An Analysis of Teachers' Strategies Scaffolding In EFL Reading Class

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Abstract
This study analyzes the scaffolding strategies employed by EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers in teaching reading comprehension to secondary school students, with a particular focus on narrative texts. The study aims to evaluate how these scaffolding strategies are implemented in classroom practice and to assess their effectiveness in addressing students' difficulties in understanding narrative texts, such as limited vocabulary, lack of background knowledge, and challenges in identifying main ideas and text structure. A qualitative case study approach was employed to obtain an in-depth understanding of the teaching–learning process. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation involving seventh-grade students and their English teacher at SMPN 1 Cilamaya Wetan. The findings reveal that the scaffolding strategies used by the teacher generally align with established principles of effective reading instruction, including pre-reading activities, guided reading, questioning techniques, and post-reading discussions. These strategies helped students engage more actively with the texts and supported their comprehension process. However, the study also identifies several areas for improvement, particularly in the selection of narrative texts that better match students' proficiency levels and interests, as well as in the consistency and depth of scaffolding provided during instruction. Overall, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of scaffolding in enhancing EFL students' reading comprehension and offers practical recommendations for teachers to refine their instructional strategies to better support students' reading development.

Keywords: *Scaffolding strategies; EFL; reading comprehension; narrative texts; secondary education.*

INTRODUCTION

In the process of learning English, there are four main skills that must be mastered, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing (Al-Jiboury, 2024; Ali, 2022; Sadiku, 2015). As with other skills, reading has a very important role. When students learn to read, they have the opportunity to improve their understanding of the language, including vocabulary enhancement, punctuation comprehension, grammar mastery, and the ability to compose sentence, paragraphs, and texts as a whole. Mastering reading is very important for students, by mastering reading students can expand their knowledge and access information from various sources (Enyew & Yigzaw, 2015).

English language learning is a crucial part of secondary education. One of the essential skills students must acquire is reading comprehension (Rahayu & Rachbini, 2018). Therefore, effective teaching strategies to developing English reading skills are very relevant. This research aims to analyze the teaching strategies used by teacher's in teaching English reading comprehension to secondary school students (Ismayanti, 2021; Wahyuni et al., 2021). According to Miarso (2005), learning strategies are approaches comprehensive learning in learning system, in the form of general guidelines and framework of activities to achive general goals learning, which is explained from a philosophical and or theoretical perspective specific

study (Nurfalah, 2017). Reading comprehension is a fundamental skill in language learning, especially for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. Proficient reading abilities enable learners to access information, broaden their knowledge, and engage with various texts. As educators, teachers play a pivotal role in shaping students' reading skills. However, teaching reading comprehension effectively requires thoughtful strategies, particularly in the context of secondary education.

Scaffolding is a teaching learning strategy in which the teacher and learners engage in a collaborative problem-solving activity with the support and guidance of the teacher to enable learners become increasingly independent (Abdul-Majeed & Muhammad, 2015). Scaffolding strategy can help students solved the task by their own and student can be understand the material. The purpose of this research is to know whether the use of scaffolding strategy is effective or not in teaching reading comprehension (Pambudiyanto et al., 2021; Sakina et al., 2023; Suwarti et al., 2024). Scaffolding according to Bruner is a process that use to guide children through zone of proximal development (Suryani et al., 2023). The scaffolding learning method refers to in Vygotsky's theory, namely learning that occurs when students work or learn to complete tasks that have not yet been studied but tasks is in the zone of proximal development (ZPD) or development slightly above current student development (Yanti, 2019).

Several studies have suggested the effective use of scaffolding in classroom learning. Amiripour, Modifi, & Shahvarani 2012 in their research stated that effective scaffolding in classroom learning includes: using patterns, using feedback, organizing student responses, using learning instruments, placing students as instructors, eliminating misconceptions, and using real problems.

