading depending on knowing the literal meaning of words in various contexts. It can be said that the reader must be able to perceive the relation of each part to the other and each of the whole of the text.

In addition, Smith (in Westwood, 2001) states that reading comprehension is considered to occur at four levels of complexity. These levels are often referred to as literal level, inferential level, critical level, and creative level. Consider the following brief passage:

For the seventh time that week Miss Chow took the elevator down to the ground floor where the landlord had his office. She was glad that she did not have to walk down the stairs as her apartment was on the 10th floor. She knocked on the office door and went in. The landlord did not look pleased to see her.

‘They are playing the music at full blast again’, she complained. ‘Those people in 10B. What are you going to do about it?’

The landlord sighed and rubbed his eyes. ‘Look, Miss Chow. I will do what I can. This seems to go on all the time. I can understand how you fell, but they take no notice of me and there is nothing in their lease to say they cannot play music. If all else fails, you could move up to the apartment on the 18th floor. That will be vacant after next week. It has the best views of the harbor and it is the best apartment we have. How is about that?’ (Westwood, 2001)

1. Literal Level

At the literal level, the basic facts are understood. For instance, knowing that the lady’s name is Miss Chow; she lives in an apartment on the 10th floor; her neighbors are noisy; she has complained to the landlord before. This information is contained explicitly within the text.

2. Inferential Level

At the inferential level, the reader is able to go beyond what is written on the page and add meaning or draw conclusions. For example, Miss Chow believes that her landlord will tell the neighbors to be less noisy; that he will sort the matter out for her. It can also be inferred that things may not improve even if the landlord does

complain. The reader also gathers that the landlord is becoming a little frustrated or irritated by Miss Chow's complaints.

3. Critical Level

At the critical level, the reader assesses the good sense of what he or she is reading, its clarity, accuracy and any apparent exaggeration or bias. For example, when Miss Chow's landlord offers her a different apartment on the 18th floor and says it is the best apartment, with the best view of the harbor, the reader knows he could be exaggerating. Critical and inferential reading together probably make the reader feel that moving up to the 18th floor may not suit Miss Chow and it is not good a good solution.

4. Creative Level

At the creative level, the reader can take information or ideas from what has been read and develop new ideas from them. The creative level stimulates the reader to new and original thinking. For example, the reader comes to understand that landlords should write a clause in their leasing agreement to say that if the tenant makes noise and the landlord receives complaints, the tenant will be asked to leave within one week. The reader might also be able to suggest other ways of dealing with Miss Chow's problem; or might write a short story indicating what happens next time Miss Choe is distracted by her neighbors.

Based on the concepts above, it can be concluded that reading comprehension is a complex intellectual process of reading in interpreting the text the reader reads that is considered occur at the several levels of complexity, namely literal level, inferential level, critical level, and creative level.

2.2.2. Aspects in Reading Comprehension

In teaching reading, there are several aspects that should be measured in order to know whether the students can achieve the goal of reading or not. According to Brown (in Agustina, 2012), there are four aspects in reading comprehension needed when we want to assess students' reading ability. These four aspects mainly deal with main idea, specific information, vocabulary and the ability to infer implicit meaning in the context of text. In the same way, Suparman (2012) also states that there are several aspects of reading comprehension skills that should be mastered by the reader to comprehend the text deeply. They are main idea, supporting detail, inference, reference, and vocabulary. Those aspects will be explained as follows:

1. Main idea

Main idea is the most important piece of information for the reader to know the concept of the paragraph which usually exists in each paragraph. According to Brown (in Agustina, 2012), main idea is a sentence or generalization that tells what the paragraph is about which is usually found at the beginning of the paragraph, or at the end of paragraph. In line with Whother and Kathleen (1986), the sentence stating this main idea is called as topic sentence. In some paragraphs, the main idea is not explicitly states in one sentence. Determining main idea of a paragraph is a skill to gasp and find the main point of the passage in each paragraph where the keyword will be repeated in the supporting details (Suparman, 2012).

2. *Supporting Detail*

Whother and Kathleen (1986) contend that specific information or supporting detail develops the topic sentence by giving definition, examples, facts, incidents, comparison, analogy, cause and effect statistic, quotations, and evidences. Identifying supporting detail means that we should look for the information that relevant to the goal in mind and ignore the irrelevant one (Suparman, 2012).

3. *Vocabulary*

Wallace (in Agustina, 2012) says that vocabulary is the stock of word used by people. it means that vocabulary is a fundamental thing for everyone who wants to speak or produce utterances. In reading comprehension, the readers should be able to understand vocabulary. It means that the readers have to comprehend the word mean in order to understand the text deeper.

4. *Inference*

Suparman (2012) defines that inference is a good guess or conclusion drawn based on logic of passage. Drawing inference means that the readers imply the sentences' meaning, then, conclude it logically. Furthermore, Whother and Kathleen (1986) state that inference is an educational guess or prediction about something unknown based on available facts and information. It is the logical connection the reader draws between what he knows and what he does not know.

5. *Reference*

Reference is the intentional usage of one thing to show something else in which one provides the information necessary to interpret the other. Finding reference means that the reader should interpret and determine one linguistic expression to

another (Suparman, 2012). Moreover, Latulippe (in Agustina, 2012) contends that reference is words or phrases used either before or after the reference in reading materials. Reference is used to avoid unnecessary repetition of words or phrases which is usually used a kind of pronoun.

From the explanation above, we know that there are several aspects of reading comprehension students should master. To achieve the goal of reading, they should be able to master those aspects such as: identifying main idea and supporting detail of the text in each paragraph; understanding vocabulary or words mean; confirming reference existing in the text; and making inference by comprehending the implicit meaning of the sentences.

2.3. The Teaching of Reading

In learning English at school, the students try to be able to read English text in which it is an important skill to achievement the goal of their study about English. Reading is useful for other purposes in which any exposure to English is a good thing for language students. Reading texts provide good models for English writing. They also provide opportunities to study language such as vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and the way we construct sentences, paragraph, and texts. Lastly, good reading texts can introduce interesting topics, stimulate discussion, excite imaginative responses and be the springboard for well-rounded, fascinating lessons.

2.3.1. The Principles in Teaching Reading

Harmer (1998) states that there are some principles behind the teaching of reading which teachers should know before teaching reading in the class. They are:

1. Principle 1: Reading is not a passive skill.

Reading is an incredibly active occupation. To do it successfully, we have to understand what the words mean, see the picture the words are painting, understand the arguments, and work out if we agree with them. If we do not do these things, especially students, then we only just scratch the surface of the text and we quickly forget it.

