

## FISHBONE STRATEGY IN TEACHING ENGLISH IN INDONESIA: A TOOL ORGANIZER FOR LEARNING EFL READING

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### Abstract

Teaching reading is not only teaching by displaying a text but also graphic organizer. This qualitative study aims at exploring students' perception of fishbone strategy that is implemented in learning of EFL reading which is underpinned by the principles of using of visual aids and the principles of EFL teaching reading comprehension. The third semester of twenty elementary school teachers education students were voluntarily willing to participate in this study by joining learning of reading using fishbone strategy. Following this, the students responded questionnaire and interview of which each question comprised factual aspect, behavior aspect, and attitudinal aspect to explore the students' responses of fishbone strategy in learning reading. The findings from questionnaire that were confirmed with interview (1) on factual aspect revealed that the students were able to solve their difficulties in learning reading, (2) on behavior aspect revealed that it was their first learning time by using fishbone strategy in reading subject, and (3) on attitudinal aspect revealed that the students felt motivated and easy to learn reading by employing fishbone strategy due to fishbone as a helpful teaching strategy for them. The overall the results of findings on each aspect from the two instruments revealed that students' positive perception of utilizing fishbone strategy as an appropriate tool organizer in learning EFL reading in Indonesia.

*Keywords:* fishbone strategy, reading comprehension, a tool organizer.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching reading is teaching literally receptive skill due to the learners' decoding process. Four categories of reading skills are (1) word attack skills to convert orthographic symbols into language, (2) comprehension skills to get meaning and recognize structure, (3) fluency skills to recognize words and extend vocabulary quickly, (4) critical reading to analyze, synthesizes, and evaluate a text (Hudson, 2007:79-80).

Teaching reading is not only decoding process but also text comprehension which involves the readers to construct meaning from a text by combining prior knowledge, previous experience, and information from the text (Pardo, 2004:272). Comprehension is as a process that occurs between the readers and text. The readers construct the meaning from the text by utilizing their linguistic knowledge and experience (Rice, 2006:1).

Several principles of teaching EFL reading cover teaching phonology, word recognition, vocabulary, text comprehension, and literature appreciation. Meanwhile, teaching comprehension strategies include summarizing, clarifying, questioning, and visualizing (Moats, 2010:17). Fishbone strategy as a visualized teaching can aid the students' reading comprehension.

Six principles of using visual aids include (1) chunk information by displaying similar materials; (2), organization of content by displaying from simple to complex material; (3), Relevance by displaying relevant information to topic; (4), importance by displaying the most important information in earlier slide; (5), appropriateness by considering audience and materials; (6), visual effectiveness by displaying simple visual (BCIT Learning and Teaching Centre, 2010:2).

Studies about Indonesian students' problems in learning reading comprehension which were conducted by Sutarsyah (2007:128) revealed that (1) the students' inability to comprehend texts when entering tertiary level, (2) difficult process that made the students inconvenient in learning reading. Study by Hamra

and Syatriana (2010:30) found many students could recognize words and pronunciation but they do not know their meanings.

Considering the Indonesian students' problem in learning reading, four reasons for implementing fishbone strategy in teaching EFL reading to help students are (1) fishbone strategy as one of the graphic organizers to comprehend better reading materials, (2) fishbone strategy as a visual tool to understand and organize information, (3) fishbone strategy to focus on topic, monitor topic comprehension and specific information (Martin, 2006:30-33); (4), fishbone strategy to understand information, apply ideas to a new situation, and analyze connection and direction (Krus, 2010:40).

## 2. FISHBONE STRATEGY AND PREVIOUS STUDY

Fishbone diagram is a part of graphic organizer to analyze an event, object or issue by utilizing web-diagram (Krus, 2010:40). Fishbone diagram is known as Ishikawa diagram in which its appearance looks like a skeleton of fish to analyze the cause and sub-causes of problem (Bose, 2012:18). Fishbone diagram is Ishikawa or cause-effect diagram as a systematic tool analysis way of looking at effect and the causes that create effect (Martin, 2006:32). The example of text and fishbone diagram is presented in Figure 1.