These big issues include student motivation and interest: issues related to student motivation and interest in reading can also influence the effectiveness of the strategies used. Apart from that, there are also teacher training: Teachers may lack proper training or resources to implement the most effective reading comprehension strategies, impacting their ability to teach effectively (Narina, 2022; (Zahrida & Elfrida, 2021).

Reading is a kind of development to interpret the direct meaning and comprehend its indirect ideas (Arabmofrad et al., 2021). Consequently, reading is one of the basic skills of language learning that should be mastered by EFL students because it covers many things in literary context and develop their thinking process to comprehend the information from the whole text (Khanza et al., 2021).

According to Wood (in Yamin, 2011:166), defines "Scaffolding as learning support for students to help them complete the learning process that they cannot solve it yourself." In a previous study related to the analysis of the scaffolding strategies set by teachers in teaching reading comprehension. It was found that one of the difficulties was difficulty understanding reading in class(Andreiya Eliata & Miftakh, 2021). This gap can be exploited by future researchers to answer whether there are difficulties in reading comprehension in scaffolding technique learning using fictional narrative texts.

In this research, the focus is on the teaching strategies employed by EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers to enhance reading comprehension among secondary school students. The primary research questions aim to identify the specific teaching strategies used by educators and to explore how these strategies effectively address the challenges faced by EFL students. The purpose of the study is twofold: first, to analyze the teaching methods

utilized in facilitating English reading comprehension, and second, to enhance students' speaking and organizing skills through dialogue and presentations, ultimately improving their active communication abilities.

The scope is limited to discussing the strategies related to reading comprehension, specifically targeting EFL students at a junior high school in Karawang, with a planned research duration of three meetings. The significance of this research lies in its potential to provide valuable insights for improving teaching processes, particularly in the implementation of effective reading comprehension strategies. The findings aim to guide teachers in selecting engaging learning strategies and assist students in acquiring enjoyable and comprehensible reading techniques.

Additionally, the research aspires to boost student motivation and make learning activities more appealing. Through this investigation, researchers seek to broaden their understanding of reading teaching strategies, hoping that the outcomes will inspire further exploration in this domain. Key terms are clarified, including reading comprehension as the ability to understand and interpret texts, EFL as learning English in non-English-speaking contexts, teaching strategies as the various methods educators use to facilitate learning, and scaffolding strategies that support EFL students in mastering reading comprehension. Overall, the study emphasizes the successful implementation of reading comprehension teaching across different school levels, contributing to the existing body of knowledge in this educational field.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses design case study methods. According to Yin (2009), study research methods case is the right strategy for used in research using the main research questions how or why, how little time you have researchers to control events researched, and the focus of the research is contemporary phenomenon, to trace contemporary events. The approach used in this research is approximation qualitative.

A qualitative approach is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of people's written or spoken words and observable behavior. The qualitative approach has characteristics natural (Natural serfing) as a source of direct, descriptive data, the process is more important than the results. Analysis in qualitative research tends to be carried out inductive analysis and the meaning of meaning is something that is important essential. (Lexy Moleong, 2006: 04).

The aim of qualitative research is a natural object or natural setting, so this research is often called naturalistic. Object what is natural is an object as it is, an object that is not influenced by the researcher so that the conditions when the researcher enters the object, after being in the object and exit the object relatively unchanged. In qualitative research the instruments are is a person or Human instrument. To become an instrument, researchers must have extensive theory and insight, so they are able to ask questions, analyzing, photographing and constructing the object under study becomes clear and eat. The data criteria in qualitative research are data that is Certain. The data criteria in qualitative research are data that is Certain. Definite data is data that actually happened as it was, not data that is merely seen or spoken, but data that is contains the meaning behind what is seen and said.