2. Principle 2: Students need to be engaged with what they are reading.

As with everything else in lessons, students who are not engaged with the reading texts or not actively interested in what they are doing are less likely to benefit from it. When they are really fired up by the topic or the task, they get much more from what is in front of them.

3. Principle 3: Students should be encouraged to respond to the content of a reading text, not just to the language.

Of course, it is important to study reading texts for the way they use language, the number of the paragraphs they contain and how many times they use relative clauses. But the meaning, the message of the text, is just as important and we must give students a chance to respond to that message in some way. It is especially important that they should be allowed to express their feelings about the topic, thus provoking personal engagement with it and the language.

4. *Principle 4: Prediction is a major factor in reading.*

When we read the texts in our own language, we frequently have a good idea of the content before we actually read. Book covers give us a hint of what is in the book, photographs and headlines hint at what articles are about and reports look like reports before we read a single word.

The moment we get those hints such as the book cover, the headline, and the word processed page, our brain starts predicting what we are going to read. Expectations are set up and the active process of reading is ready to begin. Teachers should give students 'hints' so that they can predict what is coming too. It will make them better and more engaged readers.

5. *Principle 5: Match the task to the topic.*

Once a decision has been taken about what reading text the students are going to read, we need to choose good reading tasks such as the right kind of questions, engaging and useful puzzles, etc. The most interesting text can be undermined by asking boring and inappropriate questions. The most commonplace passage can be made really exciting with imaginative and challenging tasks.

6. *Principle 6: Good teachers exploit reading texts to the full.*

Any reading text is full of sentences, words, ideas, descriptions, etc. It does not make sense just to get students to read it and then drop it to move on to something else. Good teachers integrate the reading text into interesting class sequences, using the topic for discussion and further tasks, using the language for study and later activation.

In brief, we can know that in teaching reading there are many aspects or principle that must be considered in order to make the teaching learning process running well and the process can lead the students to achieve the goal of learning reading.

The purpose of teaching reading is to develop the students' skills so that they can read English text effectively. Effective and efficient reading is always purposeful and tends to focus on the purposes of the activity. It is important for the teacher to build up the students' ability to adapt the reading strategy according to the reading purpose as a goal in teaching reading. It is also important for the teacher to apply the principles of teaching reading in class to make the teaching learning activity run well.

2.3.2. The Activities in Teaching Reading

Besides the principles, teacher should know the nature of the tasks in teaching reading that should plan to set in order to make students do some kinds of task in appropriate reading activity such as before, during, or after reading the text. Woods (2005) classifies the activities in reading class into three as follows:

1. Pre-Reading Tasks

Pre-reading task is the task given before the students read the text. This task can be in form of vocabulary games, word searches, and matching synonyms. This activity does not need the students to read the text because this task only needs the students to find the vocabulary or words used in the text. This activity can help the students to approach the text in more confident way. The other pre-reading activities are active top-down skills, or schematic knowledge that can help the students in relating to the full meaning of the text. All of them enable students to

familiarize themselves with the content of the text in which these activities can be systematic or schematic (Woods, 2005).

2. *While-Reading Tasks*

This task is given while the students are reading the text. As Hedge (in Woods, 2005) states, reading is an interactive process, it encourages them to be active as they read. In this activity, students can be given some tasks while they are reading such as: making note, following the order of the idea in the text, reacting to the opinion expressed, understanding the information it contains, asking some questions related to the text, confirming the expectations of prior knowledge or predicting the next part of a text from various clues.

3. *Post-Reading Tasks*

This task is given after the students finished reading the text. This activity can be undertaken on individual or group basis. Reading is frequently thought as being solo and a silent activity, while group pre and post-reading activities can motivate the crucial while-reading activities. The kinds of task in this activity are to go beyond the course book and introduce the students a challenging element of the target language which can add a new dimension to their learning and which can give them some autonomy (Woods, 2005).

After we know the nature of the tasks of those activities, we know exactly what we have to do in teaching reading and we can determine the appropriate media and technique or strategy we can use in the reading activities in order to arouse the students' interest in reading to make students able to comprehend the text easier.

2.4. The Strategies for Reading Comprehension

To gain the better result on language learning process, there will be a need of good and appropriate strategies in reading comprehension. Brown (2001) states that reading comprehension is primarily a matter of developing appropriate and efficient comprehension strategies. There are ten such strategies in which they can be applied to the classroom technique that will be explained as follows:

1. Identify the purpose of reading.

This strategy needs the teacher to make the students know their purposes in reading something. It is needed to make an efficient reading during the teaching learning process in which an efficient reading consists of clearly identifying the purposes of reading something. By doing so, the students know what they are looking for and can weed out potential distracting information.

2. Use graphemic rules and patterns to aid in bottom-up decoding (especially for beginning level learners).

At the beginning levels of learning English, one of the difficulties students encounter in learning to read is making the correspondences between spoken and written English. In many cases, learners have become acquainted with oral language and have some difficulty learning English spelling conventions. They may need hints and explanations about certain English orthographic rules and peculiarities. While you can often assume that one-to-one grapheme-phoneme correspondences will be acquired with ease, other relationships might prove difficult. These are the example of consideration that might provide hints and pointers on such patterns:

- a. “short” vowel sound in VC patterns (*bat, him, leg, wish, etc*).
- b. “long” vowel sound in VCe (final silent *e*) patterns (*late, time, bite, etc*).
- c. “long” vowel sound in VV patterns (*seat, coat, etc*).
- d. Distinguishing “hard” *c* and *g* from “soft” *c* and *g* (*cat vs city, game vs gem, etc*).

These and a multitude of other phonics approaches to reading can prove useful for learners at the beginning level and especially useful for teaching children and non-literate adult.

3. *Use efficient silent reading techniques for relatively rapid comprehension (for intermediate to advanced learners).*

At the intermediate-to-advanced level, students are not need to be speed readers. They only need the help to increase the efficiency by using a few silent reading rules taught by the teacher such as:

- a. You do not need to “pronounce” each word to yourself.
- b. Try to visually perceive more than one word at a time, preferably phrases.
- c. Unless a word is absolutely crucial to global understanding, skip over it and try to infer its meaning from its context.

Aside from these fundamental guidelines, which if followed can help students to be efficient readers, reading speed is usually not too much of an issue for all but the most advanced students. Academic reading, for example, is something most students manage to accomplish by allocating whatever time they personally need in order to complete the material. If your students can read 250 to 300 words per minute, further concern over speed may not be necessary.

4. *Skim the text for main idea.*

Skimming consists of quickly running one's eyes across a whole text (such as an essay, article, or chapter) for its gist. Skimming gives readers the advantage of being able to predict the purpose of the passage, the main topic, or message, and possibly some of developing or supporting ideas. This gives them a head start as they embark on more focused reading.

