

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of study, the research questions, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation, and the definition of key terms.

1.1 The Background of The Study

Reading is one of the most important skills to increase students knowledge and helps to develop vocabulary and grammar. Having good reading proficiency means the reader has abilities to understand written statements or any type of written text accurately and efficiently (Mahfoodh, 2007). According to Snow, Burns, and Griffin, (1998) good readers are engaged with the text and are aware of the mechanisms they employ to comprehend what they read. Through reading instruction, teachers can assist students in improving their reading comprehension. They do not only improve in their reading abilities, but also improve in using and increasing their English abilities and knowledge

Reading strategies are ways to improve reading comprehension in English as a foreign language. The term reading is defined as the process of identifying, interpreting, and understanding an material. Gascoigne, J., and Holck (2005) said that reading strategy is a conscious technique or subconscious process used by readers to understand a text. Therefore, reading strategies are very important. Not everyone has the same strategies. Therefore, understanding reading strategy is important for teachers.

Reading is also an individual process, which explains different readers different interpretations (Maarof & Yaacob, 2011). Based on the description above, reading strategies are absolute skill for students and need to be understood. Studies on gender differences in reading strategies show female students use more reading strategies than males.

According to Logan (2009) on reading comprehension exams, girls consistently outperform boys, however, the reason for this is unclear. In this study, Logan and Johnston investigated differences in behavior and motivational factors, differences in cognitive skills, differences in brain activation during reading, and

differences in reading techniques and learning styles. A study like this could provide us some insight into the types of learning environments that boys are better suited to.

Another research from Rianto (2021) found that male and female students have different strategies, styles, and ways of thinking when it comes to language learning. The majority of female students dominate compared male students in the use of metacognitive strategies. More research focusing on online reading processes in relation to gender gaps, especially in Indonesia's higher education environment, is needed to address the challenges faced in today's learning situation. Finding studies in this area are studies in this area is beneficial not only for students but also for teachers and administrators of foreign language study programs to help assess if they properly fulfill their students' literacy needs and directly counter potential gender bias.

As a future teacher, a teacher will deal with students who have different reading strategies. As educators we must teach using a variety of strategies. So, students can embrace which one fits their aptitudes and personalities.

1.2. Research Problem

Based on the background of the study above, the researcher formulates the research question stated as follows:

1. What strategies used by male students in improving their reading skill?
2. What strategies used by female students in improving their reading skill?

1.3 Research Objective

The main purpose of this study was to understand the differences in strategies between male and female students in developing reading skills in English as a foreign language.

1.4 Scope and Limitation

The limitation of this study is on the reading subject especially reading for comprehension and this subject is studied by students of English Department UMM at class A 2019.

1.5 Significant of The Study

In accordance with the background of study, the researcher expects that this study can give contributions to the following:

a. For teachers and lecturer

There may be possible differences between male students and female students in their reading technique or ability, especially in English lessons. Every student is unique and not all students have the same strategy, it is important for teachers and lecturers to also develop good skills and strategies to practice with students. Therefore teachers or lecturers may consider of utilizing different strategy in teaching reading.

b. For Students

Students can find out the benchmark of their ability in reading skills by understanding the strategies they will use to develop their reading skills. Furthermore, students can implement these strategies in their reading learning activities.

c. For English Department

The English language department might utilize this study as evidence that male and female students may have different reading techniques for developing their reading skills. The information about the research may shed a light the English Department to establish program which individual gender and its convenient strategy for reading can be exploited or different gender strategy may compensate each other strengths and weaknesses.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

The following terms used in this thesis need to be defined to avoid misinterpretation. The terms are defined as follows:

a. Reading strategy

In today's culture, reading is a necessary means of receiving information. Reading methods are used by readers spontaneously during the reading process, according to research Robert D. Pritchard, Lawrence G. Weiss, Amie Hedley Goode (1990). Reading strategies learn about how to read more specifically and make it easier for students to improve their reading skills.

b. Gender

Gender refers to the socially constructed qualities of women, men, girls, and boys. This encompasses conventions, behaviors, and roles connected with being a woman, man, girl, or boy, as well as interpersonal interactions. Gender, as a social construct, differs from society to society and can change over time.

Gender inequalities are hierarchical and connect with other social and economic inequities. Gender discrimination connects with various forms of prejudice, including race, socioeconomic status, handicap, age, geographic location, gender identity, and sexual orientation. This is known as intersectionality.