

EXPLORING READING STRATEGIES USED BY HIGH ACHIEVER

Muhammad Waspul Hasyim¹, Yahya Alaydrus², Nuse Aliyah Rahmati³

Universitas Islam Malang^{1, 2, 3}

21601073032@unisma.ac.id¹, alaydrus@unisma.ac.id²

Abstract: Reading activity is important to find information by comprehending the message originated from a written source as an active process in comprehend the message. To comprehend the text effectively, it is necessary for the reader to apply strategies that suit their reading needs. Therefore, the researcher aims to study reading strategies implemented by high achiever students. This research implemented using descriptive qualitative design to answer the research questions on 3 high achiever students from 8th-semester at the university of Islam Malang. The data for this research were collected with the use of WhatsApp voice notes with Semi-structured interviews as the instrument. The data are analyzed using qualitative analysis that consists of data reduction, grouping, coding, and interpretation to get the data as a whole. The result indicates that there are 15 kinds of strategies implemented by high achiever students such prior knowledge, skimming, analyzing, summarizing, scanning, predicting, observing, planning, reflecting, reviewing, motivating, asking questions, discussion, asking opinion, cooperation, and decoding. High achiever students implements reading strategies from pre-reading to post-reading strategies. In terms of the frequency of reading strategies, the study found that the students tend to use more cognitive strategies followed by metacognitive and social strategies, with the least used strategies were affective and compensatory strategies. The study suggest the implementation of various suitable reading strategies that fits reading needs as well as considering pre-reading and post-reading techniques. The study also suggest studying both high and low achiever to understand their differences in the use of reading strategies.

Key Words: : *Reading comprehension, strategies, high achievers.*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is important but not an easy skill to master especially for EFL learners. Goodman (1988) stated that reading is a receptive language process that starts with a linguistic surface which represented and encoded by a writer in the text and ends with interpretation of meaning which the reader constructs after reading. Moreover, Castles, Rastle & Nation (2018) stated that reading is the composed product of linguistic and cognitive process on written language which involves interaction with the background knowledge, textual features, and reading purpose.

Thus, can be stated that reading is not an easy skill to master as its process requires the reader to have certain level of skills to comprehend the text. In term of English language reading, Brown (2003) stated that reading is a receptive language process that initiated with language that written by an individual in the text and continued by interpretation of meaning by the reader after reading, thus reading in foreign language requires sufficient competence in a language.

Reading comprehension is the goal of reading activity, the reason why the reader read is to understand the message in the text. According to Nunan, (2003) the main purpose reading activity is to comprehend the content of the text. Without understanding the message in the text, reading would serve no purpose as understanding text is the most important aspect in reading (Hall, 2012). There are generally five aspects that influence the effectiveness of reading comprehension, those are phonological and phonemic awareness, word decoding and phonics, fluency, vocabulary comprehension (Peart, 2017).

Reading comprehension is not an easy task, it requires understanding in both meaning and the context. As stated by Oberholzer (2005) that it is easy to just read the text but it is not that easy to comprehend the text. Applying reading strategies has already been well-known to be a good step for students to enhance their reading comprehension. According to Oxford (1990), direct strategies consist of memory strategies, cognitive strategies and compensation strategies. Meanwhile, indirect strategies are composed of metacognitive strategies, affective strategies and social strategies. The Oxford framework (1990) and the O'Malley and Chamot framework (1990) are two commonly used classifications that overlap. The framework (OMCF) developed by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) uses three categories to categorize strategies in their context: cognitive strategies, metacognitive strategies, and emotional and/or affective strategies.

Cognitive strategies include those that specifically influence and improve learning on incoming information. For example, summarizing and repeating information would be included in this category. Metacognitive techniques are the next category. Both approaches concentrate on the relationship between the learner and the text and include analysis and evaluation strategies (Oxford, 1990). Readers

' comprehension of the text is most frequently mentioned in the sense of reading, monitoring and evaluation such as when comprehension breaks down (monitoring) and when their strategy uses and their reading results improve (evaluation).

