

INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN READING STRATEGIES AND READING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT AMONG ELEVENTH-GRADE STUDENTS

Indry Kaseger¹
Universitas Klabat

Virginia Gabrella Sengkey²
Universitas Klabat

Virginia.sengkey@unklab.ac.id²

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to figure out the level of students' reading strategies use and the level of the students' reading comprehension. This study was also to figure out the correlation between students' reading strategy use and their reading comprehension. This study employed a quantitative, descriptive design to determine the levels of both variables and a correlational design to examine the correlation between them. The instrument of this study was adapted from Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) for the survey of reading strategies and the reading comprehension section in the TOEFL Junior Standard Test to measure students' reading comprehension. This study was conducted on 45 students of the XI grade of one of the high schools in North Sulawesi. The result showed that the students' reading strategies were in the medium level ($M=3.48$) and their reading comprehension was at the very least level ($M=51.11$). Finally, it was found that there was a significant correlation between students' reading strategies use and their reading comprehension, as the result showed $p=.022 < 0.05$, $r=.342$. Thus, it is important for the students to be aware of the importance of reading strategies and apply these strategies to have better reading comprehension.

Keywords: Students' Reading Strategies, Students' Reading Comprehension

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, English is used for international communication in many countries around the world. According to Sharifian (2008), more than one billion people use English as their second language to communicate with other people in different countries. By using English, people from different countries can communicate with each other, which may lead to good relationships with others from various countries and to learning their cultures. Furthermore, Scarino and Liddicoat (2009) stated that learning English can help people build good relationships with people in different countries and learn about new cultures. English can also make it easier for people to get information about other countries. These are just some of the reasons why students at school must study

English. Therefore, learning English is very important because it gives many advantages to its users.

Reading is the process of interpreting the meaning of a text and extracting information from it. This is the activity between the readers and the text. Hence, in order to have good reading skills, or in other words, comprehend any reading text well, people may consider using strategies to help them understand. This is because true reading activity occurs when readers look at the text and find the meaning of the written symbols. This is the skill known as reading comprehension. Kirby (2007) stated that “reading comprehension is the process by which we understand the texts we read” (p.1). In fact, reading is one skill that needs to be learned in learning English. Moreover, Debat (2006) pointed out that reading is the most crucial skill for English as foreign language (EFL) students. Thus, reading is important for students, especially for English learners.

Reading comprehension is an important skill in education because it can help students develop good reading skills in their studies. To know the meaning of the text, people can use various reading strategies. According to Moore, McClelland, Alef, and Vogel (2016), reading comprehension is about what you read and the complexities of understanding. For example, if they read a text and were entertained with that text because they understood it clearly, it encouraged them to read more and get more information about the text, especially for their study. Moreover, Kaya (2015) found that students can improve their reading comprehension by using reading strategies. In addition, Sari (2017) found that reading strategies can help students improve their reading comprehension and address reading problems. In other words, reading strategies can help students to read a text effectively. Thus, reading strategies is an important element in learning, especially in learning English.

Many EFL students experience difficulties in reading. They have problems with their reading comprehension because of their poor reading skills, including lack of vocabulary or lack of reading strategies. According to Westwood (2008), there are some problems in reading comprehension. The problems arise from a lack of vocabulary mastery, the text's difficulty level, translation issues, inadequate use of reading strategies, difficulty obtaining information, and difficulty recalling information after reading a text. Thus, these cause students to have difficulty reading. Jayanti (2016) stated that students, especially English as a Second Language (ESL) and EFL learners, experience various difficulties in reading. Therefore, many students do not fully comprehend the texts they read because of various difficulties they encounter while reading.

Reading is an important skill for every student studying English, as well as for the teaching process. However, Indonesian students often have problems with this. According to Ganie (2019), most Indonesians are aware of the importance of reading in their lives, but they do not treat reading as a source of knowledge and information. In other words, Indonesian students do not read much, even when they know the importance of reading. Thus, this might be a reason why Indonesia has a very low interest in reading. According to Wibowo (2015), the National Library found that only 10% of Indonesians aged 10 and above are interested in reading. It might be the reason why Indonesian people have poor reading

comprehension. According to Kusuma (2017), Indonesia's reading index, as reported by UNESCO in 2012, is only 0,01%. It means among 1000 people, only one person who reads seriously. Therefore, these problems may explain why Indonesian students do not like reading, resulting in poor reading comprehension.

