



Invention: Journal Research and Education Studies
Volume 6 Nomor 2 Juli 2025

The Invention: Journal Research and Education Studies is published
 three (3) times a year

(March, July and November)

Focus : Education Management, Education Policy, Education
 Technology, Education Psychology, Curriculum Development,
 Learning Strategies, Islamic Education, Elementary Education

LINK : <https://pusdikra-publishing.com/index.php/jres>

Improving Reading Comprehension Skills in Reading

Jihan Suhaila¹, Salzabil Meila Rihadatul Aisyah², Eka Bima Khairani Harahap³,
 Yani Lubis⁴

^{1,2,3,4} Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

The ability to comprehend reading materials is one of the key components in the learning process, as it directly affects students' mastery of various academic subjects. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, reading comprehension is not only important as a fundamental skill but also serves as a foundation for developing other language skills such as writing, speaking, and listening. However, many students still encounter difficulties in understanding English texts. These problems are often caused by several factors, including limited vocabulary, low motivation and interest in reading, as well as monotonous and unvaried teaching methods. This study aims to describe and analyze effective strategies for improving students' reading comprehension skills through a literature review using a descriptive qualitative approach. By examining various scholarly sources and previous research, it was found that reading techniques such as skimming (reading quickly to grasp the main idea) and scanning (reading to locate specific information) are proven to be effective in improving reading efficiency. In addition, the application of cognitive and metacognitive strategies such as predicting text content, generating questions before and during reading, summarizing important information, making inferences from context, visualizing text, and monitoring comprehension consciously, have shown significant positive impacts on students' reading comprehension abilities. Furthermore, the effectiveness of reading strategies is also influenced by both internal and external factors. Internal factors include individual learning styles, interest in reading, and student motivation. Meanwhile, external factors consist of the learning environment, the role of teachers in the classroom, and the teaching methods and media used. The combination of these factors determines the extent to which reading strategies can be optimally applied and produce maximal results. By implementing appropriate and varied reading strategies, students are not only able to understand reading content more deeply but also develop into active, reflective, and critical readers. They become better prepared to engage with different types of texts, both in academic contexts and daily life. Therefore, it is crucial for educators to understand the characteristics and learning needs of their students and integrate various relevant strategies and approaches into their teaching process. Teacher support through innovative and interactive instruction plays a vital role in promoting students' academic success, particularly in reading comprehension skills.

Kata Kunci	<i>Reading Comprehension, Reading Skill</i>
Corresponding Author:	jihansuhaila422@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Students' understanding of text is an important part of the teaching and learning process, because reading is a basic skill that supports mastery of subject matter in various fields (Hasanah, Romdanih, and Susilawati 2021). In this understanding, a person not only has the ability to understand word for word, but also has the ability to interpret and analyze the text as a whole. The process of understanding text is influenced by many factors, one of which is the reading approach used by students. Skimming and scanning are two main reading techniques that are often used when reading text. Scanning is a way to find certain details or information in a text without reading the entire text. One example is when someone uses scanning techniques to find specific information in a reference text or to look up a phone number in a directory listing. On the other hand, skimming is a reading technique that allows someone to quickly read certain parts of a text, such as headings, subheadings, and the first sentence of each paragraph, to get a general understanding of the content of the text. Both of these techniques are very useful in helping to gain a good understanding.

The success of students in the educational process depends on their reading comprehension skills. Students gain most of their knowledge through reading activities, and what is meant by reading comprehension. The ability to read comprehension can be applied to all subjects taught in school. In the process of learning reading comprehension, there are three stages: the pre-reading stage, the reading stage, and the post-reading stage. These stages overlap each other and can help students become active readers. However, many students have difficulty understanding English texts. Several things can cause this, such as limited vocabulary, lack of motivation to read, and less varied learning methods. This condition indicates that a more interactive and effective learning strategy is needed. Students can use two strategies: prediction and questioning. The prediction strategy allows students to build a framework for understanding the contents of the text before reading thoroughly. Meanwhile, strategic questions allow students to ask or answer questions related to the text, which can improve critical understanding and strengthen their memory of the information contained in the text (Harmer, 2007).