The next category is social and affective in relation to the engagement of others with respect to the teaching task or the focus on the mental condition, to "ensure that a learning activity is effective or to reduce anxiety" (Oxford, 1990). The Oxford Framework (OXF) classifies learning strategies differently from OMCF, although the meanings of the strategies themselves have many differences. As one thing, OXF splits social / affective approaches into two different categories, which require different motivations and procedures. Two other categories are added: memory strategies and compensation strategies. Memory strategies apply to techniques that help to make connections so that memory can be mentally processed for a longer time (Oxford, 1990). Semantic mapping and grouping together are included in this category. Compensation strategies are used to assist students in bridging gaps in knowledge such as lack of vocabulary or insufficient grammar (Oxford, 1990). Learners who face unfamiliar vocabulary can use contextual cues for their reading assignments to understand words or to use the dictionary to find meanings

Every student has unique strategies based on different characteristics such as English proficiency level as it is reported that frequent readers used more global online reading strategies, while most of the people tend to read text online (Alkhateeb, 2021). Other than that, Ali (2019) found that students with intermediate and advanced levels of English proficiency did not differ significantly in using the online reading strategies. In terms of online learning Rianto (2021) found that the students used support strategies more frequently than global strategies during the pandemic, although the students differed significantly in using the overall and categorical strategies, they did not have differences in using some of the individual strategies.

There are several studies that focused on the reading strategies used by students in comprehending the text. For instance, Roslan (2013) aims to explore reading strategies used by high achiever students at the tertiary level. The result

shows that both of the ESL high and low achievers frequently used certain reading strategies to grasp the meaning of the text. However, high achiever ESL students frequently used certain reading strategies to grasp the meaning of the text and also reported to use post-reading strategies as their distinctive remark compared to other students. Another study by Fauziah (2017) aims to understand how often the students use of Global strategies, Problem solving strategies, and Support strategies employment in comprehending English texts. It was indicated that the senior high school students used Problem solving strategies more frequently than Global strategies and Support strategies. The finding also revealed that there was difference in reading strategies applied by the students with different levels of reading proficiency. Furthermore, Ali (2019) aims to provide a review of literature on 27 studies on the teaching of reading strategies for ESL/EFL learners. It was found that students with intermediate and advanced levels of English proficiency did not differ significantly in using the online reading strategies. Furthermore, the authors discuss and conclude the article by suggesting to ESL/EFL teachers some teaching strategies to be applied in the reading lesson to improve the ESL/EFL students' use of reading strategies.

The gap found in these studies are the absence of interview that cover unique strategies that can be used to differentiate strategies used by common students and high achievers and did not specifically mention what kinds of reading that the students apply their reading strategies. By considering the importance of exploring how reading strategies are implemented, it is necessary to understand how high achievers in reading implement their reading strategies. Therefore, the researcher aims to conduct the study of reading strategies implemented by high achiever students using qualitative design to cover unique strategies that differs high achievers with common students.

METHOD

This study was conducted using descriptive qualitative research design to find out the how high achievers in reading implement reading strategies in

advanced reading text in. The study was conducted on the high achievers in reading course at the third semester students at University of Islam Malang.

To collect the data, the researcher used semi structural interview about what kinds of reading strategies used by high achievers. As the instruments is in semi-structured interview, the researcher provided additional question to make the information clear and detailed enough for the result of the study. There are 5 high achievers suitable for this study with the criteria of being third semester students and have the mean of Reading I, II and III score at minimum 3.5, as well as willing to participate in this study. The researcher selected the third semester students because they have finished reading III course and they are focused on advanced reading course in third semester but not yet focused on academic reading, so they have more strategies compared to their underclassmen, but not focused on academic text like their upperclassmen. The researcher only used 5 participants as interviewee because it is sufficient for qualitative study and with a smaller number of participants the researcher can utilize more time to gather more in-depth information on the students instead of general information from a lot of students. The data collection was done by asking the representatives of 3rd semester students at in English department about any high achiever who met the criteria of this study who are willing to participate in this study, The researcher gives the copy of research instruments for 3 days prior to the interview so they can be well prepared for the interview. The students participating in the interview were be compensated. The interview session is expected to be done in a week with one session lasted for approximately 30 minutes.

