

Enhancing Reading Abilities: Exploring the Interrelationships among Speed, Critical, and Creative Reading through Classroom-Based Action Research

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Abstract

When students have good level of speed, critical and creative reading abilities, they will easily understand scientific knowledge and able to understand big volume of reading sources. However, most of teaching reading are dominated with conventional methods emphasizing on reading with question-and-answer. For the reasons, this study explores how do reading skills for speed, critical, and creative interrelate to one another, what specific techniques can be applied to enhance the level of students' speed, critical, and creative reading abilities, and how were the three readings skills interrelation and connected to Foreign Language Learning theories. The research design was classroom action research with the participants of 35 students from English Literature Study Program. Two types of data: quantitative and qualitative were gained by using test and non-test. They were analysed descriptively by using interactive data analysis consisting of reduction, presentation, and verification. The data showed that students' speed, critical, and creative reading abilities were still under standard but after the treatments, they made improvement. Their speed, critical and creative reading abilities reached standard scores. There is interrelation among speed, critical, and creative reading abilities. While integrating them in the reading class, students' level of reading skills enhanced. They could employ speed-reading strategies to quickly comprehend the texts before engaging in critical and creative reading. In critical reading, students could optimize their ability in questioning, problematizing and not passively follow the information given by the authors. Yet, students can read the text by optimizing their imagination in understanding the text information.

Keywords: speed reading, critical reading, creative reading

INTRODUCTION

Effective reading is an essential prerequisite for gaining critical and creative reading abilities (Mohammadi et al., 2022). When students have these two reading abilities, they will easily understand new scientific knowledge (Ravetz, 2020) and able to read (Silber-Varod et al., 2019) big volume of reading sources or extra reading materials such as magazines, e-books, and news from various social media. That explosion of information can be controlled and managed by them through effective, critical, and creative reading. In addition to, an effective reading strategy means that students can balance their reading speed and reading power (Baye et al., 2019). Speed refers to how fast students can read the text and power refers to their level of understanding (Renandya & Jacobs, 2016). Having the effective way to read, they can save their time and avoid miss-understanding of the spread news. They can get more information with a limited time. What is more, great quantities of advantages can be acquired when students can read fast. Furthermore critical reading referring to the activity to elicit meaning from a text (Albert et al., 2015; Rowsell et al., 2018) and creative reading referring to the ability in identifying the emerging of new ideas supported the combination of several ideas in the form of new ideas (Marin & Halpern, 2011) will help students in adjusting the information they will read. Those kind of reading skills can connect students to the divergent thinking and activating their cognitive development such as flexibility, elaboration, originality, and fluency in reading (Nakano & Wechsler, 2018). All of them automatically can influence their academic performance and lifelong learning. Based on that conceptual consideration, it is convinced that speed and power reading should be comprehensively taught to the students to enhance the process of creating multiple unique ideas and solutions to identified problems they have read.

However, most of teaching reading in higher education levels are dominated with conventional methods emphasizing on teachers explaining the reading comprehension skills and following with question-and-answer sessions (Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016). In addition, teachers teaching reading also admitted that they could do nothing in the classroom when the text has been discussed (Anders & Evans, 2019). From that empirical ground, teaching reading should be redesigned to reduce the drawbacks and difficulties faced both by teachers and students. Those conventional of teaching reading needs to be refreshed. Teaching reading should relate to the new demand of this era such as how students can effectively adjust the abundant of reading sources critically and creatively. Those two strategies should be taught to the students as with them the reading class will offer real life information needed in students' real life. In addition, to cope critical and creative reading, students should be backed up with speed reading as it becomes the basis when students will acquire the critical and creative reading skills (Biggam, 2018). From the discussed issues, therefore, interconnection should be performed in teaching reading despite teaching them separately.