Because of the stated problem with reading comprehension, students need to identify strategies to help solve their reading comprehension problems. In Indonesia, it seems like students have poor reading comprehension. According to Nanda and Azmy (2020), Indonesian students have poor reading comprehension. This might happen because they experience difficulties with certain aspects of reading. Hamra and Syatriana (2010) found that Indonesian students who lack vocabulary, learning support, and reading motivation have poor reading comprehension. Hence, this might be the reason why Indonesian students have problems in reading comprehension.

Moreover, Jayanti (2016) stated that most Indonesian students might not understand what they read in English text. Using strategies in reading is the best way to increase students achievement in reading comprehension. According to Muliawati (2017), reading strategies can help students to get better understanding when they read a text. Additionally, Ahmadi and Pourhossein (2012) found that reading strategy significantly affects the students reading comprehension skill. It means, reading strategies can help students to master reading comprehension. However, some students also have problems in using reading strategies. According to Mokhtari and Reichard (2002), poor readers are not aware of reading strategies. Furthermore, Suryanto (2017) found that lots of Indonesian students have less awareness in using reading strategies. Therefore, it is important to identify whether students use reading strategies whenever they encounter difficulties in reading.

Researchers found different results compared with previous studies when investigating the correlation between reading strategies and reading comprehension. For instance, Fadhliah, Nur and Taridi, Muhammad and Nafiah, Uyun (2020) studied about the correlation between students reading strategies and students reading comprehension at eight grade of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 4 Bungo Jambi and they found there is significant correlation. Similar result was obtained by Sari (2017). However, Siregar, Afriazi and Arasuli (2019) studied the correlation between reading strategies and reading comprehension achievement of the sixth semester students in the English education study program of Bengkulu University. They found that there is no significant correlation between two variables.

Therefore, because of the stated problem regarding students' less use of reading strategies and their poor reading comprehension, the researchers were interested in conducting a study on reading strategies and reading comprehension. The researchers were interested in conducting the study at one of the high schools in North Sulawesi because, based on one of the researchers' friends' experiences at that school, they reported that they experienced difficulties with reading strategies and reading comprehension. Thus, the researchers were interested in conducting this study to know if the students at that school still experience the same reading strategies and reading comprehension problems. In addition,

because there is still inconsistency in whether reading strategies correlate significantly with reading comprehension, the researchers also wanted to determine whether students' reading strategies are significantly correlated with reading comprehension.

This study aimed to find out the levels of students reading strategies use and their level of reading comprehension. Also, this study aimed to know if there is significant correlation between students reading strategies use and their reading comprehension. The research questions for this study are: 1) What is the students level of reading strategies use? 2. What is the students level of reading comprehension? And 3) Is there any significant correlation between students reading strategies use and their reading comprehension?

LITERATUR REVIEW

Reading is an activity to get information in the text. Reading is about a writer and a reader. It is a complex activity because it involves the perception, understanding, and thought. According to Birch (2002), reading process seems simple, but in fact this is a complex activity and complicated. This means that students must be able to read the text carefully and get the meaning on each word to get the information from the text that they read. Furthermore, according to Blachowicz and Ogle (2008), using reading strategies to construct the meaning before, during, and after reading can help the students connect the things that they read and what they have learned before. It means, the strategies used in reading are important to be learned. However, students sometimes are burdened by the reading assignment in school, but for some individual, reading is a hobby, because they can get more information from the text and then they take reading as an entertainment.

In addition to that, reading is an English skill that students must learn more about. Debat (2006) stated that reading is the important skill for EFL students. It is the foundation of learning in all subjects in the school. Moreover, according to Zia and Samreen (2013), reading can help students in the academic development that can provide additional knowledge. Moreover, beside knowing the purpose of the reading activity, students also need to understand the text that they read. As pointed out by Almutairi (2018) that understanding what is being read is an important factor in reading. Therefore, reading is not only about the activity of reading a text, but is also about understanding the text.

Reading strategies are the techniques or methods that help people to improve their reading comprehension. According to Zhang (2001), reading strategies can help people make meaning from text and help them with comprehension difficulty. Thus, it is important to improve reading strategies to help people comprehend the text better. By reading strategies, students can get the main idea of the text that they read. It means, reading strategies can help students comprehend the text. Sari (2017) stated that reading strategies is the one of many important factors that can help the readers to improve their reading comprehension. Therefore, in improving students reading comprehension and help them to be good readers, students should use their reading strategies.

Moreover, reading strategies should be learned to improve reading comprehension. According to Kaya (2015), teaching reading strategies is an important thing to develop student comprehension. It means, reading strategies can be taught to students to help them develop their comprehension. Moreover, reading strategies are the key to help students to understand the meaning of a text. Kartika, Etty, Anna (2020) found that learning strategies is a key element that can help students to improve their comprehension. Therefore, using reading strategies can help students to improve their reading comprehension.

