

ENGLISH LEARNERS' STRATEGIES OF LEARNING READING COMPREHENSION ACROSS DIFFERENT GENDERS

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Abstract: This article presents English learners' strategies of learning reading comprehension across genders. The aims of this study was to know the intensity of the reading strategy used by second semester students of University of Islam Malang and to know the reading strategies used the most by male and female students of University of Islam Malang. This research employed quantitative approach. The sample of this study was 40 students of English education department that consist of 20 male students and 20 female students. The finding showed the intensity strategy that used by students from three categories were N = 33 students with average high score (GLOB: M = 4.22; PROB: M = 4.53; SUP: M = 4.19). Meanwhile, the strategies that frequently used by the male students were (GLOB: M = 4.35; PROB: M = 4.45; SUP: M = 4.20) and female students (GLOB: M = 4.97; PROB: M = 4.56; SUP: M = 4.21) with total students most used strategy were male 18 and female 15. Male students frequently employed the approach of double-checking their knowledge whenever they encountered new information, read broad information fast in the text and ask dense questions to find answers in the book while, female students used the text's keyword to comprehend what they read, read the material twice to determine the relationship between the information and only read the opening and conclusion before reading the entire text. Based on the research findings, the researcher concluded that most of the students were classified as high strategy usage of Global Reading Strategy, Problem Solving Strategy and Support Reading Strategy. Meanwhile, male and female students had some similarities and differences in utilizing those three categories in comprehending the text.

Key Words: Reading strategy, Gender students

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the inputs, it is a crucial aspect of language acquisition. Reading is beneficial for language acquisition, according to Harmer (2007). By reading, the students can get knowledge from everything they read. They gain more information as they read more. As in general, reading requires an understanding the content of a reading. It is not uncommon for some students to experience difficulties in reading comprehension. Many students can read well,

but when asked to summarize a material, they struggle, according to Usman, Fata, and Pratiwi (2018). It might happen because the students only read word by word without knowing the meaning.

Reading strategies are really needed in language learning process. Based on Chamot and O'Malley (1994), there are three of reading strategies; 1.) Metacognitive strategies, 2.) Cognitive strategies, and 3.) Socio-affective strategies. In addition, the following are the three categories of reading strategies according to Mokhtari, et al., (2002); 1.) Global Reading Strategies (GLOB), 2.) Problem Solving Strategies (PROB), and 3.) Support Reading Strategies (SUP).

As a result of the studies, there have been many researchers comparing students' strategies in learning reading comprehension. Recent studies conducted by several researchers such as Shehadah (2015), Anantasa (2016), Nurohman (2018), and Gabriella (2018) suggest that using some reading strategies will help the readers to comprehend the text completely. Mistar, Zuhairi & Yanti (2016) stated that applying reading strategies of predicting, text mapping, and summarizing drills the students to activate their content schemata as they will have to utilize their prior knowledge of the text topic so that they will be able to make an accurate prediction of the text content. It can be said that implementing reading strategies can be an effective way to achieve better reading comprehension and also the students can highly be motivated to complete reading tasks (Shehadah, 2015). It means that reading strategies take an important role in understanding the text especially for the students in the process of learning in the classroom.

Besides that, the "gender gap" is visible in many elements of learning, including interest, attitude, needs, beliefs, and motivation, gender could have a dominant effect on learning in general (Oda, & Abdul-Kadhim, 2017). In the meantime, differences in a learner's gender identity usually result in differences in cognitive activities such as reading (Roswati & Prawira, 2018).

Therefore, the researcher finally decided to conduct a research to know the intensity of the reading strategy used by students and to know the reading strategies used the most by male and female students in second semester of the English Department at University of Islam Malang.

METHOD

This study applied a quantitative research principles. There were five classes from the second semester of English Department of University of Islam Malang chosen as the sample of this study and the total were 125 students. The researcher chose the participants randomly and only took 40 (20 male and 20 female) students as the participants.

In this study, the researcher used online questionnaire by Google Form. Initially, a questionnaire utilizing Google Form to collect the data. The validity of this questionnaire was tested using SPSS. Then, to collect the data the researcher chose the high score and divided the data into three categories (GLOB, PROB, and SUP). Based on Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995) for general learning strategy usage, Mokhtari and Sheorey categorised high strategies as 3.50 or higher, medium 2.5–3.49, and low 2.49 and lower. The utilization levels served as a useful reference point for interpreting the score averages.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The first research question examines the types of reading strategies used by all students. This is done by obtaining the average of the subscales (Global, Problem Solving and Support Strategies) in SORS. The scores for each subscale are added up and divided by the number of items in each. The mean for each subscale in the questionnaire represents the average frequency that learners use the given strategy subscale while reading academic material. The SORS results showed that 4.53% of students reported high use of Problem Solving Reading Strategies. As for the Global Reading Strategy, 4.22% reported high use, and 4.19% of students reported the same Support Reading Strategy media use (see Table 1). These findings are interesting because they suggest that, although students report high use of overall strategies, they still need to increase their use of specific strategies as will be seen below. For this reason, they cannot be considered as fully effective readers of academic material.

