

**Visual Scaffolding and Intensive Reading Strategies Based on Gender**

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**ABSTRACT**

The objectives of this study are to find out whether or not; 1) there is a significant increase in students' reading comprehension achievement based on after they are taught by using visual scaffolding strategy and intensive reading strategy and those who are not. 2) there is a significant contribution of visual scaffolding strategy and intensive reading strategy towards reading comprehension achievement of the high, average, and low achievers? This research used factorial experimental designs. These designs are essentially modifications of either the posttest-only control group or pretest-posttest control group designs. The sample was the students of PGRI University of Palembang. Two classes were chosen in which first class was experimental with male students was applied and the second was the second experimental group trained by intensive reading strategy with the female students. The results showed that First, Visual scaffolding and Intensive Learning Strategy technique affected the students' reading achievement of PGRI University. The result of t independent test was the mean of experiment group higher than mean of control group. It could be concluded, experiment group and control group were significantly difference and the visual scaffolding and Intensive Learning Strategy technique was effectively to use in improving students' reading achievement. The Second, there was an interaction effect of visual scaffolding and intensive learning strategy technique and students' learning achievement toward the students' reading achievement.

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***Keywords: Reading, Scaffolding, Intensive Reading, Strategy.***

**INTRODUCTION**

**1. Background**

Reading is one of the important skills in learning English besides speaking, listening, and writing. Jaya et al (2018) By reading, students are able to construct the meaning of words and comprehend the material which they are learning. According to Seyler (2004), reading is a process of constructing meaning from a word or cluster of words. It means that the students should be able to get the meaning of what they are reading in an

effort to get the ideas the writer delivered on the text. According to Harmer (2007, p. 99) reading is important not only for careers, study, and pleasure, but also for language acquisition. He further states that reading provides good model for English writing, provides opportunities to study vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation, and demonstrate the way to construct sentences, paragraphs, and whole texts.

Jaya (2017) Reading as one of the four skills taught in the English subject in

Indonesian high schools plays a significant role. The significance of reading skill is indicated implicitly in the Indonesia National Curriculum of 2013. This curriculum states that the objective of teaching reading, as one of the four major skills, in learning English as foreign language in university level to university level is to develop the students' ability to read and to get the message comprehensively from particular reading texts. (BSNP, 2006). However, successful reading is determined by comprehension. Comprehension itself is an active, constructive process in which the ultimate understanding of the text is determined by a combination of what is stated directly in the text and the reader's prior knowledge related to the topic of the text (Scanlon, et al. 2010, p.274).

In Indonesia, the goal of language learning, reading skill particularly, is at functional level (Pusat Kurikulum, 2013). The graduates are expected to be able to use English for survival purposes, such as carrying out transactional exchanges, reading for fun, reading popular science, encyclopedia, and other reading materials.

In fact, a research on reading skill in Indonesia has revealed that the students' skills particularly in reading comprehension are still far from satisfactory. The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) conducted in 2019 revealed that out of a total of 45 countries surveyed, Indonesia

ranked 42nd in students' literacy rate. According to the PIRLS, Indonesian students scored an average of 405 in reading literacy, far below the mean international score of 500. The shocking news comes from the current PISA result 2019 that put Indonesia on the 62th rank out of 65 participating countries in term of reading with the score 396. This score is even far below OECD average 496. As a matter of fact, in PISA 2019 result stated that Indonesian students' overall reading scale is 402 and is ranked 57 out of 65 countries.

In university context, students' inability to comprehend English texts was also found in PGRI university of Palembang. Most students, especially the lower semester still encounter difficulty in dealing with English reading achievement. The current result of mid-term test for Reading subject held on September 18th, 2019, as reported by two lecturers of Reading showed that only 93 (43,28%) out of 215 students obtained the minimum achievement criteria grade (KKM) 70. Ironically, for the mid-term test, taken from the curriculum section showed even worse result. Only 82 (38,45%) students obtained the required KKM. It means that great majority of the lower semester student has the difficulty in comprehending the English texts.