5. *Scan the text for specific information.*

Scanning can be defined as a technique of quickly searching for some particular pieces of information in a text. Scanning exercises may ask students to look for names or dates, to find a definition of a key concept, or to list a certain number of supporting details. The purpose of scanning is to extract specific information without reading through the whole text. For academic English, scanning is absolutely essential. In vocational or general English, scanning is important in dealing with genre like schedules, manuals, forms, etc.

6. *Use semantic mapping or clustering.*

Readers can easily be overwhelmed by a long string of ideas or events. The strategy of semantic mapping, or grouping ideas into meaningful clusters, helps the readers to provide some order to the chaos. Making such semantic maps can be done individually, but they make for a productive group works technique as students collectively induce order and hierarchy to a passage.

7. *Guess when you are not certain.*

Students can use guessing to these advantage to guess the meaning of a word, a grammatical relationship (e.g., a pronoun reference), a discourse relationship, a

cultural reference, content message and infer implied meaning (“between the line”). They should utilize all their skills and put forth as much effort as possible to be on target with their hypotheses where the key to successful guessing is to make it reasonably accurate. We can help students to become accurate guesser by encouraging them to use effective compensation strategies in which they fill gaps in their competence by intelligent attempts to use whatever clues are available to them.

8. *Analyze vocabulary.*

One way for students to make guessing pay off when they do not immediately recognize a word is to analyze it in terms of what they know about it. Here are several useful techniques:

- a. Look for prefixes (*co-*, *inter-*, *un-*, *etc*) that may give clues.
- b. Look for suffixes (*-tion*, *-tive*, *-ally*, *etc*) that may indicate what part of speech it is.
- c. Look for roots that are familiar (e.g., *intervening* may be a word a student does not know, but recognizing that the root *ven* from Latin “to come” would yield the meaning “to come in between”).
- d. Look for grammatical contexts that may signal information.
- e. Look at the semantic context for clues.

9. *Distinguish between literal and implied meanings.*

This requires the application of sophisticated top-down skills. The fact that not all language can be interpreted appropriately by attending to its literal, syntactic

surface structure makes special demands on readers. Implied meaning usually has to be devised from processing pragmatic information.

10. Capitalize on discourse markers to process relationships.

Many discourse markers in English signal relationship among ideas as expressed through phrases, clauses, and sentences. A clear comprehension of such markers can greatly enhance students' reading efficiency. Mackay in Brown (2001) defines that there are some types of discourse markers. They are:

1. *Enumerative*. It introduces in order in which points are to be made or the time sequence in which actions or process took place. For examples: first(ly), second(ly), one, two, three / a, b, c, next, then, finally, last(ly), in the first / second place, for one thing / another thing, to begin with, subsequently, eventually, finally, in the end, to conclude.
2. *Additive*.
 - a. *Reinforcing*. It introduces a reinforcement or confirmation of what has preceded. For examples: again, then again, also, moreover, furthermore, in addition, above all, what is more.
 - b. *Similarity*. It introduces a statement of similarity with what has preceded. For examples: equally, likewise, similarly, correspondingly, in the same way.
 - c. *Transition*. It introduces a new stage in the sequence of presentation of information. For examples: now, well, incidentally, by the way, O.K., fine.

3. *Logical Sequence.*
 - a. *Summative.* It introduces a summary of what has preceded. For examples: so, so far, overall, then, thus, therefore, in short, to sum up, to conclude, to summarize.
 - b. *Resultative.* It introduces an expression of the result or consequence of what preceded (and includes inductive and deductive acts). For examples: so, as the result, consequently, hence, now, therefore, thus, as a consequence, in consequence.
4. *Explicative.* It introduces an explanation or reformulation of what preceded. For examples: namely, in other words, that is to say, better, rather, by (this) we mean.
5. *Illustrative.* It introduces an illustration or example of what preceded. For examples: for example, for instance.
6. *Contrastive.*
 - a. *Replacive.* It introduces an alternative to what preceded. For examples: alternatively, (or) again, (or) rather, (but) then, on the other hand.
 - b. *Antithetic.* It introduces information in opposition to what preceded. For examples: conversely, instead, then, on the contrary, by contrast, on the other hand.
 - c. *Concessive.* It introduces information which is unexpected in view of what preceded. For examples: anyway, anyhow, however, nevertheless, nonetheless, notwithstanding, still, though, yet, for all that, in spite of (that), at the same time, all the same.

From the strategies explained above, we know that there are many strategies that can be used in reading comprehension. Hence, it can be concluded that the better way is by mixing and integrating some strategies suitable for the certain situations in teaching reading based on students' need. However, those strategies are not suitable to improve students' reading achievement especially in improving students' test score and those do not challenge the students either to use their high-level of thinking or their literal knowledge to deliver their ideas or opinion about the text they are reading. Therefore, the researcher will try to use a strategy in teaching reading by using QAR strategy which is believed that it is a more appropriate strategy in teaching reading especially in answering comprehending questions that will make the students more easily in answering the questions, challenged students to use their high-level of thinking to answer such questions, and also support the students to be more active and confident in teaching learning process.

2.5. Concept of Question Answer Relationship Strategy

To fully understand about this strategy, the detail explanation of concept of Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy which contains of definition and types of QAR strategy is presented below.

2.5.1. Definition of Question Answer Relationship Strategy

Question Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy is one kind of many strategies that can be used for teaching reading. According to Raphael (1982, 1986), the QAR strategy is designed as a way for students to understand that the answer to a

question is directly related to the type of question asked. He states that QAR strategy is a reading comprehension strategy developed to clarify how students approach the task of reading texts and answering questions. Furthermore, Raphael and Au (in Chien, 2013) believe that a QAR framework provides a straightforward approach for reading comprehension instruction with the potential of closing the literacy achievement gap. Besides that, John and Leahy (in Chien, 2013) also affirm that QAR strategy actively engages the students in the questioning process.

Gavelek and Raphael (in Agustina, 2012) contend that by using QAR strategy, students become familiar with the various functional relationships that exist between questions and their responses. It means that students will realize the connection between question and answer which will help them to find out the answer of the question more easily. The Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy presents a three-way relationship between questions, text content, and reader knowledge. Simply put, the QAR strategy shows that students who understand how questions are written are better prepared to answer questions. These activities help students "demystify" the question-building process as a step toward better reading comprehension (Raphael, 1982).

According to Raphael (1986), essentially QAR teaches the students three comprehension strategies: (a) locating information, (b) determining text structures and how they convey information, and (c) determining when an inference is required. Using QAR, students will be able to recognize possible answer locations

by classifying questions by type as well as monitor their comprehension of the text.

