

STRATEGIES IN READING ENGLISH TEXTS FOR STUDENTS

Fitriani¹

fitriani@stitibnurusyd-tgt.ac.id

Abstract

This research used a qualitative descriptive design. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation using an observation checklist, interview guide, and documentation sheet, and analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. This study aims to identify students' skimming strategies, determine the most frequently used strategy, and describe the challenges faced. The subjects were first-grade students in the academic year 2025/2026. Students employ various skimming strategies, such as focusing on main ideas, identifying keywords, using titles and subtitles, and reading the first and last sentences of paragraphs. The dominant strategy is focusing on the main ideas, while other strategies are less frequently used. The results of this research are expected to provide insights for teachers in guiding students to use effective skimming strategies, for students to improve their reading comprehension, and for future researchers as a reference for further studies in English reading strategies.

Keywords : Reading Strategy, and Skimming

A. INTRODUCTION

English is recognized as one of the most influential international languages in today's era of globalization. It serves not only as a tool for communication between countries but also as a gateway to scientific knowledge, technological advancement, and worldwide information. In Indonesia, English plays an essential role within the education system, being taught from primary school up to university. This policy is intended to prepare students with sufficient English skills to engage effectively in both national and global settings. (Rahmani & Karimi, 2025).

Of the four essential language skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing reading is regarded as one of the most vital to develop. It enables learners to gain new information, expand their viewpoints, and strengthen their critical thinking

¹ Lecturer of Tarbiyah Faculty of STIT IBNU RUSYD Tana Paser East Kalimantan

abilities. In learning a foreign language, reading also offers valuable exposure to vocabulary, grammatical patterns, and cultural understanding that support overall language mastery. Hence, fostering students' reading ability plays a crucial role in improving their overall proficiency in English. (Dash, B.B. and Gandhi, M.K., 2022). Mastering English is quite challenging, particularly for students at the junior and senior high school levels. As a foreign language for Indonesian learners, English possesses specific features that need thorough comprehension. Consequently, learning English at the secondary level requires strong commitment and consistent effort to achieve proficiency. (Amaniarsih & Arsita, 2023).

Reading skills are always integrated into every learning topic. Through reading, students are expected to comprehend texts with sufficient accuracy. Thus, reading ability serves as a fundamental foundation in the learning process. (*herukemdikbud.*)

Reading is one of the essential skills to be mastered, particularly when learning English, in addition to writing, speaking, and listening. By reading English texts, students can gain various information that broadens their knowledge, such as vocabulary, English grammar structures, as well as scientific knowledge contained in the texts they read. (Ali, Hashim Hameed Hamudi).

It is known that two main factors hinder students from improving their reading comprehension they are not aware of which strategies are effective to use, and they also do not understand how to enhance their reading skills by applying those strategies. When these students encounter difficulties in reading foreign texts, it indicates that they are not fully utilizing their comprehension ability, memory monitoring, and cognitive processes. Therefore, it is crucial for these students to implement various strategies and approaches that can support them in understanding English texts more effectively. Several ways to improve students' reading comprehension, one of which is by applying differentiated learning strategies. (Sari, Dina Merris Maya, and Yudy Prasetyo).

Differentiated learning is an approach to managing the learning process by taking into account students' characteristics and abilities. Implementing appropriate differentiated learning strategies can enhance the quality of classroom instruction,

including activities that foster reading habits. The variety of reading learning strategies requires teachers to be able to select and apply appropriate strategies according to the class they are teaching. However, the reading comprehension ability of the students at this school is still relatively low. Many students face difficulties in understanding and recalling the content of the texts they read. This condition is caused by a lack of reading interest and the use of less effective reading activities. There are several reading strategies that are important to be taught to students, including skimming, scanning, and visualizing.

Skimming is a technique of speed reading aimed at obtaining general information, and it is usually applied to factual rather than fictional texts. In this strategy, readers do not read the entire passage but focus only on the main ideas. Meanwhile, scanning is a reading technique that emphasizes searching for specific information such as dates, names, or phone numbers. With this strategy, readers do not need to read every sentence in the text, but only pay attention to keywords or relevant details. Unlike the two previous strategies, visualizing is a way of understanding texts by creating mental images related to the content being read. This strategy involves the reader's imagination to picture the objects or situations described in the text, whether written or spoken, such as in conversations. To make this strategy effective, teachers can give instructions on the kinds of images students should imagine.

