

Implementing the SQ3R Method to Improve Reading Comprehension of Fifth-Grade Students at SDN 70 Libukang, Liliriaja District, Soppeng Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to improve the reading comprehension skills of fifth-grade students at SDN 70 Libukang, Liliriaja District, Soppeng Regency through the SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review) method. The research used Classroom Action Research conducted in two cycles involving 12 students. Data were collected through observation, tests, and documentation, then analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The results showed significant improvement in students' reading comprehension. Learning mastery increased from 41.67% in the initial condition to 66.67% in Cycle I and 83.33% in Cycle II. Teacher and student activities also improved from "fair" to "good" and "very good." These findings indicate that the SQ3R method effectively improves elementary students' reading comprehension skills.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a crucial field in many countries. In realizing the ideals of the Indonesian nation, namely to educate the nation and improve general welfare, education is a strategic key in creating quality human resources. Education is a process of learning experiences that individuals acquire to develop their potential and thus be able to face the changing times positively (Wahab, 2025). Therefore, improving the quality of education, particularly at the elementary school level, is crucial because it serves as the initial foundation for developing students' academic abilities and character.

One crucial aspect of elementary education is language skills, particularly reading skills. Reading is a basic competency in learning Indonesian, serving as a foundation for mastering other disciplines. Through good reading skills, students can understand text content, explore information, and develop knowledge and critical thinking skills (Putri & Fradana, 2025). Therefore, reading comprehension is a primary focus in the learning process in elementary schools.

However, elementary school students' reading comprehension skills still face various challenges. Based on initial observations and interviews with fifth-grade teachers at SDN 70 Libukang, Liliraja District, Soppeng Regency in July 2025, it was found that some students had difficulty understanding reading material, frequently made errors when answering text-based questions, and were unable to retell information they had read. This situation indicates that students' reading comprehension skills are still suboptimal, even though teachers have implemented various learning methods. This problem is important to examine further to find effective solutions.

Previous studies have shown that using appropriate learning methods can improve reading comprehension skills. One method that can be used is the SQ3R method (Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review). This method is designed to help students systematically comprehend reading through structured stages.

According to (Anjani et al., 2019) Reading comprehension skills are influenced by various factors, including environmental, intellectual, psychological, and physiological factors. Therefore, a learning method is needed that can accommodate these various factors. Reading comprehension is the ability to understand, interpret, and evaluate information contained in a text. Students with good reading comprehension skills are able to identify main ideas, draw conclusions, and relate information from texts to their prior knowledge. Effective reading instruction is therefore essential to support students' academic achievement and lifelong learning (Ambarwati & Wati, 2025). Reading comprehension improves when students actively engage with texts through structured reading strategies that encourage questioning, information identification, and content recall (Khotimah, 2025).

Research shows that implementing the SQ3R method can improve students' reading comprehension and optimize cognitive abilities, particularly working memory (Siregar, 2021). Furthermore, other research also shows that the SQ3R method can significantly improve students' reading comprehension

and learning motivation (Julya & Rosnaningsih, 2023). Research (Sari et al., 2021) shows that implementing the SQ3R method in fifth-grade elementary school can improve students' learning outcomes in understanding reading texts, especially when the method is applied consistently and integrated into teaching and learning activities.

Based on this description, the SQ3R method is seen as a relevant solution to address the problem of low student reading comprehension. This method encourages students' active involvement in the reading process through systematic stages, thereby helping them understand the reading content more deeply. The application of this method is expected to improve students' ability to understand, remember, and retell information from the texts they read.

The urgency of this research lies in the importance of improving reading comprehension as the foundation for student learning success in various subjects. Furthermore, this research is also important as an effort to provide alternative, effective learning methods for teachers to improve the quality of Indonesian language learning in elementary schools, particularly at SDN 70 Libukang. Therefore, this research is expected to make a real contribution to efforts to improve the quality of elementary education.