This phenomenon drove the writers to find the reasons by casually discussing the findings with the lower

semester lecturers of English. The writer also did some casual class visits to lower semester students at variative classrooms, asking them about their English learning problem, especially in reading. Based on the discussion and the visits it is concluded that lack of vocabulary, slow identification of words, poor at connecting the ideas and inferring meaning beyond the words given on the text are among the difficulties faced by the students. Most of them also tend not to read critically or attend sufficiently to details. In general, referring to reading comprehension difficulties, the students do not possess effective strategies to help them interpret and interact with the text.

Every student in a classroom is unique. They have their own style in learning to study. In order to facilitate them with the effective teaching strategy teacher should in fact be familiar with their students' learning styles. Dunn, et al. (2002, p. 75) state that a number of studies during the last decade have found that students' achievement increases when teaching methods match their learning styles. In addition, Wilson, L. M. (2011) maintains that an understanding of the way how the students learn improves the selection of teaching strategies which is best suited to student learning.

Therefore, the writers also conducted a preliminary research to obtain information about lower semester students' learning styles from 14th to 25th

October, 2019. The writers used the ready-made questionnaires, called Abiator's Online Learning Style Inventory Test (AOLSIT). This 30-item-questionnaire was firstly translated into *bahasa* before being distributed and answered by the students. After conducting the preliminary research and analyzing the data, it was found that 161 (75%) students are categorized as visual learners, 32 (15%) auditory learners, and 22 (10%) kinesthetic learners. Since most of the students (75%) are categorized as visual learners, the writer would like to propose one of scaffolding strategy that involve visual element in teaching process as one of the solutions to increase the students' reading comprehension achievement. It is called visual scaffolding .

Scaffolding instruction as a teaching strategy originates from Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and his concept of the *zone of proximal development* (ZPD). The zone of proximal development is the distance between what children can actually do by themselves and the next learning that they can be helped to achieve with competent assistance (Raymond, 2000, p.176). Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976, p. 90) described scaffolding as a process that enables a child to solve a problem, carry a task or achieve a goal which would be beyond his unassisted efforts. Scaffolding is perceived as the strategy used by the

teachers to facilitate learners' transition from assisted to independent performance (Cooper, 2000:33-34; Gibbons, 2002).

Visual scaffolding, according to Herrell (2005), is a strategy for teaching English language learners which utilizes drawing, photographs, and other visuals in order to better help students to understand more about the language used in the lesson. In addition, Shumway (2011) states that visual scaffolding is a way to make students really understand the pattern in the lesson. Related to learning styles, teacher should employ learning strategy that accommodates the students' learning styles. Based on the preliminary research done by the writer, 75% of lower semester students of PGRI university of Palembang are considered visual learners. Judging from the above data, the writers strongly believe that visual scaffolding strategy is suitable for the learners' learning styles, especially in increasing their reading comprehension achievement. However, this strategy helps not only the visual learners but also make the classroom activities more engaging and therefore better learned by all.

To implement this study, the writers will choose the lower semester students of PGRI university of Palembang in the academic year of 2019/2020 as the sample. The writers are interested in investigating the effect of visual scaffolding strategy in increasing the students' reading comprehension

achievement since most of the lower semester students are categorized visual learners. In this study, the writers are also interested in investigating whether or not the students' reading comprehension achievement is different in term of gender. In order to see whether not visual scaffolding strategy increases reading comprehension achievement, the writer will compare it with another strategy called intensive reading strategy.

Based on the above facts and reasons, the writer plan to conduct an experimental research to the lower semester students of PGRI university of Palembang as the sample of the study. The writers will propose the research entitled "Increasing Reading Comprehension Achievement of the students of PGRI university of Palembang through Visual Scaffolding and Intensive Reading Strategies Based on Gender."

