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EFL Reading Comprehension and Reading Strategies of Different Genders

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Abstract

Two of the most examined dimension of reading strategies that have an affective influence on different genders are cognitive strategy and metacognitive strategy. This study was aimed to find out whether reading comprehension using different strategies would have different result or not for the two different genders. The researchers used a quantitative causal-comparative research approach, and data were collected from two instruments: reading comprehension test and questionnaires. A number of 50 students (25 females and 25 males) from one of the universities in Banjarmasin participated in this study. The results showed that between the two types of strategies, the cognitive strategy was mostly favoured by the male students, and metacognitive strategy was favoured by the female students. Nevertheless, their metacognitive or cognitive reading strategies preference does not significantly differ in their reading comprehension score. The interaction between two independent variables did not significantly happen in this research. The choice of using certain reading strategy was not determined by the category of gender. In other words, a certain type of gender using a certain type strategy did not give better results in reading comprehension.

Keywords: Reading comprehension, reading strategies, gender.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Richards and Renandya (2002, p. 273), “many EFL (English Foreign Language) students often have reading as one of their most important goals. They want to be able to read information, to read for pleasure, and to read for study

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purposes”. By being able to read (English) easily, students are able to fulfill their educational needs as well as having pleasure. In 2013, the [English Proficient Index \(2013\)](#) reported that Indonesia’s position was rank no. 25 out of 100 in the country ranking table with the status of “moderate proficiency” in English. This position was slightly better than in 2012 with the position of 27 or “low proficiency”, and in 2011 with position no. 34 or “very low proficiency”. These three years of data show that many Indonesians, especially students, struggle to master the four language skills in English, including reading, despite that it is continuously improving at present.

The fact that comprehension is very important in EFL reading led us to conduct this research at the English Department of Islamic University of Muhammad Arsyad Al Banjari Kalimantan, in Banjarmasin, concerning the differences in reading achievements and reading problems between males and females. Based on our preliminary study, we found that from the reading class results from the previous semester, about 34.5 % of the female students had low reading scores while only 14.6% of the male students had low scores. Accordingly, we would like to investigate further on what causes the differences. By investigating the effect of gender differences and reading strategies on students’ reading comprehension, this study aimed to figure out the reading strategy that is most favoured by the students of each gender, the preferred reading strategy that can improve their reading comprehension, and the interaction between gender and reading strategy for their reading comprehension performance. The results of this research can be input for teachers so that they can further understand the needs of their students in the EFL classroom, especially when teaching reading.

1.1 Constellation of the Research

The constellation of the research showed the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable as we can see below:

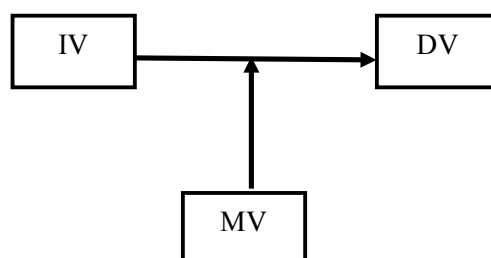


Figure 1. Constellation of the research.

Note:

IV : Independent Variable (Gender Differences)

MV : Moderator Variable (Reading Strategies)

DV : Dependent Variable (Reading Comprehension)

Independent variable is the gender differences (male and female) that assumes to have effect or may cause result on the dependent variable, which is students’ reading comprehension. Whereas reading strategies as the moderator variable becomes the bridge between independent variable and dependent variable; it connects with the direct relationship that can be strengthened or weakened between the independent variable and dependent variable.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Reading Comprehension

The concept of reading comprehension, one should have clear definition of what comprehension is about. Lunzer et al. (1979) clearly provided a clear distinction between reading and comprehension. Reading is an activity that one does; meanwhile, comprehension is to understand something that one does. For instance, a reader who understands what he has read can answer questions about it, or he can reproduce the gist of it in the form of written or spoken summary. Even while reading, he can demonstrate his comprehension by supplying missing words, as in a cloze test. Furthermore, Lunzer et al. (1979) said that comprehension indicates achievement which measures the reader's ability and willingness to reflect on whatever it is that we read.

