

## **An Online Reading Strategies among EFL University Students**

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### **ABSTRACT**

As online reading use has increased, reading strategies have become essential for people as they read online. A study by Zenotz (2012) perceive that reading strategies were described as mind operations, processes, or conceptual plans that readers use to enhance understanding and overcome difficulties while reading. This paper aims to investigate or find out what the strategy used by EFL University students on their online reading practice and are there any differences of online reading strategy use between males and females. Participants in this study consisted of 216 EFL students from various universities. This study employs quantitative research through a survey by using a questionnaire. A questionnaire will be adapted as an online survey of reading strategies (OSORS) by Anderson (2003). The findings show that students use problem-solving strategies more often when doing online reading activities, another finding is that there was no significant difference in the reading strategies used by male and female.

**Keywords:** online reading strategy, EFL students

### **INTRODUCTION**

Online reading is a reading process that uses technology and internet media. The use of online reading offers several benefits and improve reading comprehension. Abanomey (2013) claim that online reading can improve the reading quality of the students and also help students to understand the content of the online text. Online reading is considered more effective than traditional reading processes in enhancing the reading comprehension of students. This present research shows that reading practice using online texts can increase students' effectiveness in reading skills.

Additionally, Kang (2014) analyze that these hypertext features make online reading a tool for generating information from various sources. This study revealed that it helps to manage wider knowledge in the reading process and as a major factor influencing reading comprehension. Then, Huang, Chern and Lin (2009) analyze that online reading is the main source for EFL learners as the internet provides a variety of easy-to-access reading material as a support that can enhance reading understanding. The data shows that readers who had more significant knowledge previously can help them to understand online reading more easily.

As online reading use has increased, reading strategies have become essential for people as they read online. Zenotz (2012) stated that reading strategies were described as mind operations, processes, or conceptual plans that readers use to enhance understanding and overcome difficulties while reading. Previous researchers show that online reading strategies can increase their understanding (e.g Chen, 2015; Huang et al., 2009; Park, Yang, & Hsieh, 2014). For example, Chen(2015) examine the strategies in online reading and how they affect the understanding of the use of these strategies and also to examine which strategies are most effective when reading online texts for EFL students. The finding indicates that global approaches on online reading help students recognize the intent of reading and track their reading processes, helping them to better understand the text and retain information.

In addition, Park et al. (2014) in his study examine the effect and how the experience by EFL students after they using online reading strategies. This study shows that global strategies have a positive effect on EFL readers, so they prefer to use more global strategies, which are different from previous research.

The examination of the previous studies as discussed earlier have presented two critical issues. A study conducted by Jusoh & Abdullah (2015). For example, the limitation is that OSORS is a 'self-perception' tool. Therefore, its usage must be closely monitored because it is not possible to tell with certainty

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whether it is involved in using the strategy as reported. In addition, a study conducted by Taki (2016) the participants came from only two linguistic backgrounds. If there are participants from other languages and cultural backgrounds, it will be better to enrich our understanding of cross-languages and cross-cultures which influence the use of metacognitive strategies.

Although the study related to the use of online reading strategies among EFL students abound in learning (Abanomey, 2013; Kang, 2014; Lin, 2014) however, online reading strategy use for EFL University student's in language learning has not yet been explored in Indonesia. Thus it is important to investigate how and what the strategies use among EFL University students when they doing an online reading. The examination of online reading strategies useful and can improve the students understanding while reading. Abanomey (Abanomey, 2013) claimed that online reading can improve the reading quality of the students and also help students to understand the content of the online text.

In the current study, reading online is used on students' reading practices to find out their utilization and their strategy use on reading online. Specifically, this paper attempts to investigate or find out the strategy of online reading use for students' language learning at University. The paper will be significant to help student particularly on how online reading strategy use on reading comprehension. This paper will also contribute to the current literature on the use of online reading strategy among EFL University students.

## **Literature Review**

### **Online Reading**

More people are reading digitally as books are turned into electronic forms such as ebooks, or websites, so that digitally reading is becoming a phenomenon. Educational institutions such as colleges offer more online courses for their students; news outlets offer online newspapers; and publisher made more electronic books and journals that accessible. As stated by Manalu (2019), the effect of the availability of online text is that the way people read recently has modified. A lot of students now prefer to read the online texts that provide them a new experience. The online texts often improve the experience of reading, as they provide a large variety of knowledge. Then, Park et al.(2014) Online reading becomes a main source of information for ESL / EFL learners as the Internet offers a variety of reading materials with the benefit of providing immediate access to various of support services that can improve understanding reading.