For that reason, the purposes of this article were to explore the interrelationships among speed, critical and creative reading skills and to unlock reading potential through classroom-based action research. In detail, students' speed-reading level, critical reading, and creative reading skills were compared and discussed based on the relevant theories. To enhance reading abilities, some strategies of teaching speed, critical and creative reading were done to help students in improving these three reading skills. The generalization was drawn based on the result of descriptive statistic to find out the implication of the new insight from the reading strategies which have done. To straightforward and succinct manner of the three skills of reading enhancement through

a classroom-based action research, three research questions were set to clearly communicate the goal of this article, they are: (1) how do reading skills for speed, critical, and creative interrelate to one another and what effects does classroom-based action research have on the growth of speed, critical, and creative reading abilities?, (2) what specific techniques can be applied to improve the level of students' speed reading, critical, and creative reading skills?, and (3) how were the three readings skills interrelation and connected to *Foreign Language Learning (FLL)* theories from the classroom-based action research practices?

Speed Reading

Speed reading is multilevel process because every level must be developed when one wants to be an effective reader (Buzan, 2006). Speed reading or reading faster can help people to understand more because the brain works hard. When doing reading faster, people will get more information. On the other hand, when reading slower, we remember more separated words which stimulate feeling tired of. If we can read faster, we can read more groups of words which stimulate thinking the ideas (Mikulecky & Jeffries, 1986). Speed reading can also be called as fluent reading in which it is certainly a rapid and efficient process. What is meant by rapid is reading the material about 250-300 wpm (Grabe, 2009). Speed reading is associated with reading power which can help readers develop their comprehension skills to become more powerful readers and thinkers. Power reading is also a form of speed reading which emphasizes on skimming to get the general idea.

One of the digital softwares which can be used to teach and test the reading speed is from <http://www.readingsoft.com/>. The web designed to test the speed reading consists of 6 menus. They are (1) *is speed reading for you?* (2) *instructions*, (3) *speed reading test*, (4) *speed reading results*, (5) *typical reading results*, and (6) *reader profiles*. Additionally, other freely available tools on the internet can be easily used as the materials to teach speed reading to any level of classes. The website also provides standard reading outcomes which give a clue on how reading efficiencies can be carried out. Based on the general clue, students' speed reading can be seen from the following table.

Table 1. The Formula of Speed-Reading

Screen	Paper	Comprehension	Reader Profile
100 wpm	110 wpm	50%	Insufficient
200 wpm	240 wpm	60%	Average reader
300 wpm	400 wpm	80%	Good reader
700 wpm	1000 wpm	85%	Excellent, accomplished reader

(<http://www.readingsoft.com/>)

Creative and Critical Reading

Critical reading is part of higher-order thinking skills including reflective thinking, and self-monitoring that directly contribute to students' academic achievement (Ghanizadeh, 2017). One of the crucial skills in critical reading is the ability to evaluate the credibility and/or trustworthiness of text (Bråten & Braasch, 2017). There are four components in creative thinking: fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration (Rawlinson, 2017). Based on their idea then critical thinking can be understood as the effort to build the ability to analyse and evaluate arguments and evidence. Add to this, critical and creative thinking can be assumed to the ability in giving clarification,

consideration, explanation, and assumption, whereas creative thinking refers to the way to give other ideas, other ways of thinking or solution. Then critical reading means the way people read by optimizing the ability in questioning, problematizing or not directly follow what the information given by the text. Meanwhile, creative reading refers to the way readers read the text and optimizing their imagination in understanding the text information.

Related Research

Some researches that have been done and having similar themes and objectives but still needed a further investigation are from Underwood et al. (2012) who studied about the effect of speed reading instruction on Japanese high school students. They revealed that speed reading needed to be established to the specific and sufficient curriculum time and further consideration of the other context-related impediments working against adoption. Yasemin (2020) claimed that creative and critical reading skills had a direct and significant impact on students. Klimovich et al., (2023) found that the increase in reading speed is not influenced by reading activity, but rather by the readers' self-awareness. To determine whether the effects last over time, a further research is required. Wu et al. (2020) revealed that expository reading comprehension is more challenging than narrative reading and the process of reading relates to special cognitive abilities. Muijselaar et al., (2017) found that reading comprehension and reading techniques had a reciprocal developmental relationship. Cross-sectional studies showed that reading comprehension has affected to reading strategies and reading strategies also has affected to reading comprehension. They suggested that a further investigation should be done to pursue an alternative reading comprehension intervention such as seeking to increase the amount of time spent reading and comprehending texts of increasing complexity, or they may concentrate more intently on the development of scenario models via a context based approach or through practice with inference.