2.2 Reading Strategies

Nunan (1999, p. 249) stated that strategy is “the mental and communicative procedures learners use in order to learn and use language”. It is a fact that many of foreign language students are not familiar with the use of strategy. In short, reading strategies are conscious actions that readers employ to enhance their comprehension of the textual information. Readers can use reading strategies to make purposeful and conscious plans to enhance reading comprehension and overcome comprehension failures.

2.3 Gender and Reading Comprehension

In order to achieve better comprehension, male and female use different styles and strategies toward the text. The combination between gender factors and the use of strategies are likely to affect their classroom reading comprehension achievement.

Bidlake (2007) explained that gender identity may have an implication in a learner's second language access and opportunities. In this way, gender will influence the amount of language and the kind of second language exposure available for the learner. She also emphasized three areas where gender takes a role in language learning, they are: (1) proficiency assessments, (2) classroom interactions, and (3) working with factors outside the classroom (Bidlake, 2007, pp. 11-14). Furthermore, Phakiti (2006) also studied the nature of cognitive strategies (comprehending, retrieval and memory strategies) and metacognitive strategies (planning, monitoring and evaluating strategies) and their direct and indirect relationships to EFL reading comprehension test performance.

Based on the social cognitive theory of gender, it is explained that males and females develop differently according to what they have been observed and imitated (Bussey & Bandura, 1999). It has been found that females scored significantly higher than males in metacognitive strategies in learning Arabic (Yusri et al., 2013). Nevertheless, Lee (2012) found that EFL male students used more strategies use than female students in the aspects of memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies. Similar to Yusri et al. (2013), she also discovered that females used more strategies of metacognitive and social affective while reading. Thus, it can be concluded that male and female go through the reading process in different ways.

3. METHODOLOGY

We used a quantitative causal-comparative research approach. The next subsections explain the methods used in this research.

3.1 Research Variables and Design

This research involved two variables, independent variables (gender and reading strategies), and a dependent variable (reading comprehension). We applied 2 x 2 factorial design, with two levels of gender (male and female) and two levels of reading strategies (cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies), as shown in Table 1.

Table1. The association between variables (2 x 2 factorial design).

<i>Factor A</i>	<i>Factor B</i>	
	B ₁	B ₂
A ₁	A ₁ B ₁	A ₁ B ₂
A ₂	A ₂ B ₁	A ₂ B ₂

Where:

Factor A : Gender

A₁ : Male

A₂ : Female

Factor B : Reading strategies

B₁ : Cognitive reading strategy

B₂ : Metacognitive reading strategy

A₁B₁ : Male using cognitive strategy

A₁B₂ : Male using metacognitive strategy

A₂B₁ : Female using cognitive strategy

A₂B₂ : Male using metacognitive strategy

3.2 Population and Sample

The population was selected from the third semester students in the Extensive Reading classes of Islamic University of Muhammad Arsyad Al Banjari Kalimantan (or UNISKA). The whole populations of these students are 241 students and divided into six reading classes. From these classes, we used only two classes with 50 students chosen as the samples. They were randomly selected using the SPSS version 21. Since this study focused on the differences in gender on reading comprehension and reading strategies, therefore one class (class A) comprised of 25 male students. Whereas, another class (class B) comprised of 25 female students.

3.3 Research Instruments

In this research, the writer used two kinds of instruments. They are: reading comprehension test and questionnaires.

