UNDERSTANDING READING ENGLISH TEXT THROUGH STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY OF PGRI PALEMBANG

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A B S T R A C T

The goals of this study were to understand more about students' learning strategies for understanding English reading content and to discover why did students employed those strategies. Students in the second semester of the English Education Study Program at the University of PGRI Palembang participated in this research. A qualitative descriptive method was used in this study. A semi-structured interview was also used as a primary source of data. Data collection, data reduction, data display, and data verification were all utilized to examine the information. The data revealed that students used a variety of strategies to perceive the English reading text. Besides, habitual translation was the most commonly used reading strategy through students, while guessing the meaning of the text was the least commonly used reading strategy. Additionally, this study found through several reasons.

Introduction

Reading is important and among the languages to be understood by learners for comprehension of text meaning well (Connors-Tadros, 2014). Nowadays, reading activities is extremely important to our live in Era 4.0. Students are able to enrich some information from reading practice. Besides, students must be proficient in reading because it makes it easier for students to interpret and understand the substance or text. Reading strategies are essential because they assist readers in comprehending, analyzing, and remembering the material that they are reading. These strategies assist readers in engaging with the text, making sense of the material, and connecting what they are reading to previous experience and knowledge. As noted by Gambrell, Malloy, and Mazzoni (2007) that Reading entails deriving interpretation from texts, using texts information to develop the understanding of concepts, and ideas that effectively communicated both orally and in writing. Thus, in reading activities need comprehension seriously.

Unfortunately, some students still have various problem in practicing the skills of English. As the example of reading and speaking practice, Wathoni, Purnama, Harianto, Wadi, Jaelani, Ningsih (2022) concluded that insufficient vocabulary, their slow reading of the text, stuck in a difficult section of the text, and starting to work in a rush caused the students to fall behind schedule. Other problems also stated by Octaviana (2021) that when speakers want to perform at their best, they frequently encounter some difficulties. They occasionally also had no words to convey. As a consequence, they have no idea how to keep their speech going. Therefore, understanding is important to create good comprehension.

Comprehension refers to the operation of interpreting knowledge from material to thoughts of the reader. It is also how students capture and obtain specifics from the data. students are able to read, but they do not understand the text's message. This statement is supported by Schmitt (2011), teachers tend to complain that their students can read but

do not understand what they are reading. Thus, students are good at reading but students cannot understand and interpret the information from the text. This phenomenon is crucial to be managed by both teachers and students. Therefore, the most important aspect of reading ability is comprehension. (Nation, 2019). The goal of reading is not only for accomplishing but also for comprehending the content.

In terms of comprehending reading texts, EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students require some approaches in order to enable them to comprehend the knowledge or understand as from text they've already read. The text of English tends to offer complex information and need good concepts of understanding. As a result, students should need some strategies to critically comprehend the entire text. Reading strategies are crucial for enhancing students' knowledge and understanding (McKown & Barnett, 2007). Besides, reading strategies are considered to be areas where students' comprehension and reading skills have received special attention. (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). According to Huang (2009), effective utilization of reading strategies has been understood as an important method for improving reading comprehension. Reading comprehension strategies can help readers memorize the information, differentiate the knowledge, identify the main concept, and remark on the subject. (Cogmen & A. Seda Saracaloglu, 2009). Then, Usu and Adi (2021) agreed that implementing appropriate reading strategies creates effective learning process.

Considering the issues mentioned above, this research investigated students' reading strategies, especially for the category of good to very good predicates students in reading course in terms of second semester students, at English Education Study Program University of PGRI Palembang and to find out specific reasons for implementing the strategy.

Research Method

In this study, the researchers used qualitative method. Qualitative research methods that refer to understanding human behaviour based on differences in values, beliefs and scientific theories (Polit & Beck, 2004). Moreover, Yin (2003) also noted that qualitative method in conducting a study of the research also occurs with a focus on a person's life experience. This research was carried out at the PGRI University of Palembang. The subjects contained 15 students, mainly first semester English Education majors at the University of PGRI Palembang in Academic Year 2021/2022. In order to collect the data, researcher as well as interviewer used technique in interviewing the students. The interview was conducted in English and in Indonesian, audio-taped and straightforwardly interpreted verbatim. In support the information of the subject, the researcher utilized a demographic background study in order to get participants backgrounds involving gender, GPA, reading score, students' preferences through reading activities.

Result and Discussion

According to the research method, the researchers interviewed two questions to the students. During the interview, the researchers also used a video and voice recorder to record the students. After the study was conducted and the data was also evaluated. The researchers generated all of the findings in order to respond to the statement of the problem, in order to find out students' reading strategies and the reasons why those strategies were used by sample of students.

Students' reading strategies in comprehending English text

In this research, the researchers found that the students involved several strategies to comprehend the English text.

