

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN READING STRATEGIES AMONG VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstrak

Pebelajar bahasa kedua menggunakan teknik membaca yang berbeda untuk memahami teks. Namun, penelitian tentang teknik membaca menunjukkan bahwa strategi membaca pebelajar laki-laki atau perempuan mempunyai persamaan maupun perbedaan dengan hasil membaca yang berbeda pula. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan untuk mengetahui apa saja strategi membaca yang digunakan oleh pebelajar laki-laki dan perempuan ketika mereka diajarkan dengan menggunakan pendekatan tiga fase dan apakah mereka menggunakan jenis strategi membaca yang berbeda atau tidak. Penelitian ini menggunakan survei, dengan kuesioner. Subyek penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas 10 SMKN 1 JOMBANG. Hasil kuesioner diolah secara kuantitatif. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pebelajar laki-laki dan perempuan menggunakan beberapa strategi membaca dan siswa laki-laki dan perempuan memiliki persamaan dan perbedaan strategi membaca.

Kata Kunci: *strategi membaca, teknik tiga fase, gender.*

Abstract

Second language learners use different reading strategies to comprehend texts. Nevertheless, studies on reading strategies show that male and female ESL has similar and different reading strategies with different comprehension results. This research has been conducted to determine reading strategies are reported to be used by male and female students when they are taught using three-phase approach and whether or not the use of such reading strategies varies between male and female. This study is a survey, using a questionnaire. The subjects were in 10th grade students of SMKN 1 JOMBANG. The results of questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively. The results of the study showed that both male and female students applied some reading strategies in their reading process. Male and female have similarity and differences in using some reading strategy.

Keywords: *reading strategies, three-phase approach, gender.*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is a complex skill that occurs by combining attention, memory, perceptual processes and processes of understanding (Kern, 1989, p.135-149). Gaining knowledge and raising information is also the most beneficial ability. Reading is a key life skill according to Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, and Wilkinson, (1985). It's a key to the success of a child in school and, indeed, in life. Without the ability to read well, there will always be lost opportunities for personal fulfilment and work satisfaction. Therefore it becomes essential for students to understand and perform a great deal of reading tasks in speed and with good comprehension.

Many have said reading is the important academic language skill for second language learners in the last fifteen years. Reading is seen in academic settings as the fundamental means of learning new information and gaining access to alternative explanations and interpretations. Reading also provides the basis for the competencies of synthesis and critical assessment. Furthermore, reading is the primary means of

independent learning whether the goal is to perform better on academic tasks, learn more about topics or improve language skills (Grabe & Stoller, 2001, p.187).

In the early 1970s and 1980s, a lot of work contributed to our understanding of reading strategies, which are part of learning strategies, through student reports on what they are doing while reading (Olshavsky, 1997; Block, 1986; Kletzien, 1991; Saricoban, 2002) suggesting that teaching a set of strategies can help students, especially those who are struggling, to understand texts more effectively (Pali, 2002). According to Abbott (2006, p.637), reading strategies are "the processes of mental operations or understanding that readers select and apply to make sense of what they are reading." The word 'reading strategy' is unique ways the reader uses to understand the meaning intended. Barnett (1988, pp.150-162) treats reading strategies as the mental operations that are included when the reader successfully follows the text and makes sense of what he reads. Some examples of problem-solving techniques include skimming, scanning, reading for meaning, predicting,

activating general information, making inferences, differentiating main ideas from supporting details, noticing cognates and word families, conjecturing word meanings from context and evaluating those guesses and following references.

In schools, learners have been suggested to use different strategies to help them to acquire, store, and retrieve information (Rigney, 1978). The use of these reading strategies is therefore considered to be indicators of how readers perceive a task, how they make sense of what they read, and what they do when they are incapable of understanding it. In other words, as Singhal (2001) points out, these methods are the learner's techniques for improving reading understanding and overcoming comprehension errors which have been verified by many different studies. Mostly it depends on the deliberate use of reading technique. A successful learner is conscious of his use of strategy and why he uses strategies. They more often make use of strategies than less successful readers do. In addition, when necessary they coordinate and shift those strategies. We can also differentiate what we learn from essential information and details (Duffy, 1993; Farrell, 2001). Less competent readers, however, are not well aware of selecting appropriate strategies or deciding how to connect them to have a useful chain of strategies although they can describe their own strategies.

