

INVESTIGATING EFL LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION PROBLEMS AND STRATEGIES IN TIDAR UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

This study deals with Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) of reading skills in EFL learners of Tidar University. This study is to investigate the problems and to determine the strategies of reading that the learners use to help them according to their reading problems. This study seeks to answers two research questions: (1). What are/is the problems of reading comprehension at Tidar University? (2). What are/is the strategies that EFL learners use to help them in reading comprehension problem? This study adopted a descriptive qualitative approach that used a questionnaire to complete this research. The aims of this study are to know the factors of reading comprehension factors and to know EFL learners' strategies that they use to help their in reading comprehension in Tidar University.

Keywords: *reading problems, EFL learners, reading strategies*

Introduction

Reading become more and more required in moderns era. It's activities that could do everytime in many ways. We read written items such as the message in our smart phone, magazine, advertisement, and newspaper. Reading also help the readers to get new information and new knowledge after they read. According to Yukselir (2014), reading is fundamental, and beneficial also the important skill to master in learning new information, and gain the access to get explanation, interpretations and to begin the synthesis of critical evaluation skills.

Nowadays, reading become necessary device toward the English Foreign Language learners growth their English proficiency level. Moreover, reading is important to develop EFL learners in their socio-cultural competence. In education part, reading is one of compulsory activities that students and the teachers have to do that all of the time. They may read many kind of texts based on their various purposes. Based on Hung and Ngan (2015), they said that the basic skill to improve vocabulary, writing, fluency and speaking is reading. Thus would help the learners to master in their terget language. Hence, no-brainer to decide that having good skill in reading important gor successful students.

Today, one of the popular topics in English second language learners in reading classroom is reading comprehension. Moreover, reading a text in a

foreign language as English is different from reading in first language. Possibly, the English second language readers have generally had much the experience of reading in their first language. The important to comprehend the text by declare that reading means comprehending, (Stauffer (1969). One of the aspects which most necessary by English second language English learners is their ability to comprehend the texts. Nevertheless, nowadays, the learners are try to solve in their reading problems. Davoudi and Yousefi (2015) have classify reading difficulties and the problems that happen in EFL learners such as learners problem's in grammatical knowledge and poor reading strategies that they important to help them reduce the difficulties, the problems in vocabulary knowledge and background knowledge (Samad, Jannah & Fitriani, 2017).

This study aims to investigate the problem and the strategies that EFL learners use in reading comprehension in Tidar University. Afterward, the researcher formulates two research problems: (1). What are/is the problems of reading comprehension at Tidar University? (2). What are/is the strategies that EFL learners use to help they in reading comprehension problems?

Method

The aims of this study were to know factors of reading comprehension factors, and to know EFL learners strategies that they use to help their in reading comprehension in Tidar University. Therefore this study was rated using a descriptive qualitative approach. Quanlitative data speaks louder than a human's experience (Mitchell & Clark, 2018). The written word is important to establish in qualitative research to spread the finding (Kharismawan, 2017, p.115). Qualitative research produces different comprehension by humans in context and what the way they see the research (Bengtsson, 2016, p. 8). The researcher conducted questionnaire which was taken from Fawzia Al Seyabi & Victoria Tuzlukova thesis which to investigate reading problem and strategies that EFL use to help them in reading.

The object of this research were students of third semester. They were EFL learners from English Department students of Tidar University. There were twenty students to conduct this study. there were sixteen questions in the questionnaire that needed to be answeres. The questionnaire were conducted through online media which didn't need name. The media was Google form which can be accessed by everyone who has the link of the questionnaire. There were twenty students who gave their response without being pressed. Wherefore, this research was conducted as a students' perspective analysis of the difficulties and the strategies in their reading comprehension.

To begin the study, the researcher described the reading activities in English Second Language learners nowadays and the problem of EFL learners in reading comprehension. The researcher also give the definition of reading and the important of reading in daily activities also in education domain. This research focused on students perspective about the problem or the difficulties of

reading comprehension and the strategies that they used to help their in reading comprehension problems according to several experts. The researcher looked for the questionnaire from an existing thesis and made them through online news in Google Form. the questionnaire devide in two questionnaire the first title is reading problems perceived EFL learners and the second is the strategies in reading comprehension.

