

Reading Strategies Used By the Students of English Language Education Study Program

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to investigate the reading strategies used by the sixth-semester students of English Language Education Study Program who have the highest grade in reading subjects. There were 37 students who participated in this research. The data were obtained through the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) questionnaires developed by Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) and interviews with 10 students. The data were analyzed through descriptive statistics and qualitative analysis. The result revealed that students frequently used three categories of reading strategies: global reading strategies, problem-solving strategies, and support strategies. The students also used skimming, scanning and mind mapping strategies. Then, the most frequently used reading strategies were problem-solving strategies, followed by global reading strategies and support strategies. In conclusion, the students used various reading strategies to comprehend readings well.

Keywords: English students, highest grade, reading strategies



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

Reading is one of the most essential skills for people who learn English as a foreign language, specifically for university students. It increases students' understanding of how language is used; thus, their spoken and written language skills will be improved (Quadri & Abomoge, 2013). Moreover, reading is essential for understanding texts, broader learning, success in education, and employment (Oakhill et al., 2015). It is also beneficial to access the world of knowledge, summarize information from various sources, and learn new topics and success in education (Murnane et al., 2012). The importance of reading requires students to engage a lot with reading texts since a lot of information is obtained through reading. They should read a lot while learning individually, attending

classes, completing assignments, preparing and sitting for tests and exams. Since reading is essential, it is a must for students to have good reading skills.

In English Language Education Study Program, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Universitas Tanjungpura, students are demanded to have a good ability in reading for general communication, academic, and work contexts (Pedoman Akademik Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Tanjungpura, 2020). Such demand can be seen from the fact that the students should pass three reading subjects, namely Reading for General Communication, Intensive Reading, and Extensive Reading, in pursuing the bachelor's degree. For students, good reading ability means they can comprehend various reading texts and get an overall idea of the text (Dafiyanti et al., 2015).

The final year students of undergraduate program are required to compose a thesis as their final task. Therefore, the students in semester six are required to prepare themselves by writing a research proposal in Seminar Research Design subject. To undertake such task, the students should arm themselves with knowledge pertinent to research and their research topic by reading a lot of academic texts. However, reading academic text in English is challenging for ESL and EFL students. It is because academic text such as books, book reviews, research proposal, research reports and scholarly articles (Salam et al., 2018) required students to grasp the main idea, philosophies, themes and opinion from academic text (Sohail, 2015). Maguire et al. (2020) also pointed out that the expectations of academic reading are often tacit and difficult to articulate, underscoring the need for more explicit support and guidance.

In dealing with this situation, the students should read effectively and apply reading strategies to understand what they read. In reading, strategies are essential to improve readers' comprehension (Neuenhaus et al., 2022). Afflerbach & Cho (2009) define reading strategies as conscious or planned actions to help readers decode text, understand words and comprehend the meanings of the text. Reading strategies facilitate students to read effectively, and applying the appropriate strategies will contribute to improving students' reading skills and can result in high academic achievement (Thresia, 2012; Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016; Javed & Ali, 2018). Therefore, students who apply various and appropriate strategies while reading will be easier to understand texts, increase comprehension, achieve their reading goals and have high reading achievement (Tunga, 2020; Ekowati, 2013).

According to Mokhtari & Sheorey (2002), reading strategies can be classified into three categories, namely global reading strategies (GLOB), problem-solving strategies (PROB) and support strategies (SUP). Global reading strategies refer to the intentional and planned techniques

by which the readers monitor and manage their reading, such as having a purpose in mind and previewing text. Problem-solving strategies are used by the readers to better process difficult text by adjusting reading speed and guessing the meaning of unknown words. At last, support reading strategies are used by readers to help them comprehend the text by using a dictionary, taking notes, and underlining or highlighting textual information.

