



## Indonesian and Egyptian EFL university students' difficulties in reading comprehension

Intan Ummul Baiti<sup>✉1</sup>, Eros Meilina Sofa<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, Central Java, Indonesia

<sup>✉</sup>E-mail: intanub@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

Comprehension is an important aspect of every reading activity. Through reading comprehension, readers can understand the content or passage of a text. Nevertheless, many students still experience the difficulties in their English reading comprehension. This study aimed to reveal the Indonesian and Egyptian EFL university students' difficulties in reading comprehension as well as its causative factors. This study involved two EFL students who are majoring in English Education in semester five. This study used a qualitative method with a narrative inquiry design. Semi-structured interview was implied to collect the data. This study helped to develop the theory of Nuttall (2008) and Alderson (2005) about the difficulties in reading comprehension and the causative factors of its difficulties. Thematic analysis by Barkhuizen, Benson, and Chick was used to analyze the data. The result of this study showed that there were several difficulties faced by the Indonesian and Egyptian EFL university students in reading comprehension. They were namely difficulty in understanding word meaning, understanding long sentences, determining the main idea and making the inference. The next finding reported the factors that caused the students' difficulties were lack of language knowledge, lack of interest, lack of concentration, and the length of the text.

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received: March 15, 2023

Revised: May 08, 2023

Accepted: May 10, 2023

#### Keywords:

Reading comprehension;

Students' difficulties;

Causative factors

**To cite this article:** Baiti, I. U., & Sofa, E. M. (2023). Indonesian and Egyptian EFL university students' difficulties in reading comprehension. *Erudita: Journal of English Language Teaching*, 3(1), 81-92. <https://doi.org/10.28918/erudita.v3i1.7029>

**To link to this article:** <https://e-journal.uingusdur.ac.id/index.php/ERUDITA/article/view/7029>



Copyright © 2023 Author(s). This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

## Introduction

According to Bim (in Tillayeva, 2020), English is known to be the first most learned language all over the world since it is considered the most commonly spoken language. It is not surprising since English has officially become an international language. As reported from the official website of *The Ethnologue*, there are 1.5 billion people in the world who speak this language in 2022 that includes those who speak it as a first language, second language, and foreign language. As a result, numerous countries place English as a compulsory subject nearly in all levels of education starting from Asian to Middle East countries.

As we have seen, reading is an activity that is full of benefits, so it is very important for human lives. Reading ability is a necessity because the dissemination of information and messages in this modern world is presented in written form. Therefore, it can only be understood through reading. Related to language learning, Krashen and Brown (in Qrgez and Ab Rashid, 2017) had a notion that reading is categorized as the most crucial skill since it can help students raise their overall language proficiency. Furthermore, Rahim (2011) emphasized that the benefit of reading is making the reader gain knowledge and insights which will further increase their intelligence, so they can be better to answer the challenges of life in the future. She also added that another benefit of reading is that it can make someone one step ahead of others. In other words, the success of one's life depends on one reading activity.

Reading comprehension is an interactive activity that connects three things, including the reader, text and context. The skill of reading comprehension itself involves the ability to derive meaning from written text as they have been stated by Silliman and Wilkinson in Herlina (2016). They pointed out that in general, the meaning of reading comprehension is an ability to acquire meaning from a written text. Through reading comprehension, readers are expected to gain understanding from the text that pertains to new vocabulary or information. In the context of language learning, reading comprehension is how students find information from a text. Whenever students just read loudly but cannot understand the content of the text, it means they fail to achieve the goal of reading comprehension.

Ahmadi et al. (2013) pointed out that reading comprehension plays an important role in the process of learning a foreign or second language and should be emphasized in different parts of the process. Additionally, reading, which plays an important role in teaching all academic skills, has predictive functions regarding student academic performance. To be good readers, students must be able to comprehend the meaning of a text they read. Therefore, the purpose of reading comprehension in learning is used to ensure that students comprehend the idea and meaning of the passage.