Moreover, QAR strategy categorizes different types of questions which help the students to analyze, comprehend, and respond to the text concepts. As cited in Kinniburgh and Prew (2010), Caldwell and Leslie (2005) contend that QARs assist students in differentiating among questions based on where the answer can be found: either In the Book or In My Head. If answers are In the Book, the questions will be of a literal type because the answers are “right there” in the text. If the questions are In My Head, inferential questions have been posed, and the readers must use their own background knowledge to compose answers that require information not found in the text (Tompkins, 2004). This strategy refutes the common misconception that all answers can be found in the text.

In short, QAR strategy is a reading comprehension strategy that helps students realize the need to consider both information in the text and information from their own background knowledge which does not state explicitly in the text.

2.5.2. The Types of Question Answer Relationship (QAR) Strategy

Raphael (1986) identifies two categories of questions: those whose answers are supplied by the author (*In the Book QARs*) and those that have answers that need to be developed based on the reader's ideas and experiences (*In My Head QARs*). These two categories of questions also have two different types of questions. *In the Book questions* are classified as either *Right There questions* or *Think and Search questions*. And then, *In My Head questions* are classified as either *Author*

and *You questions* or *On My Own questions*. The further explanation will be presented as follows:

1. *Right There Questions*

Right There questions are factual and on the line question. The answer to *Right There questions* can be found easily in the text. *Right There questions* have only one right answer that can be found at one place in the reading text in which the question and answer usually have the same wording. The answers are usually one-word or short-phrase responses. Some examples of phrases used for *Right There questions* are *Who is....?*, *Where is....?*, *What is....?*, *When is....?*, *How many....?*, *When did....?*.

2. *Think and Search Questions*

The answers to *Think and Search questions* can be found in several parts of text which are pieced together using information from different parts of the text. *Think and Search questions* demands the readers to put different parts of a story in order to answer the questions because there may be more than one correct answer. These questions require the readers to think about how the information or ideas in the text are related to each other, and then, search through entire passage to find the information that applies. The question and answer of this type have different wordings and the answers are usually short answers. Some examples of phrases used for *Think and Search questions* are *For what reason....?*, *How did....?*, *Why was....?*, *What caused....?*.

3. *Author and You Questions*

Author and You questions ask the readers to combine their own background knowledge, experiences, and values, and in combination with the text provided to respond a particular question. The answer to *Author and You questions* are not found in the text. Instead they require students to think inferentially. The answer of the question comes from both clues in the text and students' prior knowledge. Students must think about what they already know, what the author is telling them, and how both pieces of information fit together. Then, students must synthesize the text to fully understand the question. Facing this kind of questions, students should find and make connections between new knowledge from the text and their prior personal knowledge to create a new level of understanding. Some examples of phrases used for *Author and You questions* are *Would you....?*, *which character....?*, *Did you agree with....?*, *What did you think of....?*

4. *On My Own Questions*

On My Own questions ask the reader to go completely beyond the text. These questions can be answered without even reading the text because the answer comes entirely from readers' prior knowledge. The answers to these questions rely solely on students' experiences. These questions require inferential and evaluative thinking so that the answers of these questions do not require information from the text but they do require that readers make some types of judgment about or relate to the topic of the text. Some examples of phrases used for *On My Own questions* are *Do you know....?*, *Have you ever....?* *Would you ever....?*

Here are the QAR framework that was used to frame the teaching modeling of question-asking practices during the reading cycle (adapted from Table 2 and Table 3 in Raphael and Au cited in Peng *et al.*, 2007).

Tabel 2.1. QAR Framework to Frame Question-Asking during Reading Cycle.

Reading Cycle	QAR	Comprehension Strategies	Questions
Before reading	On My Own	Activating prior knowledge	From the title, what do I already know that can connect me to the text?
	Author & You	Predicting Visualizing	From the title or illustrations, what might this text be about?
During reading	Author & You	Making simple and complex inferences	What do you think will happen next? How would I describe the mood of the story and why is this important?
	Right There	Scanning to locate information	Who is the main character? What are some words that describe the setting?
	Think & Search	Summarizing Clarifying Making simple inferences	What is the problem and how is it resolved? What are the important events? What role do the characters play in the story?
After reading	Author & You	Distinguishing fact and opinion	What is the author's message? How well does the author make his argument?
	Think & Search	Identifying important information	Find evidence in the text to support an argument.

According to Raphael and Au (in Agustina, 2012), QAR provides a framework where students can use it to link strategies at appropriate points in the reading cycle. In addition, this framework guides teacher's modeling of question-asking practices before, during, and after reading as we can see in the table 1. Using QAR strategy to plan reading comprehension instruction helps to ensure that there will be not be an over-emphasis of lower-level skills and questions that only require the students to locate and recall information. Understanding and control of strategies learned help the students to engage in the high level of literacy for which they are accountable in their day-to-day classroom activities.

According to Raphael and Au (in Peng *et al.*, 2007), extending the use of QAR to frame comprehension strategy instruction can help pupils see the 'relationships among the strategies they are learning and the task demands represented by different questions. It is believed that providing pupils a systematic way of analyzing task demands of different question probes can improve reading comprehension.

Based on the explanation above, we can conclude that QAR strategy have two categories of questions which have two different types more under each category. They are: *In the Book questions* that are classified into *Right There questions* or *Think and Search questions* where the answers of these types are right there in the text and the types of questions are literal; and *In My Head questions* are classified into *Author and You questions* or *On My Own questions* in which to answer these types of questions, the readers must use their prior knowledge because the answers do not apply explicitly in the text. It is important to note that the answers to *In the Book questions* can be found in the text or book, while answers to *In My Head questions* are based on what the learner knows. Those kinds of questions are framed and used in all activities within reading cycle.

2.6. The Procedures of Teaching Reading Using QAR Strategy

In teaching reading by using QAR strategy, there are the procedures which are used in teaching learning activities. Those procedures are divided into three sections as presented below:

1. Pre-Reading Activities

- a) Students are divided into groups consisting of 6 students. The group will be divided into a pair of sub-group which consists of 3 members of each. The first sub-group is called as expert group and the second is student group.
- b) Teacher gives a text to the expert groups and the student groups will get some clues related to the text. Then, they have to discuss about the text along with members.
- c) In pre-reading activities, the students are asked to use QAR strategy of Own My Own Questions and Author and You Questions.
- d) The student group asks some questions of On My Own Questions to activate prior knowledge of expert group. For examples: From the title, what do you know about the text? Have you ever read the same kind of the text given? How is the story like?. Then, the expert group will answer the question based on their prior knowledge.
- e) The student group asks some questions of Author and You Question to the expert group to predict and visualize the content of the text before reading it. For example: From the title of the text, what might the text be about?. Then the expert group will answer the question about what they know of the text from the title.

