

## The Sketch of Reading Instruction in Islamic Tertiary Level of Education

**Andang Saehu**

Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Sunan Gunung Djati

Jl. A.H. Nasution No.105 Bandung

Email: andangsaehu@uinsgd.ac.id

**Annie Susany Somantri**

Universitas Islam Nusantara (UNINUS)

Jl. Soekarno Hatta No.530 Bandung

E-mail: susanympd@gmail.com

### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini merupakan laporan hasil observasi kelas pada salah satu kelas matakuliah *Literal Reading*, jurusan Bahasa Inggris di tingkat pendidikan universitas Islam di Bandung, Indonesia. Observasi kelas tersebut dilakukan dalam 5 pertemuan secara konsekutif. Setelah meneliti apa yang terjadi terhadap para mahasiswa, dengan menggunakan pendekatan studi kasus, melalui observasi dan wawancara ditemukan bahwa dosen pengampu *literal reading* merancang beberapa kegiatan pengajarannya. Dosen tersebut mengaplikasikan tiga fase kegiatan proses belajar mengajar *literal reading*, yaitu *pre-reading*, *while-reading*, dan *post-reading*. Kegiatan *pre-reading* dimaksudkan untuk memancing minat belajar para mahasiswa dan mencoba mengantisipasi berbagai kendala dalam pemilihan kata. Kegiatan *while-reading* bertujuan untuk melibatkan para mahasiswa dalam *phonic method* dan *mapping concept strategy*. Sedangkan tahap *post-reading* didesain untuk menggabungkan apa yang telah mereka baca dengan keterampilan lainnya (seperti menulis, dan berbicara) dan untuk memeriksa pemahaman mereka.

**Kata Kunci:** pengajaran membaca, *Phonic Method*, *Mapping Concept*, *Pre-reading*, *While-reading*, *Post-reading*

### ABSTRACT

This study briefly reports classroom observations in one of EFL classes at English Studies Department of Islamic Tertiary Level of Education in Bandung, Indonesia. The focus of the class was on Literal Reading. The classroom observations were conducted in five class periods consecutively. Having studied what was happening to the students, using a qualitative case study, the data collected through observation checklist and interview guide found that the lecturer designed various activities in teaching Literal Reading in the EFL class. The lecturer applied teaching activities in three stages: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. The activities in the pre-reading were aimed at activating students' schemata, generating students' interest and trying to anticipate any difficult vocabularies. The while-reading stage is to invite students to be involved at phonic method and mapping concept strategy. The post-listening stage is to internalize what they have read with other language skills (e.g. writing and speaking) and to check students' comprehension.

**Keywords:** Teaching Reading, Phonic Method, Mapping Concept, Pre-reading, While-reading, Post-reading.

## Introduction

Reading is the receptive use of language, which is one of the most important skills for learning. Without reading there will be no idea to write and speak academically. In university setting, the students get some English textbooks which are written in English. Even, all subjects taught in university use English textbooks as the handbook or references. There are so many information existing in those textbooks. But, those who do not love reading the books in whichever the languages will have nothing. They need to access the information to have sufficient knowledge. One of ways to access or gist the information is through reading. In line with this, Grabe and Stoller (2002:13) define reading as an activity, which involves the reader to search for general and specific information in the text. The aim of teaching reading in university is to develop the students' reading ability in English for information, career, and study purpose (Richards & Renandya, 2002:273).

It is the fact that the majority of English Department students of Adab and Humanities Faculty show their low motivation to read English. The fact was gained from weekly teaching and learning process to fifth semester students in my own interpreting course. The first four weeks of my class were asking students to review the theories relating to basic concepts of interpreting course. From the first to four reviews, I always found that their reviews were the same as those of reviews written by their classmates or class A to E's friends. This shows that they had low

motivation to read English books. Unfortunately, this study is not to find out what makes them have low motivation to read English books.