Previous studies have demonstrated that the SQ3R method can improve students' reading comprehension and learning motivation. However, most previous studies were conducted in different school contexts and did not specifically examine the implementation of SQ3R in small elementary classrooms in rural areas such as SDN 70 Libukang, Liliriaja District, Soppeng Regency. Therefore, there is still a research gap regarding the effectiveness of the SQ3R method in improving reading comprehension among fifth-grade students in this particular context.

The novelty of this study lies in the implementation of the SQ3R method through Classroom Action Research (CAR) involving fifth-grade students at SDN 70 Libukang. Unlike previous studies that mainly focused on measuring learning outcomes, this research also examines improvements in teacher activities, student participation, and classroom interaction throughout the learning process.

This study contributes theoretically by strengthening evidence regarding the effectiveness of SQ3R in improving reading comprehension and contributes practically by providing teachers with an alternative instructional strategy that can be applied to enhance reading comprehension skills in elementary schools.

Based on this background, the research problem is formulated as follows:

"How does the SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review) method improve the reading comprehension of fifth-grade students at SDN 70 Libukang, Liliriaja District, Soppeng Regency?"

In line with the problem formulation, this study aims to describe the application of the SQ3R method to improve the reading comprehension skills of fifth-grade students at SDN 70 Libukang, Liliriaja District, Soppeng Regency.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading comprehension is the ability to understand and interpret written texts. According to (Jaenudin, dkk., 2019), reading comprehension involves understanding ideas, identifying important information, and drawing conclusions from a text. Students who possess good reading comprehension skills are able to connect prior knowledge with new information from the text. Reading comprehension is influenced by several factors such as motivation, reading habits, intellectual ability, learning environment, and teaching methods. Therefore, teachers need to apply effective instructional strategies to improve students' reading comprehension abilities.

Reading comprehension is not merely the ability to read words correctly but also the ability to construct meaning from a text. According to contemporary literacy theory, reading comprehension involves identifying main ideas, understanding explicit and implicit information, making inferences, and integrating new information with prior knowledge. Students with strong reading comprehension skills can interpret messages accurately and apply information obtained from texts in various learning situations.

The findings of this study support previous research indicating that reading comprehension develops more effectively when students are actively involved in the learning process. (Mutiarra et al., 2026) found that metacognitive awareness plays a significant role in improving elementary students' reading comprehension because it helps learners monitor, evaluate, and regulate their understanding while reading. (Astutik et al., 2026) found that instructional strategies that accommodate students' learning needs and promote active participation contribute significantly to improvements in reading comprehension. These findings suggest that effective reading instruction should provide opportunities for students to analyze, question, discuss, and reflect on the texts they read. Comprehension develops effectively when students actively engage with texts and are encouraged to think critically about what they read.

The SQ3R method, developed by Robinson, consists of five systematic stages: Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review. The Survey stage helps students obtain an overview of the text. The question encourages students to formulate questions that guide their reading. Read focuses students on finding answers from the text. Recite requires students to restate information using their own words, thereby strengthening understanding and memory retention. Finally, Review helps students reinforce and organize the information they have learned. These stages encourage active reading behavior and deeper comprehension of reading materials.

Based on previous studies, the SQ3R method has consistently demonstrated positive effects on students' reading comprehension. Therefore, this study assumes that the systematic implementation of SQ3R can improve reading comprehension and classroom participation among fifth-grade students.