Even though the importance of reading strategies is widely recognized, some research into whether or not ESL males and females have similar or different strategic reading patterns concludes differently. The experiences of the students are different; it's challenging for a teacher to cater to the needs of each student. Knowing the preferences of male and female students regarding learning styles as well as the factors influencing their reading habits would be helpful to instructors. Teachers can therefore make a more educated decision by understanding the underlying factors between strategic reading selections for male and female students.

A previous study by Yukselir (2014) showed that students tend to use high frequency reading strategies, but she fails to explain which strategies students use most and less, and she also said that these reading strategies for Turkish EFL students are not different in terms of their gender. Another study by Mei-Ling Lee (2012) found that the differences in the types of reading strategies between male and female students were significant, females were only found to report more use of metacognitive and social-affective strategies, while male students reported greater use of memory, cognitive, compensation strategies.

Griva, Alevriadou, & Geladari (2009), who examined gender differences on the results of using EFL reading strategies choices, concluded that female students

made extensive use of a wider range of strategies and demonstrated more conceptual awareness and versatility in the use of both cognitive and metacognitive strategies. No gender differences were observed in either reading performance or using cognitive and metacognitive strategies, Phakiti (2009). Since the result of the previous studies show contrasting findings, therefore it is important to investigate it more about gender differences in reading strategies to make sure the result. This study tries to apply it in Indonesian context especially Vocational High School. This research is important for the student in order to help them to determine which strategies are the best for them so that they can comprehend the text easily.

Based on the background of the study above, the researcher formulated two questions for this study:

1. What reading strategies are reported to be used by male and female students when they are taught using three-phase approach?
2. Do male and female students differ in the use of these reading strategies?

RESEARCH METHODS

A quantitative method has been used in conducting this study. The design of this research is survey. Survey research is a study that uses oral interviews or written questionnaires to gather data on the characteristics and opinions of informants about the nature of language or language learning (Mc Kay, 2006).

This study was conducted in one vocational high school in Jombang, East Java in the second semester of the academic year of 2018/2019. This school is considered as one of the most desirable vocational high schools in Jombang. This school also supports the learning of English by providing the students a number of meaningful activities that should be done in English. Besides, the students are also encouraged to use English in their daily communication with their teacher in the classroom. The time of obtaining the data was conducted during the teaching learning process of English lesson during 23-30 April 2019.

The subjects of this research were students of six different classes of the tenth grade. They were chosen using a non-probability sampling techniques (Dornyei, 2007; Ary et al., 2010). In addition these six classes have similar number between male and female students. Each class consist of 16 to 18 male students and 17 to 19 female students This similarity will support the research because the researcher wants to know whether or not male and female differ in the use of reading strategies. The total subjects are 212 students.

The data former obtained by using questionnaire of students' reading strategy. The questionnaire consisted of 31 items grouped into three categories: strategies used in

(a) pre-reading strategies, (b) strategies for whilst reading, and (c) post-reading strategies. Points 1 to 6 concern strategies used in the pre-reading phase. Items from 7 to 28 refer to the methods used in the lecture stage. Lastly, item 29 to 31 is an appropriate strategy for use in post-reading phases. Information about the reported use of reading strategies by the students is gathered through Yes or No question.

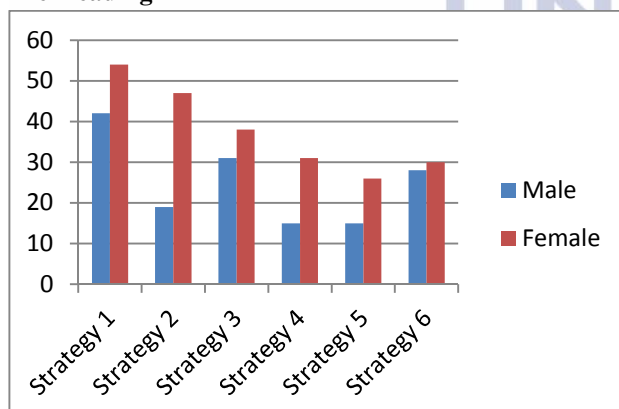
The questionnaires were distributed manually in the school. The researcher decided to visit Vocational High School 1 in Jombang to administer the questionnaire. The researcher administered the questionnaire to the respondent through face-to face. The researcher used student's questionnaire as the data. Therefore the researcher needs to verify the accuracy of the data in order to avoid an error after the data was taken. At the end, the collected responses were prepared to be analyzed.