Reading strategies are used differently in terms of students' learning achievement. The students' achievement, such as high, middle and low achievement, reflects how the students understand and use the strategies (Muslimin, 2019). Furthermore, Poole (2016) stated that students with high test scores and college grade point averages (GPA) differ significantly in their use of reading strategies from students with low test scores and college GPAs. A study conducted by Determitzaki et al. (2008), which investigated reading strategies used by the students in terms of reading achievement, confirmed that students who obtained good scores used different strategies compared to the low-group students. High achievers frequently used strategies to plan their learning, set their reading goals and understand texts. High achiever students also effectively regulated their motivation and cognition to the tasks at hand. In contrast, low-achiever students regulate their motivation toward solving the tasks; however, they use strategies unsuitable for the tasks they have to deal with and continue to use them even though they are ineffective. They are not as thoughtful in planning their learning. It can be concluded that the high achiever students employ more strategies and are more effective in using the strategies than the low achiever students.

The writer gathered information from the sixth-semester students of English Language Education Study Program in the academic year 2021/2022. The writer found that many students still struggled to comprehend reading text, especially academic materials such as textbooks, journals and articles. They were yet satisfied with their reading ability. This situation contrasts with the situation experienced by the students who became the participant in this research. These students did not have significant problems in reading because they could overcome their reading difficulties. Thus, these students were not surprised to have excellent achievements in reading subjects. These students consistently got 'A' in all reading subjects. Inspired by previous studies which revealed that high achiever students used various and effective strategies, therefore, this research aimed to investigate reading strategies used by the sixth-semester students of English Language Education Study Program who have the highest grade in reading subjects.

In this research, the writer investigated reading strategies used by the students based on the theory proposed by Mokhtari & Sheorey (2002). Some previous studies have investigated the students' reading strategies based on this theory. Jafari & Shokrpour (2012) investigated reading

strategies used by Iranian ESP students. The participants were 81 students of Sophmore University. The result showed that the students frequently used reading strategies, and reading strategies that most frequently used were support strategies, followed by global strategies and problem-solving strategies. In addition, Chen (2015) investigated reading strategies used by high school students in Taiwan. The result revealed that the students' most frequently used reading strategies were global reading strategies, followed by problem-solving strategies and support strategies. This research is different from the previous studies because the writer focused on investigating reading strategies used by the students who have the highest grade. Then, the writer used a descriptive research design and used interviews to triangulate the data. Furthermore, this research was conducted in English Language Education Study Program, Teacher Training and Education Faculty, Universitas Tanjungpura.

1.2. Research questions

1. What are the reading strategies used by the sixth-semester students of English Language Education Study Program who have the highest grade in reading subjects?
2. What are the most reading strategies used by the sixth-semester students of English Language Education Study Program who have the highest grade in reading subjects?

1.3. Significance of the study

The result of this research is expected to be beneficial for the following. The students: The writer hopes that this research can raise the student's awareness about the importance of reading strategies and make them more conscious of their own reading strategies. Furthermore, the writer hopes that the other students can imitate the strategies used by students who have the highest grade in reading subjects to improve their reading skills. The English teachers: The result of this research will be useful for English lecturers and teachers as a reference for the effective strategies that can be considered to be taught to other students to improve their reading skills. The other researchers: It is expected that the result of this research will be useful for other researchers who will conduct research in this area.

2.1. Research Design

This research is categorized as descriptive research related to its purpose. According to Leedy & Ormrod (2015), descriptive research investigates a situation as it is. The researcher does not involve changing or modifying the situation under investigation, nor is it proposed to determine a cause-and-effect relationship. Descriptive research is especially useful to explore and describe the

phenomena. Adler & Clark (2011) stated that descriptive research design is to describe groups, activities, situations, or events. In descriptive research, the researcher usually knows something about the topic under the research before they collect the data.

Based on the definition and characteristics above, descriptive research is the most suitable to understand, explore and describe phenomena that happen under this research. It facilitates the writer to present a detailed and comprehensive description of the participant's information. Through descriptive research, the researcher investigated the reading strategies used by the students. In brief, the writer explored and described about the reading strategies used by the students based on the real situation.

2.2. Samples/Participants

In this research, the participants were selected through purposive sampling. According to Leedy & Ormrod (2015), the participants are chosen in purposive sampling because they represent a diverse perspective on an issue. They are also selected for a particular purpose. In this study, participants were selected based on two criteria. First, they are sixth-semester students who enrolled in their first semester of the academic year 2019/2020. The writer chose sixth-semester students because they have taken all reading subjects: Reading for General Communication, Intensive Reading, and Extensive Reading, they have taken almost all compulsory subjects which required them to read academic text. Second, they got an 'A' in all reading subjects.