The type of reading that will be used in this research is Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) by Mokhtary and Sheorey (2002). They categorized reading strategies in SORS into three types namely global reading strategies (GLOB), problem-solving strategies (PROB), support reading strategies (SUP).

Global reading strategies is about preparing how to read and how to manage comprehension. GLOB are those intentional, carefully planned techniques by which learners monitor or manage their reading, such as having a purpose in mind, previewing the text as to its length and organization, or using typographical aids and tables figures. It consists of 13 items which explain about thinking of the purpose and knowledge that make readers understand the text, reading the whole text, taking reflection notes, and highlighting important information that can help reader understand the text. Moreover, the other items are about finding another reference, using another helpful information such as table, numbers, or pictures in the text, and paraphrasing the ideas in a text to obtain information. In addition to that, the questionnaire items on GLOB are also about imagining the information of the text than can help the readers remember what they have read, analyzing and evaluating the text, reading the text again and again, and rereading the text when getting some difficulties to increase the understanding of the text. These strategies can be thought of as generalized, intentional reading strategies aimed at setting the stage for the reading act.

Problem-solving strategies is about reading strategies use when reading difficult parts in a text. PROB are the actions and procedures that readers use while working directly with the text. These are localized, focused techniques used when problems develop in understanding textual information. PROB consists of 8 items about thinking whether the text matches the reading purposes, discussing the text with other people to make sure the text is understood, staying focus on reading, and choosing the important parts to be read carefully. The other items are about reading the text carefully when get difficulties during read a text, using context clues to understand the text, and checking the understanding when encountering different information. Lastly, the remaining items are about asking to oneself all the questions that want to be answered and trying to get the meaning of words or phrases of a text are unfamiliar. These strategies provide readers with action plans that allow them to navigate through text skillfully. Such strategies are localized, focused problem-solving or repair strategies used when problems develop in understanding textual information.

Support strategies is about using instruments or techniques to comprehend a text. SUP are basic support mechanisms intended to aid the reader in comprehending the text. It consists of 9 items that explain about taking notes

during read a text, reading louder when getting difficulties in reading, and paying attention with the text structure. Other items of the questionnaire ask about whether individuals adjust the speed of reading with the text, stop to read for a while to think about the text, and use helping tools to identify important information. Lastly, the remaining items are about trying to guess the text during reading, and checking whether the guess that the reader made before is the right or wrong information. These strategies provide the support mechanisms aimed at sustaining responses to reading.

There are some studies that have been conducted about using reading strategies to improve their reading comprehension. For example, Anuyahong (2018) studied about English reading strategies and reading motivation used by Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology Students. The purpose of this study were to study English reading strategies and reading motivation of Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students, to compare using English reading strategies and reading motivation of Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students according to genders, ages, majors, and level of academic years, and to gather opinions and suggestions about English reading strategies and reading motivation of Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology students. Five hundred forty-two undergraduate students at Thai-Nichi Institute of Technology are the participants of this study. The researcher used the rating-scale and open-ended questionnaire to gathering the data. The result of this study showed that there were statistically significant differences in using English reading strategies and English reading motivation at the level of .05. This research also found that the students had shown high level of English reading strategies and English reading motivation. Therefore, it is concluded that students use English reading strategies and are motivated to read English.

Moreover, Küçükoğlu (2013) studied about improving reading skills through effective reading strategies. The purpose of this study is to study the effective reading strategies in order to improve reading skills in language classes. This study used the main questions that is “Would reading strategies help my student’s reading comprehension study?” This is an action research that was applied to 14 students in an intermediate level integrated skills course. The result of this study indicated that the students got the extraordinary improvement when they have been tutored about reading strategies. Also, the researcher found that teaching reading strategies is the key of improve students comprehension. Therefore, the researcher stated that examining a larger group of students would better understand the differences.

Reading comprehension is the one of the most important components that students have to learn. Moreover, reading comprehension is a process of getting meaning of a text. Harrison (2004) stated that reading comprehension can be defined as the understanding of a text. For this reason, students can be helped to get the meaning of an English text by developing their reading comprehension skill. Furthermore, according to Elleman (2019), reading comprehension is the most complex activities. This means that reading comprehension is not an easy activity. Hence, it is important to teach students about reading comprehension. Stetter and Hughes (2010) pointed out that teaching reading comprehension can be done by explicitly teaching students to improve students' reading

comprehension skills. Thus, students have to know about reading comprehension so that they can improve their reading comprehension skill.

