

READING STRATEGIES USED BY EFL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ACROSS GENDER

Eka Hardiani*, Lies Amin Lestari**, Ahmad Munir***
State University of Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia
ekahardiani@mhs.unesa.ac.id

Keywords:

ABSTRACT

Reading strategies
Gender
EFL students

This study aimed to describe reading strategies employed by EFL junior high school students and the significant differences between male and female students in using certain reading strategies. The participants were 92 ninth graders in junior high school. Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) developed by Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) was used to collect the data. The data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics and independent sample t-test. The results of the study revealed EFL junior high school students use problem-solving reading strategies more frequently than support reading strategies and global reading strategies. There is no statistically significant difference between male and female students in using global strategies and problem-solving strategies. They employed those strategies in the same ways. On the other hands, there was a significant difference between males and females in using support strategies. From all the strategies used, female students tend to apply more strategies than the male students.

INTRODUCTION

One of important skills in learning English either as second or foreign language is reading. Harmer (1998, p. 68) stated that reading is useful not only for careers, study, and pleasure, but also for language acquisition. He further explains that it will give good model for English written and delivers several chances to learn about grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, and how make a sentence, paragraph, and text. If the learners are familiar with those grammatical aspects in English, it is assumed that the text will be easier to understand comprehensively.

Grabe (2009, p. 15) defined reading is a communicating process where the reader communicates with the writer. The readers are asked to comprehend the information provided by the author in certain ways. He or she should bring his or

her background knowledge to establish understanding and interpreting of what the writer's intention. Moreover there are two related processes in reading; word recognition and comprehension. The process of recognizing how printed symbols relate to one's spoken language is called word recognition while comprehension is known as the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text. Nunan (1991, p. 71) claimed that reading comprehension means reading for meaning, understanding, and entertainment. It includes high-order thinking skills and is much more complex than simply decoding specific word. The students have to understand what they have read as a part of their reading process. But there are some reasons why many students get some problems in reading especially in comprehending the texts, such as the word

procedures, unsuitable tasks or wrong text, and unfamiliar words (Nuttall, 1996).

These problems frequently happen to Indonesian junior high school students when they face National Exam. Most of items in this exam have given a big portion of its questions to be answered based on the texts. Looking back at 2015 National Exam, there were around 80% (40 out of 50 items) of questions is all based on the texts. This clearly needs a good reading ability as the students mostly have to spend the allocated limited time to read texts to be able to answer the questions correctly. Thus, it is important for the students to have good strategies so they will not waste their time reading the text again and again without getting the answers demanded the questions.

Karami (2008, p. 5) stated that reading strategies may be defined as the aware, internally variable psychological techniques expected in improving the success of or compensating for the failures in reading comprehension, on specific reading tasks and specific contexts. In line with the definition, Cahyono (2010, p. 48) emphasizes reading strategy as necessary in teaching and learning process because reading strategy can make an idea of outbreak where the students can solve reading problems by themselves and help them to recognize how they are thinking in order to make them think more consciously.

Noviabahari (2013) conducted a study about reading strategies employed by university students. Generally, she concludes that the most frequent reading strategy employed by the learners is *global reading strategies*, followed by *support reading strategies* and *problem-solving reading strategies*. She also finds how the students apply reading strategies and the extent to which reading strategies employed while reading comprehension are sometimes different.

Some studies showed that gender is an important factor when trying to describe reading strategy use and reading

achievement in university level. However the results of these studies have recently been inconsistent. A number of studies have reported that the girls have higher reading comprehension scores than boys, whereas several studies have failed to show off gender differences. Poole (2005, p. 13) reported that there is no significant difference between males and females in using their overall strategy. Both males and females used *problem-solving strategies* with high frequency, while *global* and *support strategies* were employed with moderate frequency. "Even though no significant differences were found, males had slightly higher overall scores on *global* and *problem-solving strategies*, while females used more *support strategies*". If compared to Noviabahari's study, males only show higher reading strategies for non-usual strategies.

