

# THE MAPPING OF READING STRATEGIES BY THE STUDENTS OF SMP N 3 PLERET

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## Abstract

The aims of the study are to find out whether the students have certain reading strategies in comprehending English texts and what reading strategies are applied by students in comprehending English texts. The research is an ex-post facto study. The subjects were 88 students of class VIIA, VIIB, and VIID. The sample was random sampling method. The data collection method was surveying by filling out the questionnaire. The items in the research instrument were developed by adopting reading strategies by Thomas Kral (1995). Questionnaire items were developed in nine items and divided into four types of strategies; surveying, scanning, skimming, and phase reading. Data analysis was based on descriptive statistics obtained from the results of data processing through quantitative descriptive. The data show that students of class VII A, VIIB, and VIID of SMP N 3 Pleret usually used a reading strategy of surveying (mean 4.06) and phase reading (mean 4.0). When they read English texts, they already have an awareness to find out what reading strategies they have to apply so that they are able to comprehend the texts. The mean values of scanning and skimming strategies are 3.56 and 3.19. The strategies were sometimes applied by students in comprehending English texts.

**Keywords:** *Reading strategies, English text, students of SMP N 3 Pleret*

## Introduction

English is an international language. In Indonesia, English is a compulsory subject learned in secondary school until university level. For the students in Junior and Senior High School, English is also a subject that is tested in the National Examination (UN). The scores of the test will also determine whether the students will pass the exam or not. Therefore, the students learn language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) for facing the National Examination. The researcher found some problems after conducting interview with English teachers and doing observation in SMP N 3 Pleret. It was concluded that one of the problems related to English learning that occurred in the school was some students still made mistakes in comprehending the contents of the English text. They also found difficulties in understanding the instructions of

tasks so that the task cannot be accomplished correctly. Based on data obtained from English teachers, the students' National Examination scores for English subject were low, ranging from 60 to 75.

The present paper focuses on the problem of students' difficulties in comprehending English texts. Therefore, the purposes were to answer two questions: (1) Do students have certain reading strategies in comprehending English texts? And (2) What reading strategies are applied by students in comprehending English texts?

## **Literature Review**

### ***Learning Strategies***

In the Principles of Language Learning, the success of language learning is determined by the students' learning strategies in understanding and producing language. Teachers, textbooks, and teaching methods are no longer placed as determinants of the successful language learning. The success of mastering a second language is largely due to personal 'investment' that is owned by a learner which includes time, effort, and attention to the second language in the form of the accuracy of individual strategies to understand and produce language (Brown, 2001: 60).

Spratt (2005) contends that learning strategies are a way chosen by learners to learn languages. These methods include ways to help students identify what they need to learn, process new languages and work with others to learn. Using the right strategy at the right time can help learners learn more languages.

### ***Reading***

Reading is a rapid process from readers in combining information from a text with the knowledge they have to build meaning (Nunan: 2005). The meaning of a text does not only appear in the text itself or arise from the reader alone. However, readers' knowledge integrates with text that builds meaning. Text, readers, fluency, and strategies combine together in defining the reading process (Nunan: 2005). Reading skill is very important in comprehending English texts because it activates schematic knowledge or non-linguistic knowledge that includes socio-cultural knowledge, discourse, thematic, and general knowledge relevant to the texts being read (Hedge, 2008).

## ***Reading Strategies***

There are several reading strategies based on Kral (1995: 106), namely surveying, skimming, scanning, and phase reading. *Surveying* is a fast and efficient way to see and understand the content and organization of a text by paying attention to references (title, author, table of contents, etc.) and material or material outside the subject of a text (diagrams, illustrations, tables, underscores, spaces, numbering, etc.). *Scanning* is a method of searching quickly for information that is specific to a text. In scanning, readers must pay more attention to certain keywords or specific information that readers seek. Therefore, determining the purpose of reading before reading a text will help the success of the scanning process. Brown (2007) adds that scanning deals with searching detailed information such as names, place descriptions, time descriptions, keywords, things related to numbers. This technique can be used to answer questions related to who, what, how, long, where, when, how much, how far, and so on. *Skimming* is a way to get the core or main points of a text by reading the text at a glance. In skimming, the readers must know which part of the text contains important information and they only read the information. In addition, the readers must also know the structure of the text and things related to the topic of the text by paying attention to things such as the title and subtitle of the text. *Phase reading* is a further level of scanning techniques. Eye concentration and movement are two important things in the phase reading. Thus, the better the concentration and movement of the eyes of a reader, the faster the process of understanding a reader understands of a text. However, learners of foreign languages usually have difficulty understanding and recognizing a principle. Therefore, the practice of recognizing a principle is absolutely necessary.