2. While-Reading Activities

- a) The expert group is asked to start reading the text given.

- b) In while-reading activities, the students are asked to use QAR strategy of Right There Questions, Think and Search Questions, and Author and You Questions.
- c) While the expert group is reading the text, the student group asks some questions of Right There Questions to know or locate some information. For examples: Who is the main character of the story? Where does the story take place?. Then, the expert group will answer the questions based on the text they are reading.
- d) The students group asks some questions of Think and Search Questions to the expert group to summarize, clarify, and make simple inferences of the text. For examples: What is the problem of the story and how is it resolved? What are the important events of the story?. Then, the expert group will answer the questions based on the information they get in the text.
- e) The student group asks some questions of Author and You Questions to the expert group to make simple and complex inferences of the text. For examples: After he found what he wanted, what do you think will happen next? Do you agree if the main character has to do such kind of thing to have a happy life? Why?. Then, the expert group will answer the questions based on what they are reading and their prior knowledge.

3. Post-Reading Activities

- a) In post-reading activities, the students are asked to use QAR strategy of Author and You Questions and Think and Search Questions.

- b) After the expert group finishes reading the text, the student group asks some questions of Author and You Questions to know what kind of the impression the readers get after reading the story. For examples: What is the author's message? How well does the author tell the story? Then, the expert group will answer the questions.
- c) The student group asks some questions of Think and Search Questions to the expert group to identify important information. For example: What is the evidence that supports that argument in the text?. Then, the expert group will answer the questions.
- d) After each group finishes the discussion, teacher gives a worksheet of reading test in the form of multiple choice and the students have to work individually and submit it in the time given.

(Raphael and Au in Peng *et al.*, 2007)

2.7. Advantages and Disadvantages of Using QAR Strategy

QAR strategy is a kind of strategy of reading comprehension that can be applied in teaching reading at school. In using this strategy, a teacher should know the advantages and disadvantages of this strategy when it is applied in teaching learning process.

There are some benefits of using QAR strategy in teaching reading. According to Chien (2013), QARs serve as a reasonable starting point to address the problems that stand in the way of moving all students to high levels of literacy. QAR empowers students to think about the text they are reading and beyond it, too. It

inspires them to think creatively and work cooperatively while challenging them to use literal and higher-level thinking skills.

In addition, the different skills required to answer the four types of questions in QAR allow students to become aware of their own thinking processes as they ask and answer questions. Moreover, generating questions facilitates deeper thought than does merely answering questions. These conditions make the students become more active in the class and challenge them to use their high-level thinking ability to answer comprehending questions because it teaches students how to ask questions about their reading and where to find the answers to them. This strategy leads the students to categorize the questions in order to ease the students in finding the answers of the questions because after they categorize the questions, they already know what they have to do and where they should find the answers.

Besides the benefits that we can get by using QAR strategy in teaching reading, there are also the disadvantages in applying QAR strategy. Agustina (2012) contends that for the first time, the students will be confused about QAR strategy in which there are four types of questions so that the students do not know how to categorize the questions and what they have to do during reading activity. This condition makes the students become passive and cannot follow the activities. In addition, the students with lack background knowledge related to the material given using QAR strategy will face some difficulties in finding the answers of the questions in category of *In My Head questions* in which these questions are based on what the students know and require the students' background knowledge related to the topic or material discussed.

2.8. Theoretical Assumption

Considering the discussion of the literature review, the researcher would like to find out whether there is a significant difference of students' reading comprehension ability by using a certain strategy in learning. The researcher believes that QAR strategy can improve students' reading achievement as has been shown in some of previous researches conducted before. By QAR strategy, students can improve their reading comprehension especially their ability in answering comprehension questions. Students are able to answer comprehension questions properly without too much time consuming because they have known an appropriate strategy to answer comprehension questions and what they have to do to find the answer of the question because QAR strategy helps them to locate the possible correct answers. It can be stated that QAR strategy is the most effective strategy from the other strategies in answering comprehension questions. Students are encouraged to be more active and they are also challenged to use their thinking ability. Therefore, the researcher put on assumption that the implementation of QAR strategy can give a positive effect toward students' reading comprehension at the first grade of MTsN 2 Lampung Selatan.

2.9. Hypothesis

Based on the theories and theoretical assumption that have been explained above, the researcher hypothesized that:

H₁: There is a significant difference of students' reading comprehension at the first grade of MTsN 2 Lampung Selatan before and after the implementation of Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy.

To prove the hypothesis above, the researcher used *Repeated Measure T-Test* using SPSS 16.0 for Windows. The criteria used were that the significant level was lower than 0.05 and that t-value was higher than t-table. When the criteria are fulfilled, it means that the hypothesis is accepted.

Briefly, this chapter has explained review of previous studies related to QAR strategy, concept of reading and reading comprehension, aspects in reading, concept and strategies in teaching reading, concept of QAR strategy, procedures of teaching reading using QAR strategy, advantages and disadvantages of QAR strategy, and also the theoretical assumption and hypothesis of the research.

III. METHOD

This chapter focuses on the methods used in this research. It deals with research design, population and sample, variables, research procedure, data collecting techniques, instruments, validity and reliability of the test, data treatment, data analysis and hypothesis testing that will be explained below.

3.1. Research Design

The researcher conducted a quantitative research using one group pre-test and post-test design. The researcher used one class as the experimental class. This research was conducted to know whether there was a significant difference of students' reading comprehension ability at first grade of MTsN students after applying Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy and which aspect of reading comprehension improved the most after applying this strategy.

In this research, a reading test was done at the first meeting to see the proficiency of students' reading comprehension and to find out whether there was a significant difference after the researcher applied treatments to the students as well as to find out the improvement of students' reading comprehension ability. The researcher had several steps such as a pre-test, three treatments, and a post-

test. The results of pre-test and post-test of this research were examined by the researcher to see the improvement of the implementation of QAR strategy toward student's reading achievement. Here is the scheme of one group pre-test and post-test design (Setiyadi, 2006):

$$\mathbf{T1 \quad X \quad T2}$$

Where:

T1 = Pre-test (a test that is conducted before the treatment given)

X = Treatments

T2 = Post-test (a test that is conducted after the treatment given)

3.2. Population and Sample

3.2.1 Population

Arikunto (2002) says that population is the whole subject of the research. Besides that, population also can be meant as a number of individuals that has at least the same characteristics. The population of this research was the first grade students of MTsN 2 Lampung Selatan where there were eight classes in which each class consisted of approximately 22-40 students in 2016/2017 academic year.

