

# A STUDY ON THE FIFTH SEMESTER STUDENTS' READING STRATEGIES AT THE ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAM OF RIAU UNIVERSITY

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***Abstract:** The objective of this descriptive research was to find out about students' reading strategies in their reading activities, inside and outside the classroom. The sample of this research was the fifth semester students of English Department of Riau University. There were 65 students participated as the sample of this research. The data were quantitative and the instrument of the research was a questionnaire which consists of 28 questions regarding the reading strategies they use inside and outside the class. The data were analyzed by calculating the score of the students in answering the questionnaire and classifying them to a certain category using Sugiono formula (2012). The results were that out of 65 students, the students' response is strongly agree with the reading strategies such as: Identifying the purpose in reading (81,23%), using different silent reading techniques for relatively rapid reading (80,61%), analyzing vocabulary (80%), and guessing when we are not certain(80,30%). After that, the students' response is agree such as : Using graphemic rules and patterns to aid in bottom-up reading (76%), skimming the text for main ideas (73,23%), scanning the text for specific information (73,53%), using semantic mapping or clustering (70,76%), distinguishing between literal and implied meanings (75,07%), and capitalizing on discourse markers to process relationships (74,15). This research recommended that the students to find out the suitable reading strategies for doing their reading activities. Further research can focus on studying each subtopic in details.*

**Keywords:** reading strategies, reading activities

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**Abstrak:** Tujuan dari penelitian deskriptif ini adalah untuk mengetahui tentang strategi membaca mahasiswa dalam kegiatan membaca mereka, di dalam maupun di luar kelas. Sampel penelitian ini adalah seluruh mahasiswa semester lima program studi bahasa Inggris Universitas Riau yang berjumlah 65 orang. Data yang digunakan berupa kuantitatif data dan instrument penelitiannya adalah sebuah angket yang berisi 28 pertanyaan mengenai strategi membaca yang mahasiswa gunakan. Data dianalisis dengan menghitung skor masing-masing mahasiswa dalam menjawab tes dan diklasifikasi menjadi kategori tertentu sesuai dengan formula oleh Sugiono (2012). Hasil dari penelitian adalah bahwa dari 65 mahasiswa yang merespons, didapatkan jawaban yang sangat setuju dengan strategi membaca seperti: mengidentifikasi tujuan membaca (81,23%), menggunakan teknik membaca diam yang berbeda (80,61%), menganalisa kosakata (80%), dan menerka ketika tidak yakin (80,30%). Sebaliknya, mahasiswa yang merespons Setuju dengan strategi membaca seperti: menggunakan aturan dan pola grafik untuk membantu membaca bagian bawah ke atas (76%), membaca sepintas teks untuk ide utama (73,23%), membaca cepat teks untuk informasi tertentu (73,53%), menggunakan pemetaan semantik atau pengelompokan (70,76%), membedakan antara arti yang sebenarnya dan arti tersirat (75,07%), dan memanfaatkan kata yang ditandai untuk memproses hubungan (74,15). Penelitian ini merekomendasikan mahasiswa untuk menemukan strategi membaca yang sesuai dengan aktifitas membaca mereka. Penelitian lebih lanjut dapat difokus pada penelitian mengenai masing-masing sub-topik dengan lebih rinci.

**Kata kunci:** *strategi membaca, aktifitas membaca*

## INTRODUCTION

As Block (1986) and Singhal (2001) stated that, the reading strategies used by efficient and inefficient learners were different. Strengthening English reading ability will be necessary for us to promote individual ability in competing. Using reading strategies can be a great help to non-native readers because it may serve as an effective guideline for overcoming language deficiency and obtaining better reading achievement. However, if such strategies are not properly applied, they might hinder students' understanding and overall comprehension skills. Nonetheless, empirical studies have been conducted into the effectiveness of strategy instruction on reading. King (2008) states that reading strategies differentiate between good and bad learners of a second language.

For the students of English Study Program of Riau University, the curriculum requires them to, at least, understand about these four skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening), not only mastering one of them. The four skills are important equally, in which reading takes its own part in each skill.