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach for library research is used to detail how students understand reading texts and how scanning and skimming techniques affect this understanding. In this approach, researchers focus on collecting descriptive data, which describes the phenomenon or problem without manipulation or experimentation. However, library research is the primary source of data collection. Library research means research that relies on written materials, such as books, journals, scientific articles, and other sources available in libraries or digital databases. The data collected does not come from direct observation or interviews, but rather from the study and analysis of literature related to the research topic. In the process of collecting literature, researchers search for and gather various sources related to students' understanding of reading texts, as well as scanning and skimming techniques. The sources sought include theoretical foundations, previous research findings, and research results that discuss reading comprehension techniques in education.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Reading Comprehension

One of the four most important international language skills is the ability to read. However, as many students who are not proficient in reading have shown, mastering reading is a very complicated and real process. Through reading, readers can get any message and information that can increase their knowledge. Reading is very important for life because it can make us know all the information we need to know. Very complex and requires a lot of information, such as understanding, imagination, observation, and memory, reading is a complex activity. So, reading is the process of understanding and interpreting something. Reading does not only mean understanding grammar or words, but also translating. Reading is also a thinking process, where readers must read the English reading material text well, and think about the meaning of the text. Reading is an active process where readers must understand and get messages from the source text.

According to Adler (2004), comprehension strategies are a series of consciously planned actions used by good readers to understand texts. Teaching comprehension strategies to students helps them become active readers and have a goal to control how they understand texts. For Indonesian students, a foreign language is an international language. Of course, it is difficult for students to understand the meaning or ideas contained in written texts. This is because to understand the text, students must have a strong

understanding of words, sentences, content, and most importantly, the author's ideas. Based on the explanation above, the researcher concludes that reading comprehension is the process of getting meaning from the content and all information related to the topic contained in the text. Because English is a foreign language, many students find it difficult to understand texts in English. Because of their limitations in thinking and analyzing the meaning of words and sentences, readers need to have a strong focus to read the text in order to understand the author's ideas.

Elements Influencing Reading Comprehension

Numerous elements influence the approach to understanding reading material. A key element is the learning style. Therefore, an instructor or lecturer must take into account the learning style of each student. This is essential because both instructional methods and the individual learning preferences can enhance student performance. Learning style refers to the unique way in which each person focuses, processes, and retains information new and challenging information. Different individuals experience focus in unique ways at various moments. Understanding personal characteristics is crucial for identifying the triggers that can enhance concentration, energize processing styles, and facilitate long-term memory retention for each adolescent. Numerous factors affect student engagement in learning activities, including motivation levels, familial support, students' willingness to embrace learning, relationships between students and teachers, peer interactions, verbal competencies, freedom of choice, feelings of safety, and the lack of teachers' effective communication skills. When these elements are present, students are likely to perform well academically through their learning experiences. In this context, educators must strive to clarify concepts for their students and enhance their problem-solving abilities (Astuti 2023).

During the educational journey, various learning styles come into play. Each learner presents distinct strengths and challenges in their learning process. It's vital for educators to intentionally apply diverse teaching strategies to ensure the best possible outcomes for their students. Educators must recognize that student learning abilities vary widely. For instance, to grasp what they are reading at that moment, students will employ methods that suit their individual preferences. The development of teaching techniques and learning approaches is essential for improving comprehension skills, as these strategies enable learners to guide and assess their understanding. This study emphasizes that implementing particular learning methods and styles is crucial for enhancing student success in reading comprehension (Research 2022).