**Amnesia is the general term for a variety of memory disorders that arise from different causes and affect the memory in different ways. A number of neurological conditions that cause damage to the brain produce memory deficits of one kind or another. They are probably the most frequent complaint of patients who have suffered strokes, infectious disease of the brain, and traumatic injuries. In addition, memory disorders are often the earliest signs of a number of neurological illnesses, including Alzheimer's disease, a progressive degenerative disease of the brain that usually occurs in the old age.**

**There are two basic kinds of memory loss. Anterograde amnesia refers to the inability to create new permanent memories, patients typically cannot learn the names of their doctors, hospitals they are in, or any other new information they are exposed after the traumatic event or illness that caused the amnesia. Retrograde amnesia refers to the ability to recall the information that had been learned before the onset of the amnesia, patients may not remember experiences in their earlier life or the name of the president.**

Adopted from Comprehending College Book: Steps to Understanding and Remembering by Cortina, Elder, Gonnet,

The example of the text discusses "Amnesia" in which its text organization is cause-effect text that can be illustrated in the Fishbone diagram in Figure 1.

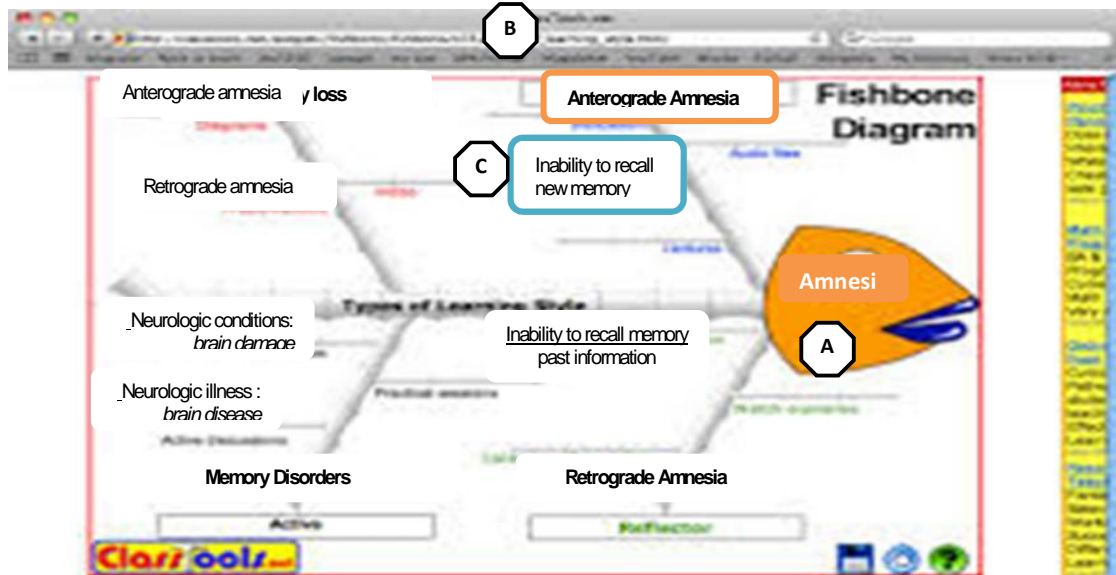


Figure 1. Fishbone Diagram in Cause-Effect Text

Three elements in fishbone diagram are (1) fish head discussing effect or problem which represents A; (2), primary causes discussing general causes which represent B ; (3), secondary causes discussing detailed effects of primary causes which represent C (Bilsen&Lin, 2012:138).

Fishbone strategy provides benefits in visual tools due to visual aids (1) accentuate important ideas; (2) provide oral and written presentation to comprehend the pattern of organization, (3) enable to recall their memories (Daniel, 2012:1). Study about fishbone strategy by Bose (2012:23) found fishbone diagram was very innovative and efficient way of resolving the main problem of ST James Hospital dealing with supply chain management inefficiency and business future process. Simmonds (2013:20) found fishbone analysis provide separated program and category of causes to focus on content of problem in health services to improve safety and quality.

Moreover, Martin (2006:38) found fishbone strategy in teaching reading provided students (1) with reading text enjoyment, (2) with learning how to present in a team work; (3), with a lot of opportunities for learning.

### 3. METHOD

This study involved twenty elementary school teachers education students of State Islamic Institute – Bandar Lampung by employing descriptive qualitative design to describe natural or man-made educational phenomena ( Knupfer & McLellan, 2001:1196) .

Two instruments in this study included semi structured interview and semi structured questionnaire of which each instrument was supported by reason of each to explore three aspects (1) factual question for students’ knowledge, (2) behavior questions for students’ action, (3) attitudinal question for students’ opinion (Dornyei, 2003:8-9).

Two data analysis techniques were (1) coding technique to analyze students’ interview, (2) counting technique to analyze students’ questionnaires (Tuckman, 1999:240).

### 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Out of twenty students participating in learning reading by using fishbone strategy, only six students who inaccurately completed the fishbone diagram can be illustrated in Figure 2.