Furthermore, there were 96 students enrolled in batch 2019, consisting of 61 students from the morning class and 35 from the afternoon class. All of the students have taken all reading subjects. In Reading for General Communication, there were 59 (61.46%) students got 'A'. In Intensive Reading, there were 69 (72%) students got 'A'. In Extensive Reading, 96 (100%) students got 'A'. In addition, only 44 (45.83%) students consistently got 'A' in all reading subjects. Initially, this research recruited 44 students who fulfilled the criteria. However, 5 students were inactive, and 2 students did not respond to the questionnaire. After those students were excluded, the number of participants was reduced to 37. Therefore, 37 students participated in this research and responded to the distributed questionnaire.

2.3 Instruments

In this research, the data were obtained from the closed-ended questionnaire and interviews.

1. Questionnaire

The Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) questionnaire by Mokhtari & Sheorey (2002) was used in this research. It mainly examines the type and frequency of reading strategies that adolescent,

ESL, and EFL students use while reading academic material in English (e.g., textbooks, journal articles, class notes, etc.). It is suitable to be used with ESL or EFL students at the institutions. The SORS consists of 30 items measuring three categories of reading strategies: global reading strategies (13 items), problem-solving strategies (8 items), and support strategies (9 items). Each item uses a five-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 to 5. They are “I never or almost never do this” (1), “I do this only occasionally” (2), “I sometimes do this” (3), “I usually do this” (4), “I always or almost always do this” (5). A short background questionnaire with items requesting information about name, students’ number, and class was also administered along with the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) questionnaire. The questionnaire was created using Google form, and the questionnaire link was sent to the students’ Whatsapp. The writer informed them that the questionnaire aimed to find out their reading strategies. In the first part of the questionnaire, the writer asked for their information, such as e-mail, name, student number, and class. The second part of the questionnaire was the questionnaire of the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS). The data collected using the questionnaire lasted 3 weeks.

2. Interview

Besides collecting data from the closed-ended questionnaire, the writer interviewed the participants. The data collected from the interviews helped the writer to triangulate the data obtained through the closed-ended questionnaire. A semi-structured interview was used in this research. The writer also employed telephone interviews. In collecting data from the interview, the writer did two stages. First, the writer selected the participants, which were selected based on their mean score on the questionnaire. Furthermore, 10 students who used reading strategies in high usage were selected since they were available to be interviewed. Then, the writer contacted the students via Whatsapp to arrange the schedule. The writer also informed them about the purpose of the interview. In addition, the writer asked the students what language to use so that they could deliver their ideas fluently in their preferred language. As a result, the 10 students choose to speak in Bahasa Indonesia. In the second stage, the writer interviewed the participants via telephone based on the arranged schedule. Each interview was done within 15-25 minutes.

2.3. Data analysis

Two data analysis techniques were employed in this research, namely descriptive statistics and qualitative analysis.

1. Descriptive Statistics

The writer used descriptive statistics to analyze the data from the closed-ended questionnaire.

In the first step, the writer prepared the data to be analyzed. The writer downloaded the students' responses from Google Forms. Furthermore, the writer used Microsoft Excel to calculate the mean score of the students' responses. Then, the mean scores were interpreted. In interpreting the mean scores, the writer used the interpretation scale provided by Mokhtari & Sheorey (2002), which was suggested by Oxford & Burry-Stock (1995). The overall average indicates how often the students use the strategies in the instrument when reading. The mean score of each reading strategy category shows which group of strategies students use most or least when reading. The scores should be interpreted using the high (mean of 3.5 or higher), moderate (mean of 2.5 to 3.4), and low (mean of 2.4 or lower).