In reading, several elements contribute to a learner's success. Numerous

factors, such as physiological, cognitive, environmental, and psychological aspects, play a role. As noted by Johnson and Pearson in Darmiyati Zuchdi (2000:1), the elements affecting reading comprehension can be categorized into those inherent to the reader and those external to them. Internal reader factors include linguistic skills (language proficiency), interest (the level of engagement with the text), motivation the reader's enthusiasm for the reading task or their general attitude towards reading), and reading proficiency (the reader's overall reading capability). External factors fall under two subcategories: reading elements and the reading environment. Reading elements relate to textual characteristics such as the language used, the complexity of the reading material, and the structure of the text. The reading environment encompasses factors such as: (1) the teacher's preparedness before, during, and after the reading lesson to support student understanding. Comprehend the content, (2) how learners engage with the assignment, and (3) the overall mood while finishing the work (challenges and support in reading). Skimming refers to a fast reading method aimed at grasping the main idea of a text (Ilmiah and Khusus 2013).

Effective Strategies for Reading Comprehension

There are many techniques for reading comprehension, and this explains all of them.

1. Activating and Using Background Knowledge

In this strategy, readers activate and use their background knowledge so that they can better understand what they read. This knowledge includes people's experiences with the world as well as their ideas about how written texts work. It includes word recognition, concepts of print, word meanings, and how texts are constructed (Anderson & Pearson, 1984). Schema theory is very important in the comprehension process (Anderson & Pearson, 1984; Anderson, Reynolds, Schallert, & Goetz, 1977). This theory is based on how people form and activate their prior knowledge. This theory explains that people create a series of knowledge structures or schemas as they learn about the world. These schemas grow and change as people learn new information through experience and reading. For example, a child's dog routine might include his or her perceptions of the family pet as white, furry, and entertaining. According to cognitive scientists, successful readers always befriend their prior knowledge with the new knowledge they encounter in a text. By the time they begin reading, readers have already begun to develop their schemas. The first schema influences how readers understand and respond to a text (Pichert

& Anderson, 1977). Schemas are essential to reading comprehension. Knowledge of the organization of a text can help students better understand it (Armbruster, Anderson, & Ostertag, 1987).

2. Generating and Asking Questions

As they read a text, readers use this strategy to ask themselves relevant questions. This strategy helps them synthesize information, find key concepts, and draw conclusions. Successful readers can focus on the most important information in a text by asking appropriate questions (Wood, Woloshyn, & Willoughby, 1995). They can also take necessary actions to resolve issues related to their comprehension (Pressley, Symons, McGoldrick, & Snyder, 1995).

3. Making Inferences

Readers consider or draw conclusions from the information contained in the text. Writers do not always provide complete information about the topic, place, person, or event in this strategy. Instead, they provide readers with information they can use to read by making inferences that combine information in the text with what they already know. During this process, readers can improve their ability to create articles. The ability to draw inferences is essential to readers' success in reading. (Anderson & Pearson, 1984; Hansen & Pearson, 1983).

4. Predicting

In this strategy, readers can derive meaning from a text by making educated guesses. Before reading, readers can apply what they know about an author to predict the content of the text, and text titles can operate on memories of texts with similar content, allowing them to guess the content of new texts.

5. Summarizing

By using summarizing, readers can learn about the structure of the text, meaning, and relationships between opinions. An effective summary of an explanatory text includes things like summarizing the steps in the scientific process, the steps in the development of an art movement, or the episodes that led to certain important historical events. An effective summary of a narrative text includes things like connecting events in the plot or recognizing elements that stimulate character activity and behavior. (Hong, Diamond, & Gluthon, 2000).

6. Visualizing

Readers are able to form mental images of a text while reading it, which indicates their perception of the text. Readers who form mental images while reading are better able to remember what they have read than

readers who do not (Pressley, 1976). Visualization is especially important for narrative texts because it allows readers to easily understand what is happening by seeing the places, characters, or operations of a plot. In addition, it can be used in expository texts, where readers visualize the steps in a process or stages of an event or create images that help them remember some abstract ideas or important names (Gambrell & Bales , 1986).

7. Comprehension Monitoring

In this strategy, readers can know when they understand what they read, and when they do not understand it, and they can use appropriate techniques to improve their understanding. Successful readers know and check their thinking processes as they read. These strategies are known as "correction" strategies. Asking for help from others, rereading, reading ahead, or explaining words are some specific correction strategies (Paris, Wasik & Turner, 1991).