3.2.2. Sample

Sample is a technique of taking a representative sample from the population. There were eight classes of the first grade of MTsN 2 Lampung Selatan. Concerning every class had relatively the same level of proficiency in English because in the first grade of MTsN 2 Lampung Selatan there was no class

classification based on their intelligence, the researcher used a probability sampling technique in which one class was randomly taken as the sample for this research, that was, VII A. It was applied based on the consideration that every student in population had the same opportunity to be chosen as the sample in order to avoid the subjectivity in this research (Setiyadi, 2006).

3.3. Variables

Hatch and Farhady (1982) define a variable as an attribute of a person or of an object which varies from person to person or from object to object. This research contained one variable as the measurement of the improvement of students' reading comprehension achievement, that was, the result of student's reading comprehension achievement as a dependent variable.

3.4. Research Procedures

In order to ensure that the result deals with the best procedure to maintain a good process, the researcher dealt with several steps as follows:

1. *Selecting the instrument material.* The instrument was prepared by the researcher taken from the students' text book and internet sources and then, modified by the researcher.
2. *Determining the population and sample.* The population of this research was eight classes at the first grade students of MTsN 2 Lampung Selatan where there were approximately 22-40 students in each class. The researcher took one class randomly as the sample by using lottery.

3. *Administering try-out test.* The test was conducted to measure whether the test items were good or not in terms of validity, reliability, level of difficulty, and discriminating power of the test. The test was given before the researcher conducted the pre-test in which the number of the test was 35 items with four alternatives and should be done in 90 minutes. This test was used for determining which items would be used for pre-test.
4. *Administering the pre-test.* This test was conducted to find out students' basic reading comprehension and students' proficiency in comprehending reading texts. The researcher gave the test before conducting the treatment meanwhile the number of the test was 25 with 60 minutes for the students to answer the test.
5. *Conducting the treatment.* After doing the pre-test, the researcher conducted the treatment in three meetings with 2x40 minutes for each meeting. The researcher taught reading comprehension by using QAR strategy.
6. *Administering the post-test.* After the treatments were given, the researcher gave the post-test to find out whether there was any improvement of their score between the pre-test and the post-test. The number of test was 25 items in the form of multiple choices test with four options done in 50 minutes.
7. *Analyzing the data.* Both pre-test and post-test results were analyzed by using *Repeated Measures T-Test* to compare data of the two mean scores. And then, the researcher analyzed the improvement of students' ability in reading, then, analyzed what aspect of reading comprehension improved the most after the implementation of QAR strategy based on the students' test results during the teaching learning process.

8. *Concluding and reporting the result of data analysis.* After the results of pre-test and post-test were analyzed, then the researcher drew conclusion regarding the results of the research and reported it on the script by also adding suggestions for further researches.

3.5. Data Collecting Technique

There are some techniques used to collect the data in this research as follows:

1. Pre-test

Pre-test was required to find out student's basic ability in reading comprehension. The test was selected-response test in form of multiple choices with four alternatives in which the students should select the correct answer between four alternatives by putting a cross mark (X). The number of test was 25 items of multiple choices and the time given for the students to do this test was 60 minutes. The aim of this test was to measure the competence of the student reading ability before the treatments were conducted.

2. Post-test

Post-test was given after the students have received the treatments. The number of the test was 25 items of multiple choices with four alternatives A, B, C, and D. The time given for the students to do this test was 50 minutes. The aim of this test was find out whether there was a significant difference in students' reading achievement before the students were taught by QAR strategy and after the students received the treatments and to see which aspect

of reading comprehension improved the most after the implementation of QAR strategy during teaching learning process.

3.6. Instrument

The researcher provided two tests dealing with reading comprehension to check the students' competence in reading. There were a pre-test and a post-test in which the pre-test was given in the first meeting before the treatments given and the post-test was given after the students received the treatments.

The type of pre-test and post-test was a multiple choices test in form of reading texts where there were 25 questions with four alternatives to answer those questions.

The purpose of the pre-test was to know the students' ability of reading comprehension at the first step before the treatments given. On the other hand, the purpose of the post-test was to find out whether there was any improvement of students' reading achievement after the students received the treatments and as the last test to know what aspect of reading comprehension improved the most after the implementation of QAR strategy during teaching learning process.

3.7. Criteria of a Good Test

A measurement of a good test considers several factors such as validity, reliability, level of difficulty, and discriminating power. Those factors are the important aspects needed to conduct a good test.

3.7.1. Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which the test measures what is intended to be measured. It means that it relates directly to the purpose of the test. A test can be considered valid if it can precisely measure the object that should be measured and suitable with the criteria. It also examines whether the test is good representation of the material which needs to be tested. There are several types of validity according to different purpose of the test. In this research, the researcher will use content validity and construct validity.

a. Content Validity

Content validity is the extent to which a test measures a representative sample of the subject matter content in which the focus of content validity is adequacy of the sample and simply on the appearance of the test (Hatch and Farhady, 1982). In Setiyadi (2006), content validity relates to the indicators of the subject matter that represent the whole material to be measured. Content validity sees how far the items of test are based on the curriculum used in which in this research, material used is based on 2013 Curriculum for the first grade of Islamic public school.

The researcher formulated the table of specification in order to match the test items with the material used in teaching learning process based on 2013 Curriculum. The content of the test items is presented in the table below.

Table 3.1. Specification of Test Instrument.

No.	Reading Aspects	Item Numbers	Percentages
1.	Finding main idea	4, 14, 15, 21, 26, 27, 29	20%
2.	Identifying supporting detail	1, 2, 8, 16, 19, 23, 25,	20%
3.	Confirming referece	5, 10, 13, 18, 20, 28, 35	20%
4.	Making inference	3, 12, 17, 22, 31, 33, 34	20%
5.	Understanding vocabulary	6, 7, 9, 11, 24, 30, 32	20%

In this research, the content of the test dealt with reading comprehension in descriptive text. The researcher focused on the aspects of reading by Suparman (2012) in form of comprehending texts such as finding main idea, identifying supporting details or specific informations, making or confirming reference, making or confirming inference and understanding vocabulary. Students were considered mastering reading ability that they could find the correct answers of the question based on the texts provided in which the kind of text is based on the curriculum used, that is, descriptive text.

b. Construct Validity

Construct validity is concerned with whether the test is actually in line of the theory of what it means to know the language. Construct validity focuses on the kind of test that is used to measure the ability. Setiyadi (2006) asserts that construct validity is needed for the measurement test that has several indicators in measuring one aspect of subject matter or construct. It means that the test is true reflection of the subject matter that will be measured based on the specific instructional objectives.