3.3.1 *The Validity of the Instrument*

Brown (2001, p. 306) said validity refers to “the extent to which inferences made from assessment result are appropriate and meaningful, and useful in terms of purpose

of the assessment”. Thus, a reading test can only be said valid if it actually measures reading ability. Testing the construct validation was conducted by measuring the correlation between variables, or between items with total score of the variables. We calculated the correlation between items of questions with the total scores using the Pearson Product Moment formula:

Where:

r_{xy} = Pearson Product Moment correlation
 Σx = total scores of a half of the test
 Σy = total scores of the other half of the test
 Σx^2 = total sum of a half squared
 Σy^2 = total sum of the other squared
 Σxy = total sum of a half times the other half
 n = total respondents

$$r_{xy} = \frac{n \Sigma xy - (\Sigma x)(\Sigma y)}{\sqrt{(n \Sigma x^2 - (\Sigma x)^2)(n \Sigma y^2 - (\Sigma y)^2)}}$$

3.3.2 Reliability of the Instrument

Johnson and Christensen (2008, pp. 147-148) explained that “a test is homogeneous or not dimensional when the items measure a single construct or a single dimension such as reading comprehension or spelling ability”. To test the reliability of the instrument, we used the Alpha Cronbach and split-half calculation. The formula is as below:

$$r_{tt} = \frac{2 \cdot r_{xy}}{1 + r_{xy}}$$

Where:

r_{tt} = Split-half reliability
 r_{xy} = Pearson product moment correlation

3.4 Technique of Data Collection

The data sources for this quantitative research were the scores from a test. The researcher used the test with the male and female students to obtain the results for reading comprehension from the reading classes. The reading comprehension test included multiple choices, and all forms were scored as either right or wrong as in dichotomous items characteristic of test item.

3.5 Technique of Data Analysis

The data were analysed descriptively and inferentially. Descriptive analysis covers the mode, median, range, mean, standard deviation and the distribution of frequency in histograms. Descriptive analysis is to give information concerning the students' scores. Inferential analysis was done by using a two-way ANOVA for hypotheses testing. However, before testing the hypotheses, the data were analysed for

its normality by using Kolmogorov-Smirnov formula and its homogeneity of the variances by using Levine's test statistics. All were computed by SPSS version 21.0.

3.5.1 Test of Normality

This test was used to test the data for normality. The statistical test for normality is a test of the null hypothesis that the distribution is normal. The desirable outcome is a significance value for the statistics (α) of more than 0.05 so that the data fails to reject the null hypothesis. If it fails to reject the null hypothesis, it can be concluded that the data is normally distributed and meets the normality assumption. The hypotheses of the test of normality are:

H_0 : The data distribution is normal

H_1 : The data distribution is not normal

3.5.2 Test of Homogeneity

Test of homogeneity or Levene's test statistics is an inferential statistic used to assess the equality of variances for a variable calculated for two or more groups. It means that the variances of the samples to be compared must be identical, but only that they do not differ by an amount that is statistically significant. The hypotheses are:

H_0 : The population variances are equal

H_1 : The population variances are not equal

3.5.3 Test of Hypotheses

The statistical hypotheses of this research are:

1. Gender Differences

H_0 : $\mu A_1 = \mu A_2$

Male and female do not significantly differ on their reading comprehension.

H_1 : $\mu A_1 \neq \mu A_2$

Male and female significantly differ on their reading comprehension

2. Reading Strategies

H_0 : $\mu B_1 = \mu B_2$

Students who use cognitive and metacognitive do not significantly differ on their reading comprehension.

H_1 : $\mu B_1 \neq \mu B_2$

Students who use cognitive and metacognitive significantly differ on their reading comprehension.

3. Interaction

H_0 : $Int. A \times B = 0$

There is no significant interaction between gender differences and reading strategies toward students' reading comprehension.