Research method used was classroom-based action research. It was designed to find the interrelation among speed, critical, and creative reading skills as well as to help the students in increasing those three reading skills. In addition, the practices of classroom-based action research were for unlocking the potential aspects in reading classes.

Subject of the Research

Subjects in this study were students in the academic reading class in the fifth semester consisting of 35 students from Ahmad Dahlan University, Indonesia. The selection of the participant was since students in this class have not been recorded their speed and power reading. Additionally, the level of creative and critical thinking was not detected yet. On the other hand, most of students still find critical and creative reading skills are strange for them.

Data Collection Techniques

To get multiple sources of evidence, the researchers actively participated in the teaching and learning processes. Set of instruments were used to gain the quantitative and qualitative data. The former consisted of test items for speed, critical and creative reading. They were adapted from IELTS and TOEFL to know those reading skill level. For the qualitative data, the researchers did the participatory observations, and interviews for open ended conversations with students. The participatory observations included (1) how

did students evaluate the text's credibility and trustworthiness, (2) did students do it easily or need other students to help, (3) how was students' flexibility in looking at a different point of view, (4) how was elaboration to enhance their ideas such as providing detail information, and how was students' originality in providing the new ideas with minimum replication from other information. For the interview, the aspects asked were about their personal view toward their reading speed improvement after joining the class, their personal experience in improving their critical and creative reading. Students were also asked to share their progress in questioning and problematizing the text discussed in the classroom.

Data Analysis Techniques

There were some quantitative and qualitative data. The former was analyzed using statistical analysis. The latter referring to the non-numeric data such as the categorical information that could be systematically collected and presented in narrative form were analyzed by using NVivo12. The questions were set as an open ended, so it led to the use of an explanation building technique. The following data analysis methods were employed to examine the effectiveness of reading activities and to explore reading potential through classroom-based action research.

Based on the objectives of the research, there were 5 data analysis technique undergone. The following data analysis methods were performed to search the insightful data about the success of the reading activities and exercises, enabling to make data-driven decisions about how to change and enhance the exercises in the future.

- a. Pre and post-test to know the students' speed reading, critical and creative reading skills before and after the reading activities.
- b. Distributing questionnaire to gather qualitative information on students' opinions of the effects of the reading activities on their reading skills.
- c. Reading logs to instruct students to make a record of their reading progress, including how much time they spend reading and how well they believe they can read.
- d. Conducting focus groups with students to have a better understanding of their perspectives and experiences with the reading assignments.
- e. Qualitative study of student work to examine reading and other projects created by students throughout reading activities to gauge advancements in their capacity for critical and creative thought.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Interrelation among speed, critical, and creative reading skills

To find the interrelation among speed, critical, and creative reading abilities, set of data taken from students' pre and post-test were obtained. They were obtained from the beginning and at the end of fourteen meetings. Then those collected data were analysed using descriptive statistic to find out the insight based on the findings. The parameter used to understand the interrelation among them was from their comprehension, cognitive processing speed, attention span, and metacognition. They were considered can influence the effectiveness and efficiency of students' reading skills. The speed-reading activity done in the classroom was conducting speed reading with two modes: (1) a timer for online-based test, and (2) a paper-based test for critical and creative understanding. With the attempt, it could be understood that students have different reading speeds. The challenge was to figure out a way to train the "slower" students to work on the skill of

reading text in chunks and to push forward until the end of the text in a particular time frame. Having tested the speed reading, students can categorize themselves whether they were belonging to an efficient reader or not.