In addition to that, reading comprehension skill can help students in their academic. According to Ponkshe (2013), students are expected to perform well in academics when they get better ability of reading comprehension. This means that reading comprehension is one of the most important skills that the students can learn to help them in their study as it can help students to understand the meaning of a text. By understanding a text, students can get information especially knowledge about all that can help them in learning. Moreover, Bastug (2014) stated that a significant predictor of academic achievement is reading comprehension. Thus, reading comprehension skill should be learned by the students to improve their academic achievement.

TOEFL Junior Standard test is a test that can measure English skills. Handbook for TOEFL Junior Standard Test (2018) explained that TOEFL Junior scores can be a powerful tool for students to monitor their progress in English class. Furthermore, Aliponga (2013) stated that TOEFL is a test that evaluates students' ability and skills to understand English in their academic task. In other words, TOEFL is a tool that can be used to measure students English learning. Additionally, according to Mahmud (2014), TOEFL is certified internationally in Indonesia that is held by the English Language System (ETS). Moreover, Samad, Jannah and Firtriani (2017) stated "The type of TOEFL test that are required to undertake is a TOEFL prediction, which is a paper-based test that consists of listening, structure and written Expression, and reading comprehension sections" (p. 2). Therefore, TOEFL test can be used to measure students English skills including their reading comprehension. Based on the Handbook for TOEFL Junior Standard Test (2018) "the TOEFL Junior Standard test measures listening comprehension, language form and meaning, and reading comprehension" (p. 2). Furthermore, according to Sari (2017), TOEFL Junior Standard Test is an instrument that is reliable to measure students English skills. Therefore, each section in the TOEFL Junior standard test, including reading comprehension, can measure students' English skills.

Different researchers have conducted studies on reading comprehension. For instance, Bayat, Şekercioğlu and Bakır (2014) studied about the relationship between reading comprehension and success in science. The purpose of this study is to define the relationship between reading comprehension and achievement in science. This study used associational model as a method, and the participants were one hundred thirty-two of eighth grade secondary school students. The data was collected from Science Items Comprehension Test (SICT), SBS Science Test (national placement test), and Turkish Reading Comprehension Test (TRCT). The result of this study determined that there is a certain level of relationship between success in reading comprehension and success in science. This study found that there is a significant correlation between success in reading comprehension and success in science. Therefore, the researchers recommended that the future researcher test the research problem of this study or the similar problems in the different fields.

Furthermore, Anggraini (2017) studied about the correlation between reading comprehension and academic achievement of English education study program students of UIN Raden Fatah Palembang. The purpose of this study is to find out the significant correlation between reading comprehension and academic achievement of English education study program students of UIN Raden Fatah Palembang. This used TOEFL reading test and documentation of English education study program students of UIN Raden Fatah Palembang as the data collected. The result of this test showed that all of the students had low comprehension. Seventy-nine students were involved in this study and the data were analyzed by test analysis. The result of this study showed that there was a correlation between reading comprehension achievement and academic achievement. Also, the researcher stated that the better reading comprehension is, the better their academic achievement will be.

There are some previous studies conducted that are related with the present study. Firstly, Dafiyanthi, Susilawati, and Rosnija (2015) studied about the correlation between students reading strategies and their reading comprehension ability in reading academic text. This study aimed to find out the correlation between students' reading strategies and their reading comprehension ability. Also, it was to find out the most common categories and types of reading strategies used by students and students' reading comprehension in reading academic text. The subject of this research was fifth semester students of English Education Study Program. The participants of this study were 53 students. This study used a questionnaire and the TOEFL test as the data collected. The result showed that the correlation between students reading strategies and their reading comprehension coefficient was 0.51 and classified in moderate level. Furthermore, the researchers suggested that students should be more conscious about their own reading strategy used in English education. Moreover, Siregar, Afriazy, and Arasuli (2019) studied about the correlation between reading strategies and reading comprehension achievement of the sixth semester in English education study program of Bengkulu University. The purpose of this study was to identify students' reading strategies used and students' reading comprehension achievement. Also, the researchers would like to find out whether or not there is any significant correlation between reading strategies and reading comprehension achievement at the sixth-semester students of English Education Study Program at Universitas Bengkulu. The researchers used a questionnaire and the TOEFL test as the instruments to collect the data. The results of this study showed no significant correlation between reading strategies and reading comprehension achievement.

Therefore, it might happen because the students have low understanding in reading strategies. However, Sari (2017) studied the correlation between reading strategies and reading comprehension achievement of the eleventh-grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah 6 Palembang. This study aimed to investigate the correlation between the use of reading strategies and the reading comprehension achievement of the eleventh-grade students of SMA Muhammadiyah 6 Palembang. This study used a questionnaire and the TOEFL test as the instruments to collect the data. There were fifty students as participants in this

study. The result showed that there was a significant correlation between the two variables. The researcher suggested that future researchers design their own reading test.