In the process of learning a language, there is a big possibility that students will experience difficulties and challenges. These can be the cause of less-than-optimal student outcomes in learning. It is a natural thing and can happen to anyone including students who learn a second or foreign language. The difficulties in learning English are not only found at the primary, secondary, and tertiary, but they will also continue until the higher education level.

In Indonesia and Egypt, English is used as a foreign language which has been taught from early childhood education to higher education. English learning in university level is more complex. Therefore, there is big possibility for the students to have difficulties in learning English. A study of reading comprehension presented by Davoudi and Yousefi (2015). They found that in these skills, EFL students face a number of difficulties such as a lack of vocabulary and background knowledge. Other researchers added that problems in reading comprehension also deal with grammatical knowledge and poor reading strategies which is in fact a must to have because it is very important to minimize and solve the difficulties (Samad et al., 2017).

In reality, this also occurs to students who are in the English education department. Many of them still fail to read adequately in English. In addition, they cannot understand what they

read. In many cases, they also read more slowly, and they do not understand the meaning or information contained in the text that they read (Stranovska et al., 2014). It is not even infrequently those who are stuck with the difficult words in the text. In addition, they also feel difficult to find the main idea of the text. Moreover, it is also not a few who argue that reading, for any purpose, requires a proper understanding of the meaning of each word in the text. Therefore, it can be concluded that comprehension is an aspect that must exist in every reading activity because it can boost reading skills, and it is absolutely useful for certain goals.

A few researchers focused on reading comprehension difficulties faced by students in secondary and high school without analyzing the factors that cause the difficulties. There have been limited studies concerned on the university student and what factors cause the difficulties are. Therefore, this research intends to investigate those two issues in reading comprehension; difficulties and its factors. This research aims to reveal the Indonesian and Egyptian university students' difficulties in reading comprehension as well as the causative factors. Due to their different cultural background, participants are expected to have different perspective. These considerations should explain the reason why this study is worthy to be done.

## Method

This study is in the domain of qualitative method with a narrative inquiry design. The qualitative approach was chosen because the data are analyzed in words or sentences rather than numbers. Narrative inquiry is designed to obtain information through someone's story about their experience (Benson et al., 2014).

This study involved two EFL students in the fifth semester in different universities as participants. Those two participants are male and female students. They are currently studying in the English education department. The male student is studying in one of universities in Egypt, and the female student is studying in Indonesia, exactly in Central Java. The different universities were chosen because the researcher wants to know the different perspectives of the participants. Furthermore, the researcher chose the participants because they have the characteristics needed in this study. The selected students are the students who have passed the English reading course. They are the students who have the most problems in reading comprehension. In addition, they admit that they still find it difficult to comprehend English text. Semi-structured interviews are used in this study to collect the data.

## Findings and discussion

### ***EFL students' university difficulties in reading comprehension***

#### *Understanding word meaning*

The participants' statement that they do not understand the word in the text demonstrates the difficulties here. This finding can be seen in the following data based on the result of students' interview as follows:

The vocabulary is difficult. When I read university materials in English, I find there are many unfamiliar vocabularies that I do not understand because they are different with what are used in daily conversation so I do not understand what the text means (Rose, Semi-structured interview, October 18, 2022).

Yes. this is what the most often happen with me. Most of the vocabulary in the books that are shared by my doctors is more formal or using academic vocabulary. Moreover, because one word has more than one meaning so it's confusing me really (Ahmed, Semi-structured interview, October 17, 2022).

Based on the result of interview, the students feel difficult in understanding word meaning. As a result, the student has a difficult time grasping the content of the reading text. This could imply that the student encountered difficulties while reading the text. According to Nuttall (2008), every word in the text must be understood by the students in order to comprehend a text. But in this case, both Rose and Ahmed feel difficult in interpreting the meaning of words appear in their university books. Moreover, the students tend to face the challenges in understanding the meaning of academic or formal vocabulary as in most academic books used in university.