Understanding students' level of speed, critical, and creative reading skills was the first step to know the interrelation among those reading skills. In the first cycle of classroom-based action research, there were two practices conducted. The first was by utilizing the source form <http://www.readingsoft.com/> and the source from https://breakingnewsenglish.com/speed_reading. The second was doing paper-based for classical reading in the classroom by using some novels from great authors: *The crucible*, *Lord of the ring*, *The tale of the two cities*, *The adventure of Huck Berifin*, *Mystery of room 342*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Chronical of Narnia*, *The hobbit*, and *Oliver twist*. The selection of those classic novels was for helping students to optimize their imagination in understanding the story because they were published long before the students were born. The decision actually argued Wu et al.,' (2020) statement that narrative reading texts were less challenging than expository reading comprehension texts.

The result of the students' speed reading is served in the following tables which are divided into three: (1) students' speed reading represents their cognitive processing speed, comprehension, and attention span, (2) critical and creative reading skills represent their ability in questioning and problematizing information contained in the text, and (3) the result of reading using novels.

Students' Level of Speed Reading

The strategy of testing students' speed reading was based on the formula served in table 1. By using it, students' level of speed reading can be systematically mapped. Students' speed reading represents cognitive processing speed, comprehension, and attention span. The average score of speed reading was 162.55 (a slow reader), the maximum score was 291 (an oral reader) and the minim score was 97 (under a slow reader).

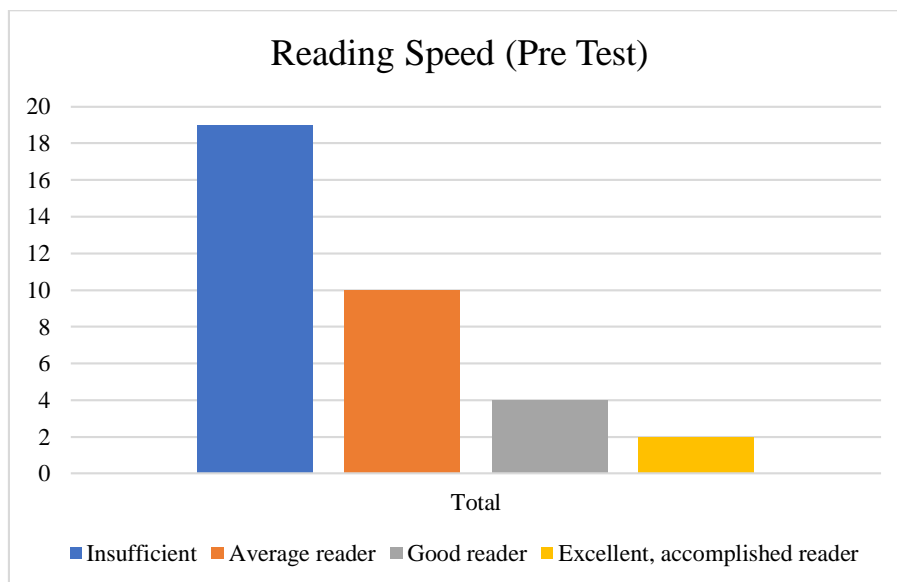


Diagram 1. Reading Speed (Pre-Test)