The study relating to lack of reading motivation was conducted by Kweldju (1996:115) who found two reasons of most students had low motivation to read English, namely; (1) their limited background knowledge and (2) their incapability of understanding the content of the text and complicated organizational structure of the text. Supporting Kweldju, Candra (2013) conducted the study at English department students at Islamic Institute of Ma'arif (STAI Ma'arif) Metro, Lampung. He found that the students encountered three problems in following reading class: (1) they have little interest in reading text, (2) they cannot determine the topic, main idea, and supporting details from the reading text, and (3) they still find it hard to grasp the outline of the information from the reading text.

This present study attempts to fill uncovered cases in their studies. It is obvious that they did not study the teaching methods applied in reading subject. The existence of teaching methods in reading subject is of great importance as it leads the students to have knowledge of how to read effectively so that they will have good attitude and high motivation to read. This coincides with the statement by Brown (2001:16) stating that method is a generalized set of classroom specifications concerned with teacher and student roles and behaviors. What is meant by teaching method in this study is any plans designed by the lecturer to teach literal reading.



Hence, this study sketched the methods the lecturer taught literal reading course in the first semester.

Looking at the description above, reading seems to be the first position out of other language skills (i.e. writing, speaking, and listening) in terms of acquiring new information. This first position is supported by the Government putting reading skill in the first order of the others. As written in the 1984 and 2004 English curriculum with the order of priorities of the language skills to be developed was reading, listening, writing, and speaking (Furaidah, Saukah, and Widiati, 2015).

At the Islamic tertiary level of education where the study was conducted, reading is not served as integrated courses but as discrete one due to the students' needs to read various types of English discourses intensively as part of their curricular activities. To help students improve their ability in understanding what the readers are reading, the Department develops particularly reading skills through these reading courses consisting of Literal Reading, Interpretive Reading, and Critical Reading. Each of which has 2 credits and 2 semester hours. These must be taught in order, meaning that the students cannot join Interpretive or Critical Reading course without passing from Literal Reading course. In other words, Literal Reading course is a prerequisite for Interpretive Reading course and from that course forth, the Interpretive Reading course is a prerequisite for Critical Reading course.

Those reading courses are taught by different lecturers in different semesters. The literal

reading course is provided at the first semester or odd semester in English Studies Department at Islamic tertiary level of education, say Faculty of Adab and Humanities in every year. The detailed information about this course can be seen in the following course description.

#### Description of Literal Reading Course:

*This course is the basic of all pre-requisite subjects of Listening Comprehension subject. It is designed to develop students competence in literal reading (i.e. knowing and comprehending) of non-fictional texts at beginner level, emphasizing the use of appropriate reading strategies to identify the meaning and use of unfamiliar lexical items, the topic and the main idea from supporting details of the texts; understand explicit information; skim and scan specific information; understand the communicative value of sentences; and recognize types of writing.*

With regard to the aforementioned case, this study aims at sketching the teaching activities or methods applied by the literal reading lecturer in one of EFL reading classes, especially Literal Reading course, to the first semester students of Islamic tertiary level of education.

#### Research Method

The study employed descriptive qualitative study to dig a deep description relating to phenomena happening in the classroom. The study was conducted



in one of Islamic tertiary level of education in Bandung, Indonesia majoring in English. This English Department has some classes in the same level starting from A to E. The researcher observed one of the classes under the recommendation from the literal reading lecturer.

The class observed was Class A amounting to 43 students at the English studies department of one of Islamic tertiary level of educations in Indonesia, which ran for one semester from late September to mid-December 2015. The class period was 90 minutes long and was conducted from 8.40 a.m. to 10.20 a.m. on Tuesday. Those 43 students were 26 female and 17 male. In the five class periods of observations, I served as a non-participant in all class period.

The research instruments used by the researcher were observation checklist and interview guide (see Appendices). While observation checklist was the primary instrument of which it focuses on the reading lecturer's actions or behaviors in teaching Literal Reading course, the interview guide was used as secondary instrument that was used to confirm or clarify things uncovered through observation.

In working with this observation, the researcher made use of an observation checklist or guide to record the teaching and learning activities. The observation checklist consisted of variables and descriptors concerning how the literal reading lecturer teaches in the classroom. The classroom observations were conducted in five class periods consecutively starting from late September to mid-December 2015.