The data analyzed in descriptive qualitative analysis based on Creswell (2006) that consist of data reduction, data management, interpretation and drawing conclusion. the analyzed interview was presented in the findings by using descriptive query analysis. In this study, the data from the interview noted into the transcripts for preparation, then the researcher begin analyzing the data by reducing the data so only the important and valid data are included. Then, the researcher manage the data by using coding and grouping technique, the coding is to label the

transcripts based on the participants, and grouping is to assemble transcripts with the similar theme or responses. The next thing the researcher do is interpreting the data descriptively and then drawing conclusion for the result of the study.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

There are various strategies implemented by each high achiever students in enhancing reading comprehension. The result of the study presents the analysis shows that there are 15 kinds of strategies implemented by high achiever students that includes using prior knowledge, skimming, analyzing, summarizing, scanning, predicting, observing, planning, reflecting, reviewing, motivating, asking questions, discussion, asking opinion, cooperating with others, and decoding unknown vocabularies. Those strategies also categorized into cognitive, metacognitive, social, affective, and compensatory strategies. The brief explanation is explained in the following table.

Table 4.1 Reading strategies used by high achiever students

Strategies	Users	Function
Using Prior Knowledge	I1, I2, I3	To confirm the information in the text with prior knowledge and experience
Skimming	I1, I2	To read faster by getting the important part of the text
Analyzing	I1, I3	To reconstruct information of the text into conclusion
Summarizing	I2	To compile several ideas of the text into brief explanation
Scanning	I3	To read faster and save time
Predicting content	I1	To predict the meaning of unknown words and terms
	I3	To predict the content of the text based on prior knowledge
Observing	I3	To compare experience with what is written in the text
Planning	I3	To be prepared with the content by collecting relevant information
Reflecting	I1	To compare the result of the first reading attempt with more careful approach
Reviewing	I1, I3	To validify the understanding to the understanding of others
	I2	To validify the understanding of the text with prior knowledge
Motivating	I2	To create more comfortable way of reading
Asking questions	I1, I2	To ask unknown information to those with more understanding

Discussion	I1	To create better comprehension by considering the ideas of others
Asking opinion	I2	To help comprehension in the difficult times
	I3	To gain recommendation of good reading material
Cooperating with others	I1	To make reading task easier
Predicting words	I1, I3	Adjusting strategies based on reading situation, especially related to time

The data above explains that each students mostly applied the same strategies for the same reasons, but there are some strategies such as predicting, reviewing and discussion that are applied for different reasons. This result is in line with the theory proposed by Oxford (1990) that there are direct and indirect strategies in reading, direct strategies consisting of memory strategies, cognitive strategies and compensation strategies. Meanwhile, indirect strategies are composed of metacognitive strategies, affective strategies and social strategies. Metacognitive strategies in reading already known material, paying attention, finding out about language learning, organizing, setting goals and objectives, identifying the purpose of a language task, planning for a language task, seeking practice opportunities, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. This is also in line with the study by Rianto (2021) who stated that there are strategies that commonly used to enhance reading comprehension, namely memory strategies, cognitive, metacognitive, affective, social and compensatory strategies.

The result also confirms that the only strategy used by high achiever categorized as memory strategy is using prior knowledge. However, this strategy is used by all high achievers in this study. This result is in consistent with the statement of Peart (2017) who defined that reading comprehension as a process in where a reader builds and interpret meaning while interacts with the text through combinations of prior knowledge and experience to process the information.

In terms of cognitive strategies there are five kinds of strategies implemented by students namely Skimming, Analyzing, Summarizing, Scanning, Predicting. The result shows that the most frequently used cognitive strategies is prediction strategies that aimed to predict information that might be contained in the text using prior knowledge. Followed by analyzing, summarizing that are used

to draft a conclusion from many information and then skimming and scanning in the last two spot that used for fast reading. This is in line with the study by Marzuki (2018) who explained that cognitive strategies in reading identified are repeating, getting the idea quickly, using resources for receiving and sending messages, reasoning deductively, analyzing expressions, analyzing contrastively, translating, transferring, taking notes, summarizing and highlighting. As stated by Oxford (1990) that cognitive strategies include those that specifically influence and improve learning on incoming information. For example, summarizing and repeating information would be included in this category.