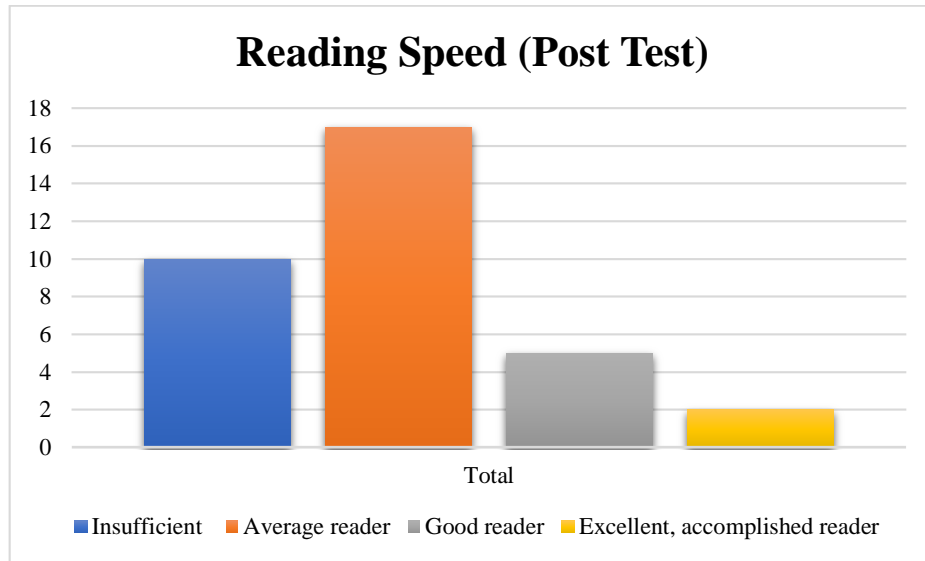


Diagram 2. Reading Speed (Post – Test)

Students' Level of Reading Power

Another important aspect of speed reading was understanding. In line with their speed reading, the finding show that their speed reading is in line with their power reading showing their ability in comprehending the information of the text they have read. The average score of students' understanding was 65.86, with the maximum score is 100, and the minimum score is 27. Based on the pre-test, both students' speed reading and comprehension was varied. However, through classroom-based action research, speed reading was redesigned with two-cycles by considering the students' competency. It was assumed that when students had given another chance and systematically guided, they can improve and reach the minimum standard of speed, critical and creative reading skills score. The finding argued the statement from Klimovich et al., (2023) that the increase of students' speed reading is not influenced by reading activity, but rather by the readers' self-awareness. In fact, in this study, students' awareness was influenced by the activities provided in the classroom. Therefore, they were interested in enhancing their reading skill.

The Level of Critical and Creative Reading

The level of students' critical and creative reading skills represents their ability in questioning and problematizing information contained in the text. The test items used were adapted from IELTS, TOEFL and News from some official websites. The finding showed that score of students' critical reading were vary. The average score of *critical reading* is 177/237, the maximum score is 227/237, and the minimum score is 56/237. In general, the result of critical reading was still unsatisfying.

Reading novel was used to help students improve their speed reading. However, the strategy was not only tracking the students' speed but also their critical reading. The way to achieve the target was by integrating productive and receptive skills. The result of the students' speed reading is served in the following table 2. In the strategy of reading novel, students were given time to read it. They could choose to stay at the classroom or outside the classroom. The goal of giving the choices were to make the students feel enjoy because reading novel should be relaxed. To support students in reading a novel and to boost their speed and critical reading, they were supposed to re-explain the story and

criticize the story. Students' comment toward the novel were considered. Both good and negative aspects from the novel should be highlighted. The attempt has been proven improve students' critical and creative reading abilities. Furthermore, the positive side of those reading enhancement can support writing skill. It is because study done by Mana & Harti (2023) showed that in writing features, students need to think creatively and should be provided with detail explanation. Furthermore, critical and creative reading abilities can contribute to students' ability in coping the uncertainties and learning from different situation (Hidayati et al., 2022).

Specific techniques applied in the classroom-based action research to enhance the level of students' speed reading, critical, and creative reading skills.