Meanwhile, interviews were used to support or confirm the observation in collecting the data relating to how the lecturer teaches the students in the classroom. About 14 interview items were used, consisting of five items asked about activities performed in pre-reading stage; five items asked about activities presented in while-reading stage; and four items asked about the activities carried out in the post-reading stage. With regard to the use of interview as the supporting instrument, Cresswell (2012:217) stated that interview occurs when researchers ask one or more participants general, open-ended questions and record their answers. It is an important way to check the accuracy of—to verify or refute—the impression of which has been gained through observation. Those interview items were addressed to a literal reading lecturer teaching in Islamic tertiary level of education.

### **Finding and Discussion**

#### **The Teaching Activities Designed by the Reading Lecturer**

The aim of this study is to sketch the teaching activities designed by the reading lecturer in teaching Literal Reading course to the students of Islamic tertiary level of education. Based on the observations done by the researcher to the respondent in her classroom, in general the stages of teaching literal reading course can be divided into three stages: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. Each of which has some activities that have been designed by the respondent prior to teaching. Although the researcher could only do the observation for five meetings to



which it should be all meetings, the researcher could capture the other experiences of the respondent through interviewing. As stated by Seidman (2006), the interview guide is used as it can capture the meaning people involved in education make of their experience.

### **1. Pre-reading Activity**

As the first stage of all the teaching and learning activities designed by the reading lecturer in every teaching period is pre-reading stage. In the stage of pre-reading, most of the time students pay attention to what is being said with the purpose of getting them interested in the topic, warming up them, and getting them the general information about the topic. At that time, the lecturer started the lesson by highlighting some uncommon words (vocabularies) relating to the topic. The lecturer then read the title of the topic aloud, and explained the uncommon words through actions, visuals, examples, and sentences. In this case, the lecturer seems to treat the students like young learners as she assumed that the students are beginners. This pre-reading activity which was done within 15 minutes was primarily aimed at activating students' schemata—borrowing the term used by Qiu and Huang (2012) to motivate and help them comprehend the text they were going to read.

The pre-reading activity was also observed in another class period to anticipate any difficult vocabularies. The activation was performed by distributing a worksheet to all students. The lecturer then asked the students to find out the meaning of any highlighted words from dictionary or

predicted them from the context. In this pre-reading activity, I (the researcher) was involved as a participant observer in student-lecturer interaction and student-student interaction. The response I saw was great. This is shocking that student-lecturer interaction and student-student interaction made the students feel comfortable because they started to regard us as members of their reading community. In line with this, Driscoll (2011) points out that the presence of an observer positively predisposes the behaviors of those being observed. In working with finding out the meaning of any highlighted words, I found that the majority of students consulted their English-Indonesian electronic dictionary for words they did not understand. Although they were allowed, I was curious to know the reason for using that kind of device. The students said that they could grasp the meanings of words. This way coincides with the statement by Kong (2005) that transferring the word meaning, in this case, is a reader initiated-strategy as a support device. This pre-reading activity was done within 17 minutes.

### **2. While-Reading Activity**

This second stage is useful to help learners develop the skill of eliciting messages through reading activities. In the stage of while-listening, it was found that the respondent applied several activities phonic method and concept mapping. Each will be elaborated below.

#### **a. Phonic Method**

At the first day of class period, the lecturer presented a phonic method. This is a method of teaching to trigger the students to

read fast. Department for Education (2013) said that:

*“Phonics is a way of teaching children to read quickly and skillfully. They are taught how to: recognize the sounds that each individual letter makes; identify the sounds that different combinations of letters make – such as „sh“ or „oo“; and blend these sounds together from left to right to make a word. Children can then use this knowledge to „de-code“ new words that they hear or see. this is the first important step in learning to read.”*

Another definition from an online oxford dictionary (2015) defines Phonics as “a method of teaching people to read by correlating sounds with symbol in an alphabetic writing system”. Phonics refers to the relationship between letters (graphemes) and sounds (phonemes) in written words (Mesmer & Griffith 2005). In alphabetic system we know that there are 26 letters (graphemes) to represent about 44 sounds (phonemes). This coincide with Ehri (2003) defining Phonics as “a method of instruction that teaches students correspondences between graphemes in written language and phonemes in spoken language and how to use these correspondences to read and spell words”.