Other kinds of the strategies that frequently used by high achievers are metacognitive strategies. The strategies categorized as metacognitive strategies that are found in this study are Observing, Planning, Reflecting, and Reviewing. In this study, observing, reflecting and planning only used by one student, observing is used by the student who wants to compare experience in the real world with those that are written in books or text, while reflecting intended for getting better method of reading based on the experience of previous reading activities. For planning, it was intended to prepare as much information before reading. In terms of reviewing, this strategies is the most frequent metacognitive strategy that applied for confirming information with both prior knowledge and knowledge of others. This is congruent with Rianto (2021) who stated that metacognitive strategies in reading already known material, paying attention, finding out about language learning, organizing, setting goals and objectives, identifying the purpose of a language task, planning for a language task, seeking practice opportunities, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. Moreover, Efnawati and Mukhayar (2020) stated that metacognitive strategies are the arrangement of reading activities by setting plan and purposes carefully by identifying textual characteristics, type of text, and context.

In terms of affective strategies, the only strategy implemented by high achiever was self-motivation which also only used during difficult times only. As stated by Oxford (1990) that affective strategy is related to emotions as

individuals try to calm down their anxiety and encourage themselves. Furthermore, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) stated that affective strategies is also called emotional strategies that focused on enhancing emotional aspect to be better in any activities don by individuals.

Other kinds of strategies used by the high achievers was social strategies that involves the interaction with others while reading such as asking questions, asking opinions, discussion and cooperation. In this study, it is found that the students only ask questions when they have difficulties in understanding the texts while asking opinion only done by one student to get recommendation from others about the good books. Furthermore, discussion and cooperation also only mentioned once by students, as discussion is used to overcome reading difficulties, and cooperation is used for making reading task faster by splitting the jobs. The use of social strategies is in line with the statement by Septiarini and Rahmat (2018) that reading comprehension is a process where a reader interacts with the text through prior knowledge, experience, stance as well as social interactions and communication. Furthermore, Oxford (1990) also stated that social strategy is a strategy that involves other people to cooperate, and emphasize with others.

The last kinds of strategies implemented by high achiever students was compensatory strategies. In this study, a high achiever aims to find out unknown vocabulary by predicting the words based on the content of the text. This is in line with statement of Marzuki (2018) that compensatory strategy implemented to acquire new language by comprehending other elements around it. Moreover, Oxford (1990) also stated that compensation strategies are used to assist students in bridging gaps in knowledge such as lack of vocabulary or insufficient grammar by using contextual cues for their reading assignments to understand words or to use the dictionary to find meanings.

In answering the second research questions, the researcher count the frequency of strategies based on the types of strategies such as cognitive, metacognitive, affective, social and compensatory. The data are as follows.

Table 4.2 Frequency of Reading Strategies

Strategies	Types	Users			Frequency
		I1	I2	I3	
Using Prior Knowledge	Memory	✓	✓	✓	3
Skimming	Cognitive	✓	✓		2
Analyzing	Cognitive	✓		✓	3
Summarizing	Cognitive	✓	✓		2
Scanning	Cognitive			✓	1
Predicting content	Cognitive	✓	✓	✓	3
Observing	Metacognitive			✓	1
Planning	Metacognitive			✓	1
Reflecting	Metacognitive		✓		1
Reviewing	Metacognitive	✓	✓	✓	3
Motivating	Affective		✓		1
Asking questions	Social	✓	✓		2
Discussion	Social	✓			1
Asking opinion	Social			✓	1
Cooperating with others	Social	✓			1
Predicting vocabulary	Compensatory		✓		2
Total					
Memory	3				
Cognitive	10				
Metacognitive	7				
Affective	1				
Social	5				
Compensatory	2				