Moreover, Fadhliyah, Nur, Taridi, Muhammad, Nafiah, and Uyun (2020) studied the correlation between students reading strategies and their reading comprehension at the eighth grade of Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri 4 Bungo Jambi. This study aimed to determine the correlation between students' reading strategies and their reading comprehension in the eighth grade of MTs N 4 Bungo. This research used questionnaire and test for collecting the data. The respondents were sixty-nine students that consist of class VIII A, B, and C. The result of this study was that there is a significant correlation between students' reading strategies and their reading comprehension.

METHOD

This study was a quantitative study. According to Apuke (2017), a quantitative research method involves quantifying and analyzing variables to obtain results. It involves numerical data analysis using statistical techniques to answer questions about how, how much, what, where, how many, when, and who. The research design was descriptive, examining the levels of students' reading strategies and reading comprehension. Moreover, it was correlational, as it aimed to determine the correlation between variables. Creswell (2012) stated that "a correlation is a statistical test to determine the tendency or pattern for two (or more) variables or two sets of data to vary consistently" (p. 338). In addition, according to McCombes (2020), a correlational research design is used to measure the relationship between two variables. Thus, the descriptive and correlational research designs were used in this study.

The respondents in this study were 11th-grade students, specifically those in the XI Science A, XI Science B, and XI Social A classes. The researchers made a Google Form that includes the questionnaire and the TOEFL Junior Standard Test. The total number of students who answered the questionnaire and the TOEFL Junior standard test was 45 students out of 76 students. There were 12 students from XI Social A, 11 from XI Science A, and 22 from XI Science B. Thus, the total number of respondents in this study was 45. In this study, purposive sampling was used to collect data. According to Etikan and Bala (2017), the purposive sampling method is the method in which the researcher chooses the respondents who can give the best information to help the researcher achieve the objectives of the study. Robinson (2014, p. 227) stated that "purposive sampling is intentional selection of informants based on their ability to elucidate a specific theme, concept, or phenomenon". Therefore, the data were collected from the students selected to complete the questionnaire.

The instrument in collecting data was a questionnaire. The questionnaire that was used is the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) adapted from Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002). There were 30 items in the questionnaire consisting of 3 main groups of reading: global reading strategies (GLOB), problem-solving reading strategies (PROB), and support reading strategies (SUP). In the questionnaire, items number 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 12, 15, 17, 20, 21, 23, 24, 27 belong to

GLOB, items number 7, 9, 11, 14, 16, 19, 25, 28, 30 belong to PROB, and items number 2, 5, 10, 13, 18, 22, 26, 29 belong to SUP. Each item of the questionnaire has a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “Never” to “Always”. The rating scale includes the following options: a value of 1 for Never, a value of 2 for Only Occasionally, a value of 3 for Sometimes, a value of 4 for Usually and a value of 5 for Always.

Moreover, to measure their reading comprehension, the researchers used the score of TOEFL Junior Test. According to IIEF (2020), the TOEFL Junior Standard Test measures reading comprehension, listening comprehension, and language meaning. It is used for students ages 11+. Based on the TOEFL Junior Handbook (2018), the test could provide the students with objective information about their progress in developing English skills, as a measurement tool to support and increase students’ English language levels, and to measure developing English communication skills for preparation for students’ future studies in English. There are 20 questions for the reading comprehension section in this test. The time to answer the question is about 50 minutes. It helps students to measure their ability to read and understand the text in academic and non-academic text in English.

FINDING

The research question number one is to find the level of students reading strategies use. To analyze this question number one, the mean score was used (see table 1).

Table 1 The Mean Score of Students’ Reading Strategies

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Reading Strategies	45	2.42	4.46	3.4812	.53769

Source: Primary Data

The mean result of students' descriptive statistics reading strategies was 3.48 (see Table 1). The mean score of the students’ reading strategies is in the range 2.50 - 3.49. Based on the interpretation of the data, the reading strategies level of 11th grade students is in the medium use level. This means that students did not always use reading strategies when they read. Further analysis was conducted to determine which subcomponents had the highest and lowest mean scores. After the analysis, it was found that although the difference was small, the mean score for GLOB was the highest among the three components, namely PROB and SUP. This means the students used GLOB reading strategies more often in reading activities (see Table 2). The result of this study is similar to that reported by Irwansa (2019), which found that students’ reading strategies were in the medium category.