Successful readers attempt to use a variety of approaches to gain meaning as they read. They do not use the same approach, but rather develop and apply the approach that works best for them. They are also highly flexible, switching from one approach to another, and using different approaches for different types of texts (Paris, Wasik, & Turner, 1991). The important point here is that successful readers can make good decisions about which comprehension strategies to use and when to use them. Many students can benefit from clear instruction that teaches them to apply particular comprehension strategies to understand a text. Another point is that particular comprehension strategies can be taught and learned, and that conscious use of these strategies can help readers improve their comprehension (National Reading Panel, 2000).

Approaches or Strategies to Enhance Reading Comprehension

To develop a profound grasp of a written piece, various approaches or strategies can be employed. These strategies not only assist learners in grasping the overall content but also aid them in navigating the challenges presented by unfamiliar texts. One particularly effective approach is skimming. Skimming serves as a rapid reading method aimed at obtaining a summary of the text's content. By concentrating on titles, subtitles, the initial and concluding sentences of paragraphs, as well as significant terms, learners can achieve a basic comprehension of the primary subject matter without an in-depth reading (Nurcahyanti 2018). This method proves especially valuable when individuals need to grasp the primary idea of extensive and intricate texts. Through skimming, students can enhance their ability to sift through essential information without becoming overwhelmed by extraneous details. Alongside

skimming, scanning techniques also play a crucial role in boosting reading comprehension (Vaughn and Stevens, n.d.).

Scanning refers to a method used to locate particular details within the text, such as figures, names, dates, or specific data. This technique necessitates that readers concentrate solely on sections that include the desired information, allowing them to bypass other portions. Scanning enables students to quickly identify the needed information, particularly in circumstances demanding speed and precision, like during assessments or research tasks. While skimming is centered on rapid reading to capture a summary or the principal ideas of a text, it proves advantageous when learners are aiming to comprehend the main themes or significant points without delving into every aspect. For Indonesian students engaging with English writings, skimming aids them in grasping the topic, key concepts, and overall organization of the text before concentrating on particular vocabulary or grammar elements. Skimming entails a brisk reading experience through the material, often by directing attention to the title, subtitles, and the first and final sentences in a paragraph to capture the core message of the text. This can assist students in avoiding feelings of being overwhelmed by linguistic complexities and directing their efforts toward identifying the key arguments or points the author intends to communicate. Conversely, scanning is a technique employed by readers seeking to locate specific details, such as names, dates, or particular facts, without the necessity of perusing the entire text. This approach involves searching for specific keywords or information.

For individuals learning English, scanning serves as a particularly effective method when searching for specific details, like definitions, illustrations, or particular answers, all without the necessity to go through the entire document. Both skimming and scanning represent proactive approaches requiring thoughtful consideration. As highlighted in the piece, comprehending text is an engaged process rather than a mere passive endeavor; it involves a lively exchange between the reader and the written material. By implementing these techniques, learners can engage with the content actively, enhancing their overall understanding of the writing. Moreover, these methods align with the "encoding" process and the comprehension of text meanings, as outlined by Pang et al. (2003) and Adler (2004) in their reading comprehension theories.

Skimming and scanning are crucial techniques that significantly contribute to enhancing reading comprehension, particularly among speakers of foreign languages like English. By employing these strategies, learners can more efficiently traverse intricate texts, boost their understanding, and cultivate greater confidence in their reading abilities. Additionally, these approaches

foster an active and thoughtful reading environment, empowering students to take charge of their educational journey and grasp the material more proficiently.

Alongside these two strategies, employing predictive techniques can further enhance students' comprehension abilities. Prior to reading, learners can attempt to anticipate the text's contents by analyzing the title or any accompanying visuals. This preparation makes it easier for them to digest the text's message once they begin reading. Such a method prompts readers to contemplate the forthcoming subject matter and connect it to their prior knowledge, which can enrich their overall understanding. Another essential technique is the practice of taking notes. Students accustomed to jotting down key ideas while reading often demonstrate improved comprehension. Note-taking directs students' attention to significant information and enables them to revisit critical concepts later. This habit also sharpens their analytical and critical thinking capabilities as they discern which information is most relevant to document (Harida 2014).