Based on the data above, the most frequent strategies implemented by high achievers is cognitive strategies that are implemented in 13 different situation by high achievers followed by metacognitive strategies for 7 times, social strategies 5 times, and the least are compensatory and affective strategies that only implemented once. This findings is in line with the study by Efnawati and Mukhayar (2020) who also found the dominant use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, however, this study also found frequent use of compensatory strategies implemented by students. This is due to the students in Efnawati and Mukhayar (2020) was social science students and not English major students who already have larger amounts of English vocabulary. Moreover, This study found that high achievers implements various strategies in reading comprehension which is in line with the previous study by Roslan (2013) who found that both of the ESL high and low achievers frequently used cognitive, social and metacognitive strategies to grasp the meaning of the text. However, high achiever ESL students also reported to use post-reading strategies as their distinctive remark compared to other students.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The result of the study indicated that there are 16 kinds of strategies implemented by high achiever students that includes cognitive strategies like skimming, analyzing, summarizing, scanning, and predicting content, metacognitive strategies such as observing, planning, reflecting, and reviewing. The study also found the use of affective strategies such as self-motivation, social strategies like asking questions, discussion, asking opinion, cooperating with others, as well as compensatory strategies by decoding unknown vocabularies and memory strategies by using prior knowledge. The study also found that high achiever students implements reading strategies from pre-reading to post-reading strategies. In terms of the frequency of reading strategies, the study found that the students tend to use more cognitive strategies followed by metacognitive and social strategies, with the least used strategies were affective and compensatory strategies. The study suggest the implementation of various suitable reading strategies that fits reading needs as well as considering pre-reading and post-reading techniques. Moreover, learning session where students share about reading strategies is important to understand how high achiever students read. The study also suggest studying both high and low achiever to understand their differences in the use of reading strategies.

REFERENCES

- Al-khateeb, H. M. (2021). Reading Strategies Used by Undergraduate University General Education Courses for Students in US and Qatar. *Reading Psychology*, 42(6), 663-679.
- Ali, A. M., & Razali, A. B. (2019). A Review of Studies on Cognitive and Metacognitive Reading Strategies in Teaching Reading Comprehension for ESL/EFL Learners. *English Language Teaching*, 12(6), 94-111.
- Castles, A., Rastle, K., Nation, K. (2018). Ending the Reading Wars: Reading Acquisition From Novice to Expert. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 19, 5–51. doi:10.1177/1529100618772271
- Efnawati, Y., M. (2020). Exploring the Reading Strategies Used by Male and Female Students. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, 539.

- Fauziah, Z (2017). Reading Strategies Used by Senior High School Students to Comprehend English Texts. *Proceedings of Social Sciences, Humanities and Economics Conference (SoSHEC 2017)*
- Goodman, K. (1988). *The Reading Process*. Cambridge University Press.
- Guo, Y., Roehrig, A. D., & Williams, R. S. (2011). The Relation of Morphological Awareness and Syntactic Awareness to Adults' Reading Comprehension : Is Vocabulary Knowledge a Mediating Variable ?
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X11403086>
- Hall, L. A. (2012). The role of reading identities and reading abilities in students discussions about texts and comprehension strategies. *Journal of Research Literacy*, 44(3), 239-272. <https://doi.org/doi:10.1177/1086296X12445370>
- Nunan, D. 2003. (2003). *Practical English Language Teaching*. Mc Graw-Hill Inc.
- Oktarani, L. (2015). Improving Student' Reading Comprehension By Uusing Inquiry Based Learning. *Center of Language Innovation Journal of Linguistics and Language Teaching*, 2(1).
- Peart, S. M. (2017). L2 Reading: Strategies and Gender Preferences in the Foreign Language Classroom. *Lenguaje y Textos*, 45, 17-27.
<https://doi.org/http://doi.org/10.4995/lyt.2017.7437>
- Rianto, A. (2021). Indonesian EFL university students' metacognitive online reading strategies before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 8(1), 16-33.
- Ruddell. (1994). *Theoretical Models and Processes of Reading*. International Reading Association.
- Septiarini, T., Rahmat, A., D. (2018). The Relationship between Reading Habits and Reading Comprehension of English Department in UNTIRTA. *Journal of English Language Studies*, 3(2), 178–191.

STATEMENT

I hereby complete the contents of my thesis in the form of an article, which was completed on July 14, 2023 and was signed by my first supervisor.

Malang, July 10th, 2023
Advisor I,

Yahya Alaydrus, S.Pd., M.Pd.
NPP. 1910200021