The researcher analyzed the data already using SPSS, in order to answer the research questions. The researcher used SPSS, because it is comprehensive and simple. To address RQ1 "What reading methods male and female students report using a three-phase approach when they are taught." The percentage ratio values of the data collected from the questionnaire was calculated. Using Percentages and Frequencies, the responses to the questions were quantitatively analyzed. To research question 2, chi-square test was used as the responses to the questionnaire were nominal (Yes/No).

RESULT

Reading strategies reported to be used by male and female students when they taught using three-phase approach

Table. 1 The Result of Reading Strategies Used in Pre-Reading



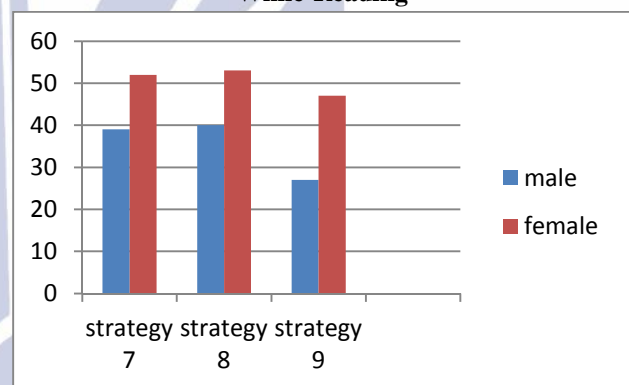
Some pre-reading strategies were implemented by the students during the pre-reading stage. There were six pre-reading strategies that the students applied. There are find the answer based on the text, give my personal

opinion about the topic, predict the next paragraph of the text, the reason why the author is writing the topic, how the writer writes the text, and make my own question about the text.

Based on the chart above both male and female students have the same preferences in using these reading strategies. Strategy 1 "find the answer based on the text" (male students 42%, female students 54%) is the most frequently used reading strategy while the least frequently used reading strategy is Strategy 5 "how the writer writes the text" (male students 15%, female students 26%). The strategies at this stage are mainly make the students still engage with the topic. At this stage the students have a chance to present their own opinion about the text or the topic and improve their communicative competence.

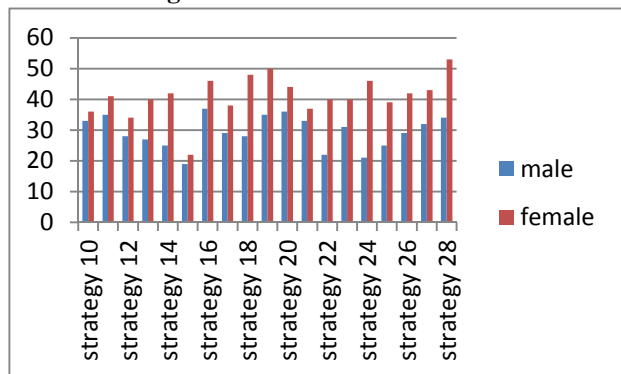
The second point is the result of reading strategies used in while-reading stage. It was presented on the table below..

Table. 2 The Result of Reading Strategies Used in While-Reading



There are 22 strategies implemented by the students during while-reading activity. At this stage include strategies such issues as notetaking and analyzing. There are some aspect that were analyzed such as analyzing arguments, characters, settings, the use of words (kinds of verbs), and other aspect of language use.

Based on the analysis of the charts above, male and female students are prefer to used strategy 8 "re-read the text to get better understanding" (male students 40%, female students 53%) rather than strategy 9 "focusing on the most important ideas of the text" (male students 27%, female students 47%) .

Table. 2.1 The Result of Reading Strategies Used in While-Reading

Based on the table.1 above, it showed that male and female have their own preferences in using the reading strategies for male students the most frequently used reading strategy is strategy 16 “question everything that does not make a sense to me” (37%) while for female students the most frequently used reading strategy is strategy 28 “the use of connectors: and, next, however, but, etc” (53%). Both of them are rarely used strategy 15 “do not believe everything I read” (male students 19%, female students 22%)

The third point is the result of reading strategies used in post-reading stage. It was presented in the table 3 below.