While previous studies were at university level, none have studied reading strategies at lower levels such as elementary school, junior high school, and senior high school. To my experience teaching English at junior high school, the students are not well aware of the strategies in reading comprehension. In other words, they do not know which strategies can help them understand the text comprehensively to increase their achievements. Therefore, it is important to study or investigate junior high school students' reading strategies. The background of the study leads to several issues as addressed below:

1. What reading strategies do the learners employ for their reading comprehension?
2. Do male and female EFL learners have differences in using certain reading strategies?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Reading as a complicated process involving cognitive processes, is divided into several levels in order to comprehend

the text. Long, Johns, and Morris (2006, pp. 801-803) proposed three levels of reading process, there are word level (lexical processes), sentence level (syntactic processes), and discourse level. The first level is occupied by word level (lexical processes) which is extremely essential for encoding the written word, retrieve its sound based on representation and obtain the meaning from memory. Perfetti and Lesgold in (Kirby, 1988) stated poor readers take longer at word identification. They spend several more seconds just to recognize the words in a sentence. Skilled readers, on the other hands, are occasionally conscious of working at this level.

Sentence level, as the second level in reading process, is focused in understanding a word which is related to structure formation especially in syntactic and the conceptual relation within and across phrases. The third level is at the discourse level. In this level, the correct ideas are integrated across sentences and related to the appropriate semantic and pragmatic knowledge in the text. This brings about in a discourse or situation model (a mental representation). It indicates characteristics of the real or imaginary world which the text describes. A reader must involve in active inferential process to interpret and rearrange information of the text supported by his or her previous understanding of the relevant knowledge domain in order to make a discourse model.

In addition, many researchers and lecturers try to create a common understanding of reading process. They have categorized reading models or approaches into three types which are bottom-up, top-down, and interactive models (Alderson, 2000; Grabe, 2009; Hudson, 2007; Nuttall, 1996; Owens, 2012) General models of reading serve useful purposes. These models describe the interconnected ways of processing a text. They are utilized whenever the readers read. Through usually unconscious

processes, they can be accepted as conscious strategies when approaching a complicated text.

Owens (2012, p. 364) revealed that in bottom-up process, reading is information processing that is guided by input and proceeds in subsequent stages. Readers start from the individual letter segments and build a comprehension word by word come to the whole sentence. The readers construct a meaning from the black marks on the page by identifying letters or words and understanding the structure of sentence. In addition, it basically assumes a reader build up meaning from ‘letters, words phrases, clauses, and sentences’ and process the text into phonemic units which signify lexical meaning. Then it constructs meaning in a right way (Hudson, 2007, p. 33). Thus these model deal with how readers extract information from the text. They suggest understanding the text meaning; the reader begins to process from letters, words, sentences, and paragraphs. In other words, the reader should work each word letter-by-letter, each sentence word-by-word and text sentence-by-sentence then combines all those words to understand a text a whole.

In top-down process, on the other hand, the importance of schemata and the readers’ influence over the incoming text are emphasized in this process (Alderson, 2000, p. 17). Similar to Nuttall (1996, p. 16), she stated the readers draw on their knowledge and experience. The prediction can be made based on their schemata in understanding the text. These models are applied when the readers take assumptions and describe inferences, or when they attempt to see the general goals of the text or take a rough idea of the writers’ argument form to have a reasonable prediction at the following step. Harmer (2001, p. 201) added that a good reader is able to grasp an idea of what is being talked about with helping of their own schemata.

Grabe (2009, p. 89) suggested that inference is a prominent characteristic of

top-down models as is the importance of background knowledge of the readers. They use their previous knowledge to comprehend the text. They form hypothesis about which words they meet and decide on only just enough visual information to analyze their hypothesis. In other words, readers begin comprehending a text by making hypothesis or prediction about the incoming information or text. They apply schemata to the text in an attempt to construct meaning. The readers do not have to read each word in the text. In conclusion, this model is making of predictions about new information of the text in accordance to past experience or knowledge that readers know or have.

The third model of reading process is interactive model. This model is aimed to explain the role of context throughout reading. An interactive model is a combination between bottom-up (for decoding and comprehending the text) and top-down models (for activating the background knowledge and guessing strategies of the reader). It is a form of cooperative processing where knowledge at all points of abstraction come into play in the process of reading comprehension. The process of this model can be summarized as follow: it is started with the initial hypotheses or guessing based on the linguistics knowledge (structure of letters, words, phrases, sentences, and larger pieces of discourse) and no-linguistic aspects of present situation. The visual information available on the page strengthens those hypotheses that are consistent with the input and weakens those are inconsistent. In turn, the stronger hypotheses create more detailed predictions about the data accessible in the visual information. When these hypotheses are strengthened, they are beyond supported, and process is facilitated.

