

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF READING ALOUD  
STRATEGIES ON LITERAL READING  
COMPREHENSION, READING PROFICIENCY  
AND TEXT LEVEL DIFFICULTIES

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I hereby declare that the work in this thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at Universiti Malaysia Pahang or any other institutions.

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## ABSTRAK

Membaca dengan lantang adalah strategi pembelajaran penting yang dapat meningkatkan konsistensi kemahiran pemahaman membaca pelajar yang membolehkan mereka berhadapan dengan cabaran bahan pengajaran tahap tinggi. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji kesan penggunaan Strategi Membaca Lantang (RAS) terhadap kecekapan membaca tahap rendah dalam kemahiran pemahaman literal para pelajar Arab Saudi dan kecekapan membaca teks pelbagai tahap. Kajian ini menggunakan reka bentuk kaedah campuran dengan pendekatan triangulasi. Tiga instrumen digunakan di dalam kajian: ujian pemahaman membaca, soal selidik pelajar dan protokol wawancara bersama guru dan pelajar. Perisian SPSS digunakan untuk menganalisis data kuantitatif dan Atlas t.i8 digunakan untuk menganalisis data kualitatif. Para peserta terdiri daripada 100 pelajar tahun satu di peringkat kolej yang mengambil kursus membaca bahasa Inggeris di *English Language Centre, King Faisal University*, Arab Saudi. Lima puluh (50) orang pelajar diletakkan di dalam kumpulan eksperimen yang mana Strategi Membaca Lantang (RAS) diterapkan, dan strategi membaca senyap digunakan dalam kumpulan kawalan dengan lima puluh (50) pelajar juga. Hasil eksperimen adalah signifikan di mana nilai p bagi kemahiran pemahaman membaca literal dan kecekapan membaca berada di bawah 0.5., dan korelasi adalah signifikan pada tahap 0.05 (2-tailed). Ujian pemahaman membaca menggunakan teks tahap tinggi dalam petikan membaca yang mematuhi garis panduan pentadbiran universiti. Hasil dapatan ujian pemahaman membaca menunjukkan bahawa skor prestasi Kecekapan Membaca Senyap (kumpulan kawalan) adalah 3% dan RAS adalah 17% (kumpulan eksperimen). Terdapat perbezaan 14% tetapi itu bukan peningkatan yang tinggi pada kesukaran teks. Di samping itu, penemuan soal selidik dan wawancara pelajar secara protokol menunjukkan bahawa sebahagian besar pelajar percaya bahawa RAS berfungsi dengan berkesan untuk meningkatkan kemahiran pemahaman literal dan kemahiran membaca mereka. Hasil protokol temu ramah guru juga menunjukkan bahawa mereka mempunyai pendapat yang sama dengan pelajar. Namun, melalui data protokol wawancara, para pelajar percaya bahawa RAS dapat membantu mereka memahami kesukaran teks tahap tinggi sedangkan guru-guru berpendapat RAS tidak berkesan pada teks yang sukar. Oleh itu, terdapat sumbangan besar penggunaan RAS untuk membantu pelajar Saudi yang mempunyai kecekapan tahap rendah apabila berdepan dengan teks yang sukar sebagai bahan pengajaran dan hal ini harus diselidiki lebih lanjut. Para pelajar Saudi dicadangkan untuk menggunakan Strategi Membaca Lantang dengan penuh makna dan strategi ini dapat dilaksanakan dalam kajian akan datang. Terdapat keperluan untuk meneruskan protokol berasaskan penyelidikan RAS dan kawasan yang ideal ialah di Wilayah Alhasa. Penyelidik juga mencadangkan agar kajian mengenai RAS dalam kalangan pelajar Arab Saudi dilakukan dengan membandingkan pelajar yang berlainan jantina. Bagi membandingkan hasil, analisis juga boleh diperluaskan ke bidang EFL yang lain. Kajian ini hanya terbatas pada satu institusi di daerah Alhasa. Penyelidikan lanjut diperlukan pada peringkat program Sarjana untuk penggunaan RAS oleh pelajar Saudi bagi cabaran mengikut tahap teks kerana dapatan adalah minimum atau sangat terbatas pada kajian tahap ini.

## ABSTRACT

Reading aloud is an important learning strategy that can boost the consistency of the reading comprehension skills of students, which can enable them to overcome the challenges of high-level instructional materials. Due to poor school English standards, Saudi students enter at university level with a weak reading background and to fill the gap there was need to investigate for which this research study was conducted. The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of using Reading Aloud Strategies (RAS) on low reading proficiency Saudi students' literal reading comprehension skills and reading proficiency against text level difficulties. The ability to comprehend information and facts that are clearly expressed in the text is referred to as literal reading comprehension. It is the basic level of reading comprehension. A number of reasons, including a lack of word reading, vocabulary, reading expertise, and the reader's ability to create meaning from the text of learning material are referred to as text level difficulty. This study employed a mixed-method design with triangulation approach. Three research instruments were administered in the study: a reading comprehension test, a student questionnaire, and an interview protocol for teachers and students. SPSS software was used to analyse the quantitative data analysis, and Atlas t.i8 was used to analyse the qualitative data. The participants comprised 100 first year students at a college level English taking reading course at an English Language Centre of King Faisal University, Saudi Arabia. Fifty (50) students were assigned into an experimental group where the strategies of reading aloud were applied, and silent reading strategies were used in the control group with fifty (50) students as well. The experimental results were significant on literal reading comprehension skills, and reading proficiency as the p value was below 0.5., and the correlation was significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). The reading comprehension test utilised high-level text in the reading passages adhering to the administrative guideline of the university. The findings of the reading comprehension test show that the gain score of Silent Reading Strategies (control group) was 3% and RAS was 17% (experimental group). There was a difference of 14%, but it was not a high growth on text difficulty. In addition, findings of the student questionnaire and (30) students' interview protocol revealed majority of the students believed that RAS worked effectively to improve their literal reading comprehension skills and reading proficiency. The results of the teacher interview protocol also revealed that they had the same opinion similar to the student. However, through the interview protocol data, the students believed that RAS could help them to understand higher level text difficulties whereas the teachers thought RAS were not effective on the difficult texts. Therefore, there is a significant contribution of using RAS to assist low proficiency Saudi students when difficult texts are used as instructional materials, and this should be further investigated. It is recommended that Saudi students use Reading Aloud Strategies meaningfully, and these strategies may be implemented in future studies. There is a continuing need for RAS research-based protocols, ideally in the Alhasa region. It also recommended that investigation on RAS in among Saudi students is carried out comparing students of different gender. To compare results, the analysis could also be extended to other EFL environments. The study was confined to one provincial institution in the province of Alhasa. Further research is also required at Master level for the use of RAS by Saudi students for text level challenges as master level students are also weak in reading comprehension skills having text difficulties.

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