H_1 : $Int. A \times B \neq 0$

There is a significant interaction between gender differences and reading strategies toward students' reading comprehension.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

We used the Pearson Product Moment to find whether each question was valid or not by internal consistency. This is because we administered one test and correlated the items to each other. For testing reliability using internal consistency, we only needed to give the instrument twice to the participants. First, at the time of trying out the instrument, and second was at the time of the research. After we tried out of the instrument, it was found from the data of the questionnaires:

$$\begin{aligned}\Sigma x &= 2.543 \\ \Sigma y &= 2.676 \\ \Sigma x^2 &= 131.945 \\ \Sigma y^2 &= 146.484 \\ \Sigma xy &= 138.553 \\ n &= 50\end{aligned}$$

4.1 Reliability

The reliability of the test estimated by the spilt half method was calculated below:

$$r_{tt} = \frac{2 \cdot r_{ab}}{1 + r_{ab}} = \frac{2 \cdot 0.77}{1 + 0.77} = 0.87$$

From the calculation above, it was found that the coefficient reliability of the reading strategies questionnaires was 0.87. It can be concluded that the reliability of the questionnaires was high.

The, after trying out the reading comprehension test, it was found that:

$$\begin{aligned}\Sigma Si^2 &= 6.95 \\ \Sigma Sx^2 &= 20.48 \\ K &= 50\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Reliability Alpha Cronbach} &= \left(\frac{K}{K-1}\right) \cdot \left(1 - \frac{\Sigma Si^2}{\Sigma Sx^2}\right) \\ &= \left(\frac{50}{50-1}\right) \cdot \left(1 - \frac{6.95}{20.48}\right) \\ &= 1.02 \cdot (1 - 0.33) \\ &= 0.68\end{aligned}$$

From the calculation, it was found that the coefficient reliability of the reading comprehension test was 0.68, or acceptable. It can be concluded that the reliability of the questionnaires was in the medium reliability.

4.2 Normality

Due to the statistical data with 50 samples of reading comprehension test scores, the significance value of the normality test statistic for the male students' score with cognitive strategy was 0.178, and their score with metacognitive strategy was 0.216. Moreover, the female students' score with cognitive strategy was 0.365, and their score with metacognitive strategy was 0.247. All of the groups is bigger than 0.05. Thus, we can reject the null hypothesis (H_0) of normality and see a transformation of the variable

meet the statistical assumption. Thus, it is concluded that the data follow the normal statistical distribution.

4.3 Homogeneity

Test of homogeneity or Levene's test statistics is an inferential statistic used to assess the equality of variances for a variable calculated for two or more groups. It means that the variances of the samples to be compared must be identical, but only that they do not differ by an amount that is statistically significant.

Table 2. Levene's test of error variances.

<i>F</i>	<i>df1</i>	<i>df2</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
1.662	3	46	.188

The result of the Levene's test of homogeneity of variances in Table 2 indicated that the transformations of data are effective to explain the homogeneity of error variance for the two groups (males and females). The *p*-value is 0.188 (18.8%) which is bigger than 0.05 (5%) or α . We can accept the null hypothesis (H_0), so it can be interpreted that the population variances were equal.

4.4 Hypotheses

4.4.1 Descriptive Analysis

Table 3 shows the number of respondents who participated in this research. They were categorized based on their gender differences and reading strategies preferences. There were 50 respondents which consisted of 25 males and 25 females. The findings showed that there were 25 respondents of cognitive strategy users and another 25 who were metacognitive strategy users.

Table 3. Test between subjects and strategies.

		<i>Value label</i>	<i>N</i>
Gender	1	Male	25
	2	Female	25
Strategies	1	Cognitive	25
	2	Metacognitive	25

Furthermore, Table 4 shows the mean of reading comprehension scores distributed among the genders and reading strategies (cognitive and metacognitive).

Table 4. Mean of reading comprehension scores.