Applying these strategies has proven to be helpful for students in understanding reading materials. In particular, the skimming strategy provides several benefits, such as helping students comprehend texts more quickly, training them to get accustomed to using reading strategies, and enabling them to apply skimming anytime and anywhere. To overcome these difficulties, students need to apply reading strategies. Strategies such as skimming, scanning, predicting, guessing meaning from context, and summarizing can help them understand texts more effectively. However, not all students use the same strategies, and some are even unaware of which strategies they actually apply when reading English texts.

Reading ability is one of the essential language skills that students need to master, especially in learning English. Reading is not merely the activity of

pronouncing words in a text, but more importantly, it is the process of understanding and interpreting meaning, both explicit and implicit, contained in the text. Through good reading comprehension skills, students can broaden their knowledge, gain information, and improve other language skills such as writing, speaking, and listening.

This research is expected to provide an overview of the dominant strategies, the less frequently used strategies, as well as the difficulties students face. The findings may serve as valuable input for teachers in improving the teaching and learning process of reading in the classroom. Moreover, the study emphasizes the importance of reading skills as highlighted by several theories, which state that reading is not only a means of acquiring information but also a fundamental skill that supports vocabulary development, language structure mastery, critical thinking, and overall language proficiency. Therefore, strengthening students' reading skills through appropriate strategies is essential for their academic success and lifelong learning.

A. Reading in English

Reading is a complex skill that requires the collaboration of multiple talents. A person needs to be able to apply their prior knowledge in order to comprehend a text properly. One of the four primary language skills speaking, listening, reading, and writing that are crucial to learning English is reading. One language ability that is crucial to day-to-day living is reading it plays a major role in molding the next generation into critical, creative, and intellectual thinkers. Additionally, reading can be viewed as an engaged activity, a technique, and a process.

Reading is a reasoning process to understand the ideas or thoughts contained in written language. (Reading Ability: Effective and Efficient Reading Techniques). It can be concluded that reading is a complex process of constructing meaning from written symbols. It does not only involve recognizing words, but also understanding, interpreting, and reasoning in order to obtain the author's intended message. These theories highlight that reading is an active and interactive activity between the reader and the text. In the context of this study, reading especially

skimming plays an important role in helping students comprehend English descriptive texts effectively.

When reading, the eyes recognize words while the mind connects them to their meanings. Individual word meanings are combined to form phrases, clauses, sentences, and ultimately the meaning of the entire text.

Based on the above explanations, it can be concluded that reading is a complex and intricate process of understanding the meaning of written texts, encompassing several activities such as recognizing letters and words, associating them with sounds and meanings, and drawing conclusions with the goal of obtaining the message conveyed by the author.

B. METHODOLOGY

A qualitative descriptive design used in this study. Since the goal of the study is to investigate and characterize the students' skimming techniques when reading English descriptive texts rather than to quantitatively measure variables, a qualitative approach will be selected. Since the descriptive design will enable the researcher to give a thorough explanation of the phenomena that will take place in the classroom, especially in relation to students' usage of skimming tactics, it will be deemed appropriate.

The primary instrument in this study to gather and analyze data directly from the field. After gathering information through observation, interviews, and documentation, the data descriptively evaluated to determine and categorize the techniques employed by the students. The use of a qualitative descriptive design also would enable the researcher to understand the students' perspectives and experiences in reading English descriptive texts, as well as to highlight the dominant strategies they will employ during the learning process.

The results showed that the students' primary methods for comprehending texts were skimming, scanning, rereading, and using dictionaries. They also used note-taking and summarizing techniques, but they still heavily relied on translation and peer support. This study differs from the present research in terms of educational level and research focus. While Puspitasari et al. focused on university students and general reading strategies, the present study focuses on junior high

school students and specifically examines their strategies in comprehending descriptive texts.

