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Volume No.3 Issue No.3 June 2014

www.iresearcher.org

ISSN 227-7471

THE INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL "INTERNATIONAL RESEACHERS"

www.iresearcher.org

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REVEALING SCAFFOLDING LEARNERS' READING PERFORMANCES: A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to present the contribution of scaffolding students' reading performances. Different studies were conducted in which teachers were encouraged to become reflective regarding their own pedagogy in order to determine which educational practices are the most effective for the students belonging to different fields. The novelty of this paper will be the contributions that will identify Scaffolding as an input to develop syllabus or material based on reading comprehension, and performances which have not been done so far and therefore, this study is a fundamental research. This study has reviewed journal papers in the relevant field which reveals that the contributions of scaffolding students' reading performances is significant ($p<0.05$). It also reveals that teachers, peers and parents are the major contributing mediators of scaffolding inputs to reading performances. Findings of this study would be useful and a guideline to develop a new curriculum based on scaffolding undergraduate learners' reading comprehension, and reading performances for the learners in a particular context.

Keywords*:* Scaffolding, reading comprehension, reading strategies, pedagogical concept

1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The term scaffolding was first introduced and used by Bruner (2002) to describe the type of interaction that occurs within the Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1977). Scaffolding means that the teacher, or classmate provides temporary support for the learners. Dorn Soffos & Lyons (2005) compared scaffolding as if learning a bike riding that needs help of others. On the first hand, scaffolding, is needed as the child is learning to ride the bike, but as the child is able to maintain his balance, the scaffolding is taken away (Au, Mason & Scheu, 1995). Cooper (1997) stated that in more formal settings, learning follows a similar pattern in which learners go through various approximations as they strive to develop their knowledge of new concepts. In each case, the device or person helps learners what they cannot do independently. Often, scaffolding takes the form of collaborative effort and accomplishment. Success through working together starts learners on their way to being able to do the activity independently. On the other hand, Reading research has responded to the concerns about poor informational reading skills at the undergraduate levels, and identified the need to provide students with more experience with informational text (Duke, 2002).

Therefore, it is important for teachers in the field of early childhood education to provide effective reading strategy instruction to help decrease the number of students who continue to struggle in reading informational text. One of the problems is that early readers are mostly immersed in narrative text at begining of their reading expository texts as they progress through their learning of textbooks. According to Duke (2000), there is a need to scaffold primary students' understanding of expository text to build comprehension and engage with the text. In this chapter literature pertinent to this topic is reviewed. Bruner (1978) adopted the idea of scaffolding from Vygotsky's zone of proximal development and explained that scaffolding like parents and teachers enable children's learning of language by helping the child focus his or her attention to pertinent aspects of the task. Stewart (2002) informed that the

teacher brings the student to new levels of skill in order to comprehend by breaking up a task into smaller parts because sometimes some parts in reading semm complex and need more support. The teacher's task is to determine students' levels of knowledge in order to develop strategies that help students to higher level of practice. Teachers may assume this role in the classroom and become the communicative ratchets helping children build and maintain literacy in reading text.

2. PEDAGOGICAL CONCEPT

However, Reed and Railsback (2003) defined scaffolding as one of the most effective strategy for developing reading achievements in English learners by teachers in classrooms during reading instruction. However, Piaget (1977) and Vygotsky (1978) founded the pedagogical concept of "scaffolding" whereas other researcher including Collins Block and Lacina (2009) supported this theory of constructivism. Dewey was considered as the father of progressive education in America. Dewey's (1938) beliefs were that learners learn through "directed living" and to him learning can be mixed with concrete activity and practical relevance. Further, Collins Block and Lacina (2009) informed that Dewey rejected the practice of rote learning that was the common mode teaching. However, teachers need to become educated on effective strategies and methods to achieve the goal of increasing reading performance levels. Teachers who are accustomed to the traditional teaching styles are more likely to accept teaching contemporary styles once they are exposed. However, exposure is the keyword based on strategies conducive to English learners' learning styles, theory of language learning, and cultural background. As Lieberman and Miller (2004) reported:

> Teacher learning can be characterized as problem solving or inquiry that starts with teachers' particular goals for their students; theories about their particular goals; and theories about what conditions are necessary for the students to achieve the particular goals. (p. 75)

Teachers need to extend their learning beyond the classroom. They have to put forth extra effort into making sure the students are learning the curriculum. Genuine teacher will insure the learning of students, not only within their spectrum, but outside the spectrum as well. In other words, teachers have to expand their knowledge on useful strategies that have been used in engineering classrooms. Franco-Castillo (2013) investigated reading comprehension, science achievement, and metacognitive strategies of second grade students interacting with instructors using dialogue journals and textbooks. Data was collected by using different measures. Findings revealed that experimental participants performed significantly better on the linear combination of reading comprehension based on the achievement of science text, and functions of metacognition through scaffolding which develop students' reading awareness.