Furthermore, visualization serves as an effective method for enhancing comprehension. Readers can create or articulate a mental image based on the content they engage with. For instance, while going through a story or detailed text, learners can envision a scene or scenario illustrated in the material. This strategy not only deepens comprehension but also boosts retention since information presented visually is simpler for students to recall (Suryani 2020). The previously mentioned approaches, encompassing both technical strategies and those rooted in cognitive abilities, can facilitate a smoother and more efficient understanding of the texts students encounter. Nonetheless, the significance of consistent practice cannot be overlooked. The more frequently students engage in reading and applying these strategies, the more proficient they become in grasping the material.

Consequently, educators should motivate students to incorporate these various

methods during their educational journey. By employing appropriate techniques, students' reading comprehension stands to gain a remarkable enhancement. These strategies not only aid learners in better interpreting texts but also encourage them to engage in more active, critical, and thoughtful reading. Ultimately, as time progresses, students' reading capabilities will advance, enabling them to more effortlessly navigate a variety of text types, whether they are expository, descriptive, or narrative.

CONCLUSION

The ability to comprehend texts is a fundamental skill that is highly important in education and contributes significantly to students' academic achievement. In this regard, reading techniques such as skimming and scanning have proven to be very helpful in enhancing text comprehension, especially for those learning a foreign language, such as English. Skimming allows students to quickly grasp the general idea of a text, while scanning is useful for locating specific information without reading the entire passage.

In addition, cognitive strategies such as activating prior knowledge, making predictions, asking questions, drawing conclusions, summarizing, visualizing, and monitoring comprehension also play a crucial role in supporting a more active and in depth understanding. Internal factors such as interest in reading, motivation, and language ability, along with external factors like teaching methods and the learning environment, have a significant influence on reading comprehension success.

REFERENCES

- Akbar, E. (2020). *Metode Belajar Anak Usia Dini*. Jakarta: Kencana.
- Berenzi, S. S. (2020). Problem Based Learning and its Impact On EFL Learners Engagement and Reading Comprehension. *Journal Of Language Horizons* , 149-174.
- Gilakjani, A. P. (2016). How Can Students Improve Their Reading Comprehension Skill. *Journal Of Studies in Education*.
- Haudi. (2021). *Strategi Pembelajaran*. Padang: Insan Cendikia Mandiri.
- Maiti, a. B. (1981). Keterampilan Membaca Pemahaman . *Journal Of Chemical Information and Modeling*.
- Marnius. (2016). Penerapan Strategi DRTA (Directed Reading Thinking Acticity) Untuk Meningkatkan Pemahaman Siswa Dalam Mencari Gagasan Pokok Krangan Narasi Pada Sisw Kelas IV SDN 003 Pagarahan Tapah Darussalam . *Jurnal Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar* , 42-50.
- Sarah Adelheit Frans, Y. A. (2023). Kemampuan Membaca Pemahaman Siswa Sekolah Dasar. *Journal Of Theology and Christian Education*.
- Simatupang, H. (2019). *Strategi Belajar Mengajar abad ke- 21*. Surabaya : Cipta Media Edukasi.
- Sudarmika, P. (2021). Model Problem Based Learning Meningkatkan Kemampuan Reading Coprehension Siswa. *Journal Of Educational Development*.
- Sunarti, S. (2021). *Pembelajaran Membaca Pemahaman di Sekolah Dasar*. Jawa Tengah: NEM

Yani Lubis, I. S. (2024). The Analysis of Understanding English Reading Text In Uinsu Students Mpi. 19-23.

Yuliana, N. Y. (2025). Students Understanding In Reading Text: A Literature Study. *Jurnal Ilmu Pengetahuan Naratif*