<i>Gender/Strategies</i>	<i>Cognitive</i>	<i>Metacognitive</i>	<i>Mean</i>
Male	40,43,46,50,53,56,60,60, 63,66,73,73,73, 76,76	43,56,63,66,66,70,70,73, 73,76	\bar{x} Male = 62.56
	\bar{x} = 60, 53	\bar{x} = 65,60	
Female	50,76,76,76,76,80,83,83, 83,86	70,73,73,76,76,76,76,76, 80,83,83,86,86, 90,93	\bar{x} Female = 78.64
	\bar{x} = 76, 90	\bar{x} = 79,80	

From Table 4, it can be seen that the frequent score achieved by the students was 76. Meanwhile, the overall mean of reading scores of male students was 62.56 and the female students was 78.54. The maximum score was 93, with the minimum score of 40. The range was 50, the median was 73, the standard deviation was 12.762, and the variance was 162.857. To be more specific, the data was divided into the mean score of the male students using cognitive strategy that was 60.53, and their mean score of using metacognitive strategy was 65.60. Whereas the mean score of female students using cognitive strategy was 76.90 and their score of using metacognitive strategy was 79.80.

Table 5 further illustrates the descriptive statistics of gender that divides the mean scores of male and female in their use of reading strategies. Both cognitive and metacognitive has its own mean score as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics.

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>N</i>
Male	Cognitive	60.53	12.276	15
	Metacognitive	65.60	9.812	10
	Total	62.56	11.420	25
Female	Cognitive	76.90	10.170	10
	Metacognitive	79.80	6.742	15
	Total	78.64	8.210	25
Total	Cognitive	67.08	13.916	25
	Metacognitive	74.12	10.631	25
	Total	70.60	12.762	50

By considering Table 5, the explanation falls into (a) the amount of male students who used two types of reading strategies based on the mean and standard deviation, and (b) the amount female students who used two types of reading strategies based on the mean and standard deviation. Hence, from 25 male students, there were 15 students who used cognitive strategy with the mean of 60.53 and standard deviation of 12.276. Only 10 students used metacognitive strategy with the mean of 65.60 and standard deviation of 9.812. The maximum score was 76, the minimum score was 36, and the range was 40. Accordingly, the cognitive strategy was mostly favoured by the male students. They used cognitive reading strategy to enhance their reading comprehension by operate comprehending the task, memorizing words, and retrieving names of items or objects.

There were also 25 female students, and those who used cognitive strategy were 10 students with the mean of 76.90 and standard deviation of 8.210. Meanwhile, 15 students used the metacognitive strategy with the mean of 79.80 and standard deviation of 6.742. The maximum score was 93, the minimum score was 50, and the range was 43. This shows that metacognitive strategy was mostly favoured by the female students. They used the metacognitive reading strategy to increase their comprehension rate by planning their written discourse, monitoring the attention to the task and monitoring comprehension while conducting the test, and evaluating or checking comprehension after finishing the task.

To conclude, the most favourable reading strategy that were used by the male students were the cognitive reading strategy, whereas the female students mostly used the metacognitive reading strategies. This implies that the male and female students have different types of reading strategies in their way of achieving better comprehension result.

To give a better view of the data, it is shown in the form of histograms to differentiate the different groups of data (male score with cognitive, male scores with metacognitive, female score with cognitive and lastly female score with metacognitive strategy) (see Figure 2).

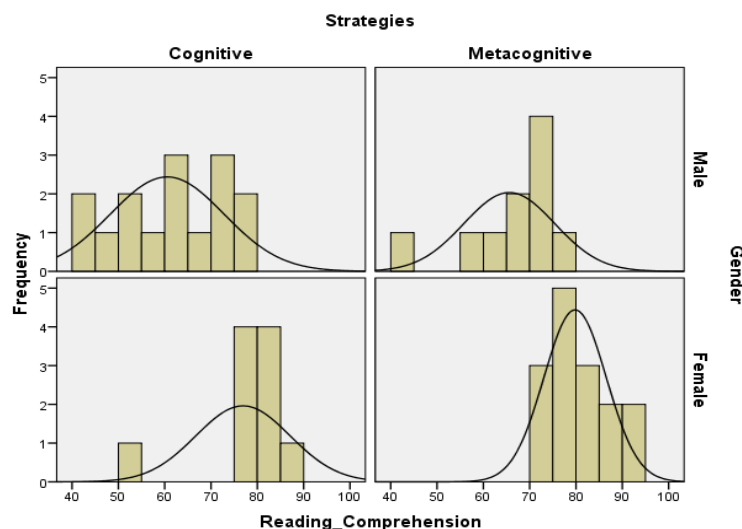


Figure 2. Histogram of 2 x 2 factorial design.