Table 2 The Mean Score of Subcomponents of Students' Reading Strategies

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
GLOB	45	2	4	3.50	.593
PROB	45	2	4	3.42	.531
SUP	45	2	5	3.39	.625

Source: Primary Data

The students' reading strategies in this study are at a medium level, possibly because the students were not familiar with these strategies or were not fully aware of them. It has been explained that students could get low level in reading strategies because they did not know about reading strategies and how to use them, and thus being aware of how important reading strategies are in reading will help students to have better reading comprehension (Dafiyanti, Susilawati, & Rosjina (2015); Erlina, 2015). Moreover, the level of students' reading strategies was medium because they do not use them frequently when reading. Additionally, it could also be because they only use some of the strategies, or in other words, they did not use all of the reading strategies. Thus, these same reasons could help explain why the students in this study did not always use these reading strategies, resulting in a medium level of use.

The second research question is to determine the level of students' reading comprehension. To analyze question number two, the mean score was used (see Table 3).

Table 3 The Mean score of Students Reading Comprehension

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Reading Comprehension	45	15	100	51.11	22.836

Source: Primary Data

The mean result of the descriptive statistics of students' reading comprehension use was 51.11 (see Table 4.3). The mean score of the students' reading comprehension is less than 66. Based on the data interpretation, the reading comprehension level of 11th-grade students was considered very low. This indicates that the students' reading comprehension level was low. A similar result was obtained by Sari (2017), wherein it was found that the level of students' reading comprehension test was failed.

The probable reason why the students got a very low level in reading comprehension might be because they do not use reading strategies to comprehend the passages. Hadi (2018) pointed out that the students with low reading comprehension scores could be because they do not use reading strategies in reading. As argued by Erlina (2015), the students have a good level in reading

comprehension because they use reading strategies to comprehend the text well. Additionally, students could get low level of reading comprehension because the test was too difficult. Sari (2017) explained that students could fail the reading comprehension test because it was too difficult to answer. Moreover, the students have a very low level in reading comprehension because they do not read or comprehend the text well. Nisa (2018) pointed out that students with good reading comprehension skills have high reading comprehension scores. Additionally, the students might have limited vocabulary knowledge to comprehend the passage. Ma and Lin (2015) stated that vocabulary knowledge can help students in reading comprehension. It means that students with good vocabulary knowledge can score well on reading comprehension. Thus, vocabulary knowledge is also an important factor that can help students comprehend a text. Therefore, not using reading strategies, the test was too difficult, and limited vocabulary knowledge might be why the students' reading comprehension in this study was very less.

The last research question is to find if there is a significant correlation between students reading strategies use and their reading comprehension. The result is shown at table 4.

Table 4 The Correlation Between Students Reading Strategies and Their Reading Comprehension

		Reading Strategies Use
Reading Comprehension	Pearson Correlation	.342*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.022
	N	45

Source: Primary Data

The results showed a significant correlation between students' reading strategies and their reading comprehension. The result showed that $r = 0.342$ and $p = 0.022$ (see Table 4). This shows that there is a significant correlation between students reading strategies and their reading comprehension. According to McLeod (2018), "a p-value less than 0.05 or typically <0.50 was statistically significant" (para.2). The result of the p-value is less than 0.05, for the standard significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. Therefore, the H1 hypothesis is accepted. This significant correlation indicates that the more often students use reading strategies, the better their reading comprehension will be.

Moreover, the result $r = 0.342$ indicates that the correlation between the two variables is low. According to Asuero, Sayago, and Gonzalez (2006), a correlation value of 0.30 – 0.49 indicates a low correlation. Additionally, the result of r-value also showed a positive correlation. Therefore, the result showed a positive, significant correlation, although it was low. This means that students' reading strategies are significantly correlated with their reading comprehension,

but the correlation is low. This might explain why the students' reading strategies level was at a medium level, yet their reading comprehension is very low, or in other words, poor. In other words, other significant factors strongly correlate with the students' reading comprehension. For instance, Furqon (2013) found a strong correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and their reading comprehension. Therefore, vocabulary mastery is another significant factor that strongly correlates with students' reading comprehension.

A similar result was reported in studies by Lumentah (2020) and Kurniawati (2020) on the correlation between students' reading strategies and their reading comprehension, which found a significant correlation. Thus, it is important for teachers to be aware of these reading strategies to help the students improve their reading abilities. As for students, they also need to be aware of these reading strategies and make sure they use them when reading English texts. As Wahyudi (2016) pointed out, using reading strategies can help students improve their reading scores. Hence, reading strategies can help the students improve their reading comprehension.