After making online questionnaire the researcher shared the link of the questionnaire to the students. The learners can answer the questionnaire according on their own perceived of the problems and strategies that they use and have. In the next part of this study, the researcher collected the result of the questionnaire. Then the result were analyzed by using the trusted theories. In the process, the researcher used 3 steps of analyzing. First, the researcher looked for the the questionnaire and found the questionnaire about reading problems and strategies in EFL learners. Second, the findings were analyzed to know the problems of reading comprehension in EFL learners. Third, the findings were divided to know the strategies that English Foreign Language students use to help them reduce the problems in reading comprehension. Finally, the researcher drew the conclusion based on the findings.

Discussion

This section shows the result of this study. It consists of 2 part, the first one is about the reading problems in English Foreign Language learners and the second one is the strategies of reading comprehension in English Foreign language to reduce the problems of reading comprehension.

Reading Problems in EFL Learners

The results show reading problems in EFL students in Tidar University.

a. Reading problem in understanding English texts

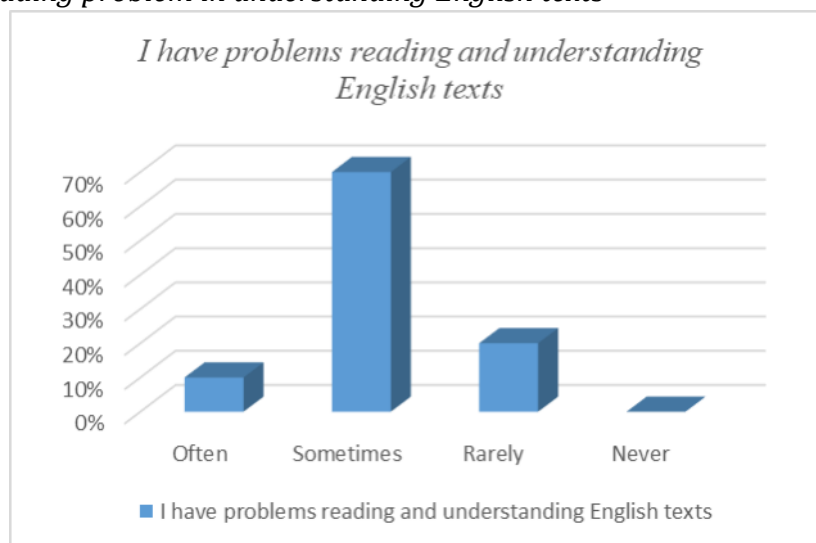


Figure 1. reading problems in understanding English text

Understanding the English text is necessary when we read. Especially, in reading for comprehend, we should comprehend the texts and know the text texts about. As shown in figure 1. *Reading problems in understanding English text* indicates that the students something feel difficult to comprehend or understanding English texts. The data shows that 10% respondents gave often have the problems in understanding English texts and 70% respondents gave sometimes in this questions. 20% respondents also gave rarely to that questions. It indicates that the learners sometimes feel difficult when they comprehend the texts.

b. Reading problems in how to pronounce the word

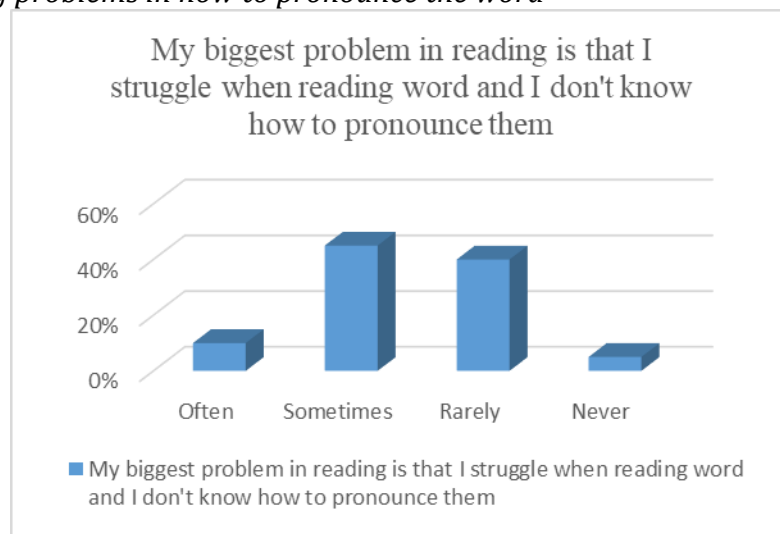


Figure 2. reading problem in how to pronounce the word

The correct pronunciation is the important things when we wants to be good readers. When we read a texts we have to know how to pronounce the word correctly. The data shown that the learners sometimes have difficulties when they have to pronounce the word correctly. Based on the data, 10% respondents gave often, and 45% respondents gave sometimes in this question. The respondents gave 40% for rarely point, and also 5% for never. It conclude that the students sometimes struggle when they read and they don't know how to pronounce the word correctly.

