

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Current advances in reading comprehension have included developing systems to match people to the most frequently used data sets for the task. When students are completing a reading task, they need to understand the task requirements to provide the correct response. The ability of students to respond correctly to the reading task is achieved through analysis of the characteristics of the questions asked, such as types of questions and question formatting (Yathip & Chanyoo, 2022). The fundamental skills required for effective reading comprehension include grasping the meanings of words, interpreting meaning in the context of a reading text, and following the organization of a reading text (Obeka et al., 2022). Comprehension of meaning has been the primary focus for all reading activities; therefore, critical reading is also important for facilitating the development of students' comprehension of meaning while reading texts. Critical reading can assist students to determine the credibility of the ideas presented within the reading text, not just interpretively comprehend the reading text.

Roomy (2022) emphasized that critical reading is crucial to students as a learning skill consequently. In addition, Majumdar et al. (2021) added that critical reading consists of critically examining, deeply engaging with, and actively engaging with the text from multiple points of view. Critical reading comprehension involves a number of cognitive processes, including decoding text, analyzing text, evaluating text, interpreting text, and synthesizing text into new thoughts or ideas. Hence, critical reading highlights the way the author builds and expands the text's ideas and meanings, including the interaction between the author and the reader. The reader should also examine how the author used structure and other texts to develop the central idea of the text they are reading. Critical reading comprehension is a type of currency that needs to be developed through education to better understand the world we live in, our role in society, and the power dynamics we have with others. According to Olifant & Boakye (2022), researchers studying critical reading comprehension today must keep in mind that educational research has evolved and will continue to shape the understanding of literacy development.

For critical comprehension, students should understand not only the content but also the context of the text. Students are expected to think critically about how to comprehend the material they read. It could be said that there are three groups of influences that result in students having difficulty with critical reading comprehension: learners, educators, and methods for

teaching and learning critical reading comprehension. A range of factors contributes to difficulties in developing critical reading comprehension. These include limited vocabulary, underdeveloped speaking skills, problems in understanding words or ideas, slow reading pace and fluency, and difficulty responding to questions or engaging in discussion about the text. In addition, students may have difficulty reading critically due to their ability to identify patterns, state practical, creative and/or scientific problems and critically think. Other reasons that students may experience difficulty with reading comprehension may be due to anxiety, lack of interest or motivation, or unfamiliar or complex text. To ensure that students can demonstrate critical reading comprehension, teachers need to apply suitable strategies that support students in enhancing their understanding of texts. In this study, the author suggests that the THIEVES strategy is an effective approach for teaching and developing critical reading comprehension skills among the participants. This strategy consists of seven steps designed to help students build prior knowledge, enabling them to engage more effectively with their assigned readings. Because of this, THIEVES can be utilized as a way for the learner to recall their prior knowledge of a subject.

The title of THIEVES refers to the seven elements of text which will help students 'steal' from before they read the text: Titles, Headings, Introductions, Each first sentence, Visuals/Vocabulary, Questions at end of chapter, and Summary/Conclusion provide information for students to "steal" so that they have some background knowledge prior to reading the text itself. As described in Liff-Manz (2002), the seven steps included in THIEVES are listed below:

1. Title: A title can signal where a text fits within a sequence or timeline, especially in chronological works. It often conveys the main argument of an essay. Although we cannot judge a text entirely by its title, students can still gain valuable insights from it.
2. Headings: Headings highlight key sections within a chapter and serve as an organizational guide for the content. By turning headings into questions, students can identify topics of interest and engage more actively as readers. For instance, combining the headings can help students form a preliminary summary before reading the full chapter.
3. Introduction: The introduction is usually a framework for placing the chapter content. It provides the text's background and settings. The introduction often refers to Chapter goals and objectives. Notify students that sometimes the introduction needs to be marked and that the writing may introduce the chapter following the title but before the first heading. The first or second paragraph may be an exclamation in texts with few headings.

4. First sentence of each paragraph: The opening sentence of a paragraph often gives a clear preview of its content, typically functioning as a topic sentence. This allows students to grasp the main idea quickly, although they should be careful when choosing to skip or omit parts during previewing.
5. Visuals/Vocabulary: Visual elements such as images, charts, graphs, maps, and tables can support understanding by providing an initial overview of the material, especially for visual learners. Converting these visuals into words helps students comprehend the topic before reading in depth. Additionally, vocabulary plays a key role in understanding the text, as highlighted or emphasized terms often represent essential concepts. These help students interpret and communicate ideas more effectively by applying what they have learned.
6. End-of-Chapter questions: The final study questions often identify crucial points and concepts. Students are alerted to substantial issues by carefully reading them during a preview. Knowing the questions before us will help guide and establish a reading purpose. Students are curious to see that they can find information about a question despite their lack of knowledge.
7. Summary: Students are advised to read the entire summary during the preview stage, as it offers a general outline of the chapter's main ideas. This overview serves as a reference point for understanding the more detailed content. Additionally, students who already have some background knowledge in the subject usually find it easier to comprehend and remember the material.

