

INVESTIGATION OF STUDENTS' CHALLENGES IN LITERAL READING AND THE OVERCOMING STRATEGIES

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ABSTRACT

Literal reading ability is a fundamental skill in mastering English for EFL students in Indonesia. This study aims to identify the major challenges faced by students in learning literal reading and the strategies they use to overcome these challenges. Using a mixed-method approach, data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, and the exam scores of second-semester students in the English Education Program at the University of Islam Malang. The results showed that motivation and interest were the most dominant challenges. However, most respondents applied strategies such as studying with peers, using digital dictionaries, and accessing English content on social media. This study recommends the active role of educators in fostering a supportive learning environment and guiding students in the use of effective reading strategies.

Keywords: literal reading, reading challenges, reading strategies, EFL, learning motivation

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the essential skills in English language learning, particularly for EFL students in Indonesia. Literal reading literacy enables students to understand explicit information from texts accurately. However, many students face obstacles such as low motivation, limited vocabulary, and difficulty in understanding sentence structures. This research aims to uncover these challenges and explore the strategies employed by students to overcome them.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the challenging factors that influence students' literal reading comprehension.
2. To determine whether these factors influence the students' literal reading scores.
3. To explore the strategies used by students to overcome the challenges.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a mixed-methods approach. The respondents consist of 30 second-semester students. Data were collected through closed-ended questionnaires (Likert scale), literal reading exam scores, and semi-structured interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS version 27, while qualitative analysis was based on interview transcripts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The questionnaire results showed that interest and motivation were the most significant challenges (mean = 4.29), followed by anxiety (4.18) and word recognition speed (3.79). Regression analysis indicated that these factors did not significantly affect literal reading exam scores. Strategies used by students include:

- Studying with peers
- Using online dictionaries
- Watching English content
- Participating in study groups

These findings align with cognitive and affective strategy theories such as those proposed by Guthrie & Wigfield and Dweck, emphasizing the importance of mindset and motivation in learning.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The main challenge in literal reading for students lies in their lack of motivation and interest. Although these factors do not significantly affect their exam scores, they still need to be addressed in the learning process. It is recommended that lecturers apply engaging learning methods and encourage collaborative interaction to foster student motivation and engagement.

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