Margana (2013) outlines several reading strategies in reading activities. These strategies include skimming, scanning, word-attack skills, vocabulary building, interpreting references, recognition, text-organization, inferencing. *Skimming* means reading quickly to determine the topic or subject matter in the text. By using this technique, the author can predict the purpose of text writing, reading topics, and main points. *Scanning* refers to reading quickly to find factual information in the text. The purpose of this technique is to explore specific information from the text or reading the entire text. *Word-attack* skill is a reading technique regarding guessing difficult words using grammatical and contextual relationships. *Vocabulary building* is related to two main processes

in the realm of morphology, namely derivation and inflection. The derivation process is interpreted as a morphological process which results in changes in meaning and / or changes in categories. The inflection process refers to the morphological process in the form of affixation that is closely related to the naming, marking of changes in tenses, and ownership. *Interpreting reference* refers to finding a pronoun reference source or source that appears in the text. *Recognition text-organization* is interpreted as one of the reading techniques relating to the introduction of patterns of organizing text or the introduction of types of paragraphs. *Inferencing* involves making conclusions based on information obtained from the text being read.

Pang et al (2003) suggest that the process of building meaning is related to various reading activities, namely connecting between previous knowledge and messages in the text, finding meaning in linguistic forms in the text, and constructing the contents of the text in order to understand texts that. In the process, the reader uses prior knowledge to find topics, main points of view, organization of texts, forms of validity that are used in order to find the message or intentional meaning that the writer has (Lenz, 2005). Therefore, readers are suggested to use a suitable reading strategy in accordance with the purpose and type of text read (Johnson, 2008). Margana (2013) also proposes that reading techniques or reading strategies are important to be mastered when learners work on reading comprehension questions because with the implementation of these strategies learners can answer questions quickly and accurately.

### ***English Learning in Junior High School***

English learning at the junior high level is targeted for students to reach the functional level of spoken and written communication to solve everyday problems. The aim of giving English subjects in junior high school, based on Minister of Education and Culture Number 24 of 2016, is that students have the ability to develop competencies in communicating in oral and written forms to achieve functional literacy, have awareness of the nature and importance of English to improve national competitiveness global community, and develop students' understanding of the relationship between language and culture.

According to Minister of Education and Culture Number 24 of 2016, junior high school English subjects include some scopes. The first scope is the ability of discourse, namely the ability to understand and / or produce oral and / or written texts that are realized in four language skills, namely listening,

speaking, reading, and writing in an integrated manner to achieve functional literacy levels. The second ability is to understand and create various short functional texts and monologues and essays in the form of procedure, descriptive, recount, narrative, and report. The third scope is supporting competence, namely linguistic competencies (using grammar and vocabulary, sound system, stationery), socio-cultural competencies (using language expressions and actions and being acceptable in various communication contexts), strategy competencies (problem solving) that arise in the communication process in various ways so that communication continues, and the competency forming the discourse.

## **Method**

The study was carried out in SMP 3 Pleret. The populations of this study were the students of the school. Determination of samples was based on random sampling method. The sample of the study was 88 students from 3 classes, involving 29 students of class VIIA class, 28 students of class VIIB, and 31 students of class VIID. The data collection was done through survey method by filling out the questionnaire. The items in the research instrument were made by adopting reading strategies by Thomas Kral (1995). Questionnaire items were designed into nine (9) questions which were divided into 4 types of reading strategies (surveying, scanning, skimming, and phase reading).

The data analysis is based on descriptive statistics which aims to describe or analyze a set of data. The data obtained from questionnaires were processed using descriptive statistics, which include activities: (1) editing; checking or correcting collected data, (2) coding; classifying the answers by marking each with certain codes in the form of numbers, (3) scoring; scoring for each category of choice (in this case the scoring model used was the Likert scale), (4) making tabulations by entering data into the table.