The language we use in everyday conversations and the language used in school or university books have significant differences. Westby (2012) also confirmed that academic language uses a different vocabulary, more complicated grammatical constructions, and different text organization style to convey information about complex relationship of each sentence. Therefore, students mostly do not understand when they read university text.

#### *Understanding long sentence*

The result of this issue is that the students struggle to understand long sentences and do not grasp the text's main idea. The finding about this difficulty can be seen from result of the students' interview as follows.

I cannot understand if there are long sentences. And I cannot understand if I read them once only. I need to read them repeatedly to understand. It's really confusing, I must read from the beginning of the text till the last sentence (Rose, Semi-structured interview, October 18, 2022).

I need much time in comprehending long sentences because it is complicated, and sometimes one there are sentences which are too complex. Need deep thinking (Ahmed, Semi-structured interview, October 17, 2022).

This difficulty refers to the student's difficulty in comprehending the longer passage due to its complex structure and the abundance of unfamiliar words in the text. Based on the interview result above, understanding long sentences is the next difficulty that faced by the students. This can be seen when Ahmed finds long sentences, he spends lot of time to understand because he claims that they are more complicated. In addition, Rose admits that if she reads long sentences, she does repeatedly to grasp the meaning. Because there are numerous words in the sentence that they do not understand, the student had difficulties in reading long texts or sentences. It was owing to their lack of comprehension of the words and language that they should be proficient in.

This is in line with Nuttall (2008) who highlighted that understanding word meaning is one of important aspect in reading comprehension. She added that comprehension must be difficult when there are words missing. Students are difficult to comprehend the content in texts and that there are a number of reasons why they struggle with their reading materials, including a lack of vocabulary. The students' understanding of sentences will improve as they extend their vocabulary and boost their vocabulary mastery. Each sentence in the text was tough for the student to understand as well as how to connect sentences by sentences to acquire information from the entire text. It is due to the student's lack of vocabulary knowledge (Alderson, 2005).

### *Determining main idea*

The main idea is crucial to reading comprehension because it provides additional details about the overall message of a paragraph or section of a text. The finding about the difficulty in determining main idea can be seen from the result of the students' interview as follows.

For determining main idea, I usually spend lot of time because I am confused. I feel that all information is important, so I'm confused to decide the main idea of a text (Rose, Semi-structured interview, October 18, 2022).

Yeah, I often feel confused to determine a main idea of a text. Because people said that main idea can be found in the beginning, middle, or end of the paragraph. So, it's confusing (Ahmed, Semi-structured interview, October 17, 2022).

The main idea is crucial to reading comprehension because it provides additional details about the overall message of a paragraph or section of a text. The finding about the difficulty in determining main idea can be seen from the result of the students' interview as follows. Based on the interview result, the students show the same view that they are still confused in determining main idea of an English text. The Indonesian student, Rose, mostly believes that every sentence is considered as important information. Therefore, she spends much time because feels confused to choose the most important one as the main idea. Her confuse leads her to the reading comprehension difficulties. Moreover, Ahmed as Egyptian students also has same opinion. He explained to the researcher that he feels confused to find a main idea because it is not placed in one place only, but in three places instead, like in the beginning, middle, or end of sentence also paragraph.

The condition above agrees with Nuttall's explanation (2008) which claimed that author's message or main idea is usually stated in one sentence within a paragraph or passage. The beginning, middle, or end of a paragraph or passage are possible to contain the main idea. She argued that in the upper grades, it becomes more challenging to identify the main idea because it may be either explicit (a full sentence taken directly from the text) or implied (summarized by evaluating the details in the text). Most paragraphs have a main idea that is either expressed in general sentences or hinted at by a number of specific sentences, and drawing inferences from a text can be challenging for students. The text's sentences may contain too much information to identify one main idea or too little to convey a clear message.