The first stage of the THIEVES strategy requires students to conduct an initial overview of the chapter by skimming or scanning the text. After that, they are encouraged to activate their prior knowledge before engaging in full reading. The process begins with examining the title to anticipate the topic of the text. In the next step, students review all the headings, including those in the table of contents, and transform some of them into key questions that the text is expected to address. They then use the introduction and the first paragraph to predict the main idea of the text. Students will write down all of the "background knowledge" they have about the topic and include all of the "major visuals" contained within the text. Before students reach the end of the "THIEVES" strategy, they will continue to work on developing their reading comprehension skills by being presented with the "end of chapter" question, then being expected to summarize all of the previous steps of the "THIEVES" strategy into "one memory."

To begin the THIEVES Process, students need to first preview the text. They can do this using the scan method. This gives students the opportunity to locate "Prior Knowledge" by reading the Title to predict the Title is about. Then, using only the headings and subheadings of the text including the table of content, students can create Essential Questions from some of the

headings. They can then use only the Intro and first Paragraph of this text to predict the main idea. Students will list their Background Knowledge as well as the Main Visuals of the text. Lastly, after completing the THIEVES process, students will continue to develop Reading Comprehension skills by answering and summarizing the End of Chapter question using the Summary of ALL of the THIEVES steps.

Reading comprehension is a challenging skill to develop, particularly for young learners of English as a Second Language (ESL). The THIEVES strategy offers a simple approach to help students in ELL classrooms interpret and understand texts. However, there is still limited research examining the effectiveness of the THIEVES strategy in teaching students to build a mental “map” of the material they read.

1.2 Research Question

Based on the research background, the problem addressed in this study is formulated as follows: does the use of the THIEVES strategy have a significant impact on students’ critical reading comprehension?

1.3 Research Objective

In line with the research question, this study seeks to determine how the THIEVES strategy influences students’ critical reading comprehension.

1.4 Research Hypothesis

The outcome from the research question provided above will allow the researcher to create two separate hypotheses related to the THIEVES strategy influence on students’ critical reading comprehension. The two hypotheses as follows

H₀: There is no significant effect of using the THIEVES strategy on students’ critical reading comprehension

H_a: There is a significant effect of using the THIEVES strategy on students’ critical reading comprehension

1.5 Research Significant

The researcher will produce materials with these items/outcomes that would hopefully serve as a basis for helping others to gain an understanding of using the resources appropriately. The study will provide two broad categories of output, specified as theoretical outputs and practical outputs. These two areas of output are intended to provide insight into developing knowledge

associated with collocation theory and will be directly helpful to be added to the body of evidence supporting the use of collocations in language studies.

1.5.1.1 For the Students

This research may shed more light on difficulties in reading comprehension, and its findings can be applied to strengthen students' critical reading abilities.

1.5.1.2 For the Teachers

Teachers are expected to implement the strategies from this study into teaching and learning activities in schools that have similar problems in critical reading comprehension.

1.5.1.3 For another Researchers

This study may contribute to other researchers working on similar analyses by providing useful information and raising awareness of instructional strategies. It is also intended to support individuals involved in teaching, especially in critical reading comprehension.

1.6 Research Assumption

It is assumed that implementing the THIEVES strategy can significantly improve students' critical reading comprehension skills.

1.7 Scope and Limitation

1.7.1 Scope

This study focuses on investigating the effect of the THIEVES strategy on students' critical reading comprehension. It will be conducted among tenth-grade students at SMA Muhammadiyah 8 Gresik, where the THIEVES strategy will be implemented as an intervention to enhance their reading comprehension skills. To evaluate its impact on students' reading comprehension scores, the research will employ a quantitative design.

1.7.2 Limitation

Several limitations exist in this research. First, it only looks at the impact of THIEVES on Students critical reading comprehension. In addition to this, there will also be no other types of texts or reading skills looked at. Secondly, the study will just consist of a specific group of Tenth graders from the SMA Muhammadiyah 8 Gresik; and so it

is limited in its applicability to the entire population. Third, the study will use a quantitative research design, which may not allow for an extensive understanding of Students critical reading comprehension process. Finally, the study will only examine the THIEVES Strategy as an independent variable and not any other variable that can affect Students reading comprehension such as motivation.

1.8 Definition of Terms

1.8.1 THIEVES Strategy

Liff-Manz (2002) claims that THIEVES prepares students to read in the THIEVES manner to "steal" knowledge through reading. To properly use THIEVES to "steal" information, students need to look at many different aspects of the text before they read it. These aspects include the title of the book, headings, the introduction, the first sentence of the book, visual images/ vocabulary in the text, the end-of-chapter questions, and a summary of the chapter prior to reading the text.

1.8.2 Critical Reading Comprehension

The main objective for all types of reading is comprehension. Providing students with opportunities to think critically about the material that they read will assist them in their critical thinking development. Based upon the results of standardized test scores, critical reading comprehension helps students use critical thinking skills in the classroom (Comber and Nixon, 2011). While critical reading comprehension is more conceptual, deep reading comprehension relies on an expanded definition of literacy.