This differs from the present study, which does not measure students' reading achievement statistically but aims to describe the types of reading strategies employed by ninth-grade students during the reading process.

The strategies used by students to read English texts are the main subject of this study. The researcher wants to find out what reading techniques students use, how they apply them, and what challenges they have when comprehending English literature. The reading techniques pupils employ to comprehend English texts are the main subject of this study. The researcher intends to obtain a greater understanding of the reading comprehension process of students in English language acquisition by identifying the reading strategies employed, how they are implemented, and the challenges that students encounter.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

1. Reading in English

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2. The Purposes of Reading in English

Reading is one of the essential language skills, especially in English language learning. The purpose of reading comprehension is to enable students to understand, interpret, and appreciate the content of a text. When reading comprehension is properly designed and implemented, students not only improve their language skills but also enhance their reasoning abilities, creativity, and appreciation of moral values (Tarihoran, 2019).

Reading comprehension that focuses on understanding the text can expand and develop students' knowledge from the materials they read. This ability serves as a foundation for students to comprehend various texts across different subjects. Good reading competence is necessary and serves as a prerequisite for understanding other academic literatures. Reading greatly supports students in grasping knowledge in various disciplines studied through other subjects. Therefore, students, as the next generation, are expected to possess strong reading skills to effectively understand and interpret texts. (Grabs, 2013)

Reading aims to achieve a deep understanding of a text, from recognizing words, phrases, clauses, to the overall meaning of the passage. This comprehension enables readers to grasp the main ideas, draw conclusions, and connect the text with prior knowledge.

3. Developing Vocabulary and Language Structures

Regular reading enriches vocabulary, strengthens grammar comprehension, and improves the ability to understand various writing styles. This is crucial for students to expand their communicative and academic language skills.

4. Improving Writing Skills

Reading activities contribute to better writing skills. Frequent readers of English texts tend to express ideas more clearly, use proper sentence structures, and write with more varied styles.

5. Developing Critical Literacy

Reading is not only for understanding content but also for analyzing, evaluating, and critically assessing information. Critical literacy helps readers question the author's purpose, understand different perspectives, and adopt a critical stance toward the information received.

6. Overcoming Difficulties in Language Learning

Reading helps students overcome challenges in learning English, such as difficulties in understanding sentence meaning, writing, and memorizing vocabulary. Effective reading strategies can reduce these obstacles and support successful language learning.

7. Types of Reading

Reading is an essential skill in learning English. To comprehend texts effectively, students use different types of reading according to their purpose and needs.

a. Intensive Reading

Intensive reading involves reading in a careful, detailed, and focused manner to fully understand the meaning of the text. This type of reading usually focuses on sentence structure, grammar, vocabulary, and the main ideas within small portions of text. It is often applied in academic contexts, language learning exercises, or when the reader needs to understand precise information. To achieve deep comprehension of the text, analyze language use, and understand complex information. Characteristics: Slow pace, frequent use of dictionaries or notes, focus on every word or sentence, detailed analysis of meaning.

Through intensive reading activities, students are expected to gain new knowledge and apply the information obtained from the text. Intensive reading emphasizes a high level of comprehension and long-term retention. In other words, this type of reading involves careful and detailed study of a text, such as analyzing

it line by line, consulting a dictionary, making comparisons, interpreting, translating, and remembering every expression contained within it. (Prayuda, 2023)

b. Extensive reading

Extensive reading is reading large amounts of text for general understanding, fluency, and overall exposure to the language. The goal is not to understand every word but to grasp the main ideas, themes, and general content. Extensive reading is often done for enjoyment or to improve overall reading skills.

Extensive reading, unlike intensive reading, emphasizes reading larger amounts of text or longer passages such as complete books at a relatively fast pace to gain general understanding. The primary concern is the overall meaning of the text rather than its specific language features.