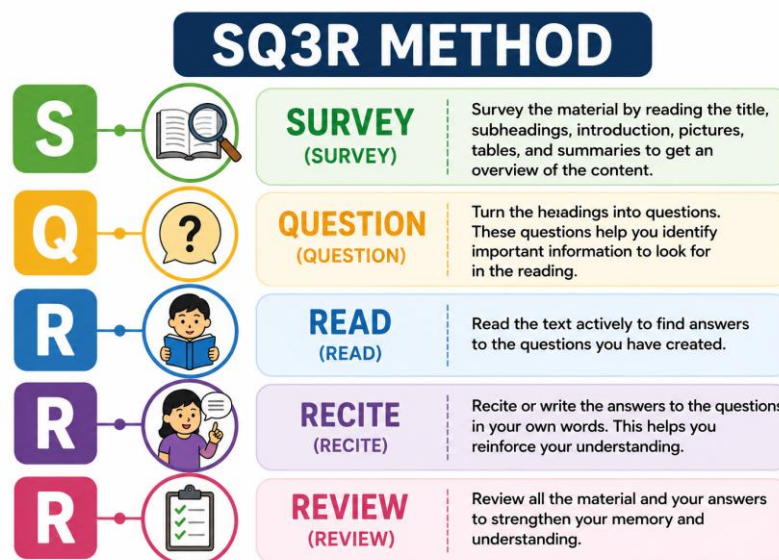


Figure 1. SQ3R Method

The implementation of the SQ3R method is expected to improve students' reading comprehension through systematic reading activities. By actively engaging students in observing, questioning, reading, retelling, and reviewing texts, students can better understand reading materials and improve their learning outcomes.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative paradigm with a descriptive approach and Classroom Action Research (CAR). This approach was chosen to systematically describe the process of implementing the SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review) method to improve students' reading comprehension. CAR was used because it is oriented toward improving learning practices through concrete classroom actions carried out repeatedly and reflectively until the desired results are achieved.

The study was conducted at SDN 70 Libukang, Liliraja District, Soppeng Regency, in the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The subjects were all 12 fifth-grade students. Subject selection was conducted through a classroom approach with the aim of obtaining a comprehensive picture of improving students' reading comprehension through the application of the SQ3R method.

Data were collected using reading comprehension tests, observation sheets, field notes, and documentation. The reading comprehension test measured students' ability to identify main ideas, answer comprehension questions, determine important information, and retell the contents of the text. Observation sheets were used to assess teacher performance and student participation during the implementation of the SQ3R method.

The Minimum Mastery Criterion (KKM) established by the school for Indonesian language learning was 70. The success indicator of this study was

achieved when at least 80% of students reached the KKM and when teacher and student activities were categorized as good or very good.

Data validity was ensured through triangulation of techniques by comparing test results, observation findings, and documentation records. Quantitative data were analyzed using percentage calculations to determine learning mastery, while qualitative data were analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

The research design followed the CAR model, which consists of two cycles. Each cycle includes four main stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. These stages are carried out systematically and repeatedly to improve the learning process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Initial Condition

Before implementing the SQ3R method, the researcher conducted an initial observation and diagnostic test to identify the students' reading comprehension abilities. The observation showed that most students experienced difficulties in understanding reading texts. Several students were unable to identify the main ideas of paragraphs, answer comprehension questions correctly, or retell the contents of the text using their own words. During classroom learning activities, students also tended to be passive and less enthusiastic when participating in reading lessons.

The teacher generally used conventional teaching methods in which students were asked to read texts and answer questions individually without structured guidance. As a result, students often became bored and found it difficult to focus on understanding the content of the reading material.

Based on the results of the initial test, only a small number of students achieved the minimum mastery criteria. Most students obtained scores below the expected standard. This condition indicated the need for an instructional strategy that could actively engage students in the reading process and help them improve their comprehension skills.

Table 1. Initial Reading Comprehension Results

Category	Number of Students	Percentage
Mastery	5	41.67%
Not Mastery	7	58.33%
Total	12	100%

The table above shows that only 5 out of 12 students achieved learning mastery, while 7 students had not yet met the minimum mastery criteria. The percentage of students who achieved mastery was only 41.67%, indicating that students' reading comprehension skills were still low before the implementation of the SQ3R method.

Cycle I

Planning

In Cycle I, the researcher prepared various learning instruments to support the implementation of the SQ3R method. These preparations included lesson plans, reading materials, observation sheets, student worksheets, and

evaluation tests. The learning activities were designed according to the five stages of the SQ3R method: Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review.