Table 1. Active Reading Strategies

No.	Students	Statement
1.	SS1	*"I go to the question and I find the keywords of the question and find the keywords in the text"*
2.	SS2	*"I usually focus on the first sentence and then I translate it the main idea"*
3.	SS3	*"For the first reading strategy that I usually use is just look at the first paragraph and then the last of paragraph"*
4.	SS4	*"My reading strategies are, first I look at the title and then I read a little in the first sentence of paragraph"*
5.	*SS5*	*"Sometimes, I highlight the important words but it depends on the situation"*
6.	SS6	*"I usually read the questions first, from the first until the last question. After I read the question, I read the text until the end. Then I repeat it. I just focus on the question"*
7.	SS7	*"In education, I prefer to read the question first."*
8.	SS8	*"For the comprehension, I prefer use the previewing strategy. From the strategy, I can conclude the main idea of the text"*
9	SS9	*"The reading strategies that I use to comprehend the text is skimming, scanning, previewing and predicting"*
10	SS12	*'I use a skimming strategy because it is used to quickly identify the main idea of the text"*
11	SS14	*"First of all, if the text has a question, I'm going to try to find the keyword of the questions, then I go to the text and translate it into bahasa to comprehend the sentence"*

Table 1. showed that there were eleven students used active reading strategy in comprehending the English text. Active reading strategy included focusing on the question, previewing, skimming, making notes, and identification the table of context and index. Another reading strategy also founded to this study. That was speed reading strategies. Table 2 explained in detail.

Table 2. Speed Reading Strategies

No.	Students	Statement
1.	SS10	*"So, for the strategy that I use, the first is I do a speed reading"*
2.	SS11	*"Then, the second one is fast read/speed read. I need to read a whole text quickly, because in the text it must be the unimportant information or not the part of the point"*
3.	SS13	*"For the first, I read the title and then I read the sentences one by one quickly"*

Table 2. showed that the use of speed-reading strategy by the students in comprehending the English text. The analysis of the data revealed that there were three students utilizing speed-reading strategies. The students implemented appropriate reading strategies in order to help them to comprehend the text and overcome the problem of

reading activity. The last strategy presented to this study was SQ3R. Table 3 described detail.

Table 3. SQ3R Reading Strategies

No.	Students	Statement
1.	SS1	*"The first one is read the title of the text and then I read the story, but not read the story until the end. Just the points. Then I try to understand it in general. After that, I go to the question and I find the keywords of the question and find (read) the keywords on the text and then I search the answer"*

Table 3. showed that only one student used the SQ3R reading strategies. SQ3R is the strategies included survey, question, read, recite, and review.

From the findings of this study, as the three reading strategies used by the students, the researcher concluded that most of students agreed that those strategies played an important role in students' reading activities. Additionally, the data showed that active reading was the dominant strategies used by the students during reading activity, where the total number of the samples used this strategy were eleven students. On the other hand, the less strategies used was PQ4R and critical reading strategies. There were no students used those strategies while doing reading activities.

Reason of using the strategies

Based on the data collected, it showed that the students employed some reading strategies in comprehending the English text and various reason category presented. One of the students said that "I prefer used the previewing strategy. From the strategy, I can conclude the main idea of the text". Likewise, the data showed that many of the students agreed after reading to the first sentence, students were able to get the main idea. Thus, most of student employed active reading strategy in comprehending the English text. Furthermore, the students reported that they did not want to take a lot of time to read the text and answer the question without losing the reading comprehension.

In addition, there was a student assumed the same reason with the different strategy, which the strategy was scanning. One of students mentioned "*It may require more exercise, as it does not take much time, and the scanning strategy does not make me difficult*".

Besides, several students translated the English text to the students who implemented the first language strategy, they have different reason to this action.

"*I asked my friend as a translator to translate unfamiliar words. Because English is not my first and second language.*"

"*I usually focus on the first sentence then I translated the main idea. Finally, I translated the words into bahasa in order to comprehend the paragraph.*"

"*When I found the unfamiliar words or difficult word, I highlighted and translated the text directly.*"

"*I'm going to try to find the keyword, then I go to the text and translate it into bahasa to comprehend the sentence. After that, if I found the unfamiliar word, I'm going to search it on google translate.*"

As mentioned above, the most reported strategy used by the students was searching for the unfamiliar words definition and translating the text into the students' first language. On the other hand, one of the students claimed that translating would take much time by asking the translator or opening dictionary. The student argued "*I don't*

want to take a long time to open the dictionary or ask the translator. So I just want to guess the word by my perception".

Reading strategies played an important role in improving students' understanding (Küçükolu, 2013). The researcher discovered three reading strategies that students used to understand the English text in this study. Students employed a variety of strategies. The strategies used by the students in order to comprehend the text's information. Most students used the active reading strategy, and included previewing, skimming, taking notes, focusing on the question, and text identification. According to the findings of this study, the strategies that students experience using to deal with new and unknown vocabulary items enabled them improve their overall reading skills. Similarly, the reading strategies reported by students for comprehending the reading text may aid them in discovering the interpretations of new language words (Saengpakdeejit and Intaraprasert, 2014)

Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion above, the researchers concluded that students had various reading strategies and they implemented it with various reason. Furthermore, the researcher found that there were three categories of reading strategies used by the students, which were active reading, speed reading, and also SQ3R. Active reading strategies was the most dominant used by the students. On the other hand, the less strategies utilized by the students were PQ4R and critical reading strategy. Additionally, one of the reasons why did they practiced those strategies was because of the habitual learning outcomes.

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