3. OBJECTIVES AND ASSUNPTIONS OF STUDY

The present study aims to investigate the impact of comprehension strategies instruction on students' reading comprehension and to examine the influence of comprehension strategies instruction on metacognitive awareness and perceived use of reading strategies of students. The outcome of the current study will strengthen students to be self-reflective learners by monitoring their own reading processes and to use self-regulated strategies independently, and inform teachers about the benefits and techniques of implementing comprehension strategies instruction. Despite the fact that the teachers' perception of the instruction will not be considered, the study may strengthen teachers' motivation for conducting comprehension instruction to see real gains in their students' improvement.

4. A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Vygotsky (1978) and Piaget (1977) advocated constructivism by adding their own thoughts and beliefs. Vygotsky's (1978) theory held that the key to learning lay in social interaction which played a fundamental role in the development of cognition in students. Krauss (1996) informed that Vygotsky's ideas supported the theory that a child's thinking develops through social interaction mediated by language in which words provided the labels for the concepts that would be developed cognitively and an individual can learn by following two levels: (1) through

interaction with others, and (2) integrated into the individual's mental structure. However, student's acquisition of new concepts may be facilitated by a partner who support the student's developing understanding of the new concept. Dorn and Soffus (2001) explained that scaffolding is a support that teachers create to help extend current skills and knowledge to a higher level of competence. The skillful use of observation and the teacher's knowledge of the child enable the teacher to design and employ the appropriate dialogue, experiences, strategies, and models that will scaffold children as they construct their understanding of the concepts that will extend their knowledge to more advanced levels. Scaffolding a child does not mean simplifying the task during the learning experience but rather the concept remains constant, and the teacher provides varying degrees of support according to how well the child is doing on the task with the new learning. Teachers must use their knowledge of the child and the task to scaffold the child in ways that will allow him to create some degree of understanding. Teachers observe students and know their effeciencies in order to apply scaffolding for obtaining new learning within the student's ZPD and make adjustments as necessary (Clay, 2001; Lyons, 2003). Similarly, Channa (2012) investigated the perceptions of Pakistani teachers towards English Language as the medium of instruction. Classroom observations and semi structured interviews were used for collecting data. The findings indicated mixed reactions resulting more than half of the participants considered English language as medium of instruction for achieving needs. The research also showed dissatisfying factor related to the use of language in teaching and learning process in the classroom for promoting local language of the students, and for developing their interest in learning easily and clearly.

Further, Lyons (2003) explained that the ultimate goal of scaffolding is to develop an independent, self-regulated learner by help provided by the more knowledgeable person as the child begins to achieve more independence and knowledge. To accomplish this, the more knowledgeable person must permit the child to deal with questions and problems and regulate the joint activity, intervening only when the child is not able to manage effective problem solving. Self-regulation is a key to the child's learning and mastery over his own behavior. Self-regulation and independence are also the desired outcome for scaffolding. The key issue at this point is the teacher's developing awareness through skillful observation and reflection of the child's level of literacy. When teachers, parents, and peers provide the support for the child's task behavior by asking questions that allow the child to participate in the discovery new knowledge (Roberts, and Barnes, 1992). Dickinson and Tabors (2001) further, elaborated scaffolding process when teacher and student collaborate during the learning process, a particular and necessary components of the scaffold including social interaction and environment take place in developing this support system. This collaboration allows the student to move forward and continue to build and extend competencies and concepts. In learning, the help provided the child from a teacher or from a peer. The interaction and conversation between individuals has been shown to foster general cognitive growth and increase students' ability, and level of comprehension of tasks (Dickinson & Tabors, (2001)). The learner's performance in activity or in any topic to converse or to write and read and the interaction with the experienced or knowledgeable helper means teacher or parent may be regarded as the "key" that can foster and extend the growth of higher levels of learning of new concepts (Lyons, 2003).