Williams (in Qurniawan, 2020) emphasized the significance of identifying main ideas as being necessary to successful reading comprehension in terms of making deductions from text and productive study methods. In this way, it will be challenging for students to read some books, especially in reading comprehension, if they do not discover the inferring information that is only implicit in a text included main idea. Ekorini (2020) also added that if the main idea is implicitly stated, so it becomes a little more difficult when students have to construct the main idea themselves. This is where students struggle the most when building their main ideas based on the information they read from the text.

### *Making inference*

According to the information gathered from the interview, there is just one participant who feels difficult in making inference. The finding of this difficulty can be seen from the result of the student's interview as follows:

I always feel hesitate to draw conclusions from the English texts I have read. I'm not sure if my conclusion is correct. Because my understanding is only half based on the words I know. Do not fully understand from the beginning of the sentence to the end. Sometimes there are some parts that may contain important information, but I do not even know what they mean (Rose, Semi-structured interview, October 18, 2022).

Making inference is one of the reading considerations that must be taken into account in order to achieve good comprehension. According to the information gathered from the interview, there is just one participant who feels difficult in making inference. Rose, the Indonesian student faces the difficulty in making inference because she does not completely comprehend the text due to the lack of vocabulary. And once again, the issue of vocabulary has led to the difficulty in reading comprehension. Rose admits that she is always not sure in making inference because of a reason related to unknown words that make her skip to other parts.

As stated by Nuttall (2008), reading is perceived as being simpler when students are able to draw conclusions, regardless of how long the text is. The students must read between the lines in order to draw an inference. They must interpret the text's implicit meaning by looking for its underlying significance. The more the students can understand the text, the more inferences they can draw. Therefore, the more successful the reading process will be, the more fluent readers they are. However, because university texts tend to be academic or non-fiction, it can be difficult to understand them. Additionally, issues about the text's implicit messages as well as its explicit ones are asked.

### ***The factors that cause the difficulties in English reading comprehension***

#### *Lack of language knowledge*

The finding about the lack of language knowledge can be seen from the result of students' interview as follows.

I mostly look for the word meaning one by one in an online dictionary or google translate. But I feel tired to open and close the dictionary. As an alternative, I usually will ask my friends, but sometimes they also do not understand instead (Rose, Semi-structured interview, October 18, 2022).

My vocabulary is limit to some words only. I do not memorize many words. Not all words I can understand the exact meaning (Ahmed, Semi-structured interview, October 17, 2022).

I mostly guess the meaning of words if I couldn't guess them, I use dictionary. If I do not have dictionary or It's not available to open dictionary, of course I ask the lecturer but I can only ask them while lecture only another that I guess and use dictionary and I prefer that because I feel okay when I do that by myself (Ahmed, Semi-structured interview, October 17, 2022).

The next interview result shows that grammar has also influenced the students' comprehension. In this study, the influence of grammar in English reading comprehension can be seen from the result of interview as follows.

Oh, I am affected by grammar too because grammar can change the meaning of sentences and ideas in the text. And it's as you know, there are big differences in grammar in my language and English (Ahmed, Semi-structured interview, October 17, 2022).

The grammar is also difficult, when there are words that I do not understand, I translate them one by one. Then I organized them as the original sentences. But I feel the meaning sounds strange and ambiguous. So, I become not understand anymore (Rose, Semi-structured interview, October 18, 2022).

Language knowledge, including vocabulary, phrase, clause, grammar, and so on, is the first key in reading. Reading comprehension relies heavily on vocabulary. Because the development of vocabulary has a significant impact on one's ability to understand text, vocabulary instruction is a crucial component of reading comprehension. Students in Indonesia and Egypt are learning English as a second language. Interpreting the meaning or the idea from written language is definitely not an easy task for students. Because reading requires students to comprehend the meaning of words, sentences, and contents, the most crucial skill is comprehending the author's ideas.