c. *Reading problem in vocabulary*

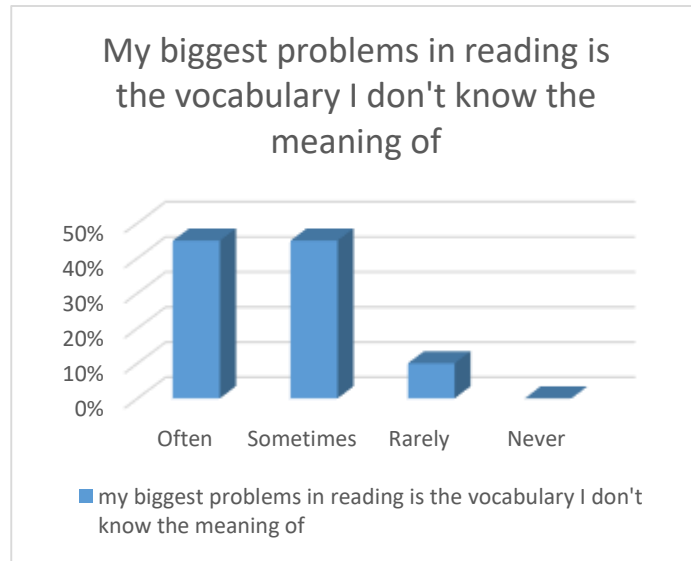


Figure 3. reading problem in vocabulary

Mastering vocabulary is necessary in reading English texts. It's one of the way to understand what the texts talk about. We should know the meaning of the word when we read the texts. It's will help the readers easy to know what that they read. However, mastering vocabulary is the biggest problems that EFL students have. Based on the data, 45% respondents gave their own assumption often and sometimes fell confused when they read, because they don't know the meaning of the word. It's happens because they don't mastering the vocabulary. 10% respondents also gave for rarely. It means the students confused when they found the difficult words and they didn't know the meaning.

d. *Reading problems in how to connect the ideas together*

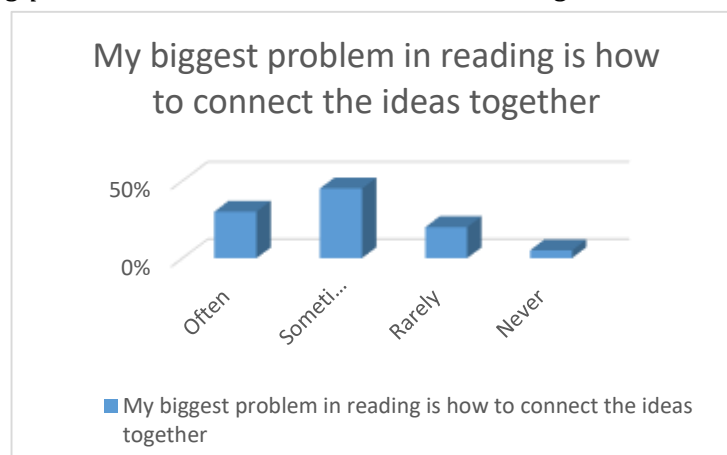


Figure 4. reading problem in how to connect the ideas together

When we read we have to connect the one ideas with the others ideas. Every paragraph always have different ideas, but they are connected. When we connect the ideas we must know about the texts about and we have to comprehend the texts about. Sometimes, it will be difficult for English Foreign Language students, because they have to master the vocabulary they should comprehend the texts also. The data shown that 30% respondents use their perspective in often, and 45% respondents use to answer this questions. 20% respondents gave their perspective for rarely, and 5% for never. It means that the biggest perspective that EFL students gave to answer this questions in sometimes and often. Therefore, they have problems in connecting the ideas.

