Reading Strategies Used by College English Students

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Abstract

The research was aimed to acknowledge and know the reading strategies and in what stage the students mostly used reading methods by English Language and Literature major students, English Department, Universitas Negeri Padang. This research used descriptive quantitative. The population was the students who had taken and passed Basic Reading, Intermediate Reading, Advanced Reading, and Critical Reading and the sample of the research was 228 students of the total population. In collecting the data, the researcher asked the students to fill out the questionnaire given by the researcher. The results were divided into three divisions and they were pre-reading strategies, while-reading strategies, and post-reading strategies. It was found the pre-reading strategies had 66.62%, whilst-reading strategies was 71.59%, and post-reading strategies was 69.45%. It had indication that the students were aware of the strategies in reading and they had tendency to implement all of the strategies in reading English.

Keywords: Reading Strategies, Reading Ability, College English Students

Introduction

Reading is one of part in English skills that is required to achieve due to the importance of the skill to have better comprehension (Sari, 2017) (Rajab, 2012) (Katzir, 2018). There are so many essential things that could be obtained from this skill. The first is to make students are able to have marvellous understanding of texts in English. As it has known, there are so many students read the texts, whereas, they cannot perceive the idea of what is stated in the texts (Piccolo, 2017). The students tend to make their own perspectives once without reading them again because they already though their ideas are true, acceptable, and it is based on the texts statements. That is why in reading the students are needed to perceive the ideas. They could be in the terms of main ideas, supporting ideas, and conlusion. The students have to be able to recognise all of them and apply them into the texts read. The second point is linked to the capability to think in "English" perspectives (Perfetti, 2007) (Sheehan, 2009). English is not the native language of Indonesia's students. The students are required to adjust their thought to what said in the text. The students cannot merely translate the text based on their languages, but also they have to look at the context which some of them have different meaning in Indonesia. For example, in knowing the translation of phrasal verbs and idioms. The student cannot do translation as they wish. They have to search for it in dictionary and digital vocabulary where idioms and phrasal verbs included.

The third is joined into helping to write essays, articles, thesis, and the others (Muslaini, 2017) (Winiharti, 2014). When the students have been studying in university, they will begin writing many essays and it is sure to be demanded in English. Also, if the students have been in the last term, they are asked to make a thesis as a final project or writing that indicate the understanding of what they study for years. During the progress of making them, they preced by reading many articles in journals

to be their references in writing. It is demanded because it is implausible to produce writing without reading any references to help in strengthening tthe perspectives or titles created. The fourth is to have students produced vocabularies as many as they can (Alqahtani, 2015). In reading process, the students will discover many words they do not have recognisation of. After finding those difficulties vocabularies, the students look for them in dictionary and take a note of them. In order to remember all words, the students ask to make sentences for words they do not know rather than merely writing meaning. It is because of the short-term of memorization if the students only write the meaning without practising to make sentences.

The last point is to grant much concentration and great critical thinking (Winiharti, 2014). Whilst reading, the students need to have much concern. It is used to make the students focused and they can have better comprehension in reading the text. This is also the most difficult thing to do by many students when they have to put much concentration, but they cannot stand to do it. That is why if the for those students who have better focused, they will gain many benefits and have no difficulties in reading text anymore.

However, when the students are desire to reach the maximum capability in reading, they have many toughness in the progress. There are five difficulties and they are related to grammar, vovabulary, lazyness, anxiety, and lack of knowledge. Firstly, it is grammar factor (Albader, 2007). Reading is connected into many grammars they have to read. Grammar is the indicator to know the time things happened in texts. Also, grammar can make the students perceive the flow of text. Nevertheless, when the students find the grammar they do not recognise, they cannot catch the meaning of reading and it results into the incomprehension of reading the texts. The second factor is vocabulary difficulties (Albader, 2007). Vocabularies stated in texts make the students progress in reading uphill. Even, when there are some unknown words they find, they stuck and difficult to continue reading the text again.