The researcher also coordinated with the classroom teacher to determine observation techniques and classroom management strategies during the implementation of the learning activities.

Action

The implementation of the SQ3R method in Cycle I was carried out in several stages.

1. **Survey Stage**

Students were guided to observe the reading text briefly before reading it in detail. They identified the title, subtitles, pictures, keywords, and important information contained in the text. This activity aimed to help students gain a general understanding of the material.

2. **Question Stage**

Students were encouraged to formulate questions related to the text based on the title and important points they had identified during the survey stage. The teacher guided students to develop curiosity and focus on finding answers while reading.

3. **Read Stage**

Students carefully read the text to find answers to the questions they had prepared. During this stage, students became more focused because they already had specific objectives while reading.

4. **Recite Stage**

After reading the text, students were asked to explain or retell the important information using their own words. Some students still experienced difficulties expressing their ideas, but overall participation improved.

5. **Review Stage**

The teacher and students reviewed the reading material together. Students discussed the answers to the questions and clarified information they did not fully understand.

Observation

During the implementation of Cycle I, teacher and student activities showed improvement compared to the initial condition. Students began to participate more actively in classroom discussions and showed greater interest in reading activities.

However, some problems were still identified during the learning process. Several students were still hesitant to ask questions or express their opinions. Some students also had difficulties retelling the text using their own language. In addition, classroom management needed improvement because a few students became distracted during group discussions.

The observation results indicated that the teacher's performance in implementing the SQ3R method was categorized as "fair," while student participation also fell within the "fair" category.

Reflection

Based on the results of Cycle I, the researcher concluded that the implementation of the SQ3R method had improved students' reading comprehension skills, but the expected learning mastery target had not yet been achieved. Therefore, improvements were needed in the next cycle.

The researcher planned several improvements for Cycle II, including:

- Providing clearer explanations during each SQ3R stage.
- Encouraging students to participate more actively in questioning and discussion activities.
- Improving classroom management to maintain students' focus.
- Giving more motivation and guidance to students who still had difficulties understanding texts.

Table 2. Students' Learning Outcomes in Cycle I

Category	Number of Students	Percentage
Mastery	8	66.67%
Not Mastery	4	33.33%
Total	12	100%

The data above indicate that students' learning mastery improved significantly in Cycle I. A total of 8 students achieved the minimum mastery criteria, while 4 students still had not achieved mastery. The percentage of mastery increased from 41.67% in the initial condition to 66.67% in Cycle I.

Although the improvement was significant, the results had not yet reached the predetermined success indicator of 80% learning mastery. Therefore, the research was continued to Cycle II.

Cycle II Planning

Based on the reflection results from Cycle I, the researcher revised and improved the learning plan for Cycle II. The improvements focused on increasing student participation, strengthening teacher guidance, and optimizing the implementation of the SQ3R stages.

Additional reading materials that were more interesting and suitable for students' reading levels were also prepared. The researcher designed more interactive classroom activities to encourage students to participate actively in discussions and retelling activities.

Action

The learning process in Cycle II was conducted using the same SQ3R stages with several improvements.

At the Survey stage, students became more skilled in identifying important information from the reading text. During the Question stage, students were more confident in creating and asking questions related to the material.

In the Read stage, students showed better concentration and reading fluency. They were able to identify important information more effectively because they already had specific questions to guide their reading.

During the Recite stage, students demonstrated significant improvement in retelling the contents of the text. More students were willing to express their

understanding in front of the class. They also used their own words more confidently and accurately.

At the Review stage, students actively participated in reviewing and discussing the material together with the teacher. Misunderstandings found during previous activities could be clarified through discussion.

Observation

The observation results in Cycle II showed substantial improvement in both teacher and student activities. The teacher was able to manage the classroom more effectively and provide better guidance during the learning process.

Students became more enthusiastic, active, and cooperative during reading activities. They showed greater confidence when answering questions, discussing texts, and presenting their ideas. Classroom interaction also became more dynamic and conducive.