e. Reading problems in the topic of the texts from other culture

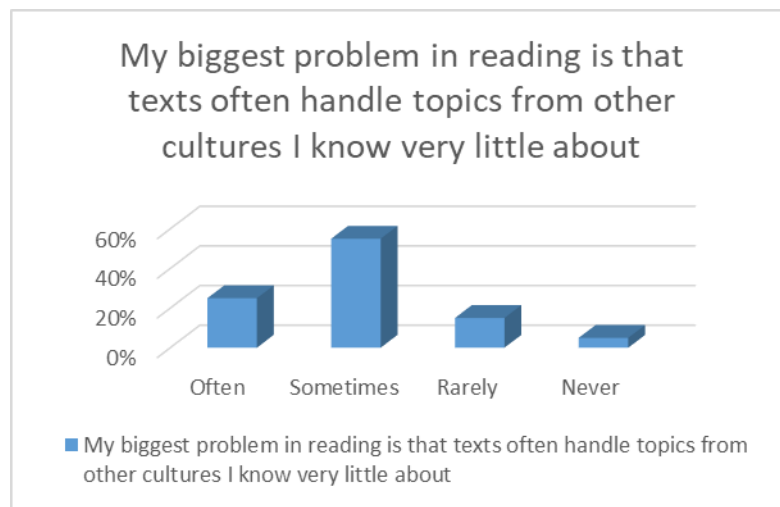


Figure 5. reading problems in the topic of the texts from other culture

As we know, that English is foreign language in Indonesia, they use English to communicate with the other people in different country. When we talk about English, we also talk about the culture. The data shown 25% respondents gave their own perceptions often and 55% respondents gave for sometimes. The respondents also gave 15% for rarely, and 5% for never. It means that English Second Language students sometimes feel difficult when they found the texts that have the topics from other cultures.

f. Reading problems in find the ways to relate topic based their own knowledge

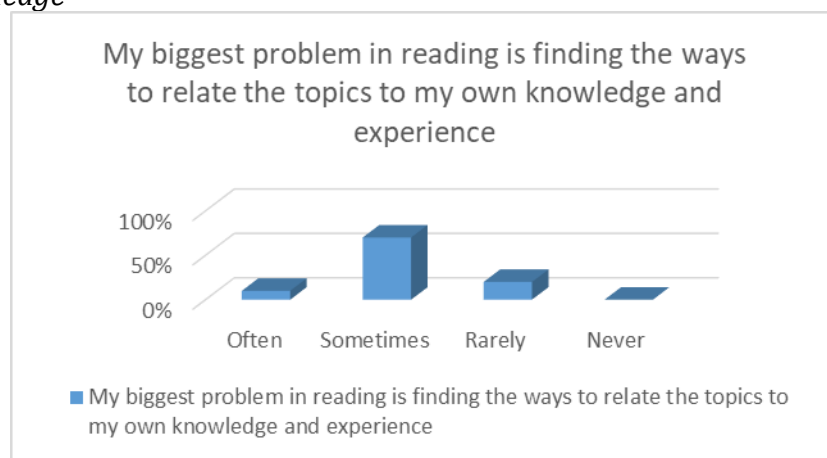


Figure 6. reading problem in find the ways the topic based their own knowledge

Background knowledge or experience of English Foreign Language learners is important when we learn about English as foreign language. Especially in reading skills. We have to relate the topic with our experience or our knowledge. However, The biggest problem in reading is finding ways to relate the topic to my own knowledge and experience. It's mean EFL students have to connect the topic with their background knowledge. The data shown that 10% respondents gave their answer for often, 70% for sometimes, and 20% for rarely. it conclude that sometimes the learners still confuse to relate the topics with their experience.

g. Reading problems in differentiate between main point and supporting details in a text

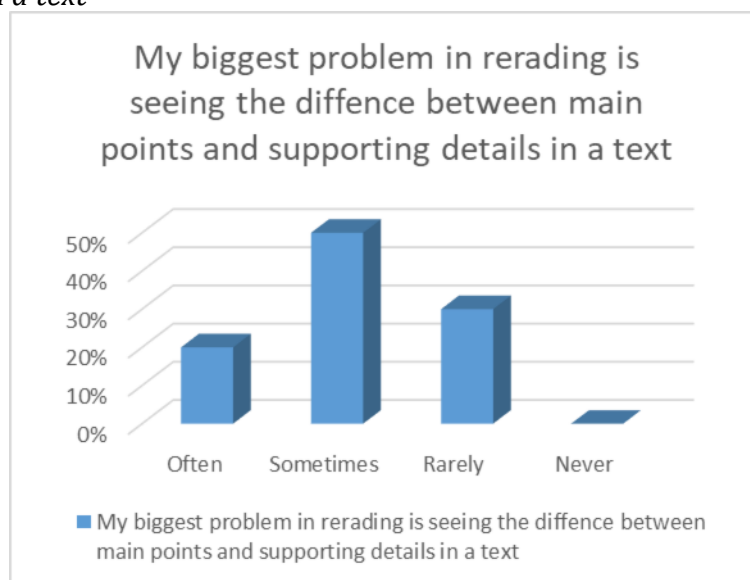


Figure 7. Reading problems in differentiate between main point and supporting details in a text