4.4.2 Inferential Analysis

Two ways Analysis of Variances (ANOVA) was used to test the three hypotheses. To do so, the p-value of each category must be seen whether they are higher than the p-value of α . The general assumptions of the three hypotheses are:

H_0 : If p-value is less than α (0.05) it means that there is a significant difference/interaction within category.

H_1 : If p-value is bigger than α (0.05) it means that there is no significant difference/interaction within category.

Table 6. Test between subject effects.

Source	Type III sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.	Partial eta squared
Corrected model	3436.567 ^a	3	1145.522	11.598	.000	.431
Intercept	239984.083	1	239984.083	2429.719	.000	.981
Gender	2802.963	1	2802.963	28.379	.000	.382
Strategies	190.403	1	190.403	1.928	.172	.040
Gender * strategies	14.083	1	14.083	.143	.707	.003
Error	4543.433	46	98.770			
Total	257198.000	50				
Corrected total	7980.000	49				

Based on Table 6 for the first category of gender, the p-value (0.000) < α (0.05) which means there is a significant difference of reading comprehension scores between the two gender. The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternate hypothesis (H_1) is accepted. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference result between the male and female students' reading comprehension.

For the second category of reading strategy, the result showed that the p -value (0.526) $> \alpha$ (0.05), which means that there is no significant difference between the use of the two reading strategies (cognitive and metacognitive) due to the students' reading comprehension scores. The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted, and the alternate hypothesis (H_1) is rejected. Thus, we can conclude that there is no significant difference between students who use the cognitive reading strategy with the students who use the metacognitive reading strategy.

For the last category of interaction, Table 7 shows that the p -value (0.707) $> \alpha$ (0.05), which means that there is no significant interaction between gender and the reading strategies. The null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted, and the alternate hypothesis (H_1) is rejected. Thus, it can be concluded that there is no interaction between gender differences and reading strategies on students' reading comprehension.

Table 7. Gender.

Gender	Mean	Std. error	95% Confidence interval	
			Lower bound	Upper bound
Male	63.067	2.029	58.983	67.150
Female	78.350	2.029	74.267	82.433

Gender was the only category that showed a significant difference among the three hypotheses. As an illustration, Table 7 shows the type of gender that had better scores in reading comprehension, who are females.

4.5 Discussion

After analysing and interpreting the data, the researcher found that between two independent variables (gender and reading strategies), only one variable (gender) and which had different effect on the students' reading comprehension. Another finding is that last two hypotheses of reading strategies and the interaction (between gender and reading strategies) did not cause interaction and did not significantly affected students' reading comprehension.

Based on the results of this study, it was found that the metacognitive strategy was mostly favoured by the female students. They used this metacognitive reading strategy to increase their comprehension rate by planning their written discourse, monitoring the attention to the task and monitoring comprehension while conducting the test, and evaluating or checking the comprehension after finishing the task. Meanwhile, the favourable reading strategy by the male students was the cognitive reading strategy. They would do repetition to what they read and try to summarize meaning from the text. To guess meaning from the context and to use imagery for memorisation are also among the other strategies employed in the cognitive reading strategy. All of these strategies involve cautious use of language to improve their learning. Thus, male and female students have different types of reading strategies as their ways to achieve better comprehension result.

Based on the first hypothesis about gender, the p -value ($0,000$) $< \alpha$ (0.05); this means there is a significant difference of reading comprehension score between the two gender. The null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the alternate hypothesis (H_1) is accepted. To conclude, there is a significant difference between the male and female students on their reading comprehension. The results have proven that the female students had better reading comprehension result compared to the male students. This

difference of the female superiority can be seen through three different aspects: verbal fluency, overall performance, and language acquisition.