The third factor is the lazyness the students have when they read long text which needs more time to understand and finish it (Satriani, 2018). Most of the students cannot finish because they think it is hard and they already bored when they are reading the text. That is why the students need some strategies that can support them to read more even it is long text. The next factor is the students have anxiety while reading (Muhlis, 2017) (Xiaohui, 2018) (Merç, 2009) (Al Faruq, 2019) (Aisyah, 2017). The students' reading texts specifically in English make them have more anxiety because they are anxious they cannot understand anything at all. It is going to produce much anxiety when the students come into exam. Most of the students cannot perceive anything and it is also because the time limited time granted to read and answer the questions. What stated in the texts, mostly, the choices have different words. That is why the students cannot understand anything from the texts. It also occurs when the students are asked to tell anything they perceive from what they read and they start to write the idea. They are afraid their perspectives toward the text mislead and the lecturers will mistaken them. The last factor is indeed related to lack of knowledge (Shehu, 2015). When the students want to understand the text, but they do not have any background knowledge of the text. It makes them hard because they cannot identify the context stated. It could be because of the reading text is not based on their basic major and vocabularies that they never listen to and read to.

Due to the explanation above, the students need some strategies to acquire. As stated by (Küçükoğlu, 2013) (Marashi, 2017), there are six ways to improve the comprehension of students in reading. The first is to predict. Predicting is the first strategy that is commonly used prior to reading the text. Predicting means the ability of students to guess the text by looking at the title, graph, chart, and table to be used to recognise what the text is about. Predicting also depends on the knowledge of students whether they know the text they read or not. If they know, that will simplify the students in acknowledging the text. If they do not know, the students will be tough to know the meaning and it results into the lack of comprehension whilst reading.

The second way is to imagine or picture something in mind. This means that the students create their imagination toward what they read so that they can conceive the meaning of the text. The students can make a setting and characteristic of what occurs in the text. The third strategy is to create link. This strategy has intention to make the students easily understand. In this idea, the students link their experience toward the text. It really grants benefits the students in terms of comprehension and potray their ideas into writing. The fourth technique is indeed connected to the way the students conclude the text. It has been known that concluding is hardly done by them. The students only read,

but when they ask to create a conclusion, they do not know how to. It can be because of the length of text read. Meanwhile, if they knew how to summarize the text, it will make them easy since the students can gain high quality of comprehension and when they are going to write their ideas, they will not be bewildered anymore.

The fifth way is to make questions. Before the students read the text, it is better to ask as many as possible by using 5W+1H pattern. It is useful because the students will not have confusion while reading the text and make a good conclusion. Also, whilst reading, the students already had guidance to perceive the text. The last strategy is to infer the text. The students have to refer through the lines. It can be advantageous in producing conclusions and comprehension of the text increased. To practise this technique, the students can be given illustration, data such as picture and then the students describe them by using their own words.

It is also supported by the research of (Baier, 2005) in her thesis. She stated that self-questioning strategy really assists the students a lot in comprehending the text. By doing this strategy, the students have many vocabularies produced in their mind due to the creation of students whilst creating questions and answering questions they make. The students also recognise the hidden meaning, stated meaning, and find information easily. Another research done by (Koch, 2017) related to reciprocal teaching. It means the students are sit in a small group and they will read together. The students shiftedly understand how to construct ideas of what they read by concluding, predicting, questioning. At the end, they will tell what they read together.

It is fruitful for the students in comprehending the text, recognising the capability of their friends, and the students can build the awareness each other. The next research regarded to strategy of reading was done by (Karami, 2008). He stated that the reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, and identifying vocabularies, are useful ones to understand the text. Skimming means the students read the texts fast and it is usually uses stopwatch to know how long the students can read and conceive the text. This strategy is commonly used when the students have exam and also when they have to read and answer questions in a limited of time.

The next strategy is scanning which means the students look for specific information stated in the text. It can be in terms of date, days, and any other specific information that grants essential information whilst reading the text. This strategy is also helpful when the students are having exam. The students read the questions and then answer the questions based on what is asked. The students have no need to read the entire text. The last strategy is identifying the vocabulary. In reading the text, there are some specific vocabularies which only used in specific knowledge. For example, they can know from the words that they refer to engineering knowledge. The students will be easy to find the idea of the text.