2. Qualitative Analysis

In this research, the writer used qualitative analysis to analyze the interview data. According to Ary et al. (2014), there are three steps in analyzing qualitative data: familiarizing and organizing, coding and reducing, and interpreting and representing.

a. Familiarizing and Organizing

In this stage, the writer listened to the audio recording several times to familiarize herself with the interview data. Then, the writer transcribed the data collected through the interviews. During transcription, participants' names were replaced with pseudonyms to protect their confidentiality. Then, the writer highlights the key information related to the reading strategies. All these steps were done to make the data ready to be analyzed.

b. Coding and Reducing

In this stage, the writer reread the transcriptions carefully. After that, the writer began the coding process by looking at the key information highlighted before and writing the codes that summarize the information's content. Then, the writer grouped similar codes into broad themes. Since the codes were in Bahasa Indonesia, the writer translated them into English.

c. Interpreting and Representing

The last stage is interpreting and representing. At this stage, the writer interpreted the data to form the description that answered the research questions. Furthermore, the data were presented through descriptive detail.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Findings

1. Reading Strategies Used by Students

a. Global Reading Strategies

In this first analysis, the writer reports the data from each individual strategy of global reading

strategies. The data shows that the students used all of the individual strategies consisting in global reading strategies. The data revealed that 10 of the 13 strategies (77%) had means between 3.57 and 4.22, indicating high usage of these strategies. They are included: ‘setting purpose for reading’ (GLOB1, M=4.22), ‘using prior knowledge’ (GLOB2, M=4.03), ‘checking understanding’ (GLOB11, M=4.03), ‘checking how text content fits purpose’ (GLOB4, M=4.00), ‘predicting or guessing text meaning’ (GLOB12, M=3.95), ‘confirming predictions’ (GLOB13, M=3.89), ‘using typographical aids (e.g., bold face and italics)’ (GLOB9, M=3.76), ‘previewing text before reading’ (GLOB3, M=3.70), ‘determining what to read’ (GLOB6, M=3.70), and ‘using context clues’ (GLOB8, M=3.57).

In addition, 3 strategies (23%) had means between 3.10 and 3.45, indicating medium usage of these strategies. They are included: ‘nothing text characteristics (e.g. length and organization)’ (GLOB5, M=3.46), ‘analyzing and evaluating the text’ (GLOB10, M=3.43) and ‘using text features (e.g., tables, figures, and pictures)’ (GLOB7, M=3.11). None of the strategies in global reading strategies was in the low usage category (mean below 2.4).

Furthermore, the data indicate that the most frequently used strategy by the students was ‘setting purpose for reading’ (GLOB1). The mean score was M=4.22, and it was the highest mean score in global reading strategies compared to the other strategies. It means that most students preferred to have a purpose in mind to help them focus on their reading goals.

Interview data showed that setting a purpose for reading helped students stay focused on their goals. The students explained that they always have a purpose for reading. Their statements are shown below.

“Every time I read, I already know my purpose for reading, for example, to get the information I want.” (Student 11. AGG, Interview)

I have a purpose for reading. For example, I want to read about plant anatomy, for example, so I look up the texts that discuss plant anatomy, or for example, I know what plant anatomy is about, oh, for example, about leaves, for example. So I will read texts that discuss plant anatomy because, of course, they discuss about plant anatomy. (Student 14. NR, Interview)

Based on the statements above the students explained that by having a purpose for reading, they could find relevant sources related to their purpose. By having a purpose for reading allowed the students to find the answer or relevant information they were looking for. In short, having purpose for reading help the students to identify weather the text is suitable to their need and purpose or not.

Overall, the data from the questionnaire revealed that the students used all the individual

strategies included in global reading strategies. Through interview data, the findings from the questionnaire were further confirmed. The students mentioned that they used 11 reading strategies when reading academic English text, *they are setting purpose for reading, using prior knowledge, previewing text before reading, checking text content fits purpose, noting text characteristics (e.g., length and organization), determining what to read, using context clues, using typographical aids (e.g., boldface and italics), analyzing and evaluating the text, predicting or guessing text meaning and confirming predictions.* The students reported that the strategies effectively helped them manage their reading, focus on their goals and understand what they read.

