STRATEGIES USED BY HIGH ACHIEVER STUDENTS IN READING COMPREHENSION

A THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Sarjana Pendidikan in English Education

By:

NURUS SYARIFAH
SN. 2520075

ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND TEACHER TRAINING
STATE ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY
K.H. ABDURRAHMAN WAHID PEKALONGAN
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2024

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Judul	:	Strategies Used by High Achiever Students in Reading Comprehension

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Demikian nota pembimbing ini dibuat untuk digunakan sebagaimana mestinya. Atas perhatiannya, disampaikan terima kasih.

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Pembimbing

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Has been examined and approved by the panel of examiners on Wednesday, 17 July 2024 as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Sarjana Pendidikan (S.Pd.) in English Education.

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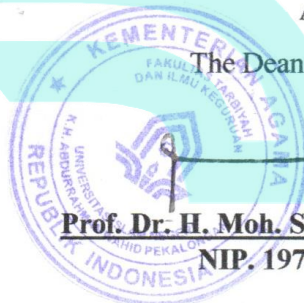NIP. 19651006 199903 1 003

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iv

MOTTO

"Take a little break when you are tired."

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ABSTRAK

Membaca adalah keterampilan penting dalam proses memperoleh kemahiran dalam suatu bahasa, khususnya bagi para pembelajar bahasa Inggris. Siswa berprestasi tinggi secara konsisten menunjukkan kinerja yang sangat baik dalam usaha belajar mereka. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi strategi yang digunakan oleh siswa berprestasi tinggi dalam proses membaca mereka. Untuk mencapai tujuan ini, metode deskriptif kualitatif digunakan. Wawancara dilakukan dengan tiga siswa berprestasi tinggi dan satu guru. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa berprestasi tinggi menggunakan beberapa strategi, termasuk pratinjau, prediksi, membaca sekilas dan pemindaian, menebak dari konteks, parafrase, mengaktifkan pengetahuan sebelumnya, mempertimbangkan kognat, dan mengabaikan kata-kata yang tidak dikenal. Selain itu, pilihan strategi membaca dipengaruhi oleh faktor situasional dan individu. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan berharga tentang strategi membaca siswa berprestasi tinggi, menyoroti pentingnya pendekatan strategis dalam meningkatkan pemahaman membaca. Temuan ini dapat membantu para pendidik dan pengembang kurikulum dalam merancang program membaca yang lebih efektif yang disesuaikan dengan kebutuhan siswa berprestasi tinggi, yang pada akhirnya berkontribusi pada hasil pendidikan yang lebih baik.

Kata kunci: Strategi Membaca, Siswa Berprestasi Tinggi, Pemahaman Membaca

ABSTRACT

Reading is an essential skill in the process of acquiring proficiency in a language, particularly for English learners. High achiever students consistently demonstrate excellent performance in their learning endeavors. This study aims to identify the strategies employed by high achiever students in their reading processes. To achieve this objective, a descriptive qualitative method was utilized. Interviews were conducted with three high achiever students and one teacher. The results indicate that high achiever students use several strategies, including previewing, predicting, skimming and scanning, guessing from the context, paraphrasing, activating prior knowledge, considering cognates, and omitting unfamiliar words. Additionally, the choice of reading strategies is influenced by both situational and individual factors. This research provides valuable insights into the reading strategies of high achiever students, highlighting the importance of strategic approaches in enhancing reading comprehension. These findings can inform educators and curriculum developers in designing more effective reading programs tailored to the needs of high achievers, ultimately contributing to improved educational outcomes.

Keywords: Reading Strategy, High Achiever Students, Reading Comprehension

PREFACE

All praise and gratitude to Allah SWT, for by His grace and blessings, I have completed this undergraduate thesis titled "Strategies Used by High Achiever Students in Reading Comprehension." This thesis is submitted as a partial requirement for obtaining the Bachelor of Education degree at UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan.

I acknowledge that this thesis may have limitations, and I am open to constructive criticism and suggestions for improvement. I hope that this research contributes to the existing body of knowledge and serves as a valuable resource for those interested in enhancing reading comprehension skills.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Research

Reading undeniably represents an essential skill in the process of acquiring proficiency in a language, particularly for English learners. It involves the complex task of comprehending and interpreting written text in the English language (Keita, 2018). Apart from being among the four fundamental language proficiencies, which encompass listening, reading, speaking, and writing, reading plays a foundational role in the language acquisition. Saba & Noreen (2020) stated that reading exposes learners to the English language, providing them with opportunities to encounter new vocabulary, grammatical structures, and discourse patterns. During the journey of acquiring English, reading consistently arises as an indispensable activity in the quest for achieving language proficiency.

The primary objective of the reading activity within the realm of English language learning is to facilitate students in achieving reading comprehension. Sawuwu (2022) stated that reading comprehension encompasses a comprehensive understanding of the text's content, encompassing not only individual word and sentence meanings but also the author's intended message. Reading comprehension is a multifaceted process demanding a range of skills, including decoding, vocabulary knowledge, grammatical and syntactical awareness, inference and

interpretation abilities, metacognitive strategies, background knowledge utilization, critical thinking, fluency, and active engagement (Sawuwu, 2022). Attaining a high level of reading comprehension serves as a crucial benchmark of students' success in their reading endeavors.

Mastering reading comprehension is a challenging endeavor, necessitating the employment of specific strategies. As articulated by Oberholzer in Hasyim et al., (2023) while reading the text may be a straightforward task, comprehending it is often intricate. Various strategies can be applied in the pursuit of reading comprehension. As per the findings of Oxford's research in 1990, strategies in the acquisition of languages encompass both direct and indirect categories. Memory strategies, cognitive strategies, and compensation strategies fall within the category of direct strategies. In contrast, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies belong to the realm of indirect strategies. All of these learning strategies are accessible to students, although not all may be employed in every instance.