There have been plenty of researchers who did the research related to the strategies of reading skill. The first experiment done by (Muslaini, 2017) that researched regarded to the method used by the teachers in easing the students' reading comprehension. The result found that mostly the teachers utilize media as a tool to do it. The next research was carried out by (Saricoban, 2002) which he identified the reading skill strategies based on the their usage of successful readers and unsuccessful readers in upper-intermediate level. The reading strategies in this research occupied the reading stages from pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. However, the strategies of each stage were divided to the two types of readers as stated to recognise which one of these groups strongly apply the reading strategies in each reading stage.The result indicated that there were some different strategies used by successful readers and less good readers which half of good readers highly used reading strategies in each stage of reading compared to the less good readers.

The third research was accomplished by (Cogmen, 2009). They focused on the level of students had while they used strategies in reading academic books, the relation of usage of reading strategy and the gender, the number of books they read in a year, and the connection between the strategies of reading and the academic achievement. The results stated that the students tended to apply strategies in reading when they had been in the upper-level. It was also found that the students used analytic strategies in improving their skill in which they often read fictional books. Inevitably, the third research question also indicated that there was a great link between the occupied strategies and the reading skill accomplishment.

The fourth research was worked by (Winiharti, 2014). They carried out the reading strategies by using reading journal as the best way to achieve virtuous reading performance. The result was

found that   plenty of the students (22 students) had ability to have nice reading skill and it also produced the students' capability in writing journal. Furthermore, it is interpreted that that the students in university had better understanding when they are accustomed to reading articles. The last research was carried out by (Hayashi, 2014). He found that extensive reading is the best occupied way in increasing the students' reading ability.The researcher applied the strategy in TOEFL and identifying whether the students' capacity improved. Indeed, the percentage showed that compared to the other skills in TOEFL, the reading comprehension section was the highest score.

Of those researches, there are essential discoveries that have not been well-identified   and in fact creates the gaps toward this recent research. To accomplish this research, the researchers had all levels of reading skill, which begun from basic reading until critical reading. In reality, this research was greatly different from the previous researches that they only participated certain year of students. The second intention of this research was to acknowledge each of the methods had by the students in each reading stage and compared to which the highest percentage of stage where strategies listed. In contrast with the previous researchers that only held specific way in achieving remarkable reading skill, this research concerned to the strategies listed in each stage and recognise the highest percentage.

Thus, this research has great significance toward the improvement of reading skill. It has been recognised that reading skill needs techniques to be applied in order to alleviate problems in reading. From applying them, they can recognise their ability in knowing what strategies they are better at and which methods they ensure to enhance in the future. For lecturers, they are able to notice the students' approaches in reading and later perceive it to improve the less-used-strategies to the students for better reading skill. Furthermore, there are two research questions queried:

1. In what stage mostly the basic, intermediate, advanced, and critical students level occupy strategies in reading?
2. What is the highest number of percentage reached of all stages?

Methods

This research had intention to analyse the strategies used by students in reading and to obtain the comprehension of reading. The type of this research used descriptive quantitative due to the purpose of this research which was had by English and Literature Department students. The population was English and Literature major, Universitas Negeri Padang. The total amount was 510 students which stated in the following table:

Table 1. Population

Reading Classes	Students' Batch	Amount of Classes	Total of Students
Basic Reading (BR)	2019	5 classes	150
Intermediate Reading (IR)	2018	5 classes	150
Advanced Reading (AR)	2017	4 classes	120
Critical Reading (CR)	2016	3 classes	90
	Total		510

The subject of this research was all of the students from English and Literature major, Universitas Negeri Padang who had taken Basic Reading, Intermediate Reading, Advanced Reading, and Critical Reading. The sample was taken by using purposive sampling because the research was aimed to identify the strategies used by students in reading. The total percentage of sample was 40% from the total of population and that was 228 students.