b. Problem-Solving Strategies

In this part, the writer reports the data of individual strategies consisting in problem-solving strategies. The data revealed that the mean scores of the individual strategies range from 3.68 to 4.41, indicating high usage of these strategies. The sequence of those strategies is as follows: 'paying close attention to reading' (PROB4, M=4.41), 're-reading for better understanding' (PROB7, M=4.35), 'trying to stay focused on reading' (PROB2, M=4.27), 'visualizing information read' (PROB6, M=4.05), 'adjusting reading rate' (PROB3, M=4.03), 'reading slowly and carefully' (PROB1, M=3.95), 'guessing meaning of unknown words' (PROB8, M=3.95), and 'pausing and thinking about reading' (PROB5, M=3.68). None of the strategies fell in the moderate usage category (mean of 2.5 to 3.4) and low usage category (mean of 2.4 or lower).

Furthermore, from the data above it can be seen that 'paying close attention to reading' (PROB4, M=4.41) was the most frequently used strategy among the 8 strategies. The statement for this strategy is "When text becomes difficult, I pay close attention to what I am reading". It shows that the students preferred to always pay attention to the text, especially when they lose concentration. This strategy helps students to focus on what they read.

Through interviews, one student confirm that she paid close attention to reading. The student explained that she paid more attention to texts when she found difficulties. The statement is shown below.

"I also paid more attention to what I read. Because we cannot deny that some of the information presented is difficult for us to understand." (Student 1. ED, Interview)

This strategy is beneficial in helping the students overcome the reading problem. By paying close attention the text, the student can concentrate more. This strategy also helpful in improving the student understanding of the text.

In short, the data from the questionnaire showed that all of the strategies were used with high frequency by the students. Through interviews, the students mentioned that they faced many difficulties in reading, such as lost concentration and finding unfamiliar vocabulary. However, they applied various strategies to help them solve the problems during reading. They confirmed that all of the strategies were beneficial in helping them overcome their reading difficulties. The strategies were also helpful in developing and improving their understanding of the text.

c. Support Strategies

The writer examined the students' responses in terms of individual strategies consisting in support strategies. It can be seen that all of the individual strategies in support strategies were used by the students. The data revealed that there were 4 of the 9 strategies (44%) had means between 3.57 and 4.11, indicating high usage of these strategies. Those strategies were: 'using reference materials (e.g. dictionary)' (SUP4, M=4.11), 'thinking in both languages (English and mother tongue) when reading' (SUP9, M=3.95), 'finding relationship among ideas' (SUP6, M=3.59), and 'underlining information in the text' (SUP3, M=3.57). On the other hand, 5 strategies (56%) had means between 3.41 and 3.22, indicating medium usage of these strategies. The 5 strategies were: 'reading aloud when text becomes hard' (SUP2, M=3.41), 'paraphrasing for better understanding' (SUP5, M=3.35), 'taking notes while reading' (SUP1, M=3.27), 'asking oneself questions' (SUP7, M=3.22), and 'translating from English to native language' (SUP8, M=3.22). None of the strategies reported fell in the low usage category (mean of 2.4 or lower)

The overall result showed among 9 strategies, 'using reference materials (e.g. dictionary)' (SUP4) was the most frequently used reading strategy by the students. The mean score was M=4.11, and it was the highest compared to the other strategies. It means that most students preferred to use the dictionary to find the meaning of words every time when they did not understand the meaning.

Through interviews the students explained that they frequently found unfamiliar vocabulary when reading academic text. Therefore, they utilized reference material such as dictionaries to find the meaning of words. The statements are shown below.

“If I don't understand, maybe I will, usually, if I don't understand, I will look up words that are impossible for me to understand, for example, looking in the dictionary, like vocabulary, some vocabularies that I don't know. Maybe I usually ask my friends, but rarely, maybe I look in the dictionary or look for synonyms.” (Student 19. RAS, Interview)

“I usually write down sentences that are difficult or unfamiliar, then look them up in books, dictionaries, or Google Translate, and then I remember them.” (Student 27. OD, Interview)

The students claimed that dictionary help them to understand the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary. They used English dictionaries and online translations such as Google Translate. One student claimed that he used a dictionary to look up the meaning of the words and the synonym.

