



TEACHING READING SKILLS: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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Abstract:

This study aims to understand the application of skimming and scanning techniques in teaching reading skills at the university level. Both techniques have been recognized as strategies that help students read more efficiently, especially in finding important information from complex academic texts. Using qualitative research methods, this study adopted a systematic review approach, where data were collected and analyzed from various scientific articles using the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) diagram. This process included the articles' identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion stages. The results showed that skimming and scanning techniques can improve reading efficiency while helping students understand the content of the text better. The findings provide recommendations for lecturers to integrate both techniques in reading learning to support the development of student's academic skills in higher education.

INTRODUCTION

Reading skills are fundamental in learning English, especially at the university level. It encompasses various techniques and strategies to understand texts effectively and efficiently. In a teaching context, teaching reading skills aims to help students develop the ability to read critically, understand the main idea, identify important details, and analyze text structure. These skills support students' academic success in various fields of study. (W. Grabe & Stoller, 2019).

Two main techniques are often taught in the reading-learning process: skimming and scanning. Readers use skimming as a speed reading technique to get an overview or central idea of the text. This method is proper when understanding the core of the text is required within limited time constraints. (Brown, 2006) Skimming helps readers recognize the structure of the text and find the main points without having to read every word in detail.

The ability to read in the era of globalization and dependence on information technology is also key in accessing various information from international sources, whether academic journals, articles, or other online media. At the university level, students are expected to understand the text and evaluate the credibility and relevance of the information found. This is important to ensure that the information they find academically supports their arguments or research.

On the other hand, scanning is a reading technique focused on finding specific information in the text, such as dates, numbers, or keywords. This technique is more directed than skimming because the reader is trying to find particular data or information

quickly. (Nutall, 2007). Students often do scanning to answer specific questions or find relevant data in journals or scientific articles.

In particular, integrating technology into teaching reading in schools using learning software and digital platforms significantly adds efficiency to the learning process. These technologies allow students to access a broader range of reading materials and practice their skills through interactive exercises and automated feedback.

Reading is also one of the essential components of English language teaching at the university level. Skimming and scanning are often part of the English language teaching curriculum in the classroom, and research on speed reading techniques such as skimming and scanning has been widely discussed in academic literature. Several studies have shown that mastering these techniques helps students understand texts more efficiently and improves their ability to analyze and interpret different academic texts.

1. Skimming in the Teaching of Reading Skills

Skimming is a speed reading technique used to get a general idea of the content of the text. This technique helps readers recognize the main idea quickly without reading every text word in detail. According to (W. P. Grabe & Stoller, 2021) Skimming allows students to understand the structure and purpose of the text before reading more deeply.

2. Scanning in the Teaching of Reading Skills

As opposed to skimming, scanning is a reading technique that is more specific and focused on finding certain information in the text, such as numbers, names, or other keywords. This technique is beneficial when students need to find specific information quickly, such as in tests, literature searches, or answering questions requiring more detailed information.

Scanning, according to (Nutall, 2007), directs the reader to notice essential details without reading the entire text. This is often done in academic activities, where students have to find specific data or references quickly in scientific texts or journals. In this context, scanning can speed up the search for information but still relies on students' ability to recognize keywords or information relevant to the topic.

3. Application of Skimming and Scanning in University Teaching

However, teaching these techniques does not always go smoothly. Some challenges faced in teaching skimming and scanning techniques include lacking basic reading skills among college students, difficulty choosing the proper method for different texts, and lack of sufficient practical practice. Several researchers recommend using task-based approaches and technology-based learning to help students practice these techniques in real-world situations.