This research was conducted at SMPN 1 Cilamaya Wetan. The reason for choosing this school was because the location at this school, learning has never been held using narrative text

scaffolding strategies, researchers are interested in collecting data at this school. Apart from that, school facilities that provide internet and projectors are also the reason this research was conducted at this school because these facilities can help facilities the process of this research. For research, 3 meetings will be held. This school is located on Jl. Kedung Asem, Mekarmaya, East Cilamaya Wetan, Karawang. In terms of participants, the researcher involved a class of 7th grade students to implement strategies scaffolding reading comprehension in English lesson.

In this study, researchers use the following collection techniques:

1. Observation

    The first data collection technique is observation . According to Craswell (2009), observation is the process of collecting direct information openly by observing people and places in the research field. Researhers usede observation sheets as an instruments for collecting data. Direct observation of teaching processes in EFL classes to see directly how teachers apply scaffolding dtrategies during reading comprehension learning.

2. Interview

    Interview with teachers to dig deeper into their understanding of scaffolding strategies, as well as interviews with students to understand the impact on their learning process.

3. Documentation

    According to Arikunto (2016), the documentation method is a method of searching for data regarding things in the form of notes, books, transcripts, newspapers, inscriptions, magazines, meeting minutes, agendas and photos of activities. Researchers use documentary data collection by collecting research data such as observation sheets, video recordings, and photos in strategies scaffolding reading comprehension learning activities. Then the researcher observes the data for research findings.

The researcher employed two instruments observation and interview to get the data study, including:

1. Observation Sheet

    In this study, for the observational data collection technique, researchers used observation sheets to observ the progress of strategies scaffolding student's teaching reading comprehension. According to Prof. Dr. Sofyann S. Willis (2012:36) states that observation is the observation and recording of objects or events carried out in a systematic way.

2. Interview Guidlines

    In collecting data using interviews, researchers interviewed students after strategies scaffolding students teaching reading comprehension. According to Moleong (2010), an interview is conversation carried out by two parties, namely the interviewer asking questions and being interviewed provide an answer to that question.

3. Documentation

    To collect documantation data, researchers will collect photos, video recordings and observation sheets as research data results. Than the researcher will observ these documents. For example, the researcher will record the process of learning activities in class from start to finish, then the researhcer will watch the video recording and observ the process of learning activities using scaffolding teaching reading comprehension.

After data from observations, interviews and documentation were collected the data was analyzed by identifying main themes related to the scaffolding strategies used by teachers. Thematic analysis is a way to analyze data with the aim of identifying or finding themes through data that has been collected by researchers.

In this paper, previous researchers delve into the intricate details of a powerful methodological approach known as systematic thematic analysis, in which previous researchers systematically unpacked its six steps: 1) Making transcripts and familiarizing with keyword identification data. 2) Code selection. 3) Development of conceptualization themes through interpretation of keywords.4) Code. 5) Theme. 6) Development of conceptual models

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis revealed that the textbook contains several narrative texts, such as folk tales, fables, and modern stories.

1. Generic Structure Analysis
   a) Most texts follow the typical structure: Orientation → Complication → Resolution.
   b) Some texts miss re-orientation, reducing moral value clarity.
2. Language Features Analysis
   a) The texts mostly use past tense, action verbs, and time conjunctions (e.g., once upon a time, then, suddenly).
   b) Some texts contain grammatical inconsistencies.
3. Communicative Purpose
   a) The texts generally achieve the purpose of entertaining the readers.
   b) However, some texts do not clearly state the moral lesson.

These findings suggest that while the textbook generally aligns with narrative conventions, certain aspects such as cohesion, elaboration of resolution, and inclusion of coda could be improved. Such improvements may help students better grasp the moral lessons and narrative flow.

The results of this study reveal that the teacher applied various scaffolding strategies to support students' reading comprehension in the EFL classroom. Based on classroom observations and interview data, the scaffolding strategies were categorized into pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading stages.