To recognise the students'strategies in reading, the researcher used questionnaire form. It was adopted from (Toprak, 2009) under title "Three Reading Phases and the Application in Teaching English as Foreign Language Reading Class with Young Learners and (Sadjirin) with title "Exploring

the Reading Strategies Used by Readers to Read Better. To strengthen the result of the data, the researcher also used interview to the chosen respondents.

In collecting the data, the students filled the questionnaire. In questionnaire, there were five choices in form of Likert Scale which indicated 1 (SD) until 5 (SA) with the statements provided. Later, the students submitted it in to e-mail. After filling out the questionnaire, the students did interview with the researcher and the participants merely the picked out ones. Next, the researcher analysed the data. In analysing the data, the researcher divided the data into two. The first is quantitative data that was analysed by using percentage descriptive technique. The second is qualitative data which was analysed by using the steps started from data reduction, data displaying, and data verification to obtain the summary.

Result and Discussion

This research had two intentions. They are related to the most prominent stage used by the students from basic level until critical level and the highest number of percentage had by the strategy of all strategies. Regarded to the first question, this is the result which determined the most important step in reading occupied by the students:

Table 2. Students' Mostly Used Prominent Stage

No.	Phase	Average Percentage
1	Pre-reading	66.62%
2	While-reading	71.59%
3	Post-reading	69.45%

The second research question linked to the highest applicable strategy in each stage and of all strategies. The data was divided into three parts. They were pre-reading strategy, while-reading strategy, and post-reading strategy. In pre-reading strategy, there were two indicators and they are previewing and skimming. In this stage, there are 13 statements which 8 statements are previewing indicators and 5 statements for skimming indicators.

Table 3. The Highest Applicable Strategy In Pre-Reading Stage

Phase	Indicators	Average Percentage (%)	Category
Pre-Reading Phase	Previewing	66.78	High
Intermediate Reading (IR)	Skimming	66.47	High
Average		66.62	High

Based on the table above, it was known that the average percentage in the pre-reading was 66.62% which known as the high category. In terms of previewing category, the percentage was 66.78% which included in the high category. Meanwhile, the skimming indicator was 66.47% that marked as high category.

The second part of data was while-reading strategy. There were five indicators and they were guessing, taking notes, analysing, scanning, and predicting. In this part, while-reading strategy had 30 statements that were divided into 8 statements were guessing indicators, 8 statements of taking notes, 6 statements of analysing indicators, 4 statements of skimming indicators, and 4 statements of predicting indicators.

Table 4. The Highest Applicable Strategy In Pre-Reading Stage

Phase	Indicators	Average Percentage (%)	Category
While-Reading	Guessing	72.23	High

Phase				
Phase Intermediate Reading (IR)	Taking Note	66.93	High	
	Analyzing	69.82	High	
	Scanning	74.21	High	
	Predicting	74.76	High	
Average		71.59	High	

The overall percentage was 71.59%. It was in high category. Meanwhile, for each indicator, guessing was 72.23% (high category), skimming was 66.47% (high category), analysing was 69.82% (high category), scanning was 74.21% (high category) and predicting was 74.76% which was still in high category.

The third category was post-reading strategy. In this category, there were 3 indicators and they were summarising, following up, and doing worksheet. There were 15 statements which divided into 4 statements indicated summarizing, 7 statements showed following up, and 4 statements indicated doing worksheet.

Table 4. The Highest Applicable Strategy In Pre-Reading Stage

Phase	Indicators	Average Percentage(%)	Category
Post-Reading Phase	Summarizing	68.40	High
	Following up	74.22	High
	Doing Worksheet	65.72	High
Average		69.45	High

The overall percentage from this category was 69.45% that included in high category. In the summarizing indicator, the percentage was 68.40% which illustrated in high category. The following up category was 74.22% and doing the task was 65.72 that was indicated as high category. Overall, from three strategies popped out in each phase, the highest category is while-reading strategy and after that it is the post-reading strategy, and the last strategy is pre-reading strategy. However, all of the indicators showed that the students have awareness in using the strategy in reading and later give the impact to their comprehension in reading the text.