Based on the interview result, it can be seen that students do not have good vocabulary mastery in English, so this causes them to have difficulty in understanding the meaning of words and what information is conveyed in the reading text. This is in line with Alderson (2005) who has stated that readers' problem in reading comprehension is mostly caused by the lack of vocabulary. It has long been known that vocabulary plays a key role in how well readers comprehend what they are reading. Understanding word meanings and having efficient access to knowledge is seen as being a crucial component of reading comprehension. According to Hsueh-chao et al. (2000), knowledge of vocabulary and reading knowledge is closely related. As illustration, in the reading comprehension section process, if students want to understand the idea of a text, they must first understand vocabulary meaning. For this reason, vocabulary plays an important role in reading embrace. However, to learn vocabulary is not easy, especially for English foreigners because English vocabulary is very rich and diverse. Therefore, it takes a long time for students to acquire a large amount of vocabulary knowledge.

The students frequently open the dictionary to look up words that they do not know the meaning of. The students are forced to rely on dictionary or skip over many crucial words due to vocabulary difficulty and an excessive vocabulary load. In addition, they also frequently ask that their friends and lecturers to clarify words for them. As highlighted by Alderson (2000), a reader will have trouble understanding a text if they do not know many of the words in it, which will impair effective and efficient text processing.

Other data show that grammar has also influenced the students' comprehension. Based on the interview result, grammar also has significant role in reading comprehension. This is showed by the students' misunderstanding about grammar that has caused them in misunderstanding the words meaning too because grammar can change a meaning. According to Alderson (2005), reading a text is an interactive process of the reader's grammar proficiency. The lack of grammar knowledge might cause the reader to misunderstand what has been said or written. Additionally, grammar significantly contributes to students' reading comprehension. Concerning the above reasoning, it makes sense because reading comprehension naturally requires a particular skill set to master due to a number of important considerations, including grammar, vocabulary, reading interest, etc.

Based on the findings, we can conclude that high level of vocabulary and grammar knowledge are necessary for comprehension. This condition is in line with Alderson (2000) who pointed out that student's comprehension will fall far short of expectations if they do not have strong vocabulary and grammar skills. The word order and word from in a sentence are determined by grammar. The grammar rules that apply to sentences in a text have an impact on its meaning. Following grammatical principles when structuring sentences helps the reader understand what the author intended. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that

vocabulary and grammar proficiency are positively correlated with reading comprehension. In other words, one's reading comprehension will be higher the more proficient they are with vocabulary and grammar.

### *Lack of motivation*

In this study, the students' motivation can be seen from the interview result as follows.

Basically, I do not really like reading. I only have reading when I am in class if I'm asked to read, or when I have assignments. No reading activity after that. It's rare and almost never to read at home, except if I have homework) (Rose, Semi-structured interview, October 15, 2022).

Not that much interested. For me, English reading is tiring you know. And I'm also working. So, I do not have much time to read (Ahmed, Semi-structured interview, October 15, 2022).

Other data that indicate students' low motivation in reading showed that they are easily feel bored during reading. The largest number of definitions view boredom as a negative emotion that has a negative impact on a person's drive and achievement. In this study, the boredom of the students can be seen from the result of interview as follows.

I am one that can be bored quickly, especially in reading. Reading forces me to sit down and look at every single word carefully. It's not fun. I prefer to listen than read. It is clearer. Because if I read, I mostly do not understand the meaning (Rose, Semi-structured interview, October 18, 2022).

In my view, English reading is boring activity. Like I read something which I do not know the meaning and sometimes just the texts were so boring. Just only some minutes I start to read, I become bored and I feel want to finish the text quickly because I do not understand. I also feel bored if the topic of the text is not interesting (Ahmed, Semi-structured interview, October 17, 2022).