Table. 3 The Result of Reading Strategies Used in Post-Reading

At this stage there are 3 strategies included and implemented by the students in post-reading stage such issues as summarizing, evaluating and commenting.

Based on the analysis of the table above, male and female students have a similarity about the most frequently used strategy which are Strategy 29 “summarizing” (male students 22%, female students 30%) and Strategy 30 “evaluating” (male students 22%, female students 30%). Both of them are rarely used Strategy 31 “commenting” (male students 21%, female students 28%). The strategies at this stage are mainly used to evaluate themselves do they already understand about the text.

Whether or not male and female students differ in the use of these reading strategies

Research hypotheses:

H_0 : male and female students do not differ in the use of this reading strategy

H_a : male and female students differ in the use of this reading strategy

Assumption:

if Sig. (2-sided) Pearson Chi Square < 0.05 (H_a accepted)

if Sig. (2-sided) Pearson Chi Square > 0.05 (H_0 accepted)

Strategy	Pearson Chi-square
1	0.297
2	0.000*
3	0.875
4	0.002*
5	0.085
6	0.162
7	0.139
8	0.073
9	0.000*
10	0.156
11	0.575
12	0.918
13	0.091
14	0.004*
15	0.561
16	0.955
17	0.610
18	0.000*
19	0.015*
20	0.925
21	0.327
22	0.001*
23	0.824
24	0.000*
25	0.039*
26	0.142
27	0.398
28	0.000*
29	0.508
30	0.508
31	0.660

*) significant different

From the table above, it can be concluded that H_0 is accepted it means that male and female students do not differ in the use of these reading strategies. The table showed that both male and female students differ in the

use of these reading strategies in some strategies but mostly they are similar in other ways. Male and female students differ in strategy 2 "give my personal opinion about the topic", 9 "focusing on the most important ideas of the text", 14 "how I should accept his or her opinion", 18 "do not believe arguments based on wrong reasoning", 19 "has a good reason for believing some things and do not believing others", 22 "use of different ideas to show contrasting perspectives", 24 "the author writes emotionally", 25 "the way nouns function", and strategy 28 "the use of connectors: and, next, however, but, etc". Male and female students mostly do not differ in the use of these reading strategies so that genders do not affect their preferences in using the reading strategy.

DISCUSSION

Reading Strategies that are reported to be used by male and female students when they taught using three-phase approach.

The results of this study revealed that some reading strategies were deliberately implemented in their reading process by both male and female students. Questionnaire gained the data. In using any reading strategies, male and female students have similarities, and vary in other respects. That student used a number of strategies to help them understand the text. According to Rigney (1978) it was suggested that learners use different strategies to enable them to acquire, store, and retrieve the information in terms of strategic use in reading. The use of these reading strategies is therefore known to be measures of how readers interpret a task how they make sense of what they read, and what they do when they are incapable of understanding it. Strategies are the techniques that the students used to increase their understanding of reading and how to overcome it, and many different studies, Singhal (2001), have confirmed this.

In addition, each student has their own preferences in using the reading strategies in order to comprehend the text. As a teacher we cannot force students to have same preferences. Male and female students tend to use the same reading strategies in pre-reading activity such as strategy 1 "focusing on the most important ideas of the text" (male students 42%, female students 54%) and strategy 5 "how the writer writes the text" (male students 15%, female students 26%) as the least frequently used by male and female students. In while-reading especially notetaking parts both male and female students tends to use strategy 8 "re-read the text to get better understanding" (male students 40% and female students 53%) as the most frequently used by male and female students, and less used strategy 9 "focusing on the most important idea" (male students 27% and female students 47%) while in analyzing part male students tend to use