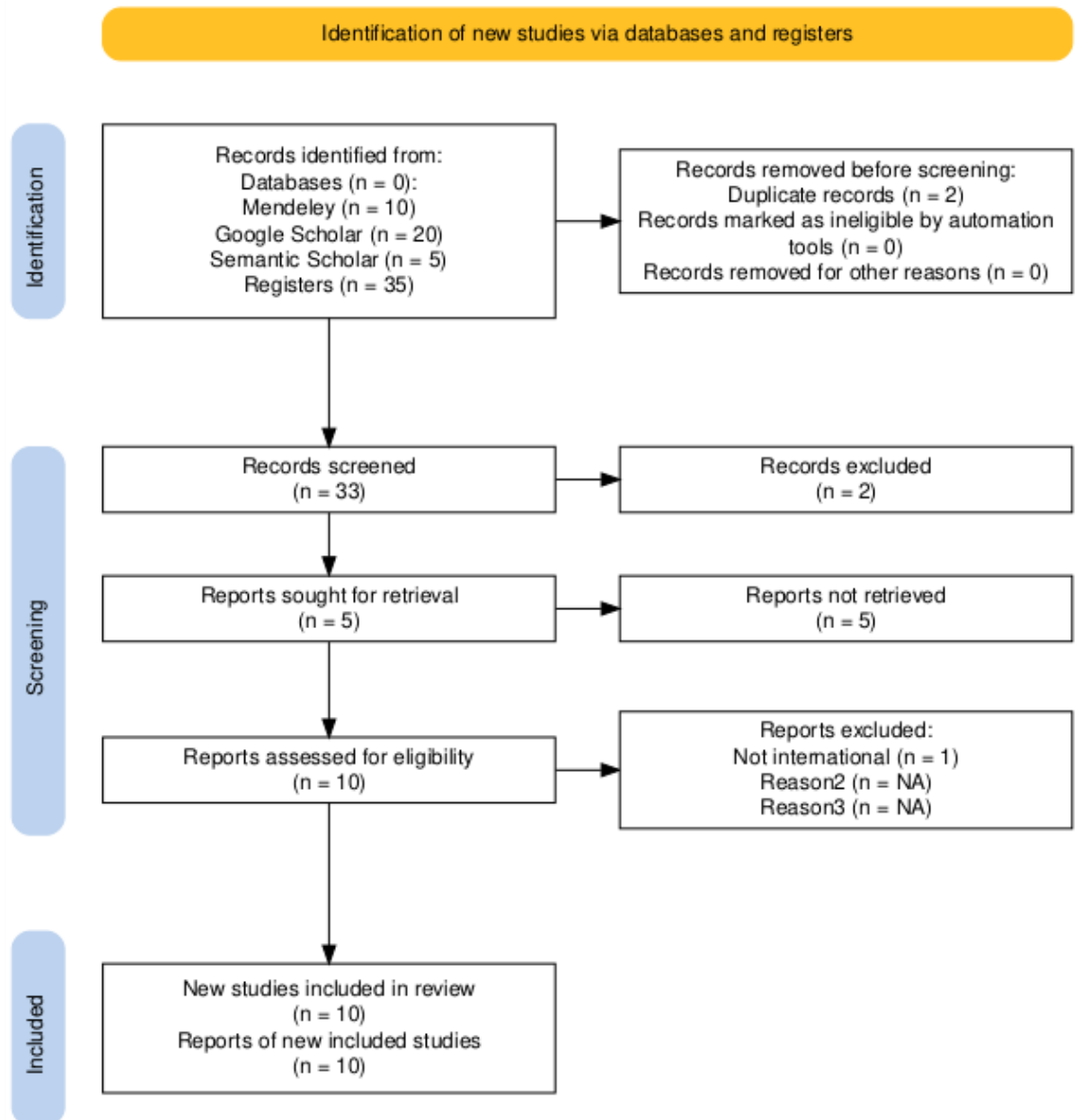
RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach with a systematic review method to examine the existing literature on skimming and scanning techniques in teaching reading skills at the university level. This method was chosen because it can filter and analyze findings from relevant scientific journal studies. The research process followed the guidelines set by PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses), which ensured that the selection of articles was systematic and transparent. (Moher et al., 2009)

Literature searches from various databases such as Mendeley, Google Scholar, Semantic Scholar, and other databases containing peer-reviewed journals with published articles from 2020-2024 were conducted using relevant keywords such as

“skimming,” “scanning,” “teaching reading skills,” and “university level.” Articles were selected based on the inclusion criteria, i.e., articles that addressed skimming and scanning techniques in teaching reading in a university context or articles of good methodological quality. Articles that did not fit or meet the selection standards were excluded.

Subsequently, data from articles that met the inclusion criteria were extracted and analyzed qualitatively. The main focus of this analysis was to explore the effectiveness of both skimming and scanning techniques in improving students' reading skills at the university level. A PRISMA diagram was used to illustrate the article search and selection flow used in this review, providing a clear picture of how the data was collected and processed. (Page et al., 2021).



RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Through a systematic review process, 10 studies were identified as relevant to skimming and scanning techniques in improving reading skills at the university level.

These studies emphasized diverse perspectives and outcomes on the use and success of these techniques in improving student's reading comprehension and efficiency.