According to Alderson (2005), motivation also includes interest. Students who are interested in reading do so because they enjoy it. Based on the interview result, the two participants showed their low motivation in reading. This is proven by the students' low interest and the low frequency of English reading. Rose only has reading activity during in the class. At home, she is rare also almost never to read English text except when she has homework. In same case, Ahmed doesn't have much interest in English reading. In addition, he is also working besides studying, so that he feels lack of time to spend in reading. These conditions cause them to be unfamiliar with English words. As a result, the students' vocabulary does not improve.

Interest in reading is showed with a strong desire to do reading activities. Students who have high interest in reading will always fills free time by reading. Strong interest in reading can affects the reading skills itself (Darmono in Elfisa & Yunaldi, 2012). Students' interest in reading arises from the curiosity of students to understand or obtain information from their environment. Although the text and content are interesting, but if the reader is not interested, then the reading activity is cannot be done well (Alderson, 2005).

Moreover, less reading motivation has a significant impact on students' reading habits since good reading habits can assist students overcome reading comprehension challenges. The claim made above that reading habit is a necessity for building a literate society in the modern world is supported by Palani (2012). Individuals' personalities are shaped by it, and it aids in the development of solid thought.

Based on the interview result, the students are bored to read English books because they discovered unknown words, so they do not get information from the text. In addition, the topic of text also can influence the students' interest in reading. This claim is actually



supported by Alderson (2005), who notes that the students' limited vocabulary prevents them from understanding the English material. As a result, they find reading boring and struggle to understand the text's content.

### *Lack of concentration*

The results of interviews that have been carried out showed that the students' reading comprehension is affected by their low concentration. It can be seen from the data as follows.

I cannot have full concentration. How I can concentrate well. I even lost my concentration easily when I see words that I do not understand the meaning. I will stuck in those words and I feel lazy to continue the reading (Rose, Semi-structured interview, October 18, 2022).

It is hard for me to focus on reading in foreign language like English which it is totally different from my language. English and Arabic are totally different started from what is seen, I mean the alphabets, structures, and vocabularies. So, I need extra focus, but it's hard (Ahmed, Semi-structured interview, October 17, 2022).

Concentration is something really needed during reading, so that the important points contained in the reading can be more easily understood. Thus, without concentration, students will not be able to get maximum results from the reading process. Based on the data, the students' comprehension is affected by the lack of concentration. Both Rose and Ahmed cannot focus on the text well. Rose's problem in understanding unknown words and Ahmed's language differences with English make their concentration is disturbed during reading. This condition is supported by Hung and Ngan, (2015) who noted that most students are unable or unwilling to concentrate when reading. According to Hsu et al. (2012), concentration examines how attentively students pay to learning materials and contents during the reading activity. In this case, a study conducted by Halil et al. (2015) highlighted similar evidence suggesting the higher the concentration of students in reading, the more effective the reading process will be. Likewise, if the concentration is low, the comprehension will also be low.

### *The length of the text*

The length of a text is another element that may influence its level of difficulty. This finding can be seen from the result of students' interview as follows.

For me yes absolutely. Short text seems easy to comprehend as long as the vocabulary is easy too. But for long text, when the first time I see, I feel not have desire to read (Ahmed, Semi-structured interview, October 17, 2022).

To be honest, I am lazy when I see a long text. Before reading, I am used to check whether the text is long or short. If I find the text is long, I will not read it. Or sometimes I read some sentences only in the first paragraph because I do not like long text because I do not understand the vocabulary meaning. I'm sure I will spend lot of time to get comprehension of the full long sentences (Rose, Semi-structured interview, October 18, 2022).

I dislike it because it is more complicated and difficult to get the main idea about it especially if there are many strange words that I do not know, surely, I will feel bored to read them (Ahmed, Semi-structured interview, October 17, 2022).