In this research, the researcher examined whether the items of the test actually reflected the means of reading comprehension or not. The test were formulated by the concept of reading comprehension stated by Suparman (2012) in which there are five aspects of reading comprehension such as finding main idea, finding supporting detail, confirming reference, making inference and understanding vocabulary. The test items measured five aspects of reading comprehension which was presented in the table below.

Table 3.2. Specification of Test Instrument.

No.	Reading Aspects	Item Numbers	Percentages
1.	Finding main idea	4, 14, 15, 21, 26, 27, 29	20%
2.	Identifying supporting detail	1, 2, 8, 16, 19, 23, 25,	20%
3.	Confirming referece	5, 10, 13, 18, 20, 28, 35	20%
4.	Making inference	3, 12, 17, 22, 31, 33, 34	20%
5.	Understanding vocabulary	6, 7, 9, 11, 24, 30, 32	20%

In addition, five aspects of reading comprehension can also be included into concept of reading comprehension stated by Smith (in Westwood, 2001) in which there are four levels of complexity of reading comprehension: literal level, inferential level, critical level, and creative level. However, in this research, the test items just focused on two levels of comprehension, literal and inferential level, in which aspects of reading comprehension such as main idea, supporting detail, reference, and vocabulary included in literal level while inference and also main idea (several items) included in inferential level. Table of specification was formulated to reflect the test items to the level of complexity of reading comprehension. The level of comprehension of the items is presented in the table below.

Table 3.3. Specification of Comprehension Level of Test Instrument.

No.	Level of Comprehension	Item Numbers	Percentages
1.	Literal level	1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 28, 30, 32, 35	65,.71%
2.	Inferential level	3, 4, 12, 15, 17, 22, 26, 27, 29, 31, 33, 34	34.29%%

To measure validity of the instrument used in this study, the researcher used the expert judgment in the form of questionnaire which could be seen in *Appendix 6*. In this case, the expert chosen is one of lecturer of Lampung University who masters the nature and theories of reading, Prof. Dr. Cucu Sutarsyah, M.A.

From the result of questionnaire, it could be seen that the whole items used for try-out test fulfilled both content and construct validities. The expert judged that every item has measured five aspects of reading comprehensions. It meant that the test items were valid and could be used to measure students' reading comprehension ability (see *Appendix 6*).

3.7.2. Reliability

Reliability is defined as the extent to which a questionnaire, test, observation, or any measurement procedure that produce the same results on repeated trials. Gronlund and Waugh (2009) state that reliability refers to the consistency of assessment results. In brief, it is the stability or consistency of the test results over time or on repeated trials. It is a measurement of accuracy, consistency, dependability, or fairness of scores resulting from the administration of particular examination. Reliability is a necessary characteristic of a good test.

To estimate the reliability of the test in this research, *Split-half Reliability* was used. In order to measure the coefficient of the reliability between odd and even group, *Pearson Product Moment* was used for counting the reliability. The formula is as follows:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{\Sigma xy}{\sqrt{(\Sigma x^2)(\Sigma y^2)}}$$

Where:

r_{xy} = Coefficient of reliability between odd and even number items

x = Odd number items

y = Even number items

Σx^2 = Total score of odd number items

Σy^2 = Total score of even number items

Σxy = Total score of odd and even number items

After getting the reliability of half test, the researcher then used *Spearman Brown's Prophecy* formula to determine the reliability of the whole test as follows:

$$r_k = (2r_{xy}) / (1 + r_{xy})$$

Where:

r_k = Reliability of the whole test

r_{xy} = Reliability of the half test

(Hatch and Farhady, 1982)

After finding the coefficient of reliability of the whole test, then the researcher analyzed the coefficient of reliability of the test with standard reliability below, according to Slamento (1998) (in Wati, 2015):

- a) Very low reliability ranges from 0.00 to 0.19.
- b) Low reliability ranges from 0.20 to 0.39.
- c) Average reliability ranges from 0.40 to 0.59.
- d) High reliability ranges from 0.60 to 0.79.
- e) Very high reliability ranges from 0.80 to 1.00.

The researcher administered a try-out test to find out the reliability, level of difficulty and discrimating power of the test. After analyzing the result of try-out test (see in *Appendix 7, 8, and 9*), the computation showed that reliability coefficient of the test was 0.9695 (see in *Appendix 11*). It could be stated that the test had very high reliability since the range of very high criteria of reliability was 0.80 to 1.00 (Slamento, 1998 in Wati, 2015).

3.7.3. Level of Difficulty

To see the level of difficulty, the researcher used the following formula by Shohamy (1985):

$$LD = \frac{R}{N}$$

LD = Level of difficulty

R = The number of students who answered correctly

N = The number of students who did the test

The Criteria are:

<0.30 = Difficult

0.30-0.70 = Average

>0.70 = Easy

Based on the result of try-out test, after analyzing level of difficulty of the test items, the researcher identified that the try-out test consisted of 10 difficult items; 13 average items; and 2 easy items. It could be seen in *Appendix 10*.

3.7.4. Discriminating Power

The discrimination power is the extent to which item can discriminate between weak and strong examinees in the ability being tested. The students of try out class were divided into two group upper and lower students. The upper students were the students that answer the questions correctly and the lower students were students that answer the questions wrongly. To determine the discrimination power, the researcher used the following formula:

$$DP = \frac{U - L}{\frac{1}{2}N}$$

Where:

DP = Discriminating power

U = The proportion of upper group students

L = The proportion of lower group students

N = Total number of students

The criteria of discrimination power are:

0.00 – 0.19 = Poor

0.20 – 0.39 = Satisfactory

0.40 – 0.69 = Good

0.70 – 1.00 = Excellent

- (negative) = Bad items must be omitted

(Arikunto, 1997)

Based on the result of try-out test, after analyzing discriminating power of test items, the researcher revealed that the try-out test consisted of 1 good item; 24 satisfactory items; and 10 poor items (see in *Appendix 10*).

After analyzing the criteria of good test by using level of difficulty and discrimination power, the researcher found that 25 items were good and could be administered for pre-test and post-test. On the other hand, 10 items were bad and dropped because they did not fulfill the criteria of level of difficulty and discrimination power. They were items number 4, 6, 11, 20, 23, 24, 26, 29, 30, and 32 (see in *Appendix 10*).

3.8. Scoring System

Before getting the score, the researcher determined the procedure or technique to be used in scoring the students' work. The researcher used Arikunto's formula with the ideal highest score of 100. The scores of pre-test and post-test were calculated by using following formula (Arikunto, 1989):

$$S = \frac{r}{n} \times 100$$

Where:

S = The score of the test

R = The total of right answer

N = The total of test items.