Every paragraph has their own main ideas and supporting ideas. When we read we have to know the main ideas in each paragraph. The problems is the students sometimes difficult to differentiate the main point and supporting details. The data drew 20% respondents gave their opinion in this question for often, 50% for sometimes, and 30% for rarely. it's means that the students sometimes feel difficile when they have to differentiate between main point and supporting point.

h. Reading problems in inferring information

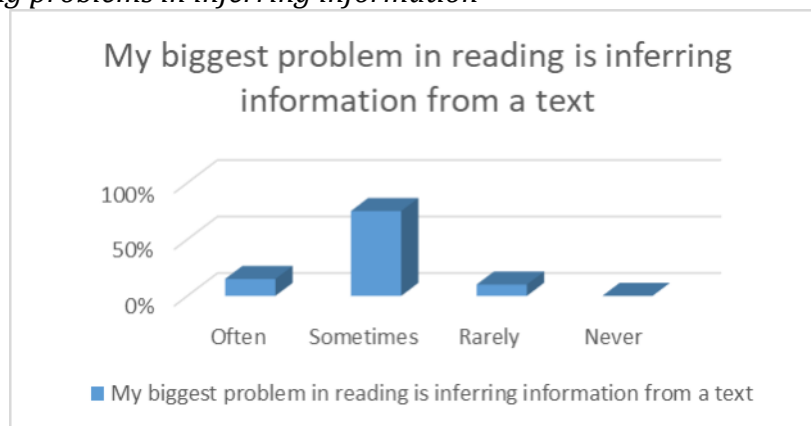


Figure 8. reading problems in inferring information

Inferring information is important when we read English text. The data drew 15% respondents gave their perspective in this question for often, and 75% for sometimes. The respondents also gave their perception 10% for rarely. it's means the biggest problems that happen in EFL learners in inferring the informanction from a text that they read.

Reading Strategies in EFL Learners

The result show reading strategies that EFL students use to reduce their problem in reading comprehension.

a. Using reading strategies to understand the texts

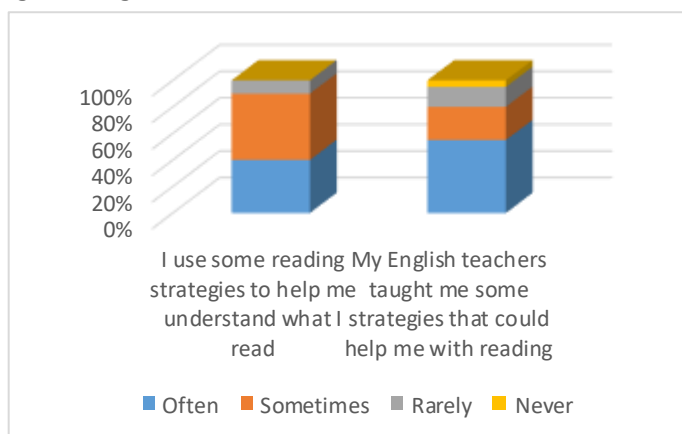


Figure 9. using reading strategies in EFL learners

When re read the texts we have to use some strategies to reduce the problems of reading. In education, the teachers should taught their students some strategies that they can use in reading. Based on the data, 55% the highest point that the respondents gave for this question is the teachers often taught them some strategies in reading. However, in reality, their teachers sometimes they to use reading strategies to help them understand what they read.

b. Try to predict the content

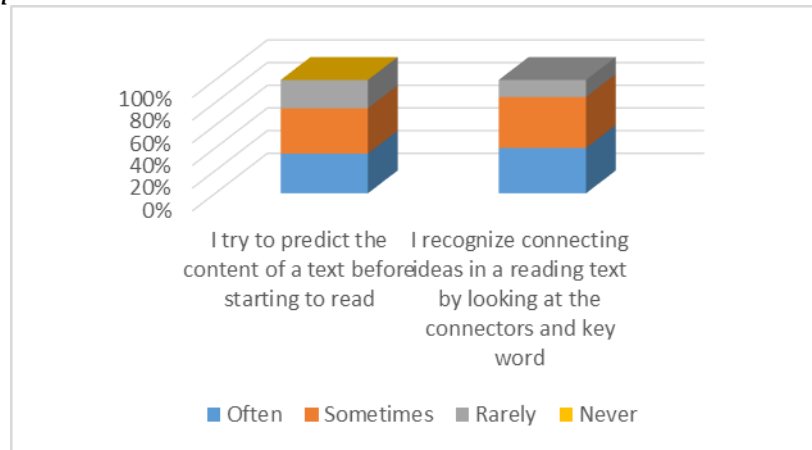


Figure 10. try to predict the content

Based on the data, the correspondents gave their perspective about this questions is the students try to predict the content first before they read, and sometimes they guess the meaning of the word using context clue or word formartion clue. The data drew 35% students often predict the content and 60% sometimes they use to guess the word formation clues or context clues.