1. SKIMMING

No	Authors	Country	Research Objective	Method	Key Findings	Implication
1	(Gulo, 2020)	Indonesia	Analyze the advantages of the skimming method in improving reading comprehension among second-semester university students.	Utilization of questionnaires to collect information from 28 students in the Basic Reading II class.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most students realize that skimming helps predict content, find main ideas, and save time. - Skimming can increase interest in reading, but some students face new vocabulary and accuracy challenges. 	Skimming can be a helpful reading strategy, but its success depends on the student's ability to use it appropriately and requires additional practice.
2	(Darmawan, 2020)	Indonesia	To investigate the effect of the skimming technique on reading comprehension of fourth-semester students in the English Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Metro in the 2019/2020 academic year.	Purposeful sampling, information gathering through observation, interviews, documentation, and surveys.	The skimming technique substantially improved reading comprehension, where most students showed familiarity with the method and obtained satisfactory test scores.	The skimming technique helps students understand the main ideas in the text, and it is recommended that teachers continue to train students in this technique and evaluate their understanding regularly.

3	(Yusuf et al., 2021)	Indonesia	To investigate if skimming and scanning strategies (SST) can enhance English reading comprehension for eleventh-grade students in recount texts, focusing on recognizing main ideas and specifics.	A quantitative experimental approach was employed, featuring a pre-test and a post-test.	There was a notable enhancement in students' reading comprehension scores, with the average score rising from 45 in the pre-test to 65 in the post-test. Statistical evaluation indicated that the enhancement was significant ($t = 4.7, p < 0.05$).	SST may be a practical resource for educators to improve students' reading abilities, even though issues like student focus and time management were observed during execution. Future studies should incorporate larger samples and investigate student responses regarding the effectiveness of SST.
4	(Harnila, 2020)	Indonesia	To explore the impact of skimming and scanning strategies on the reading understanding of pre-university learners in an IELTS prep course.	A preliminary experimental study included 30 students who learned skimming and scanning techniques over time, with data gathered from pre-tests and post-tests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There was a noticeable enhancement in students' reading comprehension results, with a pre-test average of 3.5 and a post-test average of 5.5. - A correlation coefficient of 0.68 suggests a moderate correlation between employing these techniques and enhancement in reading comprehension. 	Skimming and scanning are helpful techniques for improving reading abilities, especially for students who are getting ready for the IELTS exam, and their application is encouraged in education. Additional studies are recommended that include larger sample sizes and control groups.

5	(Fatmawan et al., 2023)	Indonesia	To evaluate how skimming and scanning methods enhance reading comprehension in Indonesian students.	Systematic Literature Review (SLR) is used to gather, evaluate, and synthesize existing skimming and scanning techniques in the literature.	Skimming and scanning are valuable techniques to boost reading comprehension, especially in speed reading and general reading development for Indonesian learners.	The research indicates that skimming and scanning methods can be incorporated into instructional approaches to enhance students' reading efficiency and understanding. It also advocates for additional studies on their use in different educational settings.
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2. SCANNING

No	Authors	Country	Research Objective	Method	Key Findings	Implication
1	(Zainal Abidin, 2020)	Indonesia	To explore the role of the scanning method in enhancing students' reading understanding.	Experimental research utilizing a pre-test and post-test design assesses reading comprehension before and after the scanning technique's implementation.	Using the scanning method greatly enhanced students' reading comprehension scores, demonstrating its efficiency in assisting students to find specific information rapidly.	The results indicate that integrating scanning methods into reading lessons can improve students' reading abilities, making them more proficient readers and improving their text comprehension.
2	(Thamrin, 2023)	Indonesia	To assess how effectively the scanning method enhances students' reading comprehension skills.	Pre-experimental research featuring a single experimental group; information gathered using pre-tests and post-tests.	Students' reading comprehension scores showed a notable enhancement, rising from an average of 4.48 in the pre-test to 9.1 in the post-test.	The research indicates that the scanning technique is valuable for improving students' reading comprehension, highlighting its possibilities for broader use in teaching English.