## **2. Problems of the Study**

Based on the background of the study, the writer will formulate the following research problems, namely;

- (1) Is there any significant increase in students' reading comprehension achievement based on after they are taught by using visual scaffolding strategy and intensive reading strategy and those who are not?
- (2) Is there any significant contribution of visual scaffolding strategy and intensive reading strategy towards

reading comprehension  
achievement of the high, average,  
and low achievers?

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **1. The Concept of Scaffolding**

The concept of scaffolding is grounded in Vygotsky's social constructivist view of learning. According to Vygotsky (1978), every mental function in a child's development first appears in collaboration with an adult. The collaboration occurs in what Vygotsky referred to as the zone of the proximal development (ZPD). The most straightforward and the most often quoted definition of ZPD according to Vygotsky (1978, p. 86) as cited in Walqui (2006, p. 162) According to this definition, ZPD is the area between what a child can actually do independently and what he/she can do with assistance. Over time, when given repeated experiences, a child internalizes the collaborative form of the mental process and is able to engage in them alone or in new contexts. Therefore, Vygotsky (1978) anticipated that directed interactions with adults have a high effect on children's cognitive functions.

The term scaffolding in its educational sense was first used by Wood, Brunner, and Ross (1976). They describe scaffolding as a process that enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task or achieve goal which would be beyond his/ her

unassisted efforts (p. 90). Then, Rogoff (1990, p. 93) describes scaffolding as supported situations in which children can extend current skills and knowledge to a higher level of competence. In addition, Graves, Watts, and Graves, (1994, p. 44) describe scaffolding as a temporary supportive structure that teachers create in order to assist a student or a group of students to accomplish a task that they could not complete alone.

A related construct that is very important in understanding scaffolding is the gradual release of responsibility model (Pearson & Fielding, 1991) This model illustrates a temporal sequence in which learners progress gradually from situations in which the teacher takes the major responsibility for completing successfully a reading task, to situations in which learners assume increasing responsibility for reading tasks, and finally to situations in which learners take all or nearly all the responsibility for reading tasks.

Scaffolding is one of the effective strategies in English language learning, especially reading. It enables the teacher to keep a task whole, while students learn to understand and manage the parts, and presents the learner with just the right challenge. According to Rogoff (1990) scaffolding integrates multiple aspects of a task into a manageable chunk and permits students to see how they interrelate. Therefore, it helps students to

cope with the complexity of tasks in an authentic manner (Pearson, 1996). McKenzie (1999) defines the features of successful scaffolding that include clear direction, purpose, and expectation. Results include on-task activity; better student direction; reduced uncertainty, surprise, and disappointment; and increased efficiency. In brief, the way the scaffolding is conducted in the classroom depends on the students' abilities. Varying levels of supports are possible, and the more complex a task is, the more support students will need to accomplish it. To sum up, scaffolding is seen as a process in which students are given support until they can acquire new skills and strategies and continue independently.

## **2. The Concept of Visual Learners**

All students are unique and they learn in unique ways. Flemming, N.D. & Mills, C. (1992) classifies three common learning styles; visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. As the concern of this study, visual learners can learn best when they see what they're trying to learn. They remember things best when presented to them through visible media – like , flash cards, pictures, graphic organizers, drawn on a board, or projected on a screen. Generally, the more they see, the more they remember and form associations with those visual cues.

An an investigation of sensory learning preferences among East Asian

students conducted by Reid (1987) and Vakos (2005). found that Korean, Chinese and Japanese students are all visual learners. They like to read and obtain a great deal of visual stimulation. For them, conversations and oral directions without any visual backup are very confusing and can create anxiety. It is obvious that such visual learning style comes from a traditional classroom teaching in East Asia, where most teachers emphasize learning through reading and tend to pour a great deal of information on the blackboard.