Snow (2002, pp. 13-16) stated that reading comprehension is influenced by several factors. Those factors are the reader who is taking the comprehending, the text which is to be understood, and the activity

in which comprehension has a part. Considered to the reader, she involves all the capabilities, capacities, experiences and knowledge which a person takes to his or her reading achievement. Text is generally interpreted to take in some printed or electronic texts. Meanwhile the activities consist of the aims, processes, and results with the reading act.

Reading in Indonesian Curriculum

English is a compulsory learning subject in Junior High school. Based on the *Permendikbud No. 58 tahun 2014*, the goal of English teaching in junior high school is to develop the learners' potency in order to have a communicative competence, both in oral and written, comprehensibly utilizing the accurate and satisfactory linguistics elements, and inculcate noble values of the nation's character, in the life context. Hence, all the learning aspects are expected to be as close as possible to the actual situation.

The new curriculum used in Indonesia is called Curriculum 2013 where English have time allocation 4 x 40 minutes (two meetings) in a week. The competencies are set forth in Core Competence 1 (spiritual), Core Competence 2 (social), Core Competence 3 (knowledge), and Core Competence 4 (skill). Language skill competencies cover listening, speaking, reading, and writing. All skills are integrated each other. Reading skills as one of essential skills is taught in some basic competencies which students should master. The competencies are to understand social functions, structures and language features of some passages: short functional text and short essay. Short functional text includes notice, warning, instructions, invitation, greeting cards, label, list, etc. while shorts essay including five genre text: descriptive, recount, narrative, procedure and report. Students have to interact with some types of texts to make them able to get and construct meaning from the passages they read. Moreover, the curriculum also requires that they should have skills to be

able to getting meaning the idea of the short essay texts. They are expected to do some reading activities using some reading strategies to get the text meaning. It assumes that the students' reading skills will be developed through those reading comprehension activities.

As important skill, reading comprehension is the main skills which are tested in *Ujian Nasional* (UN) for the English subjects. The question items tested are varied in some micro-skills of reading and cognitive levels. In reading competencies, students are required to be able to understand the written passage meaning in the form of short functional and short essay: descriptive, procedure, report, narrative and recount for daily context. The indicators of the competencies are identifying the general idea, specific information, detailed information explicitly and implicitly, and identifying the reference, words meaning and communicative functions of the short essay. Regarding to those indicators, the questions type of National Examination can be varied in some levels of comprehension. Therefore, teachers should distribute the type of questions which are asked to the students when teaching reading.

Reading strategies

Prior to the elaboration of reading strategies, it is necessary to distinguish two terms that might overlap and create confusion, that is, skill and strategy. According to Paris et. al. in (Hudson, 2007, p. 106), skill is defined as information processing techniques that are automatic or used unconsciously, while strategies are steps or actions taken consciously and deliberately to accomplish a certain goal. They further state which an emergent skill may turn into a strategy when it is utilized deliberately, or a strategy is as a skill when it is applied automatically. Thus, the focal point in differentiating the two terms is the intention or consciousness. Reading strategies refer to actions which a reader chooses and control to achieve certain

objectives (Van Dijk and Kintsch in Haley & Austin, 2013, p. 171). The strategies are selected and used by the reader with consciousness and deliberation.

Reading strategies are a significant feature of teaching English as foreign language. In facts, a lot of English books for ESL/ EFL learners especially in academic contexts include reading comprehension strategies in practice. Some of the used reading strategies consist of: reading for pleasure, skimming and scanning, summarizing information, making guesses, predicting, making inferences, underlining words or phrases, mapping semantic, analyzing words and making notes. According to Brown (2001, p. 306), most learners of second language who are good at reading comprehension are developing and orchestrating appropriate reading strategies. The use of the strategies corresponds with bottom-up process for some learners, and top-down process for the others. This line with Hudson (2007, p. 292) stated more proficient readers are intended to apply more strategies, especially metacognitive strategies than less proficient readers.

Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002, p. 4) classified three categorizations of reading strategies, they are Global Reading Strategies (GLOB), Problem-solving Strategies (PROB), and Support Strategies (SUP). GLOB strategies are purposeful and carefully planned techniques in which learners are asked to know how to monitor or control their reading. Those relate to pre-activities such as having a purpose in the readers' mind and thinking about what one already grasps about the material before reading. Global reading strategies can be considered as metacognitive in nature, which plays a more important role in language learning than other strategy types (Anderson, 2005). PROB strategies include manners and functions which the readers apply when they find obstacles in understanding of the text. It is relevant to functions such as reread to comprehend text and adjust reading rate to the level of

difficulty of what they are reading. SUP strategies are the strategies where the learners should consider that there are another support material presented to them, further to the teacher and the text. It is about the use of making outside reference materials in the text like noting in the margins, concluding, and underlining of important ideas.

Gender and Use of Language Learning Strategies

Language learning strategies are steps selected by the students to improve their learning. There are several factors which influence the choice of strategies such as age, sex, nationality/ ethnicity, learning style, degree of awareness, task requirements, language learning purpose, motivation, and teacher expectation (Oxford, 1990, p. 13). As one of the factor, sex (closely related with the term “gender”) is a topic with significant theoretical and pedagogical assumption in second language learning. A number of studies reported that gender have an important effect on how students study a language. Chavez (2001) identified the basic purposes of understanding gender differences in using strategy are; to let us know how gender can influence second language reading development and achievement; to allow teachers of second language to have this awareness to assist the students of both gender to get achievements in second language reading comprehension; to inspire next research into the role of gender in second language reading, to help the need of individual students, assumed that males and females are worthy of the same chance in learning successfully.

The girls are expected to perform better in language domains than quantitative domains (Ellis, 1994). The boys, on the other hands, are persuaded to increase independent self-confident behavior needed more for future success in science and mathematics. Furthermore females have better on questions about educations, human relations, care, art, and

philosophy than the males do better on sports, economic and technological topics, politics, and violence.

Some practitioners conducted any studies to examine gender as a variable in the use of language learning strategies. Phakiti (2003) investigated gender differences in the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategy with EFL university students. The results revealed that females significantly lower in using metacognitive strategies than the males. But there is no difference between males and females in their reading comprehension and their use of cognitive strategies.

Zare (2013) conducted a study to find out the overall frequency in employing reading strategy and how the use of these strategies various according male and female students. The participants of the research were eighty Iranian EFL learners. The result showed that there is no significant difference between male and female language learners in using reading strategies.

In line with Zare and Young & Oxford, Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001) investigated differences of using reading strategies between native and non-native English speakers when they are reading academic materials. Respondents were 150 US native-English-speakers and 152 ESL learners in the university level. They should complete a “survey of reading strategies”. The results reported that there were no any significant differences between male and female ESL students in using overall reading strategies. They only differed on one individual strategy.

Although this current research is conducted in similar topic, but the present research is applied in different level of students. The subjects of this research are ninth graders of junior high school in Kota Jambi. Some previous research studies give positive contributions for this research since they give an inspiration and general input to do further investigation.

RESEARCH METHODS

Type of the Research

This research was intended to find out the use of reading strategies employed by the students of junior high school across gender. Therefore, quantitative study was used as a basic design which explores the differences among students in utilizing reading strategies. This study used survey method which using questionnaire to collect the data. The questionnaires were applied as the main research instrument to find out the reading strategies used by EFL junior high school students and the significant differences among students.

Population and Sample

The population of this research was ninth graders of junior high school (SMP N 14) Kota Jambi. This level was selected because the students had experienced reading-oriented learning for more than two years. There were six classes in grade nine, namely 9A to 9F in the even semester of 2016/ 2017 academic year. However, the researcher only took four classes. The classes were selected because of English teacher's recommendation and the distribution of males and females were almost equal.

Meanwhile, the total samples contributed in this study were ninety-six students from four classes but there are four students not attended to the survey. So only ninety-two students participated in this survey, they were 49 male students and 43 female students. From the individual background information, the students approximately have read 2-3 books in a recent year.

Research Instruments

The questionnaire *Survey of Reading Strategies* (SORS) developed by Mokhtari & Sheorey (2002) was used to answer the first and second research questions in this study. Moreover, the questionnaires were carried out to the respondents to find the information about the reading strategies they used. SORS was used as the main data of this study. In this study, the questionnaires were translated into Indonesian language in order to avoid

misunderstanding by the subjects in answering the items.