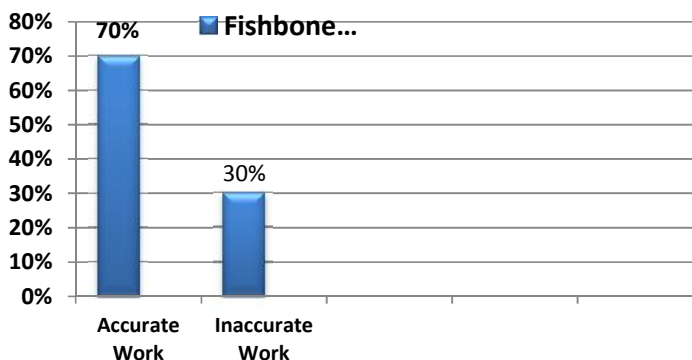


Figure 2. The Result of the Students’ Works of Fishbone

Three aspects to explore twenty students’ perceptions of fishbone strategy were by administering ten “yes or no” questions which were completed with reasons for each response. Firstly, factual aspect comprising three questions is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Students’ Responses to Factual Aspects

Question		Yes	No
1.	Do you still find difficulty in comprehending the text after introducing fishbone strategy?	30%	70%
2.	Do you know how many elements of fishbone diagram?	100%	0%
3.	Do you know what type of text pattern used in fishbone diagram?	100%	0%

Students' responses to factual aspect in question 1 indicated 70% of the students' responses "yes" which were supported by reasons, that is; fishbone strategy provided easiness, explicitness, and clearness of the idea in the text. Meanwhile, question 2 and 3 indicated 100% of the students' responses "yes" to the two kinds of questions. The reasons of responses to question 2 were the students' familiarity with three elements of fishbone diagram. The reasons of response to question 3 were the students' familiarity of cause-effect text organization. Secondly, behavior aspect comprising two questions is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Students' Responses to Behavior Aspects

Question		Yes	No
1.	Have you ever joined reading class by using fishbone strategy?	0%	100%
2.	Have you been familiar with fishbone strategy before?	0%	100%

Students' responses to behavior aspect in question 1 and 2 indicated 100% of the students' responses "no" to the two kinds of questions. The students' reasons for each response revealed that their first experience in learning reading using fishbone strategy. Thirdly, attitudinal aspect comprising five questions is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Students' Responses to Attitudinal Aspects

Question		Yes	No
1.	Do you think fishbone diagram help you understand a text?	100%	0%
2.	Are you motivated to join reading class by using fishbone strategy?	100%	0%
3.	Does fishbone diagram make you easy to understand reading text?	100%	0%
4.	Does fishbone diagram difficult to understand reading text?	0%	100%
5.	Are you interested in the picture of the fishbone?	100%	0%

**Table 3 . Students' Perception of Attitudinal Aspect**

Students' responses to attitudinal aspects, question 1, 2, 3, and 5 indicated 100% of the students' responses "yes" to four kinds of questions. The reasons of responses in question 1 were fishbone strategy enabled students to get with keyword, detail of information, and easiness in understanding the text. The reasons of responses in question 2 were fishbone strategy provided students with interest and curiosity. The reasons of responses to question 3 were fishbone diagram provided students with understanding without reading overall text. The reasons of responses to question 5 were fishbone strategy provided students with an interesting and a nice picture of the fish. Meanwhile, question 4 indicated 100% of the students' responses "no" to one kind of question which were supported by reasons, that is; fishbone strategy provided students with aid and easiness to understand a reading text. The views on the students' perceptions of the implementation of fishbone strategy towards learning reading consisting of three aspects are illustrated in Figure 3.

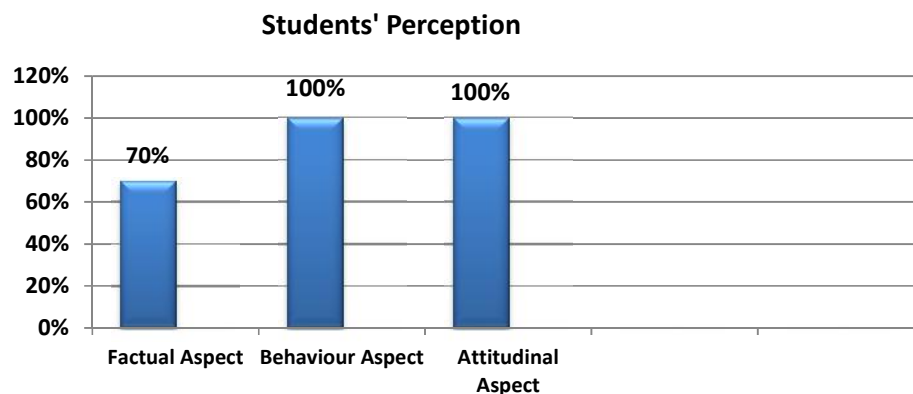


Figure 3. Students' Responses to Fishbone Strategy from Three Aspects

Students' responses to fishbone strategy towards learning reading revealed that factual aspect to explore the students' reading and fishbone knowledge indicated 70% of the students' positive perception. Meanwhile, behavior aspect to explore students' responses to fishbone learning reading activity and attitudinal aspect to explore students' opinion and feeling about fishbone strategy in learning reading indicated 100% of the students' positive perception of the two aspects.