strategy 16 "question everything that does not make a sense to me" (37%) and 20 "repetitions of words, phrases, examples, or illustrations" (36%) as the most frequently used and strategy 15 "do not believe everything I read" (19%) as the least frequently used. In other side female students tend to use strategy 28 "the use of connectors: and, next, however, but, etc"(53%) and 19 "has a good reason for believing some things and not believing others" (50%) as the most frequently used by female students and strategy 15 Strategy 15 "do not believe everything I read" (22%) as the least frequently used. In post-reading both male and female students are rarely to used strategy 31 "commenting" (male students 21%, female students 28%). Male and female students may use the same number of the strategy maybe because the strategies is easiest to understand for them. They also differ in the use of this strategy because male and female have different ability in understanding a text so that they have their own preferences in choosing the reading strategies that appropriate for them. It is suggested for the teacher should be aware of the reading strategies that the students tend to use. The teacher will introduce the useful reading strategies to the students that can improve comprehension when reading academic materials in English. As stated by Clarke and Silberstein (1977), the goal of reading instruction should be "to provide students with a variety of successful approaches to texts including helping students identify objectives and strategies for reading, to use pre-reading strategy to improve mental preparation and to provide students with strategies to deal with difficult syntax, vocabulary and organizational structure" (cited in Grabe, 1991, p.377)

Whether or not male and female students differ in the use of these reading strategy

The result of the pearson chi-square showed that in pre-reading, male and female students differ in the use of reading strategy 2 (0.000) and strategy 4 because the result of the pearson chi-square 0.002 which is lower than 0.05. While-reading, male and female students differ in the use of reading strategy 9 (0.000), strategy 14 (0.004), strategy 18 (0.000), strategy 19 (0.015), strategy 22 (0.001), strategy 24 (0.000), and strategy 25 (0.039) that are also lower than 0.05. Furthermore, in post reading male and female students do not significantly differ in the use of the strategies. In conclusion both male and female students reported to use the same reading strategies in their reading process in some ways in different in other ways. As stated by Phakiti (2009) males and females student did not differ in their reading comprehension performance and the use of strategies. However, it can be concluded that there were no gender differences in either reading strategies use. In addition, male and female

students may use the same number of strategies in learning a language Osborne & Akerman (2008).

The use of strategies among students might be different because students' perspectives are different; each student has different learning abilities that are related to different levels and types of intelligence. That is way the teacher cannot expect the students will get the same understanding about the text it is because they have their own preferences reading strategies that they use to understand the text. Male and female students might be different not because of gender but because of their intelligence. As stated by Gardner (1983) points out that human being do not share the same types and levels of intelligences, which are referred to as "multiple intelligences". In other words, individual differences and ability are emphasized.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

According to the result and discussion in the previous chapter, several conclusions were drawn. First, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to the students. Then they are instructed to answer the following questions about reading strategies. As a result, male and female students have applied these kinds of reading strategies in their reading processes. Male and female students tend to use strategy 1 and they are rarely used strategy 5 in pre reading activity. In while-reading (notetaking) male and female students prefer to use strategy 8 rather than strategy 9. Furthermore in while-reading (analyzing) male students prefer to use strategy 16 in other side female students prefer to use strategy 28, both they are rarely used strategy 15. Post-reading male and female students rarely used strategy 31. Male and female students have their own preferences strategies that more frequently and less frequently used by the students. They could decide their own learning strategies to understand and solve their own problem while reading a passage. They actively self-regulate their learning.

In addition, male and female students have similarity and differences in the use of these reading strategies. Based on the result of the pearson chi-square they differ in reading strategy 2 (0.000), strategy 4 (0.002), strategy 9 (0.000), strategy 14 (0.004), strategy 18 (0.000), strategy 19 (0.015), strategy 22 (0.001), strategy 24 (0.000), and strategy 25 (0.039). They differ because the result of the pearson chi square is lower than 0.05. It indicates that these reading strategies that they used were effective and appropriate for them to understand the text.

Suggestion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher will give some suggestion and recommendation for teacher and future researcher who concern on this study.

The first of all, reading strategies can help both male and female students to get better understanding while reading a text. The teacher can make more educated decision by understanding the underlying factors for male and female students. The teacher cannot push them to always use the same strategies in their reading processes. It is also suggested that to further researcher or teacher to do a research about gender differences in reading strategies among students. There are some things that should be revised by the next researchers to make this research better in the future.

Furthermore, the second suggestion is addressed for the next researchers who wants to conduct the similar study. It is suggested to do more preparation, modification, and revisions. Other researchers can also conduct this research with different level of the students, different skill, or different material.

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