The representative questionnaire was very structured data collection instrument. It covered with most of items asking about detailed pieces of information or offering several response options. The questionnaire was composed of two sections. The first section requested students' individual background such as class, gender, UN try-out score, and information about their readings. The students had to fill and choose the answer based on their own opinions. The second part of the questionnaire was *Survey of Reading Strategies* (SORS) developed by Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002). It was utilized to identify the reading strategies used. SORS employed a five-point Likert scale ranging from answers indicating "never or almost never" to "always or almost always". The student whose mean score below 2.4 ($M \leq 2.4$) is signified to be a low strategy user, the student whose mean score between 2.5 and 3.4 ($2.5 \leq M \leq 3.4$) is demonstrated to be a moderate strategy user, and the student whose mean score above 3.5 ($M \geq 3.5$) is considered a high strategy user.

SORS covered 30 Likert-scales items and created a measure of using overall strategies, as well as scores on three types: *global reading strategies* (GLOB), *problem-solving reading strategies* (PROB) and *support reading strategies* (SUP). *Global reading strategies* are relevant to top-down strategies in many ways, such as dealing with one's reading purpose and reconsidering what one already recognized about the topic. *Problem-solving reading strategies* include guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words and re-reading complicated parts. *Support reading strategies* involve actions such as taking a note and doing paraphrase.

In order to check reliability and validity scales of the questionnaire (Indonesian version), a pilot study was done with thirty students from the population. The result showed a reliability

level as the Cronbach's coefficient Alpha is .76 of overall reading strategies survey. Since the Cronbach Alpha value is greater than .70, the questionnaire has a good internal consistency to assess the reading strategies used by the students.

Data Collection Technique

The data were gathered from the questionnaire of the "survey of reading strategy (SORS)". The researcher prepared sufficient copies of questionnaires for every student. The survey was held on February, 27th – 28th, 2017. The students are asked to select one of the scale-Likert beside the statements based on their own opinion. They are given 40 minutes in completing this task. The students need to give some information about their personal data on the form attached to the questionnaires. After the data being gathered, they were analyzed to find the score of each instrument. The final step was interpreting the data.

Data Analysis Technique

The first step conducted after acquiring the data from questionnaire was to examine the normality distribution and the homogeneity of variances of the data. The normal distribution and homogeneity of variances should be evaluated because of the fact that this research investigates the significant differences of the groups. If the significant level of α is lower than .05, the normal distribution and homogeneity of the data are not significant. It indicates that the data are not normally distributed and not homogenous. The data of reading strategies are normally distributed by significant value of .180 for Kolmogorov-Smirnov and .105 for Shapiro-Wilk which higher than p . value .05. It can be concluded that the data thoroughly had the normal distribution assumption, so independent samples t-test can be used by concerning to this data. The next step after finding the normality of data distribution

was to make out the homogeneity of the data. It is showed that the data of overall reading strategies encountered the assumption of the homogeneity of variances with level of significance .484 that higher than p . value of .05.

After identifying the normality distribution and homogeneity of variances of the data, the next step was to analyze the data. In order to answer research question number 1 "What reading strategies do the learners employ for reading comprehension?", descriptive statistics involving means and standard deviation was applied to distinguish overall strategies used. For Global reading strategies (GLOB), the total scores of 13 items (1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 12, 15, 17, 20, 21, 23, 24, and 27) were calculated. For Problem-solving reading strategies (PROB), the total scores of 8 items (7, 9, 11, 14, 16, 19, 25, and 28) were calculated. For Support reading strategies the total scores of 9 items (2, 5, 10, 13, 18, 22, 26, 29, and 30) were calculated. From these total, a rank of the mean score of the reading strategies had been obtained.

In order to answer the second research question "Do male and female EFL learners have differences in the use of certain reading strategy?" data derived from individual background about their gender were split into two groups (males and females). For each type of reading strategies, independent samples t-test was done to identify the differences between males and females by using Software Package Used for Statistical Analysis 20.0 (SPSS).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The first research question is about reading strategies employed by EFL junior high school learners for their reading comprehension. The results of reading strategies used are presented in Table 1

Table 1. Reading Strategies Used

Reading Strategies	Mean	Mode	SD
GLOB	2.9	3.2	.54
PROB	3.4	3.9	.55
SUP	3.2	3.4	.58

Table 1 shows mean score and Standard Deviation of reading strategies used in reading comprehension. The results reported that the most frequent reading strategies employed by the students of junior high is *problem-solving reading strategies* (M= 3.4, SD= .55), followed by *support reading strategies* (M= 3.2, SD= .58). The least-used strategies were *global reading strategies* (M= 2.9, SD= .54). From the mean score, it can be concluded that the learners used all reading strategies for their reading comprehension were considered moderate-strategy users. They used more problem-solving reading strategies and support reading strategies than global reading strategies.