In conclusion, the data from the questionnaire revealed that the students used all of the strategies included in the support strategies. In addition, the data from the interview showed that the students used 8 strategies such as *taking notes while reading, reading aloud when text becomes hard, underlining information in the text, using reference materials (e.g., dictionary), paraphrasing for better understanding, finding relationship among ideas, asking oneself questions, and translating from English to native language*. The students also confirmed that the strategies were beneficial to help them comprehend the text, focus on reading, and remember information in the text.

d. Skimming

Based on the interview data, the writer found the students also used skimming strategy. They used this strategy to get the main idea of the text quickly and to know the type of text they read. The students explained that they did not read the text in detail. Meanwhile, they read the first and the last paragraph to know the context of the passage. Furthermore, one student claimed that he used this strategy during exams. The claims are shown below.

“I tried to look for the information, the context of the text to get better information about the text.. ee.. with.. ee.. maybe skimming.” (Student 11. AGG, Interview)

“So, to know the type of text, I see the paragraphs, so I skimmed it, so I do not have to read all of the text, but later on we will know, oh, it is recount text and so on.” (Student 32. AEP, Interview)

“My reading ability is standard, but for reading the full text, I cannot skim and scan the text; that is what other people do, but for me, if I read for pleasure, I should read the full text. But, if I read the text to answer the questions, I will scan and skim the text.” (Student 3. BR, Interview)

e. Scanning

The data from interviews revealed that the students used scanning strategy. They used this strategy to find the information they needed in the text quickly. In using this strategy, they directly go to the part or paragraph which contains the information they need. Furthermore, one student claimed that he used scanning strategy to answer the questions.

“Yes, I considered what to read and what to ignore. So, I read with the scanning method.”
(Student 30. RK, Interview)

“Aaa.. for scanning, I used it to look for the keywords that I am looking for and are related to my reading purpose, that are what I am looking for the mots. That is the thing I look for with scanning.” **(Student 19. RAS, Interview)**

“My reading ability is standard, but for reading the full text, I cannot skim and scan the text; that is what other people do, but for me, if I read for pleasure, I should read the full text. But, if I read the text to answer the questions, I will scan and skim the text.” **(Student 3. BR, Interview)**

f. Mind Mapping

Through the interview, the writer found one student used mind mapping strategy. This strategy allows the readers to organize their ideas or the information from the text. With mind mapping the readers can represent the ideas with graphic and pictures. One students claimed that this strategy frequently used while taking note of the information in the text. The claim is shown below.

“But, for me, my learning style, it is like I read, but I also rewrite like making a mind map. So, in one paragraph any important points, I will write down the main ideas. Then, for the important points, I made branches like a mind map, oh “These are the important point in the first paragraph,” then I will do the same thing for the following paragraphs. So, one title usually consists of several paragraphs. Then, I will make branches for each paragraph. I write down the important points because it is my learning style. So, I rewrite it so I can easily remember something I have learned.” **(Student 14. NR, Interview)**

2. The Most Used Reading Strategy

The frequency of reading strategies used by the students who participated in this research can be determined through the mean score of each category of reading strategies. The data is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Mean Scores of Three Reading Strategies Categories

Strategy	Mean	Usage Level
Global Reading Strategies	3.76	High
Problem-Solving Strategies	4.08	High

Support Strategies	3.52	High
Overall Reading Strategies	3.79	High

Table 1 shows that the most frequently used reading strategy by the students were problem-solving strategies (M=4.08). Then it followed by global reading strategies (M=3.76). The least used reading strategy were support strategies (M=3.52). In addition, the mean score of the overall reading strategies was 3.79, indicating that the students used the reading strategies with high frequency.

3.2. Discussion

This research explored the reading strategies used by the sixth-semester students of English Language Education Study Program who have the highest grade in reading subjects. This research also explored the most frequently used reading strategies by the students. The result of the data analysis revealed that the students used three categories of reading strategies: global reading strategies, problem-solving strategies, and support reading strategies, as well as 30 individual reading strategies. Through interviews, the students reported that they used 27 of 30 individual reading strategies, which consist of 11 global reading strategies, 8 problem-solving strategies and 8 support strategies. These findings indicate that the students used various reading strategies while reading. They also claimed that reading strategies were beneficial to help them focus on reading, solve problems, remember information, and understand the text.