The observation results categorized teacher activities as “good” and student activities as “very good.” This indicates that the implementation of the SQ3R method created a more active and meaningful learning environment.

Reflection

Based on the results of Cycle II, the researcher concluded that the implementation of the SQ3R method had successfully improved students’ reading comprehension skills. Most students achieved the minimum mastery criteria, and classroom participation improved significantly.

The problems identified in Cycle I were largely resolved in Cycle II. Students became more engaged in the learning process and demonstrated a better understanding of reading materials.

Table 3. Students’ Learning Outcomes in Cycle II

Category	Number of Students	Percentage
Mastery	10	83.33%
Not Mastery	2	16.67%
Total	12	100%

The table above shows that 10 out of 12 students achieved the minimum mastery criteria in Cycle II. The percentage of learning mastery increased to 83.33%, exceeding the predetermined success indicator.

This improvement demonstrates that the SQ3R method effectively enhanced students’ reading comprehension abilities.

Table 4. Improvement of Students’ Learning Mastery

Stage	Percentage
Initial Condition	41.67%
Cycle I	66.67%
Cycle II	83.33%

The data above indicate continuous improvement in students’ reading comprehension from the initial condition to Cycle II. The percentage of learning mastery increased by 25% from the initial condition to Cycle I and improved again by 16.66% from Cycle I to Cycle II.

The improvement in students' achievement demonstrates that the SQ3R method provided positive impacts on students' reading comprehension skills and classroom learning activities.

The implementation of the SQ3R method successfully improved students' reading comprehension skills. This improvement occurred because the SQ3R stages guided students to read systematically and actively participate in learning activities.

During the Survey stage, students identified important information before reading the text. In the Question stage, students developed curiosity by formulating questions. The Read stage encouraged students to focus on finding answers from the text. Through the Recite stage, students practiced retelling information using their own words, which strengthened understanding and memory retention. Finally, the Review stage helped students reinforce the information they had learned.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research showing that the SQ3R method improves reading comprehension and learning motivation. Students became more active, confident, and engaged during the learning process.

This research aligns with the findings of (Siregar, 2021), who stated that SQ3R can help students comprehend reading more systematically through structured reading stages. These results also support the findings of (Julya & Rosnaningsih, 2023), who showed that SQ3R can increase student motivation and engagement in the learning process. The SQ3R method has been proven effective in improving students' reading comprehension because it guides learners through systematic stages of surveying, questioning, reading, reciting, and reviewing information, resulting in better understanding and retention of reading materials (Nabilla & Hadi Asmara, 2022).

Teacher activities also improved from the "fair" category in Cycle I to the "good" category in Cycle II. Similarly, student activities improved from "fair" to "very good." This indicates that the SQ3R method not only improves learning outcomes but also enhances classroom interaction.

The increase in learning completion indicates that SQ3R not only helps students understand reading content but also improves their ability to identify important information, answer questions, and rephrase the text in their own words. Therefore, these research findings strengthen empirical evidence that SQ3R is an effective strategy for improving reading comprehension skills in elementary schools.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the implementation of the SQ3R method effectively improved the reading comprehension skills of fifth-grade students at SDN 70 Libukang, Liliriaja District, Soppeng Regency. The improvement occurred because the SQ3R stages encouraged students to read actively, formulate questions, identify important information, retell ideas using their own words, and review learning materials

systematically. As a result, students became more engaged in the reading process and demonstrated better comprehension of reading texts.

The SQ3R method also improved teacher and student activities during the learning process. Students became more active and engaged in reading activities.

1. Teachers are encouraged to apply the SQ3R method in reading lessons to improve students' comprehension skills.
2. Schools should support the implementation of innovative learning methods that encourage active student participation.
3. Future researchers are encouraged to conduct further studies on the application of the SQ3R method in other subjects and educational levels.

FURTHER STUDY

This study was limited to one class consisting of 12 students. Future research can involve larger samples and different educational settings to obtain broader findings regarding the effectiveness of the SQ3R method.

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