The researcher felt curios to know the reasons the lecturer designed this phonic method for literal reading course. The interview data showed that the lecturer assumed that the literal reading course is the prerequisite course for other reading courses. Thus, the

students need to be aware of the differences between letter-sound in Indonesian and English. A good illustration about this has been given by Lestari (2016) that the use of the letter-sound of “I” in Indonesia and English is different. In Indonesia we say /u/ like “mulut” however in English it can be /ʌ/ like when we say cup /k ʌ p/ or it can be /I/ like in busy /b I s i/. This condition is potential for Indonesian learner to get confused to recognize those different sounds.

In teaching phonics, we should have some approaches of methods that would be applied in classroom activity, and there are some researchers who already investigated about phonics method. The first research came from Johnston and Watson (2005). They investigated the effects of the use of synthetics phonics on reading and spelling. For this study, they need seven year- long of study and then they found that five-year-old children had better word reading, spelling and synthetic phonics awareness skills than children who get a supplementary analytic phonics program.

Having done the pre-reading activity, the lecturer continued the activity by presenting phonic method. The first three days she focused on teaching letter-sounds found in the passage as introducing the phonics to students is important. In the first day, the lecturer gave some ten-letter-word with one blank letter and asked the students to write the correct letter in the space given. When the researcher was observing that kind of activity, the students seemed to be enthusiastic to follow the instruction. The lecturer then pointed six representative students to





come forward and show their works. Each of student presented what they have corrected in front of the class. Afterwards, the lecturer gave another worksheet to do the same thing.

In the next day, the lecturer provided words with one worksheet on every word. In working with this worksheet, the lecturer got students to read the text twice. The lecturer then asked the students to find the meaning of words based on the context that can be easily found in the text. Again, the students should present their works by read aloud their answers in front of the class. In the third day, the lecturer gave a text about three paragraphs then asked students to read aloud the text and write a review or opinion relating to the text they read. The researcher could feel some students' good proficiency in reading English text of which they previously did some mistakes in the ways of reading, pronouncing, and spelling the words.

### **b. Concept Mapping**

From the fourth to fifth days the lecturer changed her way of teaching literal reading by presenting concept-mapping strategy. By using this reading strategy, the lecturer seemed to create and focus more on student-lecturer interaction and student-student interaction. This can be seen from the result of observation (field note) below.

Table 1. The Result of Observation

Activity	Construct of Observation	Description	Interpretation
Pre-reading	Interaction: - Students-Students (with their classmates) - student-lecturer	Low interaction from Students-Students and Students-Lecturer	Learning Atmosphere: Students-Students interaction for discussion and
While-reading	Interaction: - Students-Students (with their classmates) - students-lecturer	High Students-Students Interaction and Students-Lecturer interaction	Students-Lecturer interaction for confirmation
Post-reading	Interaction: - Students-Students (with their classmates) - students-lecturer	No Students-Students interaction and Students-Lecturer interaction	

Table 1 describes the learning interaction among the students and the students with their literal reading lecturer occurs to discuss the topics given by the lecturer. They tried to find the main idea of the paragraph and of the text, predict the highlighted words, and answer the questions relating to the topic. During doing the observation, the researcher also recorded the students' learning interaction in learning literal reading happening in the observation through field note that is used to record as presented in Table 2.