The purpose of extensive reading is to encourage readers to read for enjoyment or information, rather than to focus on mastering particular grammatical structures or specific reading strategies. Consequently, this approach may engage the use of various reading skills and strategies. (*extensive and intensive reading*).

c. Skimming

Skimming is a technique used to quickly read a text to identify the main idea or general overview. This type of reading allows students to get the gist of a text without reading every word. Skimming is high-speed reading that can save a lot of time. You do skimming to get the general idea of a passage or a book. (*More reading power book*).

d. Scanning

Scanning is a method for locating specific information in a text quickly. Unlike skimming, scanning is not concerned with understanding the whole text but focuses on finding particular facts, numbers, names, or keywords. Scanning is very high-speed reading. When you scan, you have a question in mind, you do not read every word, only the words that answer your question. Practice in scanning will help you learn to skip over unimportant words so that you can read faster. (*More reading power book*).

e. Previewing

Previewing is a reading strategy that involves looking over a text quickly before reading it in detail. The purpose is to identify the structure, purpose, and key information of the text. By examining titles, subtitles, pictures, or keywords, students can anticipate the main topic and overall content. This initial overview helps them understand the text more easily and efficiently.

When you gather information about a book by looking at its cover, you are doing previewing. The purpose of previewing is to help you predict or make some 'educated guesses' about the content of the book. (*More reading power book*).

f. Predicting

Predicting involves guessing what a text is about before fully reading it, based on clues such as titles, pictures, headings, and prior knowledge. This strategy helps activate the reader's background knowledge and prepares them to understand the text better.

Predicting is a reading strategy that encourages students to make guesses or predictions about the content of a text based on its title, pictures, or prior knowledge. This strategy helps activate background knowledge, making it easier for readers to comprehend the material. When predicting, students stay more engaged as they check whether their assumptions match the actual content while reading.

This study was carried out at students in the first grade during the 2025–2026 school year were the subject of the study. Students who were chosen as volunteers based on the study's goals served as the research's subjects. The study was conducted in a typical English classroom where students were required to read English descriptive texts. In order to get thorough information regarding students' reading methods for comprehending English descriptive texts, data was gathered through classroom observations, student interviews, and documentation.

According to the study's findings, first grade students applied various reading strategies to comprehend English descriptive texts. The most commonly used strategy was inferring the meaning of words from context. Students often relied on contextual clues to understand unfamiliar vocabulary rather than stopping

to translate every word, demonstrating their ability to interpret text based on surrounding sentences and overall meaning.

The students also frequently used scanning, focusing on locating specific information needed to answer comprehension questions. This approach was particularly suitable for descriptive texts, which often contain factual information such as names, places, and characteristics. In addition, some students applied skimming by reading titles and the first sentences of paragraphs before examining the full text, allowing them to grasp the overall idea and anticipate the content.

However, the findings also indicated that some students tended to focus too much on difficult vocabulary at the beginning of their reading. This sometimes slowed down their overall comprehension, as they paused to figure out every unfamiliar word. Limited vocabulary knowledge remained a significant challenge, and excessive word-by-word reading hindered effective understanding of the text. The first-grade students used appropriate reading strategies for understanding English descriptive texts. Nevertheless, to improve comprehension and balance vocabulary understanding with overall text meaning, students still require guidance from teachers in applying strategies such as scanning, skimming, and inferring meaning from context.

D. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study and the previous discussion, it can be stated that first-grade students use a variety of reading strategies to understand English descriptive texts. The strategies they employ include guessing word meanings from context, skimming, and scanning, often combining them depending on the reading purpose and the complexity of the text.

Among these strategies, guessing the meaning from context is the most commonly used, as it helps students interpret unfamiliar words by looking at the surrounding sentences and the overall content. Scanning is also frequently applied to locate specific information quickly. These findings confirm that reading is a complex activity in which students actively use strategies to make sense of written texts.

In general, the students have used appropriate reading strategies to comprehend descriptive texts in English. Nevertheless, some students still experience difficulties with vocabulary, which may influence their full understanding of the text. Teachers are advised to explicitly teach reading strategies, such as guessing meaning from context, scanning, and skimming, and provide targeted exercises so that students can use these strategies effectively in understanding descriptive texts. Teachers also need to help students improve their vocabulary without relying too much on word-for-word translation.

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