## **3. The Concept of Visual Scaffolding**

In English language learning, especially in teaching reading there are many strategies that teachers can use. Visual scaffolding is one of them. According to Burns (2005) visual scaffolding is a strategy for teaching English language learners that employs drawings, photographs, and other visual media in order to help students to understand more about language used in each lesson. Furthermore, McCloskey (2005), says that visual scaffolding employs the use of visual supports, like pictures, picture cards, word cards, posters, realia, and graphic organizer in language learning, especially in teaching reading. By using visual scaffolding teacher not only provides comprehensible input for the learners but also make complex ideas more accessible, and

makes language more memorable. Furthermore, Shumway (2011) states that visual scaffolding is one of the strategy in English language learning that is utilized to make the students comprehend the pattern in the lesson.

#### **4. The Concept of Intensive Reading**

Intensive reading is one of the popular reading methods. According to William as cited in Diem (1999, p. 2) intensive reading refers to extremely careful reading where the aim is complete comprehension of the text. Intensive reading occurs when the learner is focused on the language rather than the text. The texts for intensive reading are relatively short (500 words), at a language level judged to be slightly above the reader's proficiency, and with a high proportion of task items. To complete the task the reader should use word-by-word reading. The principal aims of intensive reading are to provide input and practice in the foreign and second language and also practice in reading skills and styles.

### **METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

#### **1. Design of the Study**

The writers applied factorial experimental designs. These designs are essentially modifications of either the posttest-only control group or pretest-posttest control group designs. According to McMillan & Schumacher (2010, p. 283) factorial designs are used when there are two or more independent variables are

involved. The purpose of this designs are, (1) to see if the effect of an intervention are consistent across characteristics of the subjects, (2) to examine the unique effect of the independent variables together. In addition, London, K. & Wright, D. B, (2008) confirm that factorial design enable the researchers to examine the main effects of two or more individual independent variables simultaneously, and to detect interactions among variables. Moreover, Best, J. W & Kahn, J. V. (1995, p. 159) provide more vividly the description of factorial designs.

#### **Results of the Study**

1. Paired test is used to know the significant difference among the variable, where at the first paired table was the difference pre-test and post test of experimental group taught using visual scaffolding and intensive learning strategy technique. It was found that the mean in the pre-test of the experimental group taught using visual scaffolding and intensive learning strategy technique was 60.85, while in the post-test, the mean was 67.60. It was shown that the value of sig was 0, 00 at the significance level < 0.05 in two tailed, it means the critical of t-table was 0.025. Since the value of t-obtained was lower than the critical value of t-table, it meant that there was a significant difference in achievement before and after the treatment in the

experimental group. Because the sig. value (0.00) < than 0.025, it meant the students' reading achievement significantly increased.

2. Independent t test was commonly used to know the difference between two groups. In this investigation, it found that t that the students who were taught by visual scaffolding and intensive learning strategy technique got a higher mean score than those who were taught by using conventional technique. The students who were taught by using visual scaffolding and intensive learning strategy technique got 67.6, while those who were taught by conventional technique got 61.18. Furthermore, it also showed the statistics calculation using independent sample test was found the levene test 0.69 higher than 0,05, meaning the variance of the two groups were approximately equal. Then, the p-output Sig was 0.072. When the p-output was lower than  $\alpha$  (.05). Therefore, it could be predicted that the strategy (visual scaffolding and intensive learning strategy technique) was applied to increase students' reading achievement was effective.

3. For the last interpretation was the result of two Anova where it purposed to know the interaction among the independence variable, moderator and students dependent variable (reading achievement). The interaction between

students reading achievement, high, medium and low reading achievement, was shown from the sig 0.000 > 0.05 it means, there was a significant interaction high, medium and low reading achievement to the students reading achievement, meaning that, the visual scaffolding and intensive learning strategy technique was influenced by the students' interest. In other word, the teaching using visual scaffolding and intensive learning strategy technique was effective to the students who had high, medium and low achievers.

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