Students' preference on problem-solving strategies can be predicted based on their experience in learning English. The students studied English in a very limited time, about a few hours in the classroom. Only a few numbers of students take an English course outside the classroom. This condition makes the students not familiar with English. They have difficulties in comprehending an English text. It is proved by their statements that they only read two or three books such as English handbooks, magazines, and short stories in a recent year. Junior high school students often read slowly and carefully. They read word by word and sentence by sentence to increase their understanding about the text. This finding shows the ability of EFL junior high school students are still categorized as the beginner learners who usually apply bottom-up approach in their reading comprehension. In bottom-up process, the readers begin from the individual letter segments and build a comprehension word

by word come to the whole sentence (Owens, 2012). In order to get the meaning, the students process each word; each sentence then combines all to understand a text in a whole.

Likewise Anderson (1999, p.47) mentions a technique that can be employed to get readers check their comprehension while reading by stopping periodically. Hudson (2007, p.110) additionally states while reading, the reader can also determine to reread particular passage for clarification or can skip ahead to decide where the text is going. Anderson's (1999) and Hudson's (2007) statements support the findings of the study. Junior high school students frequently stop from time to time and think about their reading. But when text becomes complicated, they reread to get more understanding. By rereading, the students have another chance to have sense of a text and to check for their comprehension.

The second favorable strategies are support strategies. The ninth graders of junior high school frequently translate an English text into Indonesian as their native language. They do this strategy to understand the text more when they are reading. In addition, if they meet some unfamiliar or difficult words in the text, they will find the meaning in their dictionaries. This happens because the students of junior high school are still relatively of the low-level and cannot infer words meaning from context. They also are not able to differentiate between important and unimportant vocabularies.

Compared to the results of previous studies conducted in university level, the junior high school students in this study do not favor global reading strategies. This fact can be considered as a factor that differentiates the characteristics of junior high school and university students. Global reading strategies can be considered as metacognitive in nature, which plays a more important role in language learning than other strategy types (Anderson, 2005). Metacognitive strategies" include functions

such as having a purpose in readers' mind or previewing the text before reading (overseeing), deciding what information to be read closely and what information to be ignored (regulating), and critically analyzing and evaluating information (evaluation). The students of junior high school have less awareness in using these strategies than the university students because of a lack of academic learning experiences. Therefore they are included in least-used strategies employed by the junior high school students.

This research finding is slightly different from the other research findings investigating reading strategy use among native and non-native speakers in a kind of settings, most of the studies are accomplished in higher level (senior high school and university level). The common trend of strategy use in these studies (Chen & Chen, 2015; Noviabahari, 2013) is that the students usually prefer to employ global reading strategies, followed by problem-solving reading strategies or support reading strategies. This current findings of the research are in line with Huang and Nisbet (2014), they report that the students favored problem-solving strategies, followed by support strategies. Their least-used strategies are global strategies.

Difference of Reading Strategies Used by Male and Female Students

The research question examines the differences between males and females in employing certain reading strategies. Because the data of reading strategies use was normally distributed, independent samples t-test was utilized to describe the differences of male and female learners in using reading strategies. The t-test result of overall reading strategies used by the students with different gender is performed in Table 2

Table 2. Reading Strategies Used by Female and Male Students

	Gender	Mean	SD	Sig.
--	--------	------	----	------

	r	n		
Reading	Male	92.37	14.728	.085
Strategies	Female	97.60	13.968	

Table 2 presents the findings of the differences in using reading strategies between males and females. The result of the test describes that there is no significant difference between males and females students in employing reading strategies. The significant value of reading strategies is .085 which is higher than p .05, meaning that there is no significant difference between two groups. To put it simple, both male and female learners employed similar reading strategies.