The researcher assumed that each participant has the same experience based on their replies to the questions posed. Rose, before she reads a text, she usually checks the length of it first. If she founds the text is short, she might read it and vice versa. Meanwhile, Ahmed dislikes long text because he believes that it will be more complicated to comprehend. Thus, it can be sum up that the students prefer to read short text than long text. It is a common

misunderstanding that a passage will be harder, the longer it is. In this study, the students tend to avoid and dislike a long text. The low vocabulary mastery obviously has influenced to this issue as what has been explained by Alderson (2005) that language knowledge including vocabulary is the main key in reading comprehension. The result of this issue is that the students struggle to understand long text and do not grasp the text's main idea. This could mean that the student is difficulty in reading the text. It takes them a long time to read and comprehend each sentence.

Regarding this, Chastain (in Mehrpour & Riazi, 2004) argues that language teachers typically favor short reading passages. This tendency may give rise from a desire to avoid overburdening the students, but it is more likely a result of the assumption that reading is a difficult process of understanding a complicated and occasionally foreign linguistic code, for which the students were expected to be familiarized in all grammar and vocabulary. In fact, the students are still struggling with grammar and vocabulary. As a result, students read much too slowly and pay too much attention to language rather than meaning. Snow (in Satriani, 2018) also claimed that reading longer texts was especially challenging since the slowness and difficulty of word recognition interfered with the creation of meaning. Because comprehension involves reading a longer text, understanding its meaning is necessary.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings, the researcher concludes that there are some difficulties faced by students in English reading comprehension. First, the Indonesian and Egyptian students are difficulty understanding the word's meaning. Second, students feel difficulty in understanding long sentences. Third, students feel difficulty in determining the main idea. Fourth, students feel difficulty in making an inference.

All the difficulties faced by students are caused by several factors. The first factor is the students' lack of language knowledge. The second factors the students' lack of motivation to reading. Based on the interview, the researcher found that the students have a low interest in reading. The third factor is the students' lack of concentration. In this study, the students still feel difficult to focus on their reading because they get stuck in unknown words. The fourth factor is the length of the text. As the students get difficulty understanding long sentences, then the length of the text must be a cause.

## Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank to every single person who contributed to this research. Therefore, we would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all of them. With their support, pray and unconditional love we are able to finish this research. We apologize for not mentioning them one by one, but we are grateful for their help and support.

## References

- Ahmadi, M. R., Ismail, H. N., & Abdullah, M. K. (2013). The importance of metacognitive reading strategy awareness in reading comprehension. *English Language Teaching*, 6(10), 235-244. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v6n10p235>
- Alderson, J. C. (2005). *Assessing reading*. Cambridge University Press.