The quantitative data were collected from questionnaires. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze data in the questionnaire. The researcher used a scale technique, called the Likert Scale, to find the strategies used by the students in reading and comprehending English texts. The five-point scale is used to find out what strategies are used by students in comprehending English texts. The five-scale scoring in question was: 1 for never or almost never true, 2 for usually not true, 3 for somewhat, 4 for usually true and 5 for always true. In order for making the quantitative data easy to read, the researcher converted

the data into average interval values on a scale of 1 to 5 using factual value intervals. Value conversion was made based on Suharto (2006: 52 - 53).

$$Interval\ value = \frac{(highest\ score - lowest\ score)}{scale}$$

$$= (5 - 1) / 5 = 0,8$$

Based on the calculation, the interval class is arranged as a follow.

Table 1.Quantitative Data Conversion

Scale	Interval of the mean value	The other form of the interval	Category
5	4.6	$\overline{X}$ 4.6	always true
4	3.7 – 4.5	3.7 4.5	usually true
3	2.8 – 3.6	2.8 3.6	somewhat true
2	1.9 – 2.7	1.9 $\overline{X}$ 2.7	usually not true
1	1 – 1,8	1 $\overline{X}$ 1.8	never or almost never

## Findings and Discussion

Table 2. Questionnaire Result about Reading Strategies in Comprehending English Text of Students of SMPN 3 Pleret Year 2018

No	Component	Score					Mean score	Category
		1	2	3	4	5		
1.	Surveying	0	0	23	6	59	4.41	usually true
2.		21	0	28	12	27	3.27	somewhat true
3.		0	1	17	17	53	4.39	usually true
4.		1	0	27	15	45	4.17	usually true
$\overline{x}$							4.06	usually true
5.	Scanning	13	2	26	29	18	3.42	somewhat true
6.		2	2	24	19	35	3.78	usually true
7.		18	3	30	20	17	3.17	somewhat true
$\overline{x}$							3.56	somewhat true
8.	Skimming	21	1	23	26	17	3.19	somewhat true
9.	Phase Reading	0	1	29	27	31	4.0	usually true

Table 2 shows that the mean values for *surveying* strategy are 4.41, 3.27, 4.39 and 4.17. The average mean value for this strategy is 4.06. Based on quantitative conversion data referenced by Suharto (2006: 52-53), the mean value of 4.06 is categorized into the 'usually true' category because the average value is in the range of 3.7 – 4.5.

Meanwhile the mean value items for *scanning* are 3.42, 3.78 and 3.17. The average mean value for this strategy is 3.56. It is in the range of 2.8 – 3.6 and categorized as "somewhat true". The table also shows that the average value of *skimming* is 3.19. Based on quantitative conversion data referred by Suharto (2006: 52-53), the mean value of 3.19 is categorized into the "somewhat true" category because the average value is in the range of 2.8 – 3.6. Meanwhile the *phase reading* strategy is in the range of 3.7 – 4.5 with the main value of 4.0 and it is categorized as "usually true"

It can be concluded from the table that students of class VIIA, VIIB, and VIID tend to have certainty in comprehending English texts. Students often apply the surveying strategy (mean value 4.06). In other words, when they find English texts they give full attention to references (title, author, table of contents, etc.) and material or material outside the subject of a text (diagrams, illustrations, tables, underscores, spaces, numbering, etc.). Students of class VIIA, VIIB, and VIID also often apply the strategy of phase reading (mean value 4.0). In other words when they meet English texts they pay full attention to the title first then read the first and last paragraphs of the text, pay attention to the italics, graphics, and tables and read the summaries provided in the reading text.

Meanwhile, with a mean score of 3.56 and 3.19, reading and skimming strategies are only sometimes applied by students of class VIIA, VIIB, and VIID when comprehending English texts. This means that when students find English texts, they are not fully aware to give attention to find detailed information such as names, place descriptions, time descriptions, keywords, things related to numbers. Based on the data presented above, it can also be summarized that the items in the instrument used for the study were made by adopting reading strategies by Thomas Kral (1995). The items in the questionnaire included 4 types of reading strategies: surveying, scanning, skimming, and phase reading. Surveying is the strategy mostly applied by students of class VIIA, VIIB, and VIID when they comprehend English texts. This is in accordance with the theory of Kral (1995: 106) which states that surveying strategies are the fastest and most

efficient way to see and understand the content and organization of a text.

## Conclusion

Referring to the results of the research, conclusions can be drawn to answer the formulation of the existing problems. The first conclusion is that in comprehending English texts, the students of class VIIA, VIIB, and VIID SMP N 3 Pleret tend to use certain reading strategies. The second conclusion is that the reading strategies that tend to be used most often by the students of class VIIA, VIIB, and VIID in comprehending English texts are surveying, followed by phase reading, scanning, and skimming.

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