4.1 ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT

Vygotsky's (1978) theory included the idea that the potential for cognitive development resides in the "ZPD". The child's thinking develops through social interaction mediated by language (Krauss, 1996; Vygotsky, 1978). Language provides the labels and meaning for the objects and ideas based on metacognition strategies. Scaffolding and metacognition by using reading text provide a plateform for the learners to examine and organize new ideas and concepts as the child builds cognitive understanding. In result, Language becomes a powerful tool for scaffolding. Cain Oakhill and Bryant (2004) described scaffolding as a support system that helps children achieve success on tasks that would be too difficult for them to achieve by themselves. Typically classroom teachers ask themselves how they can help young children particularly those low perform children in their own rooms, acquiring new learning and accelerate at faster rates. Many researchers (Cain, Oakhill, & Bryant, (2004); Clay, 2001; Cooper, 1997) felt that the strategies that will best accomplish to support learning within the child's zone of proximal development. Cooper (1997) explained that new learning occurs in the zone of proximal development. Support is given and then gradually taken away as the child demonstrates ownership of new learning by allowing the child to move on to increasingly higher levels of cognitive functioning. New learning and knowledge are built upon and extended from the actual knowledge and understandings of a child.

4.2 SYSTEMIC INQUIRY EXAMINING SCAFFOLDING

Researchers (Halliday, 1975; Teale & Sulzby, 1986) informed that early childhood experiences include sharing stories, observing stories, coloring, writing, reading, listening to stories and the conversations surrounding these acts play an important role in helping children learn to read and write. Stewart (2002) supports several earlier theories regarding the importance of language and learning. Lyons (2003) shows that children learn to coordinate and to follow the words while listening to stories and attempt to write their names, the earlier they will learn to read and write. While language is critical to nurturing and human survival that also provides the means for individuals to carry out five fundamental, compelling human urges: to show and gain love, to interlink with others, to become secure by emotions, to understand the world and the people in it, and to reveal needs and desires (Lyons, 2003). Further, Lyons (2003) exposed that language is much more than the ability to express oneself with words it includes any means of expressing or communicating to another through body language based on gestures, signs or cues, and sounds or noise. For example: A baby knows things about language (a sound system, gestures) long before he is able to speak a word. By the age of six months, an infant creates a permanent record of his native language in his brain that lasts a lifetime. Levine (2002) pointed out that in numerous research studies, language is critical to cognitive, social, and emotional development. Language plays a critical role in learning and teaching and is closely related to thought processes. Infants demonstrate that speech and gestures are closely related they produce gestures while talking (Lyon, 2003).

Moreover, many studies indicated that the methods applied for scaffolding support students in using text. Gopnik, Meltzoff and Kuhl, (1999) investigated that with the support of teachers or expeirenced, undergraduate students extend their knowledge beyond their prevailed comprehesion. The teacher, by reinforcing what the students know and follow with new knowledge can develop a context in which meaning can be formed to the text. However, text using metacognition help readers to develop thinking that may facilitate understanding and creative thinking (Lyon, 2003). The aspects used by students integrate their experiences into developing comprehension of the text in order to provide particular meanings. Scaffolding and metacognition used by teachers in the class to support students related to the activities provide better chances for the learners to experiment with their thoughts and validate their thinking in terms of the task. Similarly, Vygotsky (1978) theorized that language is the most significant tool in learners' cognitive growth in order to integrate knowledge and use thought to communicate and represent their ideas in words by transmitting experiences with each other. Further, Bruner (2002) revealed that learners do construct meaning by using experiences to meditate how to reorder and develop their knowledge. Similarly, Dickinson and Tabors (2001) stated that scaffolding techniques increase learning level of the students. Berk and Winsler (1995) presented a method in which teachers or mentors use and apply scaffolding impacts on students' ways of learning: (1) to observe experienced person and learners work in pair on an issue solving activity, (2) to divide teaching attitudes and students performances, present during collaboration, (3) to note students completing similar activity independently, (4) to record the students' involvement in activities, and (5) to inspect or scrutinize carefully the elements of scaffolding and metacognition, interlinked with sometime positive or sometime negative students' attitude.

Dickinson and Tabors (2001) further stated that the students' behaviour evaluated by comparing with a standard measures of intelligence in terms of teachers using strategies in order to control and scaffold the text. The use of systematic scaffolding strategies by teachers, provide students with multiple opportunities to apply strategies. On the one hand, scaffolding and metacognition encourage self-regulation to seek information when learners scaffold new activities in order to know how to enhance their own learning. Learning through scaffolding is to prompt students for using personal or self-regulated guidance for the solution of any problem (Yang, and Wilson, 2006). On the other hand, Krashen (2003) presented five hypotheses: (1) Learning hypotheses: In this hypothesis, learners reveal students who involve in strategies by scaffolding and developing the language for effective learning, (2) Real or natural order hypothesis: In this hypothesis, learners use different ways of learning, but some do not expose same type of strategies to follow and opt in natural or real ways of learning language and its rules. (3) monitorial hypothesis: This hypothesis tells that students judge and find if they comprehend whatever the task is provided, (4) Input hypothesis: In this, learners practice whatever they learn and retain for further activities and, (5) Affective filter hypothesis: This hypothesis indicates that learners wants to partake in class activities as they feel secure about what they know and desire to play their roles actively.