The writer and the students do realize that not all of the students do the reading, eventhough they know they must read extensively to gain more information about the books, texts, journals or online sources. The reading activities will cause much time to do, but students sometimes don't know how to manage it. The students have already learnt about reading strategies but apparently they only use one or two reading strategies in their reading activities. In fact, the lecturers have taught the students about the reading strategies, but in the other hand not many use the strategies in their reading activities. This issue must be the students' awareness, because their academic knowledge can be recognize from their reading activities. That is why writer wants to bring this research for the fifth semester of English Study Program in Riau University in hoping that it will be an advantage for them in reading.

As the writer has mentioned before, reading strategies can help college students to read effectively. The time can effectively be used and the information can be received as much as possible. By reading, students hopefully can be aware of the issues discussed in the world. For this time, much news is written in English, so by recognizing these strategies, students are not only able to read but also can save their time. By doing this way, when they read the articles, at the same time they also will get specific information for these texts based on their purposes of reading.

Brown (2001) states that reading comprehension is when a student builds on some appropriate and effective reading strategies. In this study the writer will use Brown's ten reading strategies, Identifying the purpose in reading, Using graphemic rules and patterns to aid in bottom-up reading, Using different silent reading techniques for relatively rapid reading, Skimming the text for main ideas, Scanning the text for specific information, Using semantic mapping or clustering, Guessing when you are not certain, Analyzing vocabulary, Distinguishing between literal and implied meanings and Capitalizing on discourse markers to process relationships.

## METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive research. In this research, the researcher used quantitative research design. Quantitative data analysis is helpful in evaluation because it provides quantifiable and easy to understand results.

The aim of this research is to find out about the reading strategies used by the fifth semester students of English Study Program of Riau University in their reading activities. The place of this study is at English Study program FKIP-UR. The study was conducted on October 2015.

The population of this research is the 5th semester students who have passed content subjects Reading 1, 2 and 3. They consist of 3 classes: class A, class B and class C. The writer uses a questionnaire as an instrument for collecting the data in this research.

A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. The researcher uses questionnaire with items measured on a Likert scale on scale of 1-5 (Shiu-chen Hsu, 2006).

- 1 = Strongly Agree (SA)
- 2 = Agree (A)
- 3 = Neutral (N)
- 4 = Disagree (D)
- 5 = Strongly Disagree (SD)

To obtain the data the first step is by giving the participants the questionnaire. The writer uses questionnaire in order to discover the students' perception in reading strategies while doing their reading activities. The writer will not use the validity and reliability test, because the questionnaire is adapted from two sources, they are : Laraine Flemming (2007) and Alireza Karbalaei (2010).

In analyzing the data, the writer will use the Likert analysis way (Sugiono, 2012). Firstly, because the questionnaire has 28 questions which divided in 10 indicators and each indicator are divided into 2 up to 5 questions, we need to find the Mean in each indicator that the respondent chose. After that the data will be tallies in order to get the exact total in each indicator. Secondly, the data will be count with the formula as follows: **T x Pn**

In this study, T is the number of respondent that chose the particular indicator and Pn is the Likert score option number. Likert score option number in this study is the number we give for each scale, which the highest score Strongly Agree is counted as 5 points and the lowest score Strongly Disagree is counted as 1 point.

Next, the writer will find the highest and the lowest score of the data in order to get the interpretation result. This assessment means that we can determine the panelists' assessment score to be counted for each indicator. The formulas are as follow:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{Y}(\text{The highest score}) &= \text{the highest likert score} \times \text{total of respondent} \\ \mathbf{X}(\text{The lowest score}) &= \text{the lowest likert score} \times \text{total of respondent} \end{aligned}$$

After we find the the highest and the lowest score, we will find the interval of each scale in order to determine the assesment of each indicator. The formula as follow:

$$\mathbf{Interval\ Formula\ (I)} = \frac{\mathbf{100}}{\mathbf{Total\ Likert\ score}}$$

Finally, after all the data is completed, we can asses each of the indicator and find each percentages. The formula that we will use is index formula as follows:

$$\text{Index Formula } \% = \frac{\text{Total score}}{Y} \times 100$$

## THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

### The Descriptions of the Data

Before the writer finds the result of each indicator, the writer will find the highest and the lowest score of the data. After that, the writer will find the interval of each Likert score in order to determine the assessment for each indicator.

