

USING VISUAL SCAFFOLDING STRATEGY FOR TEACHING READING IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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Abstract

This research was aimed to investigate the effectiveness of using visual scaffolding strategy in teaching reading comprehension at the eighth grade of junior high school. The design of this study was a quasi experimental study. The subjects were the students of state junior high schools in Cirebon, Indonesia. The data were obtained by administering reading test and from observation as a supporting data analysis. The data of the test were analyzed by using t-test formula to know the difference of the students' comprehension in reading narrative text between two groups. Meanwhile the result of the observation was analyzed descriptively. The results indicate that there was a significant difference on students' learning result before and after Visual Scaffolding applied.

Keywords: *reading comprehension, narrative text, visual scaffolding strategy*

INTRODUCTION

The role of reading skill in English language is very crucial nowadays. It becomes a way to communicate among human being. Humans are able to get a lot of knowledge from reading. Reading is an activity which engages a text, brain and eye to create a meaning. We could not get any meaning from the text, if we do not take any activity of reading. Reading is also a skill of how an author or a writers tries to communicate or delivers some messages to the readers through a written text. Mastering reading skill is a must for all of the students who are studying English as a foreign language (Johnson, 2008).

When people talk about reading, it cannot be separated from comprehension or understanding. For instance, a reader who understands what she or he has read can answer questions about it. Smith (2004) notes that:

“Comprehension may be regarded as relating aspects of the world around us, including what we read to the knowledge, intentions, and expectations we already have in our head. It is clearly the purpose of reading and of learning to read.” (p. 13)

Learners need to be familiarized with how sentence are functionally exploited to carry meanings in a discourse

and how they are manipulated to form a paragraph through analysis in interpreting meanings or ideas carried by the reading text (Fauziati, 2015). Understanding something is the main goal of reading skill. It cannot be denied that teacher also play an important role in enhancing students' reading comprehension and mend their reading habit.

As reading comprehension is an essential skill, it also has complicated problems. The writers gathered some information by doing some interviews with English teachers and some students. The writers reaches a conclusion that first, some teachers consider that reading is not a favorite activity for most students. Second, students have less motivation to read which leads into another problem that cause the students' evaluation are dissatisfying. The last problem, students are lack of vocabularies, so the students are not able to neither comprehend nor answer the questions from the text they have been read.

Visual Scaffolding is an interesting strategy and might as well a good strategy for the teachers to apply it in the classroom. This strategy can be categorized as one of the visual aids that related to pictures, photos and any nonverbal tools the teacher uses during teaching and learning. The writers uses this strategy because the writers was sure that teaching reading comprehension becomes more interesting for the students if we use visuals. Eighty percent of all people learn through their sense of sight, thus, people are very dependent on their vision (Carpenter in Khoii and Forouzesh, 2014).

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether or not Visual Scaffolding Strategy is effective for teaching reading comprehension at the eighth grade of junior high school. Based on the formulation of the problem, the writers's main concern was to improve students' learning result of reading comprehension through visual scaffolding strategy in teaching and learning process.

Using Scaffolding in Teaching Practice

Tabrizi and Shokripour (2015), Bassiri (2012) and Attarzadeh (2011) conducted their research ni teaching English using scaffolding. The findings showed that scaffolding is able to support the learners through an interactive process of contextualization, analysis, discussion, and joint negotiation of texts. Those previous studies have the similarities with the current study which have the same focus on reading comprehension and uses scaffolding and visual scaffolding as a strategy. There are also some differentiations with the current study. The current study had different participants. The writers used visual scaffolding as a strategy in this study, because there were only few of studies about visual scaffolding. So, the writers tried to strengthen the experts' findings in the previous study that not only scaffolding, visual scaffolding also can be effective for teaching reading comprehension. Furthermore, writers wanted to prove that teaching reading comprehension through visual scaffolding is one of the way to improve students' activities in reading comprehension class be more effective and active.

Visual Scaffolding is a derived strategy from scaffolding. Scaffolding is based on the socio-cultural theory popularized by Vygotsky (1978). Vygotsky believes that success in gaining knowledge can only be achieved through scaffolding from a knowledgeable person to a novice. Scaffolding can be presented in many ways for teaching reading, however similar to any other strategy, its success or failure depends highly upon its implementation by practitioners. Techniques used for scaffolding in literature can be viewed as general techniques used for language teaching and specific ones used or defined for teaching reading (Bassiri, 2012). Scaffolding is considered as an important instructional tool because it supports students' learning, helps them understand that they can both teach to and learn from others, helps them reorganize information in a way that makes sense to them, reduces learning ambiguity, and thus increases growth opportunities (Poorahmadi, 2009).

Herrel and Jordan (2004) argued that visual scaffolding is a strategy for teaching English that utilizes drawings, photographs and other visual in order to help students to better understand the language. The visuals used in scaffolding may include the images from internet, photographs, teachers' or students' drawings, illustration in books and videos. In line with that, Tabrizi and Shokripour (2015) elaborates that visual scaffolding is a specifically designed academic instruction in English (SDAIE) that using method and resources that add context to the language that the student is learning, such as props, gestures and pictures, contribute to that child's

language acquisition and ultimately to the production of new language.

In implementing the first type of scaffolding, the teacher can simplify the language by shortening selections, speaking in the present tense, and avoiding the use of idioms. For the second type of scaffolding, the teacher asks students to choose answers from a list or complete a partially finished outline or paragraph. And last, for using visuals the teacher can present information and ask for students to respond through the use of pictures, photograph, graphic organizers, tables, charts, outlines, and graphs.