In order to make deeper explanation of these findings, the test of each types of reading strategies use was applied as a result in Table 3

Table 3. Certain Reading Strategies Used by Female and Male Students

Reading Strategies	Gender	Mean	SD	Sig.
GLOB	Male	37.22	6.971	.154
	Female	39.33	7.009	
PROB	Male	27.43	4.587	.848
	Female	27.60	4.141	
SUP	Male	27.71	5.107	.006*
	Female	30.67	4.844	

**significance difference

Table 3 points out the result of the certain reading strategies employed by males and females students. They were p value of GLOB .154, p value of PROB .848, and p value of SUP .006. GLOB and PROB has greater p value than .05. Therefore, there are no significant differences between males and females in

using global reading strategies and problem-solving reading strategies. Only SUP has p value lower than .05, meaning that a significant difference is found between male and female students in employing support reading strategies. Females use these strategies (underlining or circling information, using dictionary as reference material, and translating English text into Indonesian) than the males. On three types of reading strategies, female students have higher overall score than the males.

Moreover both males and females rarely used tables, figures, and pictures to improve their understanding. The students do not realize that those instructional aids can help them to find deeper meanings in the text. Kirby (1988, p. 257) states one of the ways selecting important ideas in text is making use of instructional aids (organizers, summaries, list of objectives, figures, tables, and maps) provided with the text. This important idea or information can be used to answer the questions.

Most of male students do not read a text carefully. Females, on the other hands, use this strategy more frequently when they are reading. It is proved from the survey that female students spend more time to read (such as for translating the text into Indonesian and finding the meaning of difficult or unfamiliar words by using dictionary) than the males. This condition might occur because almost of reading topics in English textbook contain uninteresting topic for the males. Oakhill and Petrides (2007) claims the content of reading passages significantly influenced male's reading comprehension, not for females.

Furthermore considered to the text genres, boys favor adventure, science fictions, and sports, while girls like romance, animal stories, friendship, and historical stories. For example, when the text provided is about football, automatically male connected all his knowledge about information related to football game such as favorite team,

players, rules, etc. As mentioned by Snow (2002) there is an interaction between a domain knowledge of the reader and the content of the text. If males are interested in topic of the text, they will easily understand what text about. In conclusion, whether one gender to be more successful than the other is influenced by subject matter.

The result of this study is consistent with Sheorey & Mokhtari's (2001), Poole's (2005), and Zare's (2013) findings, which reported that male and female ESL/EFL students show no significant differences in using overall reading strategies. The prior and current studies have the same results because the participants of these two studies are English as second language (ESL) and English as foreign language (EFL) learners. That is, ESL learners do not use strategies or patterns of strategies which are different in kind from those of EFL learners. As supported by O'malley and Chamot (1990, p. 126) foreign language learners show similar patterns of metacognitive and cognitive strategies use as compared by second language learners. So both male and female ESL/EFL learners are intended to use similar reading strategies. Furthermore it is also supposed that the reason for the lack of gender effect for ESL/ EFL readers in these studies may be due to the unequal distribution between males and females.

By contrary, this current study have different result from Chen and Chen (2015); Poole (2009) who reveal there are any statistically significant differences between males and females in using overall reading strategies. Additionally, they also showed that females tend to use more reading strategies than males.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Based on the findings, some conclusions can be drawn as follows. First, EFL junior high school students use problem-solving reading strategies more

than support reading strategies and global reading strategies. However from the mean scores, these strategies are considered as moderately used.

Second, as there is no statistically significant difference between male and female students in using overall reading strategies, both males and females employ global and problem-solving strategies in similar ways. However, they have significant differences in using support strategies. Before reading a text, female students identify the text content by taking overall view of the text more frequently than the males. They sometimes lose concentration when reading but they attempt to retrieve on track. Additionally, female students tend to apply more strategies than the male students. From all the strategies used, the result reveals EFL junior high school students whether across gender or proficiency levels rarely use instructional aids such as table, figure, picture, organizer, etc. to help them increase their understanding about the text.

Suggestion

Based on the results of current study, some suggestions are proposed to the teachers and the future researchers. First, for the teachers, they should introduce several reading strategies which can be helpful to the students in understanding how to cope with problems that they meet in comprehending academic English text. It is also very useful because most of the students do not know how to use reading strategies appropriately and effectively when they are reading academic materials. The teachers are able to provide English reading material considered to the students' interest in order to encourage their reading ability for comprehending the text.