DISCUSSION

Students' Reading Strategies Use

The findings revealed that the eleventh-grade students demonstrated a moderate level of reading strategy use ($M = 3.48$). This indicates that although students occasionally employed reading strategies during reading activities, they did not consistently apply them throughout the reading process. Among the three categories of the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSI), Global Reading Strategies (GLOB) obtained the highest mean score ($M = 3.50$), followed by Problem-Solving Strategies (PROB) ($M = 3.42$) and Support Strategies (SUP) ($M = 3.39$). These findings suggest that students were more likely to use strategies related to setting reading purposes, previewing texts, and activating prior knowledge than strategies involving problem-solving during reading or external supports such as note-taking and dictionary use.

The moderate use of reading strategies is consistent with the findings of Irwansa (2019), who reported that Indonesian EFL students generally demonstrate a medium level of strategy use. This similarity indicates that although students are familiar with several reading strategies, they may not have fully developed the metacognitive awareness necessary to apply them effectively in different reading situations. According to Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002), proficient readers consciously select and regulate reading strategies before, during, and after reading, whereas less proficient readers often employ strategies inconsistently or only when they encounter difficulties.

One possible explanation for the moderate level of strategy use is students' limited explicit knowledge of reading strategies. Many learners may employ certain strategies unconsciously without understanding their specific functions or knowing when they should be applied. This interpretation supports the findings of

Dafiyanti et al. (2015) and Erlina (2015), who argued that insufficient awareness of reading strategies prevents students from maximizing their reading comprehension. Without systematic strategy instruction, students tend to rely on surface-level reading practices rather than strategic and purposeful reading.

Another possible explanation is that classroom instruction may emphasize answering comprehension questions rather than explicitly teaching strategic reading behaviors. As a result, students become accustomed to completing reading tasks without developing effective metacognitive control over the reading process. This finding highlights the importance of integrating explicit strategy instruction into reading classrooms so that students become more aware of how, when, and why particular strategies should be used.

Students' Reading Comprehension

The present study also revealed that students' reading comprehension was very low ($M = 51.11$), indicating that most students experienced considerable difficulty in understanding English texts. This finding suggests that students encountered challenges not only in recognizing textual information but also in constructing meaning from the passages they read.

The low level of reading comprehension is consistent with Sari (2017), who reported that many Indonesian senior high school students failed to achieve satisfactory scores on reading comprehension tests. Similar findings have been widely reported in EFL contexts, where reading comprehension remains one of the most difficult language skills because it requires the integration of vocabulary knowledge, grammatical competence, background knowledge, inferencing ability, and strategic processing.

Several factors may explain students' poor reading comprehension. First, students' moderate use of reading strategies may not be sufficient to support successful comprehension of increasingly complex texts. Effective comprehension requires readers to actively predict content, monitor understanding, identify key ideas, and evaluate textual information throughout the reading process. Students who employ these strategies inconsistently are less likely to construct accurate meanings from texts.

Second, vocabulary knowledge appears to play a crucial role in students' reading performance. Ma and Lin (2015) argued that vocabulary knowledge is one of the strongest predictors of reading comprehension because readers cannot understand texts when they fail to recognize essential words and expressions. Students with limited vocabulary are therefore likely to experience greater difficulty identifying main ideas, making inferences, and interpreting relationships among ideas.

Third, the complexity of the reading test itself may have contributed to students' low performance. Reading passages containing unfamiliar vocabulary, complicated sentence structures, and higher-order comprehension questions may exceed students' current English proficiency. Consequently, students may have struggled to answer comprehension questions even when they understood portions of the texts. This explanation is consistent with Sari (2017), who suggested that test difficulty can substantially influence students' reading comprehension performance.

These findings imply that improving reading comprehension requires a comprehensive instructional approach that combines explicit strategy instruction with vocabulary development, intensive reading practice, and exposure to authentic English texts. Such an approach would help students become more strategic, independent, and confident readers.

The Correlation Between Reading Strategies and Reading Comprehension

The findings further demonstrated a positive and statistically significant correlation between students' reading strategy use and reading comprehension ($r = .342$, $p = .022$). Although the strength of the relationship was categorized as low, the result indicates that students who reported using reading strategies more frequently tended to achieve higher reading comprehension scores.

This finding supports previous studies conducted by Lumentah (2020) and Kurniawati (2020), both of which reported significant positive relationships between reading strategy use and reading comprehension among Indonesian EFL learners. Similarly, Mokhtari and Reichard (2002) emphasized that strategic readers generally achieve better comprehension because they actively regulate their reading processes, monitor understanding, and employ appropriate strategies when encountering comprehension difficulties.