Semi-structured interview to four students consisting of three aspects covering factual, behavior, and attitudinal questions is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Students' Responses to Fishbone Strategy from Interview

Aspect	Responses	Coding
Behavior	1 <i>I never join reading class using fishbone strategy</i>	-Ever <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Never - Other:
Factual	2 <i>Fishbone strategy</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fishbone -Other :
Factual	3 <i>Four elements : fish head, primary causes, and secondary causes</i>	-One -Two <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Three - Four
Factual	4 <i>Cause – effect text</i>	-Narrative text -Descriptive Text <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cause –Effect Text
Attitude	5 <i>Fishbone strategy helps me understand a text because fishbone can give the main information.</i>	-Title -Paragraph <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> information -Picture
Attitude	6 <i>Fishbone strategy makes me easy to understand a text because I can see the important information from fishbone diagram.</i>	-Title -Paragraph <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> information -Picture
Attitude	7 <i>Fishbone strategy give me motivation in learning reading because I feel interested in learning reading</i>	-Happy -Lazy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interested

Factual aspect comprised three questions that covered question 1 for the name of strategy in learning reading revealing responses “*fishbone strategy.*” Question 2 dealt with the elements of fishbone diagram revealing response “*three.*” Question 3 concerned text organization in fishbone strategy that revealed responses “*cause-effect.*”

The findings on the students' responses of factual aspect from interview were confirmed with questionnaire revealing that most students were able to overcome their difficulties in learning reading because they were familiar with the fishbone diagram and its elements.

These findings were confirmed by study by Martin (2006:38) who found the students felt enjoyed the reading activity by using fishbone diagram. Moreover, Bilsen & Lin (2012:138) stated three elements of fishbone diagram proposed by Ishikawa comprising fish head for problem or effect, primary cause for general cause, and secondary cause for detailed effect of primary causes.

Behavior aspect comprised one question that concerned students' experiences in learning reading by using fishbone strategy revealing response “*never*” to the question.

The findings on the students' responses in behavior aspect from interview were confirmed by questionnaire revealing that it was the students' first experience to join reading class by using fishbone diagram. This finding was confirmed by study by Martin (2006:34) who revealed fishbone diagram as the first teaching strategy for the science stream students in Serawak.

Attitudinal aspect comprised three questions that covered question 1 that concerned fishbone aid in learning reading revealing that fishbone provided information. Question 2 dealt with the easiness of fishbone strategy in learning reading revealing that fishbone strategy provided information in the diagram. Question 2 concerned students' motivations in learning reading by using fishbone strategy revealing that

fishbone strategy provided interest in learning reading. The findings on the students' responses of attitudinal aspect from interview were confirmed by questionnaire revealing that most students felt easy and were motivated to understand the text because fishbone diagram was helpful for them. These findings were acknowledged by study by Martin (2006:33) who stated fishbone strategy as a tool to help students understand reading text to pick out particular information. Furthermore, a Moats (2010:17) state the principle of visualized teaching is for comprehension in which fishbone is one of the visualized teachings.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The results of findings on three aspects comprising factual, behavior, and attitudinal aspect to explore students' responses about fishbone strategy in learning EFL reading have shown the students' positive perceptions of implementing fishbone diagram as a tool organizer in learning EFL reading for comprehension. The students' responses of factual aspect revealed that students were familiar with fishbone diagram that comprised three elements covering fish head, primary cause, and secondary cause which were used in cause-effect text pattern organization.

Behavior aspect revealed that fishbone diagram was the students' first learning strategy in learning reading. The students' responses of attitudinal aspect revealed that the students felt easy in learning reading that could enhance their motivations to join reading class by using fishbone strategy because fishbone diagram accommodated important information from the text.

Based on those conclusions, it is suggested that fishbone diagram be one of the tool organizers that is suitable to teach reading subject. Concerning the EFL reading curriculum, fishbone diagram is the most appropriate tool organizer for teaching cause-effect text pattern organization.

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