This research discovered that the two questions of research answered. The first questions is regarded to the most chosen stage in reading where students from basic level until critical level applied the reading strategies. It found that while-reading strategy was the step that the students spent their time using methods in reading and also the strategy they chose to apply most was predicting. This also answered the second question of research.

Furthermore, related to the finding, there are some researchers who already worked on the type of this research, however, those are in fact different from this research. Initially, it begun from the finding discovered by (Hayashi, 2014) that the students in intermediate level occupied strategies in while-reading stage compared to the other steps, such as making prediction, having background knowledge, and linking with image connection. It found that 10,8% students used that. On the other hand, it is indeed different from this research in terms of the strategy used in this research. Hayashi focused to have certain reading method by using extensive reading, meanwhile, this research concerned to all strategies in reading stage.

Secondly, the research is suppoeted by the research done by (Winiharti, 2014). Their finding indicated the same result. They used the specific method which was named as reading journal to increase the capability of students in reading. The students mostly worked on the whilst-reading strategy. Nevertheless, the students were aimed to write the information they already read after reading the journal (58.7%) to ensure the students' ability from four different faculties (Department of Information System, Technology of Information, Japanese Language and Culture, and English Language and Culture).

Thirdly, the research worked by (Cogmen, 2009) . They concluded the research based on the frequency of reading strategies whilst reading the academic materials. Additionally, the methods used were analytical and pragmatic ways. It found in the research that the students mostly had analytic way (1,223) compared to pragmatic. The techniques occupied was to build the concept and memorise the information.

The next research was done by (Saricoban, 2002) which he found that the English Language Teaching students at Hacettepe University used strategies in while-reading and post-reading. These results were divided based on the two types of readers; successful and unsuccessful readers. In the end, many of successful students occupied different strategies in each stage. There were two reading methods in this research namely annotating and analysing. From the two ways, the research invented that analysing method obtained the highest percentage (62%) compared to the other techniques. Whereas, this research did not intentionally state in what stage the students mostly has the reading strategies been used.

The fifth research which linked to the strategies in reading that were used by the first year of English Foreign Language university students done by (Sattar, 2014) . It discovered that the students using their capability in reading righteously in the whilst circumstance of reading related to the background knowledge. The students make their own prediction effectively applicable when they were doing the test granted by the researchers. Eventhough the result indicated the same result, this research only had purpose in applying the methods in doing the exam, and also the object was the first year of university students.

The last supportive research was undertaken by (Küçükoğlu, 2013). He stated that methods implemented in reading were indeed useful in enhancing the intermediate-level students ability in reading in some stages. The result invented that plenty of students (14 students in total of sample) succeeded. Whereas, the research had difference in terms of the result. They obtained that the students did not excel in the stage of predicting the information in the text due to the lack of knowledge had by the intermediate students. To conclude, it can be acknowledged that all researchers who did the experiment regarded to the reading strategies were unalike from this research. The previous researchers did not specifically state in what step of reading the students had strategies been used and also in terms of the type of strategies implemented.

Conclusion

The research had specific aim connected to the stage of reading strategies are pertinent to and what is the most implemented strategy used by the students of English Department started from basic level until critical level. From the two questions formed in this research, the researcher found that they were answered entirely and there was link of them. The students of English Department tend to have strategies utilized in whilst-reading compared to the pre-reading and post-reading stage. Likewise, the prediction strategy is the most widely used by many students. It can be understood that the students when they are reading, they have tendency to create prediction for what they read to comprehend it easier and the students will not be indeed totally surprised with the passage read.

For students, it is indeed suggested to read as much as they can. It is very essential to lose the unmotivated self for not reading any texts. If the students already get used to read any kind of texts in foreign language, specifically English, they will have no tendency to be difficult because the students have been provided and exposed with many reading techniques that could be used when reading and in exam situation when the strategies are needed. The students will also have no any anxiety regarded to reading a text because they already make reading as a habit.

For lecturers, it is advised to have many strategies as many as possible because the strategies implemented recently will not always be used in the next future. It is also better to discover other strategies of reading so that the students are not having a few of choices and the students can also foster their reading ability much rather than only use the recent methods.

Acknowledgments

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