Meanwhile, Roehler and Cantlon (1997) in Bassiri (2012) argued that there are five types of scaffolding.

- a. Offering explanation;
- b. Inviting student participation;
- c. Verifying and clarifying student understandings;
- d. Modeling the desired behaviors;
- e. Inviting students to contribute clues for reasoning through an issue or problem.

In another study, Hannafin et al (1997) also identified six main types of scaffolding instruction in teaching English. There are four categories of scaffolding:

- a. Conceptual scaffolding;
- b. Metacognitive scaffolding (supports the underlying processes associated with individual learning management)
- c. Procedural scaffolding (helps learners by providing hints on how to utilize available resources and tools), and
- d. Strategic scaffolding (provides support for how to utilize strategies).

Teaching Reading Comprehension

Reading is information-processing: transforming print to speech, or print to meaning. Anyone who has successfully learned to read has acquired a mental information processing system that can accomplish such transformations (Snowling and Hulme, 2005). Reading is a constantly developing skill. Like any skill, we get better at reading by practicing. And conversely, if we do not practice, we will not get better and our skills may deteriorate (Johnson, 2008).

Nowadays, reading is viewed as an active process requiring the reader to activate his background knowledge in order to recreate the writers' intended meaning (Khoii and Forouzesh, 2010). To read well, learners have to detect and select the right cues to form concept or meanings. They have to develop their abilities to perceive the elements of the reading text to get meanings with sufficiently efficient speed. To enable them to develop their reading skills, the teachers should know the rationale of the nature of reading and its implication in teaching techniques. They should also be able to employ suitable techniques to improve the students' reading ability (Fauziati, 2015).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this research, a quasi-experimental design was conducted during the research. The writers used pretest-posttest control group design. To gather the data, the writers used tests and observation as the techniques for collecting the data. The tests consisted of pre-test and post-test. Both tests were formed in multiple choices and consist of

20 numbers. The writers used observation only for supporting the data analysis. The observation consisted of the activities which occur during teaching learning process, students' motivation, students' response and participation, students' ability to work in group, students' enthusiasm and interest, students comprehension on the target language, the problems which were found during teaching and learning process and students' progress in learning reading comprehension after the researcher applied visual scaffolding strategy as the treatment.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From the result of the pre-test, it can be found that the mean score of the pre-test of experimental group was 52.7 and the control group was 35.7. The result of post test of experimental group was 75 while the control group gained the score into 54. Based on the score, it can be seen that the score of experimental group was higher than the control group. The calculation of t-test showed that t_{account} was 4.88 and t_{table} was 1.995 with df 68, significant level 0.05 (5%). It means that t_{account} was higher than t_{table} . This implies that the use of scaffolding strategy is one of the alternatives to invites students' critical ideas from the texts. .

The writers had taken some notes from the result of observation from three meetings which consisted of ten aspects. It can be summarized that there was a significant difference in teaching learning process and students' learning result between experimental and control class. In experimental class, students tent

to have some improvement in each meeting. It can be seen from students' motivation, student's involvement, students' participation during discussion, students' comprehension on the target language, students' organization in the material, students' enthusiasm, students' interest, and students' progress in learning reading comprehension after the writers applied Visual Scaffolding Strategy as a treatment. At first, they were having a hard time to adapt well with the learning style that conducted by the writers. But in the next meetings, they were showing some progress from those aspects. Some proves that the writers noted were students competed with each other to response to the writers's questions about the materials. They were enthusiastically raised their hands so that they would be acknowledged by the writers. It means that they had some interest towards the learning process. Besides that, students also participated well with their group by sharing the problems of a particular text and giving comments each other. The evidence also can be seen from the result of their post-test. There was a significant improvement in the result of their post-test. It can be concluded that students can comprehend the text well.

However, in control class, the condition of teaching and learning process was quite different from experimental class. The writers investigated that only several students who had motivation, enthusiasm and interest during teaching and learning process. Most of students were passive. Although the writers had already given encouragement, some of students were

still afraid of giving their opinion because they were afraid of making mistakes. Students' result of post-test in control class also did not show any significant improvement. Only several students were gaining some improvement in learning result.

There were also found out that teaching reading comprehension through Visual Scaffolding Strategy contributed a lot to the improvement of students' reading comprehension. Based on the analysis of students' score, there were some factors that made Visual Scaffolding Strategy effective in improving students' reading comprehension. As stated by McCloskey (2005), Visual Scaffolding Strategy gives some benefits. First, visual scaffolding provides comprehensible input which is a good start for students to learn reading comprehension. Second, visual scaffolding is able to make complex ideas from texts more accessible and makes language or vocabulary more memorable. Third, visual scaffolding strategy supports learners to do something that they cannot yet do independently. And last, visual scaffolding often includes collaborative effort, so the students can easily share their opinion and difficulties in learning reading comprehension with their friends. However, the writers also found some weaknesses of in this schema of using Visual Scaffolding as a strategy for teaching reading comprehension. Some students were distracted easily; they had difficulties whether to focus on the text or visual aids that the writers provided. Not all of the students can learn through visuals, some of them also confused to

make some connection between the text and the picture. In line with that, Khoii and Forouzesh (2010) found that text provided with image might split students' attention between two forms of information. Visual Scaffolding was also took too much time in learning process. It would be better if the teacher was able to maintain the time so the students can comprehend the text well through Visual Scaffolding Strategy.

CONCLUSION

Even some weaknesses of the implemation of the scaffolding strategy were found, but the results mainly suggest positive outputs as the indication of the t-test analysis. Thus, it needs more time to ensure the advantages and to explore and fix the weaknesses of the intervention.

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