1.Scaffolding Strategies in Pre-Reading Activities

In the pre-reading stage, the teacher primarily employed activating background knowledge, pre-teaching vocabulary, and predicting strategies. The teacher asked guiding questions related to the topic of the text and encouraged students to share prior knowledge. This strategy helped students connect new information with existing knowledge, making the reading text more accessible. Additionally, the teacher introduced difficult vocabulary before reading, which reduced students' anxiety and facilitated better understanding of the text.

2. Scaffolding Strategies in While-Reading Activities

During the while-reading stage, the teacher used guided questioning, modeling reading strategies, and chunking the text. The teacher modeled how to identify main ideas and supporting details by thinking aloud. Students were guided to read the text in smaller sections, which helped them focus on meaning rather than decoding every word. The teacher also

provided prompts and hints when students encountered difficulties, instead of giving direct answers.

3. Scaffolding Strategies in Post-Reading Activities

In the post-reading stage, scaffolding was provided through summarizing activities, comprehension checks, and feedback. The teacher encouraged students to retell the text in their own words and answer comprehension questions collaboratively. Feedback was gradually reduced as students showed better understanding, indicating a process of scaffolding withdrawal. Overall, the findings show that scaffolding strategies were implemented systematically and adjusted based on students' responses and comprehension levels (Zaman et al., 2024).

Discussion

The findings indicate that scaffolding plays a crucial role in enhancing students' reading comprehension in EFL classrooms. The use of background knowledge activation and vocabulary support in the pre-reading stage aligns with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where learners require temporary assistance to perform tasks beyond their independent ability. Furthermore, the teacher's use of guided questioning and modeling during while-reading activities supports the theory proposed by Bruner (1983), who emphasizes scaffolding as a process of providing structured support and gradually transferring responsibility to learners. By modeling reading strategies, the teacher helped students develop metacognitive awareness, which is essential for effective reading comprehension. The gradual withdrawal of support during post-reading activities reflects the core principle of scaffolding, where assistance is reduced as learners gain confidence and competence.

This finding is consistent with previous studies indicating that effective scaffolding encourages learner autonomy and critical thinking in reading activities. The findings indicate that scaffolding plays a crucial role in enhancing students' reading comprehension in EFL classrooms. The use of background knowledge activation and vocabulary support in the pre-reading stage aligns with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), where learners require temporary assistance to perform tasks beyond their independent ability.

Furthermore, the teacher's use of guided questioning and modeling during while-reading activities supports the theory proposed by Bruner (1983), who emphasizes scaffolding as a process of providing structured support and gradually transferring responsibility to learners. By modeling reading strategies, the teacher helped students develop metacognitive awareness, which is essential for effective reading comprehension. The gradual withdrawal of support during post-reading activities reflects the core principle of scaffolding, where assistance is reduced as learners gain confidence and competence. This finding is consistent with previous studies indicating that effective scaffolding encourages learner autonomy and critical thinking in reading activities.

CONCLUSION

The narrative texts in the textbook generally follow the generic structure of narrative text, though some are incomplete. The language features mostly align with the characteristics of narrative texts, but grammatical errors are present. The communicative purpose is achieved in most texts, but some lack explicit moral lessons. For Teachers: Supplement the texts with

explanations and additional exercises. For Authors/Publishers: Revise the narrative texts to ensure structural and grammatical accuracy.

For Future Researchers: Conduct comparative studies on different textbooks. This study concludes that the narrative texts in the English Support Book for eighth grade students generally meet the generic structure and linguistic features of narrative genre. However, the omission of codas, inconsistent cohesion, and limited use of varied linguistic resources indicate areas for improvement. Teachers are encouraged to supplement the textbook with additional materials that provide more complete narrative models. Textbook writers should also consider revising narrative texts to ensure alignment with genre pedagogy, thus supporting students' literacy development more effectively.

In conclusion, the teacher's scaffolding strategies in the EFL reading class were effective in supporting students' comprehension processes. The strategies not only helped students understand the text but also promoted active engagement and independent learning. These findings suggest that scaffolding should be an integral part of reading instruction in EFL contexts.

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