High-achiever students are those who consistently perform at a high academic level. Being a high achiever in English class indicates that a student is a good language learner. Effective language learners actively oversee their own speech and the speech of others, as well as give priority to comprehending the intended message (Rubin, 1975). These characteristics are influenced by various variables that differ for each

individual. Consequently, proficient language learners exhibit a greater level of accountability for their language acquisition and personal growth.

Research on strategies for reading comprehension was conducted by several scholars. One of them is Tunga (2020), who investigated the learning strategies in reading employed by high achievers and low achievers. In this study, differences in the strategies used by high achievers and low achievers in reading comprehension were observed. Another study was carried out by Hasyim (2023) on the reading strategies employed by high achievers among college students. This research revealed the utilization of 15 strategies by high achievers in reading comprehension. Additionally, Sitharahmi (2021) conducted research on learning strategies in reading performed by 12th-grade students, identifying four strategies employed by students to achieve reading comprehension. Furthermore, Munjid (2021) conducted a study on strategies used by 10th-grade high school students, indicating that students employ seven different strategies in their reading activities.

This research, "Strategies Used by High Achiever Students in Reading Comprehension," delved into a specific niche by examining the unique learning strategies employed by high achiever Students in the context of reading comprehension. High achiever students represent a distinctive subset of learners who consistently perform at an exceptional academic level, and their learning strategies may differ from those of their peers. Hence, this study aims to fill this void by conducting an in-depth

investigation into the strategies and approaches employed by high-achieving students to excel in reading comprehension, thus adding to a more thorough grasp of learning approaches within this particular context.

1.2. Formulation of the Problem

The objective of this study is to address the following inquiries:

1. What are the strategies used by high achiever students in reading comprehension?

2. What are the students' reasons for choosing those strategies for reading comprehension?

1.3. Operational Definition

For this research, the operational definitions are as follows:

1. High Achiever Students: High achiever students are individuals who consistently excel academically and exhibit remarkable skills and talents within their chosen academic pursuits. Such students typically embody a synergy of intellect, determination, and proficient learning methodologies, all of which significantly contribute to their accomplishments (Al-Qahtani, 2021).

2. Learning Strategies: Learning strategies encompass specific activities, steps, methods, or approaches adopted by students, like actively searching for conversation partners or offering self-motivation to tackle demanding language tasks, with the aim of improving their learning (Oxford, 1990)

3. Reading Comprehension: Reading comprehension denotes the capacity to analyze textual material, grasp its significance, and integrate it with the reader's existing knowledge base (Brown, 2003)

1.4. Aims of the Study

The purposes of this study are:

1. To identify the strategies used by high achiever students in reading comprehension.

2. To investigate the students' reasons for choosing those strategies for reading comprehension.

1.5. Significances of the Research

1. Theoretical Use: The study deepens our understanding of effective learning approaches for developing Reading comprehension skills by examining the strategies used by High Achiever Students.

2. Empirical Use: The study endorses the efficiency of distinct learning approaches in enhancing students' reading comprehension, contributing to the broader research on language acquisition and serving as a basis for future investigations.

3. Practical Use: English Educators can incorporate the identified learning strategies into their teaching methods to enhance students' reading abilities.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1. Conclusion

Several strategies have been identified based on the research findings and discussion regarding the strategies used by high achiever students in reading comprehension. Among them are:

4.1.2.1. Previewing

The students reported engaging in previewing activities before reading. This includes reading the title, looking at accompanying images, and/or reading the summary.

4.1.2.2. Predicting/Engaging in Prediction and Revision

Students engage in predicting simultaneously with previewing. Prediction involves utilizing their prior knowledge to support comprehension, such as knowledge about a topic, understanding the type and structure of the text, and other relevant knowledge that aids understanding.

4.1.2.3. Skimming and Scanning

Students use skimming to identify the main idea of a text, while scanning is employed to locate specific information within the text.

4.1.2.4. Guessing from Context

Students employ the strategy of guessing from the context during reading activities to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words.

4.1.2.5.   Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is one of the alternative strategies chosen by students to help comprehend an English text. However, not all students use this strategy; one participant admitted not using it.

4.1.2.6.   Activating Prior Knowledge

The students reported using their prior knowledge to enhance the quality of their comprehension during reading activities.

4.1.2.7.   Considering Cognates

The students acknowledged that they paid attention to English words that resemble Bahasa Indonesia. This practice can effectively enhance their comprehension in the process of reading English texts.

4.1.2.8.   Omitting unfamiliar words

The students admitted that they do not translate each word in the text individually and ignore words they do not understand as long as they can grasp the overall meaning of the passage. This approach is taken for time efficiency and due to limited access to translation tools or dictionaries during exams.

Furthermore, several reasons contribute to their choice of strategies, including:

1. Situational Factor

Situational factors significantly influence students in selecting reading strategies. The students admitted to using skimming and

scanning in different contexts: skimming to identify the main ideas, and scanning when they need to find specific information. They use the strategy of guessing from the context when they have limited access to dictionaries or translation tools.

2. Individual Factor

Age is an individual factor that influences students' choice of reading comprehension strategies. According to the students, during their childhood, their reading strategy selection was simpler compared to the more complex strategies they employ now.

5.2. Suggestion

Research on strategies in reading comprehension remains highly relevant. It is recommended that further studies be conducted to explore the factors influencing the choice of strategies to enhance reading comprehension. Such research aims to yield more in-depth findings and make a positive contribution to the field of education. This approach will ensure a comprehensive understanding of the intricacies involved in reading comprehension and support the development of effective educational practices.

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