Then, the intensity of strategy used by students from three categories were Global Reading Strategies namely students used their personal experiences and background knowledge with the high mean average was 4.22. Furthermore, the students attempted to restore concentration in Problem Solving Strategies when the text was tough, with a mean average of 4.53. Meanwhile in Support Reading Strategy, the students read the text repeatedly to find relationships between information with the high mean average was 4.19. Because the “gender gap” is visible in many elements of learning, such as interest, attitude, needs, beliefs, and motivation, gender could have a dominant effect on learning in general (Oda, & Abdul-Kadhim, 2017).

Tables 1: Description of the Data by Students

	<u>GLOB</u>	<u>PROB</u>	<u>SUP</u>	<u>N</u>
	M	M	M	
High	4.22	4.53	4.19	33
Medium	3.49	3.24	3.47	7
Low	-	-	-	0

Source: Created by author for paper

M, mean; N, number

Based on the table 1, the researcher concluded that from three categories of reading strategies used, there were 33 students identified as high strategy usage. There were 7 students classified as medium strategy usage. Besides that, there were no students grouped as low strategy usage. From the data obtained, there were more students classified as high strategy usage than medium and low strategy usage. So, almost the students used reading strategies to their reading comprehension.

The second research question was to know the reading strategies used the most by male and female students in second semester of the English Department at University of Islam Malang. The result showed of the high score students based male and female. The high average score of male students (GLOB: M = 4.35;

PROB: M = 4.45; SUP: M = 4.20) and female students (GLOB: M = 4.97; PROB: M = 4.56; SUP: M = 4.21) with total students most used strategy were male 18 and female 15 (see Table 2).

Table 2: Description of the Data by Male and Female Students

Strategy			M
GLOB	Male	I check my understand when I come across new information	4.35
	Female	I use context clues to helped bedtter understanding what I reading	4.97
PROB	Male	I try to get back to trace when I lose concentration	4.45
	Female	I try to get back to trace when I lose concentration	4.56
SUP	Male	While reading, I do skimming	4.20
	Female	I again read and forth in the text then find relationship both idea in it	4.21

Source: Created by author for paper

M, mean; N, number

Based on the high mean in the table 2, male and female students had some similarities and diffirences in utilizing those three catagories in comprehending the text. Globlal Reading Strategy there are male students frequently employed the approach of double-checking their knowledge whenever they encountered new information, and female students used the text's keyword to comprehend what they read. Furthermore in Problem Solving Strategy, have similarities among male and female students were trying to get back to trace when they lose focus. Meanwhile in Support Reading Strategy, male students were reading general information quickly while reading the text and female students read the text repeatedly to find the relationship among the information.

In this part, the researcher interpreted the result of the research finding. This study was conducted to investigate the English learners' strategies of learning reading comprehension across genders. According to the data description above, it showed that the intensity of the students in using reading strategies was high. The result can be seen from the difference of mean score and compared the number of students. Then, the finding of this study was correlated with some experts' elaborated theories. It is proved that there are some differences between high-proficient and medium/low-proficient readers in terms of using reading strategies and the relationship between reading strategies and reading ability (Cheng, 2000; Oxford, 2001; Zhang, 2008). They noted that reading strategies gave the readers huge advantages such as reading ability, easiness in understanding the text, and helping in answering questions on a reading text. Another important study conducted by Zhang (2001) reported that the use of some strategies contributes to having a good level of reading comprehension. Then, the finding of the study by Shmais (2002) was in line with this present study and some experts which stated that the students who used a number of reading strategies got easiness to answer multiple questions on a reading text, high motivated, and comprehended the text quickly.

Hence, from the explanation above, it was implied that implementing reading strategies will ease the students to comprehend the text. The result of this study strengthened the previous researches that using some reading strategies gave positive response to the students in the process of learning reading in the

class. All in all, implementing reading strategies in learning reading was useful for the students' reading comprehension.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the research findings, the researcher concluded that there are three categories of reading strategy (GLOB, PROB and SUP) N = 33 students with average high score, N = 7 students with average medium score there were no students with low score. There were more students classified as high strategy usage than medium and low strategy usage. Meanwhile, the high average score of male students and female students with total students most used strategy were male 18 and female 15. Then, there were some disparities among male and female students in three categories of reading strategies. Male students frequently employed the approach of double-checking their knowledge whenever they encountered new information, but female students used the text's keyword to comprehend what they read. Furthermore, male students read broad information fast in the text, whereas female students read the material twice to determine the relationship between the information. Meanwhile, male students ask dense questions in order to find answers in the book, whereas female students only read the opening and conclusion before reading the entire text.

There were some suggestions. The first suggestion was for teachers/lecturers, they can guide the students to use reading strategy which is suitable for the students themselves and can improve students' reading comprehension based on the different gender. For the students/learners are able to increase their reading comprehension skill with the strategies they often use in their reading process. Additionally, they can also explore the other reading strategies in helping them comprehend the texts. Lastly, for the future researchers, this research can become one of the references for future scholars who wish to conduct similar study. In addition, further researchers can also obtain more data without time constraints and conduct a research directly even though using the online system from Google Form.

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