According to Mokhtari & Sheorey (2002), global reading strategies are planned techniques that the students apply to monitor and manage their reading. The data analysis revealed that in global reading strategies, the students frequently set a purpose in their minds to be more focused on their reading. The data from the interview revealed that this strategy helped the students find the information they needed and also helped them to find relevant sources or texts that fit their reading purpose. It is supported by Eze (2016), which stated that setting a purpose for reading helps the readers to select the text they need and also helps them to determine the appropriate approach to read a text. In addition, having a purpose in mind will enhance students reading motivation (Bruggink et al., 2022).

In addition, problem-solving strategies are planned actions used by the readers while working directly with the text. These strategies focus on helping the students when problems develop in understanding text (Mokhtari & Sheorey, 2002). In this research, the result revealed that students preferred to pay attention to the text when they found difficulties. The data from interviews support this finding. One student claimed that she tended to pay close attention to the text when she found difficulties. The students might struggle to understand the meaning of the words, phrases and

sentences in the text. These difficulties lead to poor reading comprehension. Therefore, paying closer attention to the text helps the students to be more focused on understanding information. In line with this, Yilyiz & Cetinkaya (2017) believed that the higher the level of attention, the higher the reading fluency and comprehension. Therefore, this strategy is beneficial for students to help them solve problems and improve their comprehension.

Furthermore, Mokhtari & Sheorey (2002) pointed out that support strategies provide the support mechanisms to help the readers comprehend the text. The result showed that the students frequently used reference material, such as the dictionary, to help them understand what they read. In order to comprehend the text being read, it is crucial to know the meaning of the words. However, unknown vocabulary is one of the predictors of reading difficulty. Using reference material such as printed or online dictionaries can be seen as one of the tools to help students overcome their difficulties. The data from the interviews revealed that the dictionary was beneficial for the students to find the meaning and the synonym of the words. They also used Google Translate to translate unknown words. Cortes (2013) pointed out that a dictionary is used when the reader cannot understand the meaning of the words from the context. Therefore, it is very helpful to help the reader to find the meaning of the words since it provides the definition. In line with the findings of this research, some studies revealed that the dictionary is beneficial in overcoming vocabulary difficulty and enhances comprehension (Chen, 2011; Shen, 2013).

Among the three categories of reading strategies, problem-solving strategies were the most frequently used by the students, followed by global reading strategies and support strategies. Interestingly, this finding was in line with the findings from the studies conducted by Dafiyanti et al. (2015), Alsheikh & Mokhtari (2011), Rizqi et al. (2018), Hong-Nam (2014), Par (2020) and Shang (2017) which indicated that problem-solving strategies were the most frequently used, while support strategies were the least frequently used by the students. Mokhtari & Sheorey (2002) pointed out that problem-solving strategies are techniques used when problems develop in understanding the text. Accordingly, it is obvious that the problem-solving strategies were to be used more frequently because the readers need to apply them when encountering problems to understand the text easily. This finding encourages teachers to explicitly teach the students to apply problem-solving strategies in reading since problem-solving strategies are considered beneficial to overcome reading difficulties and comprehend reading text.

This finding, however, contrasts with the research findings by Jafari & Shokhpour (2012) and Chen (2015). Jafari & Shokrpour (2012) examined the reading strategies used by Iranian students to comprehend expository text in English. The result showed that the students frequently used support

strategies, followed by global strategies and problem-solving strategies. In addition, Chen (2015) explored the reading strategies used by high school students in Taiwan. The result revealed that the students' most frequently used reading strategies were global reading strategies, followed by problem-solving strategies and support strategies. Several factors might cause these differences. The possible factors influencing the differences are the participants' education level and language proficiency. In Jafari & Shokrpour's (2012) study, the participants were university students enrolled in medical school. In Chen's (2015) study, the participants were high school students, while in this current research, the participants were English major students who have the highest grade in reading subjects. Huang & Nisbet (2014) suggest that language proficiency has a positive effect on the reading strategies that the students use. Other possible factors that influence the strategy use are learning style (e.g., auditory or visual), students' age, text difficulties, and type of texts (Oxford, 2003; Mokhtari & Reichard, 2002). Since strategy use varies by several factors, such as education level, language proficiency, learning style, students' age, text difficulties, and types of texts, other researchers may investigate how these factors influence the usage of reading strategies.