Table 2. The Field Note during Observation

No	Field Note
1.	<p>The strength of the strategy:</p> <p>It is noted that during applying the concept mapping, students discussed with their friends to determine the topic and the Key-word for the important information.</p> <p>The researcher's comment: <i>The implementation of concept mapping is good in providing the students' interactions to share ideas with their friends.</i></p>
2.	<p>The weakness of the strategy:</p> <p>It is also recorded that the students encountered the difficulty of determining main idea and supporting details. These difficulties can cause the difficulty to fill the nodes from the diagram of concept mapping.</p>
3.	<p>Suggestions:</p> <p>It would be better if the lecturer monitored the students' interaction when they find topic and main idea in determining key-word. Thus, they could answer the questions correctly.</p>

Table 2 presents the learning interaction among the students to find important information and key-words. This learning interaction also encourages them to share their ideas.

Besides, in the fourth day, the lecturer also focused on strengthening students' proficiency in reading skill. At that day the handouts of concept mapping (consisting of an empty concept mapping format) were distributed to the students after they finished reading the text. The reading exercises did not specifically ask the students to find the main idea and supporting details.

In the fifth day, the handouts of concept mapping were distributed to the students before they read the reading text. This was done to see whether the students could predict the idea and its supporting details. That's why the reading exercises were focused on finding the main idea and supporting details. Both in the fourth and fifth days, the students seemed to show their proficiency in sharing ideas about the text and in discussing reading materials.

The concept mapping strategy applied in the class for two class periods has given much contribution to students in improving the learning interaction among them to discuss important information and the students' learning interaction to consult their works with their lecturer. What has been designed by the literal reading lecturer was initiated by several researchers since years ago. In 1987, Sinatra, Gemake, and Morgan conducted a study about concept mapping and found that concept mapping which covers graphic arrangement describing how the written works are linked with the major and the minor ideas is an effective semantic visualization.

In 2009, a study conducted by Munthe showed that concept mapping strategy which consists of major concept on the top and specific concept beneath the general concept presented by using arrows to show its relationship is very effective in improving students' reading comprehension. Following Munthe, in 2010, Srimulyaningsih revealed that concept mapping enables the students to feel the joy of learning. Even, the research finding by Kusen (2011:103) found that the concept mapping implementation to raise the students' participation in learning reading.

### **3. Post-Reading Activity**

The post-reading stage was designed to extend the understanding of the students learned at pre-reading and while-reading stages into other learning tasks like sharing the ideas (speaking) and writing the answers. EFL students need to act upon what they have read to expand their thinking. This post-reading stage helps students internalize what they have read and comprehended. The ways the lecturer internalized it can be done through moving on from reading practice to focus on other language skills, such as speaking and writing.

In this context, the lecturer linked the reading skill with speaking and writing skills. She checked the students' comprehension of the material given by asking them to write or speak what she asked. For example, she questioned the students "what is the main idea of the first paragraph? What does the passage tell about? Etc. The students responded the questions depending on what the lecturer directed to answer whether in written or orally.

Connecting the reading task with the speaking and writing tasks is essentially related because EFL reading can be taught in an integrated way along with other language skills (Cahyono & Widiati, 2011). This post-reading stage was run in 15 minutes.

In short, the teaching procedures or stages starting from pre-, while-, to post-reading have helped the lecturer, teacher, or those working on teaching organize the lesson in order to provide the students with step-by-step instruction. In addition, by using those stages, the lecturer could have an opportunity to set how much time should be spent on each stage. Besides, those stages, according to Widodo and Cirocki (2014), enable the lecturer to decide what kinds of learning activities or strategies that the students would go through in one lesson. Another notion about the use of these sequence of instructional activities was pinpointed by Yang and Chang (2014) that they could keep students alert, motivated, and engaged in language skill activities.

### **Conclusion**

This study has sketched various types of activities designed by the listening lecturer in the teaching of literal reading course in English Studies Program of Islamic tertiary level of education. These various activities were intended to help students improve their reading skill. One principle thing designed by the lecturer in every meeting of teaching is the use of three phase techniques of teaching: pre-reading activity, while-reading activity, and post-reading activity. Although the three phases are advisable to be



applied by other lecturers, the lecturers should notice that when there are problems, they should see the problems as challenges and look for solutions. However, this study would be wise if the researcher observed all class periods (14 meetings) to sketch more various reading activities.