Based on the students' responses, students preferred some specific techniques to improve speed reading, critical and creative reading skills:

Table 2. Type of Reading Technique Preferred by Students

No	Type of Reading Technique	Description taken from Students' Acknowledgment
1.	Speed reading exercises	<i>"It can encourage us to practice reading at a speed rate by using timed reading materials and reading software. With speed reading exercises, we gradually increase our speed reading as we become more comfortable and confident."</i>
2.	Comprehension activities	<i>"Provide us with a variety of texts, answer questions, and engage in discussions that test comprehension and critical thinking."</i>
3.	Visualization exercises	<i>"Support practice mentally visualizing the information we read and created mental images and connections to aid comprehension and recall."</i>
4.	Annotation and summarization	<i>"Teach us to comment and summarize as we read the text, highlight important information, and summarize information in our own words"</i>
5.	Creative writing	<i>"Encourage us to write creatively and use our imagination and the information we learn from reading to come up with new and unique ideas"</i>
6.	Collaborative reading	<i>"Have us to work in groups to read and discuss texts, encouraging group interaction and discussion that can lead to new and innovative insights"</i>
7.	Reflective journaling	<i>"Encourage us to keep a reading journal, reflecting on what we have read and learned and how we can apply the information in our lives. These activities can be tailored to a student's individual needs and abilities and can be combined and adjusted as needed to best support student learning."</i>

Those are the reading activities that were preferred by students to improve their speed, critical, and creative reading. These activities can be tailored to the students' needs and abilities of the classroom and can be combined as well as adapted as needed to be the best support of their learning. In line with the reading resources, here are the appropriate reading text that could foster creative and critical reading skills.

Tabel 3. Description taken from Students' Acknowledgment

No	Reading Resources	Description taken from Students' Acknowledgment
1.	Novel (Classic literature)	Reading classic novels and works of literature can challenge students to think critically and creatively, as they explore complex themes and ideas.
2.	Non-fiction	Reading non-fiction texts, such as news articles, biographies, and academic journals, can help improve critical reading skills as students learn to evaluate the credibility of the information presented.
3.	Graphic novels and comics	These types of materials can provide a fun and engaging way for students to improve their reading speed and comprehension, while also encouraging creative and critical thinking.
4.	Short stories	Reading short stories can help students develop their speed-reading skills, as well as their ability to understand and analyze character motivations and plot.
5.	Poetry	Reading and analyzing poems can challenge students to think creatively and critically, as they interpret the meaning behind the words and imagery.

However, it is important to note that the best reading materials for promoting creative and critical thinking skills will vary and depend on the students' interests and abilities. However, it's a good idea to offer a range of reading materials which appropriate with the students' major. The attempt will encourage students to choose texts that they find engaging and meaningful.

The Three Readings Skills Interrelation to the Foreign Language Learning Theories

Based on the empirical ground from the classroom-based action research, speed reading in FLL can support the ability to read quickly and efficiently. Learning target language is important for acquiring and processing information, and for increasing reading comprehension. Therefore, speed reading is important for FLL. To master the speed reading, students must understand how to do skimming and scanning because these two basic strategies can help students to improve their speed reading. In addition, critical reading in FLL is important because it refers to the ability in questioning and criticizing the information they have read. In speed reading, students also need to evaluate the content while mastering it rather than just passively accepting and taking for granted. Therefore, a fast critical reader will have efficient time in critically evaluating the author's argument from different perspectives. With the comprehensive skills, student can become more autonomous learners and improve their overall reading comprehension. Additionally, students' cognitive process involving questioning, analysing, evaluating, and making judgments can be trained as they help students to become more competent in making decisions about the information they have explored. In the context of FLL, there are two ways to integrate between critical reading and speed reading: from the language input or selection of reading text's themes and language learning activities or variety of tasks.

The selection of appropriate reading text can support students' ability to read texts quickly and efficiently. It is because speed reading involves using various techniques including skimming and scanning, therefore these ones should be firstly mastered by them. To quickly understand the main ideas of a text, meaningful reading text must be

offered to help students to process a large amount of information quickly. The claim is supported by Yasemin's study that creative and critical reading skills had a direct and significant impact on students' reading enhancement. However, the depth and accuracy of the reading should be compromised. In critical reading, on the other hand, needs a more in-depth process of evaluating and analysing the information being read. It involves paying close attention to the author's argument, evidence, and language use, and critically evaluating the information being presented. Critical reading focussed on the process how individual gains a deeper understanding of the text and analyse as well as evaluate information. In practice, speed reading and critical reading are open to use together, with the goal of quickly processing information while still retaining a deep understanding of the material. For example, an individual can use speed reading techniques to quickly understand the main ideas of texts, and then engage in critical reading to evaluate the arguments and evidence presented in more detail. On the other hand, creative reading needs understanding a text with a more inventive and receptive mindset, enabling fresh perceptions and interpretations to information. Students reading the text creatively have more possibilities to think outside the box and having more surprising viewpoints because they enable to draw connections between the text and their own knowledge, experiences, and imagination.

