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## Exploring The Secondary English Teachers' Strategies In Teaching Reading Comprehension: An Interview Study

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### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui strategi yang digunakan oleh guru bahasa Inggris dalam mengajar pemahaman bacaan. Penelitian ini dirancang sebagai penelitian kualitatif deskriptif. Partisipan penelitian ini adalah tiga orang guru Bahasa Inggris yang mengajar di salah satu SMP di Karawang. Instrumen penelitian adalah wawancara. Instrumen digunakan untuk mengetahui strategi yang digunakan dan bagaimana guru bahasa Inggris mengimplementasikannya di kelas. Hasil data dianalisis dengan analisis tematik dari Braun & Clarke (2006). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru pertama menggunakan strategi scaffolding dalam mengajar pemahaman bacaan. Sedangkan guru kedua menggunakan strategi QARs (Question-Answer Relationship). Dan guru ketiga menggunakan strategi scaffolding dan QARs (Question-Answer Relationship) dalam mengajar pemahaman membaca di kelas. Strategi yang diterapkan efektif dalam mengajar pemahaman membaca di sekolah tersebut.

Kata Kunci: *Pemahaman Membaca, Strategi Guru*

### Abstract

This research aimed to figure out the strategies used by English teachers in teaching reading comprehension. This research was designed as descriptive qualitative research. Participants of the research were three English teachers who teach in one of the junior high school in Karawang. The instruments of the research was an interview. The instruments were used to figure out the strategies used and how the English teachers implemented them in the classroom. The result of the data was analyzed by thematic analysis from Braun & Clarke (2006). The result showed that the first teacher used scaffolding strategies in teaching reading comprehension. While the second teacher used QARs (Question-Answer Relationship) strategies. And the third teacher used scaffolding and QARs (Question-Answer Relationship) strategies in teaching reading comprehension in the classroom. The strategies applied were effective in teaching reading comprehension in that school.

*Keyword: reading comprehension, teachers' strategies*

## INTRODUCTION

The act of reading involves more than just saying the alphabet letters aloud, however, reading activities create the meaning from the text. Additionally, meaningful reading improves the accuracy with which the text's message is understood (Habermas, 2001). Although, education and training programs are constantly changing, there are not enough reading comprehension studies being conducted in our nation. This deficiency is particularly evident in international reading comprehension tests, where Indonesian students perform well below expectations. This is proven from several studies, such as in 2018, Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) conducted by a world organization which is the Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development (OECD). It showed that Indonesia in the less category.

According to Widodo (2015a, b), in Indonesia, the most of English teachers use intensive reading programs when teaching reading in their classroom. Because, not just secondary students, but reading researchers and academics today focus primarily on helping readers absorb and comprehend textual information. The goal of teaching and learning is to help students create and understand spoken and written language. So that learning can be carried out properly, and the material can be conveyed appropriately, the teachers need a strategy to achieve these learning objectives. A variety of teaching approaches and procedures can be carried out more easily according to teaching strategies, according to Brown (2004). However, the implementation of strategies is one of the difficulties that the majority of Indonesian teachers face in the classroom. In order to teach intensive reading, the teachers must be able to select the best teaching method. Not only that, but the tactics used by the teachers must be adjusted in accordance with the demands of the students. According to Allington (2002), inventive teachers are able to provide better results regardless of the curricula, pedagogical strategies, or reading programs employed.

In order to keep the students interested, the teacher should employ a variety of teaching methods, media, and activities when teaching reading. According to Brown (2004) as cited by Dwiningtyas (2020), the main purpose of teaching strategies is to make it simpler to use a range of teaching approaches and techniques. The secret is to design more interactive learning environments, integrate technology where it makes sense into the learning process, and use the right collaborative learning techniques. Allington (2002) made the observation that innovative teachers are able to produce higher outcomes independent of the curricular materials, pedagogical strategies, or reading programs used. From the explanation above, the researcher assumes that in learning reading comprehension the role of the teacher is very important.