- Alderson, J. C. (2000). *Assessing reading*. Cambridge University Press.
- Barkhuizen, G., Benson, P., & Chik, A. (2013). *Narrative inquiry in language teaching and learning research* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203124994>
- Davoudi, M., & Yousefi, D. (2015). Comprehension breakdown: A review of research on EFL learners' reading difficulty and problems. *International Journal of Language and Applied Linguistics*, 1, 58-72.
- Ekorini, P. Z. (2020). Analysis on students' difficulties of finding main idea of a passage. *Jurnal Dharma Pendidikan*, 15(2), 72-82. <https://journal.stkipnganjuk.ac.id/index.php/jdp/article/view/95>
- Elfisa, M. K., & Yunaldi. (2012). Layanan pustakawan anak terhadap anak di perpustakaan proklamator bung hatta dalam menumbuhkan minat baca anak [Children's librarian services for children at Bung Hatta proklamator library in fostering children's interest in reading]. *Jurnal Ilmu Informasi Perpustakaan dan Kearsipan*, 1(1), 206-214. <https://doi.org/10.24036/706-0934>
- Halil, A., Yanis, A., & Noer, M. (2015). Pengaruh kebisingan lalu lintas terhadap konsentrasi belajar siswa SMP N 1 Padang [The effect of traffic noise on students' learning concentration at SMP N 1 Padang]. *Jurnal Kesehatan Andalas*, 4(1), 53-57. <https://doi.org/10.25077/jka.v4i1.188>
- Herlina. (2016). Meningkatkan keterampilan membaca pemahaman melalui metode SQ4R [Fostering reading comprehension skills through SQ4R method]. *Jurnal Ilmiah VISI PPTK PAUDNI*, 11(1), 29-35. <https://doi.org/10.21009/JIV.1101.4>
- Hsueh-Chao, M. H., & Nation, P. (2000). Unknown vocabulary density and reading comprehension. *Reading in a foreign language*, 13(1), 403-430. <https://doi.org/10.26686/wgtn.12560354>
- Hsu, C. C., Chen, H. C., Su, Y. N., Huang, K. K., & Yuan, M. H. (2012). Developing a reading concentration monitoring system by applying an artificial bee colony algorithm to e-books in an intelligent classroom. *Journal of Sensors (Basel)*, 12(10), 14158-14178. <https://doi.org/10.3390/s121014158>
- Hung, D. M., & Ngan, V. P. T. (2015). Investigating reading strategies used by EFL students at Dong Thap University. *Asian Journal of Educational Research*, 3(4), 10-20. <http://www.multidisciplinaryjournals.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Investigating-Reading-Strategies-Used-By-EFL-Students-at-Dong-Thap-University.pdf>
- Mehrpour, S., & Riazi, A. (2004) The impact of text length on EFL students' reading comprehension. *Asian EFL Journal*, 8, 72-90. [http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/Sept\\_04\\_sm\\_ar.pdf](http://www.asian-efl-journal.com/Sept_04_sm_ar.pdf)
- Nuttall, C. (2008). *Teaching reading skills in a foreign language*. Macmillan Education.
- Orqez, M., & Ab Rashid, R. (2017). Reading comprehension difficulties among EFL learners: The case of first- and second-year students at Yarmouk University in Jordan. *Arab World English Journal*, 8(3), 421-431. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol8no3.27>
- Qurniawan, M. A. (2020). *Students' difficulties on reading comprehension at the eighth grade of SMPN 6 Sarolangun* [Bachelor's thesis, UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi, Indonesia]. UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi Repository. <http://repository.uinjambi.ac.id/4167/>
- Palani, K. K. (2012). Promoting reading habits and creating literarte social. *International Reference Research Journal*, 3(2), 90-94. [https://didarnews.ir/files/fa/news/1398/8/21/129559\\_545.pdf](https://didarnews.ir/files/fa/news/1398/8/21/129559_545.pdf)

- Rahim, F. (2011). *Pengajaran membaca di sekolah dasar [Teaching reading in primary schools]*. Bumi Aksara.
- Samad, I. A., Jannah, M., & Fitriani, S. S. (2017). EFL students' strategies dealing with common difficulties in TOEFL reading comprehension section. *International Journal of Language Education*, 1(1), 29-36. <https://doi.org/10.26858/ijole.v1i1.2869>
- Satriani, E. (2018). Reading comprehension difficulties encountered by English students of Islamic University of Riau. *Journal of English for Academic*, 5(2), 15-26. [http://doi.org/10.25299/jshmic.2018.vol5\(2\).1885](http://doi.org/10.25299/jshmic.2018.vol5(2).1885)
- Stranovska, E., Munkova, D., & Munk, M. (2014). Dynamics of reading comprehension skills in linguistics intervention programme. *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 149, 963-942. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.08.304>
- Thao, T. Q. & Tham, D. M. (2018). The difficulties in ESP reading comprehension encountered by English – majored students. *VNU Journal of Foreign Studies*, 34(2), 151-161. <http://doi.org/10.25073/2525-2445/vnufs.4253>
- Tillayeva, Sh. M. (2020). Learning English language is essential in today's world. *Journal NX - A Multidisciplinary Peer Reviewed Journal*, 6(11), 354-357. <https://repo.journalnx.com/index.php/nx/article/view/180>
- Westby, C. C. (2012). *Assessing and remediating text comprehension problems*. Pearson.