However, the relatively low correlation coefficient suggests that reading strategies represent only one of several factors influencing reading comprehension. In other words, increasing students' strategy use alone may not necessarily result in substantial improvements in reading achievement. Reading comprehension is a multidimensional construct influenced by various linguistic, cognitive, and motivational variables.

One important factor is vocabulary knowledge. Furqon (2013) found that vocabulary mastery has a stronger relationship with reading comprehension than many other language variables because vocabulary enables readers to access textual meaning directly. Students who possess broader vocabularies can process information more efficiently, identify textual relationships, and comprehend complex academic texts more successfully.

In addition to vocabulary, grammatical competence, background knowledge, reading motivation, language proficiency, and reading engagement may also contribute significantly to students' comprehension performance. Students with sufficient linguistic knowledge but low motivation may still perform poorly, whereas highly motivated students often compensate for linguistic limitations through strategic reading behaviors. Therefore, reading comprehension should be viewed as the product of interactions among multiple learner-related factors rather than the result of reading strategy use alone.

From a pedagogical perspective, these findings emphasize that teachers should not merely encourage students to use reading strategies but should also explicitly teach how to apply those strategies effectively in authentic reading situations. Strategy instruction should be integrated with vocabulary enrichment, grammar development, extensive reading programs, and critical thinking activities to maximize students' reading comprehension. By combining these instructional

components, students are more likely to develop stronger reading competence and become more autonomous readers.

Overall, the present study confirms that reading strategies play an important role in reading comprehension. Nevertheless, because the observed relationship was relatively weak, future studies should investigate additional variables—such as vocabulary knowledge, reading motivation, self-efficacy, grammatical competence, and metacognitive awareness—to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing EFL students' reading comprehension.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to determine the level of students' reading strategies and reading comprehension, and to examine whether there was a significant correlation between students' reading strategies and their reading comprehension. This study used descriptive design and correlational design to find out the level of students' reading strategies and students' reading comprehension, and the correlational design was used to find the correlation between students' reading strategies and their reading comprehension. The population of this study was the 11th grade of Science A and B and Social A of one of the high schools in North Sulawesi as the respondents. The number of respondents was 45 students. The researchers used a purposive sampling method to collect the data. Additionally, the researchers used an adopted questionnaire from Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) and used the TOEFL Junior Standard test.

This study showed that students' reading strategy level was 3.48, indicating a medium level. Moreover, the students' reading comprehension level was very low, with a mean score of 52.11. Furthermore, the result of the correlation between students reading strategies and their reading comprehension showed that the $p = 0.022$ and $r = 0.342$. Thus, the results indicate a significant positive correlation, but it is low.

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the 11th-grade students do not always use reading strategies in reading English texts. Moreover, they have difficulty understanding English reading texts, as their reading comprehension level was found to be very low. In addition, it is concluded that their poor reading comprehension may be due to their not always using reading strategies. In other words, the more students use reading strategies, the better their reading comprehension will be. However, other factors should also be considered, as the correlation between students' reading strategies and their reading comprehension was found to be low.

Based on this study, this study provides several recommendations. Firstly, the students need to learn more about reading strategies and use them more often, especially when they read English texts. Thus, students should also know the importance of using reading strategies in their learning. Moreover, students need to expand their vocabulary to better understand English reading texts. In addition, students need to use reading strategies, especially when they encounter difficulties understanding a reading passage. Thus, the students also need to be aware of the importance of reading strategies and use them in reading activities to help students

comprehend the text. Therefore, it is expected that the students' reading comprehension problem can be solved when they use reading strategies when they read a text.

Secondly, it is recommended that teachers gain a better understanding of reading strategies to explain them to students and how to use them in reading activities to help them solve reading comprehension problems. Moreover, it is recommended that teachers assess students' abilities using reading comprehension tasks or tests. It can help the teacher explain reading strategies to students, enabling them to practice these strategies and improve their reading comprehension.

Finally, future researchers interested in conducting similar research on students' reading strategies and reading comprehension can use the findings of this study to inform their research on students' reading strategy use and reading comprehension, especially in North Sulawesi. It is recommended that future researchers conduct the test directly in the classroom to explain it to students and control them while they answer to obtain accurate results. It is also recommended that future researchers use the TOEFL Junior Standard Test scoring system for a more accurate score. It means that the students should register in the official test to do this, and official test centers should approve it. Additionally, it is recommended to conduct a similar study at different educational levels and with a greater number of respondents. Also, future researchers can examine how each sub-component of reading strategies correlates significantly with reading comprehension and assess the strength of these correlations.

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