Teachers-Students, Students-Students' Collaboration in Enhancing Speed, Critical, and Creative Reading Skills

Through collaboration, teachers and students will be able to make a reflection. They can discuss the new strategy that they could try. With collaboration, teachers can realize how they teach and can change their thinking as well as and find the way to provide about the teaching reading in a new and productive ways (Murray, 2015: 26). If it is compared, collaborative teaching and learning activities will be more promising than the personal ones. It is because they can make direct of peer reflection after doing the reading in the classroom.

In reading classes, collaborative teaching is a must to do. Indeed, in this digital technology, collaborative teaching and learning can be done not only in the school level but also in the wider context (Madya, 2013). Doing teaching reading under the collaboration among students and teachers are still rarely performed yet it will support the effective teaching practice (Moore, 2000). Moreover, in a wider context, Moore also explained that there were three types of good teaching model that can support the effective teaching: communicative, competence, and reflective. Those competence needed in teaching reading for further goals. In nutshell, thing which needs to be emphasized is that it is axiomatic that during the teaching reading one of the most important points is how the teachers act in the classroom and how students can handle their effective reading to gain creative and critical reading.

With collaboration, students can accelerate their speed, critical and creative reading. These three most popular reading skills are needed in this globalized world. Therefore, both critical and creative reading skills can be trained in the teaching contexts while boosting their speed reading. Consequently, teachers are obliged to search appropriate reading texts that can stimulate students to think critically and creatively in a limited time. They also should support students not only for speed their reading but also able to question and evaluating the text. With collaboration, the targets can be reached because the main goal of learning is to prepare students to have the flexible adaptation (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000: 77). From that postulate, therefore in

teaching reading, teachers should design good chances to integrate the targeted reading skills to the students. Through collaborative reading activities, students can make any kinds of adaptation. Even they can easily overcome the process of changing to suit different conditions with their creativity. Turning to, teacher can do a lot in the classroom to help students to have efficient independent reading (Hyland, 1995: 109). Then with that skills student can improve their ability in selecting all the needs in their life.

CONCLUSION

Students could employ speed reading strategies to quickly comprehend a text's core ideas before engaging in critical and creative reading. In critical reading, students can optimize their ability in questioning, problematizing and directly follow the information given by the authors. Students can read the text by optimizing their imagination in understanding the text. A faster reading strategy can help students to get more opportunity to engage in creative reading, where they are free to conceive of and interpret the information in fresh ways. Students can improve and develop their higher order thinking abilities such as analysis, synthesis, and assessment. It is convinced that there is a connection between reading speed, critical and creative reading. For increasing reading speed, students can be more critical and creative thinkers. Students' level of critical and creative thinking will contribute for adjusting the new challenges in the future life. The relationship between speed, critical, and creativity reading skills and unlocking reading potential through classroom-based action research is a valuable topic for investigation. This study can help to improve student's understanding of how these skills are related and how they can be developed and enhanced through effective teaching and learning practices. Classroom based action research provides the collection of real-time data in a natural setting and opportunities for teachers to reflect on and improve their practice. The research design can help to identify effective strategies for promoting the development of speed, critical, and creativity reading skills. Overall, the findings of this current research serve important and timely issues that give potential insight to improve the reading skills. Further research should be done to explore the correlation among students' speed-reading level, critical, and creative reading abilities as well as to know the impact of those abilities toward students' academic achievement.

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