c. Using skim and scan in reading

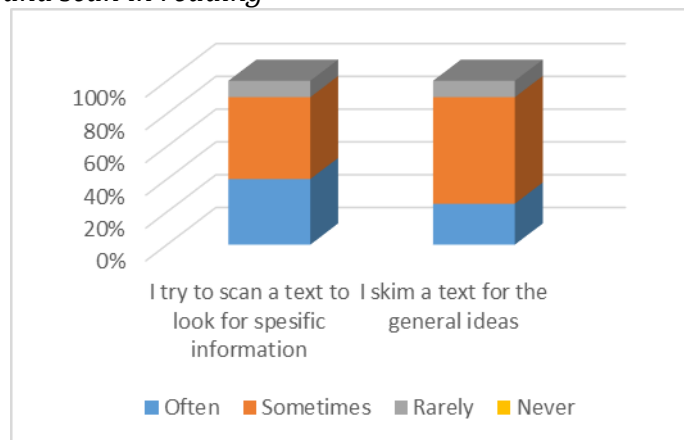


Figure 11. Using skim and scan in reading

In reading, there are two techniques that use, the first is scan and the second is skim. In each techniques has their function. Scan technique is use when

we want to find the main ideas, and skim use to find the general information. Based on the data, 65% students sometimes use skim technique to find the general ideas, and 50% students use scan techniques when they want to find spesific information.

d. Using dictionary and context clues

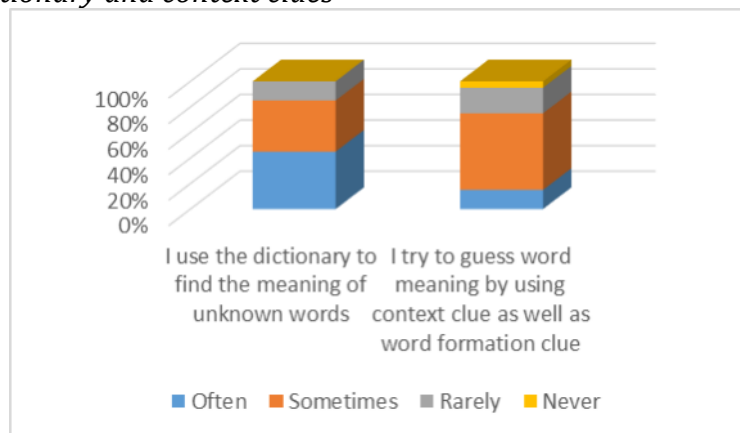


Figure 12. using dictionary and context clues

Based on the data drew the respondents gave the highest point in often use the dictionary to help them find the difficulty word when they read. The sometimes also guess the word using context clues or word formation clue to know what they read. The students gave 45% point in using the dictionary to help them when they found the difficulties word. 60% point that respondents gave in using context clues to guess the meaning word.

Conclusion

The result of this study showed the problems in reading comprehension and the strategies that they use to reduce the problems of reading in EFL learners. The problems are they sometimes feel difficult when they have to comprehend the texts, how to pronounce the word correctly, mastering the vocabulary, connect the word ideas, the topics of the texts that serve in different culture, inferring the information, differentiate the main ideas and supporting ideas in the texts, and also find the strategies to find relate topic based on their own knowledge or experience. Futhermore, the result also showed the strategies they used to help them in reading problems, the strategies are using dictionary and context clues, using some reading strategies; using scanning and skimming techniques, and trying to predict the content. The findings also indicated that to comprehend the texts they have to use some strategies in reading to reduce the problems. They have to master the vocabulary or use formation word (context clue) to predict the meaning of word. They also have to predict the content by using the key word on the texts.

The aims of this study are to gain the information about the problems and strategies of reading in EFL learners. Since reading is the basic skill to improve vocabulary, writing, fluency and speaking. Thus, it is important to improve reading skill in Teaching English as a Foreign Language in the third semester of Tidar University.

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