4.3 SCAFFOLDING FOR INSTRUCTIONS

Dickinson and Tabors (2001) assrted that students in classrooms must work with language either written or oral in order to form meanings of the text. In class room, teachers support students through scaffolding for instruction. A significant feature of Vygotsky's (1978) theory is that a social perspective seems to pervade even those instances in which children and adults appear to be involved in private cognitive activity including reading a book alone in a room, and drawing a picture. To achieve this goal, teachers structure the task and the surrounding environment so that demands on the child are at any given time within an appropriately challenging level and constantly adjust the amount of adult intervention to the child's current needs and abilities. Allington (2001) further, proposed that teachers must learn to understand the relationships that exist between language, literacy, and learning and building knowledge. Effective teachers find that focusing on identifying the one right method or set of materials that works for all children has not been as productive as acquiring the knowledge and skills to make sound judgments and creating environments that scaffold student learning and maximize children's opportunities to acquire new and more advanced learning. Singhal (2001) found the role of the teacher to be seen as "provoking occasions of discovery" whereas reciprocal teaching can be applied to develop reading text for comprehension among undergraduate students (Stewart, 2002). The teacher's role becomes one of scaffolding the learners' involvement in the discussion in ways that eventually lead to full participation in the dialogue as well as mastery of the task at hand. Children will begin to actively engage in conversations and initiate problem solving techniques.

Park and Kim (2011) further, informed that teachers comprehend and decide that an apprenticeship approach based on four tenets which they use including: (1) to model, (2) to coach, (3) to scaffold, and (4) to fade for students in classroom. This is especially significant because an apprenticeship approach is one that emphasizes learning and changes in both student and teacher learning. Park and Kim (2011) informed that teachers have found that scaffolding does not require any special programs but depends on students' responses and actions as they interact with the task, the teacher becomes the learner who is being taught by the child. From a constructivist perspective, language provides the vehicle or means that shapes this higher-level understanding for both the teacher and the child. Clay (2001) has stated that inappropriate reading behaviors or habituated confusions can be a real impediment to higher levels of understandings. Baker (2005) documented the relationship between high-quality classroom instruction and the success of at-risk students. The results of numerous research studies and reflective teaching studies have documented that simply immersing children in literacy-rich environments is not enough to successfully offset the difficulties of struggling readers. Baker (2005) stated that the more knowledgeable person and the child engage in interactive oral discussions about ideas, concepts, or written language, they acquire important tools for the mind.

It is here that the role of the teacher becomes the keystone of the model. Further, Channa Soranastaporn Engchuan and Tirataradol (2013) conducted a survey study to analyse the engineering students' need to use English at Pakistan. Data was collected from students and teachers through questionnaire. The findings showed that both teachers and students found very extensive needs of speaking and writing skills at their top priority and encouraged for improving reading skills of the students in order to overcome reading barriers of the readers. Similarly, Channa Soranastaporn Engchuan and Tirataradol (2013) conducted need analysis review study for using English byEngineering students at Quaid-e-Awam university of Engineering, Science and Technology, Pakistan and found English language as an official language in Pakistan and as medium of instructions within schools, colleges and universities. The purposes of research was to investigate needs of English, problems of students in using English in their academic and professional studies, and to explore the students' wants regarding the purpose, content and methodology of language learning. The findings of the study suggested that students need four skills in order to overcome language difficulties. During these literacy events the more knowledgeable person carefully monitors the child's interpretation of the situation and provides timely support that enables the child to achieve increasingly higher levels of understanding. These beliefs and understandings are based upon Vygotsky's (1978) theories.