Second, the future researchers should consider to these concerns. In order to have a deeper understanding of the use of reading strategies by high school students, the observation can be done as well as interview which is employed after survey and observation. These two

approaches are conducted to examine reading strategies that are the most successful in increasing English reading ability of the students. Furthermore in order to investigate how effective reading strategies to improve reading comprehension of EFL junior high school students, it is suggested for further research to conduct classroom action research and experimental.

REFERENCES

- Alderson, J Charles. (2000). *Assessing reading. Cambridge language assessment series*: Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Anderson, N. (2005). L2 learning strategies. *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 757-772.
- Brown, H Douglas. (2001). *Teaching by principles: An integrated approach to language pedagogy*. New York: Pearson Education.
- Cahyono, Bambang Yudi. (2010). *The Teaching of English Language Skills and English Language Components*. Malang: State University of Malang Press.
- Chavez, Monika. (2001). *Gender in the language classroom*. Boston: McGraw Hill.
- Chen, Kate Tzu-Ching, & Chen, Sabina Chia-Li. (2015). The use of EFL reading strategies among high school students in Taiwan. *The Reading Matrix: An International Online Journal*, 15(2), 156-166.
- Ellis, Rod. (1994). *The study of second language acquisition*: Oxford University.
- Grabe, William. (2009). *Reading in a second language: Moving from theory to practice*: Ernst Klett Sprachen.
- Haley, Marjorie Hall, & Austin, Theresa Y. (2013). *Content-based second language teaching and learning*:

- An interactive approach*: Pearson Higher Ed.
- Harmer, Jeremy. (1998). *How to teach English: An introduction to the practice of English language teaching*: Longman.
- Harmer, Jeremy. (2001). *The practice of English language teaching* (3rd ed.). London: Longman.
- Huang, Jiuhan, & Nisbet, Deanna. (2014). The relationship between reading proficiency and reading strategy use: A study of adult ESL learners. *Journal of Adult Education*, 43(2), 1.
- Hudson, Thom. (2007). *Teaching second language reading*: Oxford University Press Oxford.
- Karami, Hossein. (2008). Reading Strategies: What are They? *Online Submission*.
- Kirby, John R. (1988). Style, Strategy, and Skill in Reading. In R. R. Schmeck (Ed.), *Learning Strategies and Learning Styles* (1st ed.). New York: Springer Science+Business Media, LLC.
- Long, Debra L, Johns, Clinton L, & Morris, Phillip E. (2006). Comprehension ability in mature readers. *Handbook of psycholinguistics*, 2, 801-833.
- Mokhtari, Kouider, & Sheorey, Ravi. (2002). Measuring ESL students' awareness of reading strategies. *Journal of developmental education*, 25(3), 2.
- Noviabahari. (2013). *Reading Strategy Employed by University Students in Comprehending Reading Text*. (Post Graduate), State University of Surabaya, Surabaya.
- Nunan, David. (1991). *Language Teaching Methodology*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Nuttall, Christine. (1996). *Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language* (3rd ed.). Oxford: Macmillan Education.
- O'malley, J Michael, & Chamot, Anna Uhl. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*: Cambridge university press.
- Oakhill, Jane V, & Petrides, Alison. (2007). Sex differences in the effects of interest on boys' and girls' reading comprehension. *British Journal of Psychology*, 98(2), 223-235.
- Owens, Robert E Jr. (2012). *Language Development: An Introduction* (Eighth ed.). New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc.
- Oxford, Rebecca L. (1990). *Language Learning Strategies: What every teacher should know* (1st ed.). Boston: Heinle & Heinle Publisher.
- Phakiti, Aek. (2003). A closer look at gender and strategy use in L2 reading. *Language learning*, 53(4), 649-702.
- Poole, Alexander. (2005). Gender differences in reading strategy use among ESL college students. *Journal of college Reading and Learning*, 36(1), 7-20.
- Poole, Alexander. (2009). The reading strategies used by male and female Colombian university students. *Profile Issues in TeachersProfessional Development*(11), 29-40.
- Sheorey, Ravi, & Mokhtari, Kouider. (2001). Differences in the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among native and non-native readers. *System*, 29(4), 431-449.
- Snow, Catherine. (2002). *Reading for understanding: Toward an R&D program in reading comprehension*. Pittsburgh: Rand Corporation.
- Zare, Pezhman. (2013). Exploring reading strategy use and reading comprehension success among EFL Learners. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 22(11), 1566-1571.