Through interviews, the writer found other strategies used by the students. They used various strategies to read effectively based on their purposes. If the purpose is to find the main point of the text and specific information in the text, then they will employ skimming and scanning strategies. The students used skimming to get the main idea and the type of reading text quickly by reading the first and the last paragraph. According to Brown & Lee (2015), skimming is a strategy to help the reader get the main ideas of the text. This strategy allows the readers to predict the main topic of the text quickly. In addition, the students also scanned the text to find the information they needed in the text and used this strategy during exams to help him answer the questions. Brown & Lee (2015) stated that scanning means quickly searching for particular information in the text. Fauzi (2018) argued this strategy is beneficial to help students get answers to the questions during exams and save their time to answer the questions since this strategy allows students to find specific information quickly.

After that, the writer also found student 14 (NR) used mind mapping strategy to remember important information in the text. According to Al Shdaifat et al. (2019), in mind mapping, each fundamental point is written down and linked to the major idea, creating a web of relationships. Correspondingly, student 14 (NR) created mind maps in the written note in which she wrote down the main idea and used branches to connect the subtopics from each paragraph. For student 14 (NR), memorizing through mind mapping strategy would help her focus on the main ideas as well as the subtopics of the text. Murley (2007) pointed out that mind mapping increases memory and helps to

focus on the main point.

Another aspect of the finding revealed that the mean score of the overall reading strategies used by the students was 3.79, which means that the students used reading strategies with high frequency. It can be concluded that the students used reading strategies frequently. It aligns with Simsek & Balaban (2010), which pointed out that high-achieving students are more conscious, frequent, and use various strategies in their learning.

Nevertheless, there is a limitation encountered in conducting this research. This research was limited by the number of participants since there were 37 students who participated in this research. It is hard to reach generalization because of the small number of participants involved in this research. Therefore, future research with a similar focus and with a large number of participants is needed to clarify the findings.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1. Conclusion

This research explored the reading strategies used by the sixth-semester students of English Language Education Study Program who have the highest grade in reading subjects. This research also explored the most frequently used reading strategies by the students. This research revealed that, first, the sixth-semester students who have the highest grade in reading subjects used three categories of reading strategies: global reading strategies, problem-solving strategies and support strategies, as well as 30 individual strategies. The students also used skimming, scanning and mind mapping strategies. Second, the most frequently used reading strategies were problem-solving strategies (M=4.08), followed by global reading strategies (M=3.78) and support strategies (M=3.52). The mean score of the overall reading strategies was M=3.79, indicating that the students used the reading strategies with high frequency. The students also preferred to set a purpose for reading, pay close attention to reading and use reference material, such as dictionary, while reading. Through the interview, the students claimed that reading strategies were beneficial to help them focus on reading, solve problems, remember information, get the mind idea and supporting ideas quickly, and understand the text. In conclusion, the data showed that the sixth-semester students who have the highest grade in reading subjects used various reading strategies.

4.2. Suggestions

Based on the conclusion above, the writer would like to suggest several points related to this research result. First, the reading strategies used by the participants in this research could be a reference to the other students so they can read effectively and efficiently. Second, regarding the

minimal use of support strategies, the participants of this research are suggested to learn about them and consider using them when reading. Third, the English teachers are expected to help and teach the students to use appropriate strategies. Regarding the high use of problem-solving strategies, the teacher can explicitly teach the students to apply these strategies as the problem solver to help the students comprehend reading texts. Last, the other researchers are suggested to investigate the factors that influence the usage of reading strategies, such as education level, language proficiency, learning style, students' age, text difficulties, and types of texts. Second, observation can be used to gain a deeper understanding of reading strategies used by the students. Third, since the number of participants in this research was limited, other researchers may perform similar research with a much larger number of participants.

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