Lyons (2003) informed that in scaffolding and supporting the child, it is imperative that the teacher makes use of the complementary actions of validation and activation to extend the child's learning to a higher level of cognitive development and learning. Initially, the child needs the validation of the more knowledgeable person that his approximations are on or near target. As young children use something they know to build upon and extend

knowledge to learn something new, they begin to discover that their knowledge can be generalized. Cognitive development and social interaction are perceived as complimentary processes that work together to promote the child's intellectual development and growth. An influential force in the child's learning is the teaching that occurs around the literacy event. From the Vygotskian point of view, mental development, teaching, and learning share reciprocal relationships that cannot be discussed separately (Lyons, 2003). Hammond (2002) emphasizes the importance of language and social interaction for stimulating children's cognitive growth through guided participation in planned, structured literacy events. Hammond (2002) views children as apprentices in learning who acquire a diverse collection of skills and knowledge under the guidance and support of a more knowledgeable person. A crucial learning situation for the teacher occurs, because the teacher must acquire the skills necessary to give just the appropriate amount of support at the proper moment. Initially the teacher must assume responsibility for structuring the learning task and orchestrating the interaction. As the child acquires higher-level understanding, if independent self-regulation is to occur, there must be a shift or transfer of responsibility from the teacher to the child.

Wells and Mejia Arauz (2006) maintains that instructional interactions must be based on the child's current ability and the adult's pedagogical intentions and knowledge. The teacher must use this knowledge of his craft and of the child to modify, at a moment's notice, the level of instructional support being provided to the child, based on the child's feedback. This suggests that clear models and guided participation are critical elements of successful interaction that have the potential for supporting and moving the child forward to higher levels of cognitive knowledge and new learning. Stewart (2002) informed that children may not only learn solely how to attend to and process the information contained in the print (letters, spaces, and words) on the page in order to become effective, efficient problem solvers, but they may also learn to comprehend the meaning in those abstract print symbols used to form words, which is in itself an individual constructive process. The information inside the text, the linguistic structures may be combined with the information the reader already possesses which is outside the text. The information within the mind of the reader is derived from prior experiences. It is the child's constructive cognitive processes that combine the information in the text with the information outside of the text within the reader's mind that a complete and adequate representation of the author's meaning is formed (Wells, and Mejia Arauz, 2006). Therefore, the focus of instruction should be on concept development that is generative in nature rather than on discrete skills.

4.4 SCAFFOLDING AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

The social context has a direct affect upon the scaffolding that is used within the classroom to support student learning. Allington (2001) stated that it is the "children who have difficulty in learning to read along their peers that are the most often at risk in our schools". Wells and Mejia Arauz (2006) proposes that learning is primarily a social rather than an individual accomplishment one that is not so much learned from conscious emulation as by "joining the club" of people. Smith extends this idea further by stating that one of the most important communities any individual can join is the "literacy club," because membership ensures that individuals learn how to read and comprehend the text. In some cultures, the measures of literacy might be the ability to read animal tracks. Various cultural groups require various forms of literacy. Being considered literate by a social group requires one to perform reading and writing skills in ways that are acceptable to that group. A more knowledgeable person, helping (scaffolding) them to identify and clarify the conventions of print, is necessary to help them to depend on meaning and the larger structures of language. In the contexts of learning, there is a place for planned instruction, but such instruction will support and not supplant the learning system of each learner, and will express itself in respect and trust for the many ways in which children acquire the tasks they wish to master (Holdaway, 1979). Literacy develops as children interact in real-life settings for real-life activities in order to "get things done." Young children benefit from modeling of literacy situations by more knowledgeable adults, especially their parents (Kenner, 2000). When this does not occur, there is a significant problem. However, Wilkinson and Son (2011) supported future research in dialogic approaches to investigate the impact dialogic teaching has on comprehension while, Levitov (2010) reminds us that students need reading skills as well as the ability to communicate and comprehend in order to use online resources for reading text to comprehend.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This paper has provided a comprehensive literature review covering the topics related to the mastery of reading performances in order to gain the ability to communicate which effectively forms the foundation for a successful education. Reading allows children to give meaning to the printed word, whereas oral and written language allows children to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas. Thus, language provides the vehicle through which concepts and knowledge are acquired. Teachers must carefully establish the norms and procedures of the classroom. Effective strategies and its implementation are required to develop students' reading ability and performances under the supervision and help of their teachers. Infact, scaffolding is closely related to effective instruction and an effective teacher is observer and attentive to the responses and actions of learners, adjusting responses, guidance, and modeling to meet their needs. The very nature of scaffolding demands that both tutor and child are actively engaged and attentive to the actions and responses of each other.

The resuts and findings of this review study of the literature motivate students to become reflective in terms of monitoring their reading processes in order to use self-regulated strategies independently. These learners also work to inform their teachers about the benefits and insist their mentors to implement comprehension strategies instruction. The study will motivate teachers for conducting comprehension instruction among students. To sum up, the effective scaffolding techniques will support the child and lead to self-regulation. The teacher must provide selective intervention that fades over time so that the child does not become dependent upon these interventions.

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Statement:
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