- Y(The highest score) = the highest likert score x total of respondent
  - $Y = 5 \times 65 = 325$
- X (The lowest score) = the lowest likert score x total of respondent
  - $X = 1 \times 65 = 65$
- Interval Formula (I) =  $100/\text{Total Likert Score}$ 
  - $I = \frac{100}{5} = 20$

From the result we got, the interval for each Likert score is 20. Because this study we use the percentage, the Interval is between 0% and 100%. The interval in this study as follows:

- 0% - 19,99% = Strongly Disagree
- 20% - 39,99% = Disagree
- 40% - 59,99% = Neutral
- 60% - 79,99% = Agree
- 80% - 100% = Strongly Agree

The result shows that the first indicator percentage is 81,23%. This means that the respondents are in the category of *Strongly Agree* in using Identifying the purpose of reading strategies. The second indicator percentage is 76%. This means that the respondents are in the category of *Agree* in using graphemic rules and patterns to aid in bottom-up reading strategies. The third indicator percentage is 80,61%. This means that the respondents are in the category of *Strongly Agree* in using different silent reading techniques for relatively rapid reading strategies. The fourth indicator percentage is 73,23%. This means that the respondents are in the category of *Agree* in using Skimming the text for main ideas reading strategies. The fifth indicator percentage is 73,53%. This means that the respondents are in the category of *Agree* in using Scanning the text for specific information reading strategies. The sixth indicator percentage is 70,76%. This means that the respondents are in the category of *Agree* in using semantic mapping or clustering reading strategies. The seventh indicator percentage is 80,30%. This means that the respondents are in the category of *Strongly Agree* in using Guessing when you are not certain reading strategies. The eighth indicator percentage is 80%. This means that the respondents are in the category of *Strongly Agree* in using Analyzing vocabulary reading strategies. The ninth indicator percentage is 75,07%. This means that the respondents are in the category of *Agree* in using Distinguishing between

literal and implied meanings reading strategies. The tenth indicator percentage is 74,15%. This means that the respondents are in the category of *Agree* in using Capitalizing on discourse markers to process relationships reading strategies.

### **Interpretation of the Result**

Since this study is focusing on the students' reading strategies, and how they managed to do the reading strategies inside and outside the classroom, the participants showed pretty high percentage in implement the reading strategies into their reading activities. It can be seen that the result of the questionnaire ranges from Agree to Strongly Agree. The participants response is Strongly Agree with the reading strategies such as: Identifying the purpose in reading (81,23%), using different silent reading techniques for relatively rapid reading (80,61%), analyzing vocabulary (80%), and guessing when you are not certain(80,30%). This means that the students recognize and also doing the strategies in their reading activities frequently.

On the other hand, the rest of the reading strategies that the participants' response Agree such as : Using graphemic rules and patterns to aid in bottom-up reading (76%), skimming the text for main ideas (73,23%), scanning the text for specific information (73,53%), using semantic mapping or clustering (70,76%), distinguishing between literal and implied meanings (75,07%), and capitalizing on discourse markers to process relationships (74,15%), do not mean that these strategies are not frequently used by the participants. The reason for the participants' using some of the strategies such as analyzing vocabulary or capitalizing on discourse markers to process relationship ineffectively might be that they do not want to spend their time on them but they directly start to read the text instead (Ozek & Civelek, 2006).

It is quite a surprise for the writer that the most familiar reading strategies like Skimming and Scanning are unlikely to be chosen in this study. The result shows that the skimming the text for main ideas is only 73,23%, and scanning the text for specific information is only 73,53%. As (Barnett, 1988, p.153) states that another strategy which helps the readers to understand what the text is about and to activate their schemata is skimming the text to get the gist. This indicates that even though the students familiar with particular reading strategies, does not mean they agree or they do it in every reading activities.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

After conducting this research entitled "A Study on the fifth semester students' reading strategies at the English Study Program of Riau University", some conclusions can be drawn. Based on the result from the research, we can see that the highest percentage of the reading strategies in this study is the identifying the purpose in reading strategy for 81,23%. On the other hand, the lowest is using semantic mapping and clustering reading strategies for 70,76%. Overall, the result from this research is only between Strongly Agree and Agree, this indicates that the students' perception towards the reading strategies are quite high.

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