3	(Shafqat et al., 2023)	Pakistan	To examine the relationship between information scanning skills in text and impulsive versus reflective learning styles in Pakistani engineering students.	A quantitative method employs a questionnaire to analyze learning styles and a reading assessment to measure scanning abilities with 382 undergraduate engineering students.	A statistically significant positive relationship was discovered between impulsive and reflective learning styles and test scores in scanning information, suggesting that learning styles influence scanning abilities.	The results indicate that recognizing students' preferred learning styles can guide instructional techniques and policies, ultimately improving reading comprehension and academic success in engineering education.
4	(Mawarni & Usman, 2023)	Indonesia	To investigate students' views on scanning and skimming strategies in reading comprehension for the TOEFL exam.	Quantitative descriptive research methodology utilizing a questionnaire comprising 12 items, distributed to 30 students from the English department at Serambi Mekkah University.	93.34% of learners concurred that scanning and skimming strategies assisted them in responding to reading comprehension questions, while 96.67% deemed these methods helpful for the TOEFL exam.	The favorable response to scanning and skimming techniques indicates that these approaches should be incorporated into reading education to improve comprehension, especially for standardized assessments such as TOEFL.
5	(Hassan Ali Eltayb, 2020)	Sudan	To explore the significance and function of teaching literature in improving reading comprehension abilities at the university level.	A descriptive analysis approach was employed with a questionnaire given to 30 English teachers from different universities in Sudan, and the results were analyzed using SPSS.	Instructing literature greatly enhances reading comprehension, refines skimming and scanning methods, and boosts students' interpretation skills.	The research emphasizes the importance of including literature in language classes to enhance reading abilities, recommending that teachers create curricula that weave in literary works for improved understanding results.

Discussion

The findings in the table show that skimming and scanning methods are very effective in improving students' reading skills at the university level. The skimming technique helps students quickly grasp the gist of the text, as shown in Gulo's (2020) and Darmawan's (2020) studies, which demonstrated improved reading comprehension after applying the technique. Meanwhile, the scanning method is proven to improve students' ability to find specific information efficiently, as shown by the studies of Zainal Abidin

(2020) and Thamrin (2023). The difference in results between the skimming and scanning methods shows that the choice of method must be adjusted to the learning objectives to understand the reading subject or find specific information.

In addition, challenges in applying these two methods, such as lack of basic reading skills, little practice, and time constraints, must be addressed. The proposals put forward in this study include organized training and digital technology to help master these reading techniques. This statement also aligns with the recommendations of Yusuf et al. (2021) and Mawarni & Usman (2023), who emphasized the importance of using task-based methods and technological support to increase effectiveness in reading learning.

Some of the key themes that emerged from these studies include :

1. Effectiveness in Time Management

One of the main advantages is the efficiency of skimming and scanning methods, which saves time when searching for important information in academic texts. Several studies have shown that students trained to use these methods can find the main idea and specific information more quickly than those who use the traditional way of reading the entire text. For example, a study conducted by Fatmawan (2023) showed that using these techniques in EFL students increased reading efficiency by 40% without degrading the quality of their comprehension. (Fatmawan et al., 2023).

2. Improved Comprehension Tactics

Skimming and scanning techniques act as strategies for speed reading and support students in improving their analytical comprehension skills. Research by Santoso et al. (2020) showed that students who mastered these skills tended to be more effective in conceptualizing outlines and linking information between paragraphs than those who were not trained. This suggests that this method can be taken as a first step to understanding more complex texts. (Santoso, D., Rahmawati, F., & Prasetyo, 2020).

3. Application in EFL/ESL Contexts

In several studies, skimming and scanning methods have proven to be successfully applied in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) or ESL (English as a Second Language) contexts. For example, a study by Fatmawati (2023) showed that non-native English-speaking students felt more confident when reading academic literature after being trained with these techniques. In various cultural and linguistic contexts, the flexibility of this technique is an advantage, as it does not require overly complex adaptations for implementation. (Fatmawan et al., 2023).

4. Integration with Digital Tools

Technological developments also play a role in integrating skimming and scanning techniques with digital tools such as reading apps and online learning platforms. In a study conducted by (Meidina & Kasmawati, 2022) Students who utilized AI-based platforms for reading practice showed significantly improved reading speed and accuracy in identifying key information compared to the control group, which only reads manually.

CONCLUSION

The systematic review shows that skimming and scanning techniques effectively enhance reading skills in university students. Both approaches enhance understanding and productivity, enabling students to engage with academic materials more adeptly. Issues like uneven basic reading abilities and lack of practice emphasize the necessity of incorporating structured training and digital resources into educational programs. These results underline the necessity of implementing creative methods in teaching reading

skills to fulfill higher education requirements. Future studies should examine these approaches in various educational environments to enhance their relevance and efficiency.

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It is recommended that additional research be conducted with a larger sample size and diverse educational backgrounds to test the robustness and adaptability of these two techniques in various learning contexts. Lecturers should incorporate targeted training on skimming and scanning techniques into the curriculum, with periodic evaluations to assess students' understanding. The use of digital learning platforms such as interactive reading apps and AI-based software should be expanded to support students' independent practice, and comparative research across countries could be conducted to explore how differences in cultural and educational contexts affect the effectiveness of these techniques.

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