3.9. Data Treatment

According to Setiyadi (2006), using T-Test for hypothesis testing has three basic assumptions that can be described as follows:

- a. The data is an interval.
- b. The data is taken from random sample in population.
- c. The data is distributed normally.

Therefore, before testing the hypothesis using T-Test, it is necessary to find out whether the data in experimental class is normally distributed or not. Since the objective of this study was only to find out the improvement of students' reading comprehension, the data could be treated by using normality test. This test was used to measure whether the data is normally distributed or not. The researcher used SPSS version 16.0 to analyze the data (Setiyadi, 2006).

3.10. Data Analysis

According to Kerlinger (1978), analysis means categorizing, ordering, manipulating, and summarizing the data obtained to answer the research questions. The purpose of analysis is to reduce data to be intelligible and interpretable so that the relation of the research problem can be studied. Furthermore, by analyzing the data, we can know the result of the research and draw the conclusion from the result.

In order to find out the difference and improvement of students' reading comprehension ability after being taught by QAR strategy and what aspect of reading improves the most, the data were analyzed by these following procedures:

1. Scoring the pre-test and post-test.
2. Tabulating the results of the tests and calculating the scores of pre-test and post-test. To calculate the students' mean score in the pre-test and post-test, the researcher computed them by using the formula as follows:

$$M = \frac{X}{N}$$

Notes:

M : Mean

X : Students' score

N : Total number of the students

(Arikunto, 1999)

Then, to find out the improvement of reading achievement, the mean of pre-test was compared to the mean of post-test. In order to find out whether the students got an improvement, the researcher used the following formula:

$$I = M2 - M1$$

Notes:

I : The improvement of students' reading achievement.

M2 : The average score of post-test

M1 : The average score of pre-test

3. Analyzing the data of the students' results of pre-test and post-test using *Repeated Measures T-Test* through SPSS version 16.0 to find out the difference between students' reading comprehension achievement before and after the implementation of QAR strategy in teaching reading.

4. Drawing conclusion from the tabulated result of the pre-test and post-test which was statistically analyzed by using *Repeated Measures T-Test* through SPSS version 16.0.

3.11. Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis, which shows that there is a significant difference of students' reading comprehension achievement at first grade of MTsN students after applying Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy, was statistically tested by using statistical computerization through SPSS 16.0, that is, *Repeated Measure T-Test* in which the significant level was determined by $p < 0.05$ which means that the probability of error in the hypothesis was only about 5%. Therefore, the hypotheses are as follows:

H_1 : There is a significant difference of students' reading comprehension at the first grade of MTsN 2 Lampung Selatan before and after the implementation of Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy. The criteria: H_1 is accepted if significant level is lower than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$).

H_0 : There is no significant difference of students' reading comprehension at the first grade of MTsN 2 Lampung Selatan before and after the implementation of Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy. The criteria: H_0 is accepted if significant level is higher than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$).

The criteria for accepting the hypothesis are:

H_1 (alternative hypothesis) is accepted if t-value is higher than t-table.

H_0 (null hypothesis) is accepted if t-value is lower than t-table.

In conclusion, this chapter has explained the methods used in this research dealing with research design, population and sample, variables, instruments, data collecting techniques, research procedure, data treatment, data analysis and hypothesis testing.

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In this chapter, the researcher presents conclusions and suggestions. The suggestions are proposed for teacher and for other researcher who are going to conduct any similar research.

5.1. Conclusions

After conducting the research at the first grade of MTsN 2 Lampung Selatan, the researcher draws conclusions as follows:

1. QAR strategy gives a positive effect toward students' reading comprehension ability. It can be seen from the fact that there was a significant difference of students' reading comprehension at the first grade of MTsN 2 Lampung Selatan before and after the implementation of Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy. The students' mean score in the post-test improved from the pre-test significantly in which the improvement reached 13.45 points. Relating to the previous researches about this topic, it can be concluded that QAR strategy can improve students' reading comprehension ability in all graders, such as in kindergarten, elementary school, junior high school, and senior high school especially in their test score and their ability in questioning process.

2. Not all aspects of reading comprehension can be improved by using QAR strategy. It can be seen from the findings which reveal that students' reading comprehension ability showed the significant improvement in four aspects of reading comprehension such as finding main idea, finding supporting detail, making inference, and understanding vocabulary except confirming reference. The highest improvement occurred in understanding vocabulary while in confirming reference, it decreased after the implementation of QAR strategy. By seeing the learning process, the researcher found that there are some factors which influence the students' achievement in each aspect of reading comprehension such as: they get confused about linguistic expression used in the questions or do not fully understand about the questions so that they get wrong interpretation then answer the questions in a wrong way.

5.2. Suggestions

In reference to the conclusion above, the researcher proposes some suggestions concerning the research findings as follows:

1. Suggestion for the Teacher

After conducting the research especially the implementation of Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy to improve students' reading comprehension ability, the researcher suggests to the English teachers to apply QAR strategy in the classroom for teaching English particularly teaching reading. QAR strategy is the most effective way to help students understand the text and answer the comprehension questions easily and quickly because this strategy is designed as a

reading comprehension strategy which is developed to clarify how students approach the task of reading texts and answer questions. Firstly, teachers should explain clearly about QAR strategy to the students such as what the QAR strategy is, what the types of QAR are, how to categorize the questions based on QAR types and how to determine the location of possible correct answers in the text. Then, teachers should give a model on how to apply this strategy in learning process. In addition, the teachers can also give some tricks or clues to the students how to answer the question quickly and easily based on the types of the questions. Beside that, when the teachers ask students to make questions regarding to the text, teachers should not frame the types of questions that will be made by students. The teachers should let the students make questions freely so that they do not get confused in making questions and they can ask everything they want to know about the text.

2. Suggestion for Future Research

In this research, the treatments were done in three meetings. Other researchers can spend more time and use other types of texts in giving treatments using QAR strategy so that the students can get enough exercise and can apply this strategy for those other types of texts. Other researchers can also choose other subjects for future research such as university students or Islamic school students in other levels or grades since neither this research nor the previous research have examined QAR strategy for university students or for other levels of Islamic school students, and moreover, Islamic school students might have different ability or proficiency from state school students in English. Further

research should investigate the effect of QAR strategy in improving other skills. If the future research also examines QAR strategy for reading skill, it should investigate each aspect of reading more specifically and find the cause why those aspects increase or decrease so that it can complete the previous findings. The researcher also suggests to make some modifications in the implementation of QAR strategy for the future researcher so that this strategy can improve all aspects of reading comprehension.

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