In the aspect of verbal fluency, the female students had better ability in identifying the meaning of words rather than their male peers. They successfully gave correct definition for designated words, whereas male students made more mistakes in their test. The lexical task required the students to predict the meaning of the designated words based on the list of options. From the first five questions which required them to guess the meaning of the underlined words (items number 16-20), the male students gave 64.8% of correct answers, whereas the female students gave 74.4%.

In aspect of overall performance, the female students were more interactive than the male students because from classes being observed, such as in classroom discussions. In the aspect of language acquisition, the female students outperformed than male students where they could fill in the blank with the correct words more properly. Female students were seen to use language more often, not only for learning but also for maintaining the interpersonal relationship among others; therefore, they had more opportunities to put into practices their language use and carry it out in the learning activities.

Male and female were exposed to many different social groups, and they were expected to have their male and female roles; for example, female were supposed to be feminine which possesses the characteristics of caring, sensitive, affectionate, whereas male were supposed to be masculine and possesses the characteristics of aggressive, competitive, strong and assertive. These types of characteristics were seen to affect the way the male and female students use language. These leads to the different ways on how the male and female students think, speak, write, and read.

The second hypothesis was about reading strategies, the p -value ($0.172 > \alpha$ (0.05)); this means that there is no significant difference between the use of cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies from the students' reading comprehension scores. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted, and the alternate hypothesis (H_1) is rejected. To conclude, there is no significant difference between students who use cognitive reading strategy with the students who use metacognitive reading strategy.

Even though the research findings showed that the female students who used more metacognitive strategy had higher scores than the male students who used more cognitive strategy, but the result in overall reading comprehension test did not show high correlation between the scores and the strategies used. Perhaps this is because the students, as they confessed themselves, were not active strategy users. They were not using the reading strategies to the fullest and they did not even notice the possibility of using specific strategy in reading. This means that many of the students were unaware in using the reading strategies. Apparently, when students are aware in using strategies, they can increase their efforts in reading. They can develop positive attitudes to make their reading comprehension more powerful and beneficial.

The last hypothesis was about interaction, in which the p -value ($0.707 > \alpha$ (0.05)); this means that there is no significant difference in interaction between gender and the reading strategies. And so, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted, and the alternate hypothesis (H_1) is rejected. To conclude, there is no significant interaction between gender differences and reading strategies toward students' reading comprehension.

Accordingly, the result of reading comprehension of a student cannot be explained by the type of gender and the type of reading strategy being used. To sum up, the

students' result on their reading comprehension was not being influenced by their use of specific reading strategy and specific type of gender.

5. CONCLUSION

The result of this research had shown that the female students had better reading comprehension scores than the male students. Both of the male and female students acquired the same stages in learning reading, but their reading development is different because they carry out their own social cognitive function of gender. Therefore, the assumption that reading strategies affects students reading comprehension is seemly to be rejected. Due to the result, the students' metacognitive and cognitive reading strategies preference does not significantly differ in their reading comprehension score. The interaction between two independent variables did not significantly happened in this research. The choice of using certain reading strategy was not determined by the category of gender. In other words, a certain type of gender using a certain type of strategy did not give better result in reading comprehension.

Nonetheless, the female students were better than the male students in reading comprehension in the EFL class. Therefore, to achieve better EFL reading comprehension results, and hence better English language graduates, it is suggested that English majoring departments specifically in Indonesia should put more emphasis on teaching reading strategies to both female and male students.

This study was conducted not without limitations. This study only focused on two groups of students (male and female) from one institution and only focused on two reading strategies, metacognitive and cognitive reading strategies. The variability of the reading comprehension result may also be influenced by other factors, and we suggest that future researchers further investigate this inquiry by employing more students and involving more institutions in their research.

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