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**Appendix 1: Observation Guide**

No	Observation Items	Observation Class Periods				
		1	2	3	4	5
A	Pre-reading Activity					
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The lecturer greets the students and asks their condition.</li> <li>2. The students respond to the lecturer.</li> <li>3. The lecturer calls the roll.</li> <li>4. The students tell who is absent.</li> <li>5. The lecturer highlights some vocabularies.</li> <li>6. The students reads and rewrites the highlighted vocabularies.</li> <li>7. The lecturer asks the students what the highlighted vocabularies mean.</li> <li>8. The students finds the meaning from dictionary or predicts it through context.</li> <li>9. The lecturer distributes a worksheet to all students.</li> <li>10. The students receive the worksheet.</li> <li>11. The lecturer asks the students to find out the meanings of the highlighted words in the worksheet.</li> <li>12. The students fill in the worksheet.</li> <li>13. The lecturer explains the goal of teaching and learning.</li> </ol>					



B	While-reading activity					
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Phonic Method             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The lecturer gives ten letter-words with one blank letter and asks the students to write the correct letter in the space given.</li> <li>b. The students try to write the correct letter.</li> <li>c. The lecturer points some students to present their works.</li> <li>d. The students present their work in front of the class.</li> <li>e. The lecturer gets students to read the passage twice.</li> <li>f. The students read the passage twice quickly.</li> <li>g. The students share their ideas of the text.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Concept Mapping Strategy             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The lecturer plays a role in a dialogue.</li> <li>b. The lecturer reads the text aloud by himself to describe the situation and place where the dialogue is conducted.</li> <li>c. The students watch the ways the lecturer plays a role.</li> <li>d. The lecturer gets students to take notes on what they heard from each character.</li> <li>e. The students reread what they have written.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Listening to the Songs             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The lecturer plays a song and lets students to listen to the song.</li> <li>b. The students are allowed to imitate the song.</li> <li>c. The lecturer spread out a worksheet related to the song.</li> <li>d. The students fill in the blank phrases while listening to the song.</li> <li>e. The lecturer asks the students to come forward to read the complete worksheet.</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Doing Drama             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The lecturer distributes handout of concept mapping to the students</li> </ol> </li> </ol>					





	<p>after reading the text.</p> <p>b. The lecturer asks the students to find the main idea of the text.</p> <p>c. The lecturer distributes handout of concept mapping to the students before reading the text.</p> <p>d. The lecturer asks the students to find the main idea of the text and supporting details.</p> <p>e. The students share the main ideas and supporting details to their classmates.</p>					
C	Post-Listening					
	<p>a. The lecturer links the reading to speaking or writing by asking the students to speak or write what the lecturer asks.</p> <p>b. The students respond the questions depending on what the lecturer directed to answer whether in written or orally.</p> <p>c. The lecturer summarizes and gives further guidance.</p> <p>d. The students reflect their learning</p> <p>e. The lecturer motivates the students to participate more in the next class period.</p> <p>f. The lecturer closes the session by saying good bye.</p>					

**Appendix 2: Interview Guide**

**Purpose:** The interview is aimed at confirming the information gained from observation (if any unclear information) about the teaching activities or strategies applied by Literal Reading lecturer in one of semester one EFL reading classes.

No	Pre-Listening Stage
1.	What preparation did you do prior to teaching Literal Reading?
2.	How did you design the teaching strategies?
3.	How did you manage the time on each teaching stage?
4.	Why did you do this pre-reading stage on every class period?
5.	What did you expect from this pre-reading stage?



<b>While-Listening Stage</b>	
6.	What did you prepare for this while-reading stage?
7.	How did you connect the pre-reading stage to the next stage?
8.	Why did you do different activities on every class period?
9.	Why did you set more than 40 minutes for while-reading stage?
10.	What did you expect from this while-reading stage?
<b>Post-Listening Stage</b>	
11.	What was this post-reading stage for?
12.	What best activity did you experience during this post-reading stage?
13.	What did you do if in this post-reading stage you found that students still did not understand of what you have taught?
14.	What did you expect from this post-reading stage?



Halaman sengaja untuk dikosongkan