Anyone who instructs must comprehend the tenets and presumptions that guide each

method. Any teaching strategy must be understood in order to be efficient and effective. A strategy is an activity that a teacher does to achieve one or more of her teaching-learning objectives, according to Harmer (2007). When teaching English in the classroom, teachers employ a variety of instructional tactics that can take many different shapes to enhance student learning. Teachers must regularly adapt their reading comprehension instruction strategies in order to match the demands of their pupils. According to Hassan (2015: 172), even though reading comprehension instructional strategies may differ from teacher to teacher, reading comprehension instruction in all classrooms should have common objectives for reading comprehension instructional strategies, such as supporting independent comprehension and student engagement in reading comprehension dialogue, among others.

According to Vacca & Vacca (1999:53), there are several strategies in teaching reading comprehension as follows:

1. Scaffolding

Gasong (2007) defines scaffolding as a teaching strategy in which students receive support at the start of their learning process before the support is reduced and opportunities are provided. By using scaffolding, teachers can help a variety of students in text-related learning contexts navigate meaning and overcome obstacles.

2. Think-Aloud

Think Aloud is a strategy that helps pupils succeed academically and is intended to help them retain more crucial elements from the books that their teacher has assigned.

3. Reciprocal Teaching

Reciprocal teaching, an approach for guiding reading comprehension, enables children to automatically develop the skills that proficient readers and learners possess (summarize, question, clarify, predict, and respond to what they are reading).

4. Question-Answer Relationship (QARs)

QARs is a reading technique that entails understanding and deciphering questions. To put it another way, this approach aids students in understanding the questions so they can gain knowledge from the reading.

The study, Teachers' Strategies in Teaching Reading Comprehension, was done by Dwiningtyas, et al. According to their research, the two English teachers who participated in it employed a variety of ways to teach reading comprehension. Pre-reading, while reading, and post-reading are the three processes that both of them integrated and put into practice. A prior study by Naima Al-Husban, titled EFL teachers' methods while teaching reading comprehension

in Jordan: Teacher development implications, also covered the topic of teaching reading comprehension. According to his research, teachers are aware of the titles of reading comprehension strategies and the many levels of reading comprehension instruction. However, they were unable to practice and apply it while learning in the classroom.

The instructional techniques employed by teachers are being modified to the current circumstances despite the fact that numerous earlier research have provided a complete description of reading comprehension instructional strategies. This is because increasingly sophisticated technology is being developed. Thus, in order to bridge this knowledge gap, the researcher will look into the strategies used by English teachers in the classroom, particularly when instructing students on how to understand what they are reading. Exploring the Secondary English Teachers' Strategies in Teaching Reading Comprehension: An Interview Study is the name of the study that the researcher is encouraged to conduct as a result of this.

## METHOD RESEARCH

This study used descriptive case study design. In this instance, using a single case study does not serve the objective of testing or extrapolating a hypothesis. The case study's main objective was to describe, instead. Descriptive case studies are frequently employed to give researchers a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon they are researching (Yin, 2003). This study's participants were three junior high school English instructors in Karawang who taught secondary English. These instructors had prior experience instructing and learning English. Therefore, the researcher was interested in learning more about reading comprehension teaching strategies and how teachers really put them into practice. In this study, the researcher used a number of procedural steps to collect data, including member check, exploration, and orientation. The reasoning goes like this: 1) Orientation: at this point, the researcher has identified and illustrated the topic under study; 2) Exploration: The primary goal of this research's current phase is to collect data in line with its stated goals; 3) Member Check: The data and documentation gathered in the previous stage are all gathered in the last step so they may be processed and again examined to complete the necessary data.

In this study, the researcher conducted one-on-one in-depth interviews with each respondent and used semi-structured questions that flowed as naturally as possible so that the respondents felt at ease and free to express their opinions and responses when responding to the researcher's questions. Thematic analysis from Braun & Clarke (2006) was used in this study as a data analysis stage since it is extremely valuable to identify and evaluate the themes of the data. This helps present data so that it is not difficult to grasp. The steps in data analysis activities are broken down into numerous parts, including familiarizing yourself with the data, creating initial codes, looking for themes, looking over themes, defining and labeling themes, and producing the report.

## FRESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Research Findings

The participants in this study were three English instructors who had been working in a secondary school in Karawang before learning about the tactics used by English teachers to teach reading comprehension. Each teacher has one classroom observation done. The same day and time, but at separate class times, are also used for observation classrooms.

#### 1. Participant 1

Based on the result of interview with the first teacher, the researcher found that the teacher used strategy scaffolding in teaching reading comprehension. This technique was put into place by the teacher with the intention of aiding students who struggle with reading comprehension exercises. The researcher also discovered that the teacher instructed the pupils to use simple terminology and only ask them to describe things simply at first in order to make it simpler for them to read the material. The pupils use a dictionary to help them grasp the text because their vocabulary is still limited. The wording used in this activity is concise so that students can understand its contents more easily. One of the results of the instructor's scaffolding method was that the teacher moved around the class as the kids wrote their descriptive paragraphs to assist them.

#### 2. Participant 2

While doing the study, the researcher came across the second teacher's usage of the QARs (Question-Answer Relationship) technique to teach reading comprehension. The researcher learned about this tactic through classroom observation and interviews. The teacher used this method to test how well the class could comprehend the narrative text's contents. Following her explanation of the topic of a narrative text, the teacher then instructed the class to read the narrative text that the second teacher had selected and to respond to some of the provided questions. After reading the text and comprehending its contents, students answered the questions in their book. The text that was utilized to teach reading comprehension was brief. Additionally, the instructor employed narrative material, which includes captivating and well-known anecdotes to the students.

#### 3. Participant 3

The third teacher employed the scaffolding technique to instruct reading comprehension in class VII I, the researcher discovered during the observation. Procedure text was the subject of the meeting's discussion. The teacher first went over the book's background information before giving an example of a process text and asking the pupils to comprehend its contents. The teacher helped pupils identify the procedure text by employing the scaffolding method. In the past, the instructor also assisted pupils by reading the material aloud to them and then providing an Indonesian translation. The QARs (Question-Answer Relationship) technique was the second discovery that the researcher made about the third teacher. However, during the class observation, this discovery was not made. According to the findings of the teacher's interview,

she instructed pupils to read the questions prior to reading the text.

## Discussion

The researcher examines the data and draws conclusions from it in the discussion phase by outlining the relevance in relation to the research problem that has been looked at and any fresh information that has emerged from the study's findings. The researcher discovered numerous ways the three English teachers used to teach reading comprehension based on the findings of the interviews she conducted. The following is a description of those strategies:

### 1. Scaffolding

Structuring is the primary method educators employ to teach reading comprehension. Teachers provide support so that pupils can build on existing knowledge, overcome a lack of vocabulary, and understand what they read. According to Vacca & Vacca (1999:53), scaffolding is a form of assistance that teachers give to their students in order to improve their learning capacities and enable them to show a greater level of material mastery by resolving more difficult problems. A necessity of this technique is that the teacher must support the pupils in accordance with their needs.

### 2. Question-Answer Relationship (QARs)

The second method that teachers employ to teach reading comprehension is QARs (Question-Answer Relationship). The professors employed this technique to assist students in comprehending the connection between various question types and how to locate solutions in the text. When pupils are through reading the book, they employ or put into practice this technique. After finishing the text, the students were given a number of questions by the teacher or written down on paper. QARs help students understand the different kinds of questions they may ask and how to find the answers to them. Vacca & Vacca (1999:53) define QARs as a reading technique that requires understanding and deciphering questions.

## CONCLUSION

The researcher draws a conclusion about the research findings in this chapter. Based on an interview, the researcher in this study draws conclusions regarding the methods employed by three English teachers to teach reading comprehension. The results of this study show that the teachers used two tactics to teach reading comprehension: scaffolding and question-answer relationships (QARs). According to the results, the first teacher taught reading comprehension using scaffolding, the second teacher taught reading comprehension using QARs, and the third teacher taught reading comprehension using both of these tactics. The lecturers assisted pupils in understanding the text's contents by employing these techniques.

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