In addition, (Lin, 2014) found that online reading program not just to effectively increased learners' ability to read but also enhanced their enthusiasm for reading and improved their interest in reading. The mature learners emphasized the importance of reading for fun, and emphasized the learner's uniqueness in the online reading program. Zenotz(2012) also show that online reading has become more and more popular and, as a result , online reading has become increasingly important.

### **Online Reading Strategies**

In order to comprehend a specific reading, the reader has an aim before reading whether to search for information, conduct research, relaxation, or doing assignments, etc. Readers have various strategies in reading to make an online text material easier for them to understand. For example, Huang et al. (2009) state that there are three types of reading strategies: global strategies, problem-solving strategies, and support strategies. Global strategy has a goal in mind when you want to read, thinking about what you know to help you understand or asses the meaning of the text, evaluate the type of text, check whether the text's content suits the intent, and note the text's characteristics such as length and structure. Problem solving techniques are used to solve problems when the text is difficult; including, to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words, to read slowly and to re-read the text to increase comprehension. Support strategies are used to help understanding, such as using a dictionary, taking text notes, or translating into the target language frommothertongue.

Also, Lee, Kigamwa, Pookcharoen and In (2013) perceived that the categorization of reading methods includes three subcategories. Global strategies are those strategies which language learners use to prepare, manage and review their reading. Examples of global reading strategies include setting a objective for reading, and checking whether the information suits the goal. Problem-solving strategies include techniques or actions that language learners take to strengthen communication problems and develop them. Examples of problem-solving techniques include changing reading speed, paying more attention to reading and pausing to focus on reading. Support strategies are the tools used by readers

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to achieve comprehension when problem-solving strategies aren't enough. Examples of reading support strategies such as taking notes, paraphrasing texts and using dictionaries.

Then, Usó-Juan and Ruiz-Madrid (2009) indicated that Three major categories of strategies , i.e. global reading strategies (along with talking about what you know to help you understand reading, among others); problem-solving strategies (such as changing reading levels or re-reading hard text, among others); and support reading strategies (such as writing notes or reading aloud, among others).

### ***The Impact of Reading Strategies***

The use of strategies helps student to online reading activities and has a positive impact on readers. Huang et al.(2009). The use of reading strategies is known as an important way to improve comprehension of reading. Zenotz (2012) in his research show that after analyzing that students were having difficulty reading online, it was concluded that reading strategies could contribute to improving online reading. The findings show that the teaching of metacognitive strategies has a positive impact on online reading but does not influence the amount of strategies used.

Jusoh and Abdullah (2015) the research found that they are moderate strategy users. The strategy most often used is problem solving while the least strategy used is support strategy. Then, Pinker (2003) shows that strategies used in online reading play a positive role in student learning and improve the reading comprehension level. Online-based reading allows students to understand content reading more effectively and offers a number of additional tools to the readers. The studied revealed that reading online has a better impact than learning based on paper.

In addition, Abanomey (2013) Reviewing the impacts on academic performance of these online reading approaches and specific learning types. The findings showed that reading strategies may be used to help students with various learning styles process the knowledge they may experience in online learning environments. Lee, Kigamwa, Pookcharoen and In (2013) studies indicate that using metacognitive reading strategies will reader 's prior solve challenges they experience and eventually gain comprehension of the reading.

### ***Research Questions:***

The study explore the following questions:

1. What are the online reading strategies use by EFL learners?
2. Are there any differences of online reading strategy use between males and females?

These questions were examined with data obtained from quantitative research tools.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

Participants in this study were consisted of 216 EFL students from various universities. Table 1 shows the demographic of participants, based on level of education, gender and age. As shown in table 1, participants level of education starting from Diploma, Undergraduate, and Postgraduate level. 69% N= 149 participants were female and 31% N= 67 were male who all ranged in age from <18 to >24 years.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The study used the Online Survey of Reading Strategies (OSORS), adapted from the research by Anderson (2003). In this survey there are 38 items that are classified into three categories, including Global strategies (18 items N=1,2,3,5,6,8,10,14,17,18,20,23,24,26,27,30,32,33); Problem-solving strategies (11 items N=9,11,13,16,19,22,28,31,34,35,36); and Supporting strategies (9 items N=4,7,12,15,21,25,29,37,38). Each statement can be filled with a Likert scale of 5 points (starting from 1= which means never, up to 5= which means always). The reliability index (Cronbach's alpha) of the total OSORS in this study were .89. The reliability value for the three categories of OSORS that are Global strategies, .83; Problem solving strategies, .81; and Support strategies, .78. The mean value in OSORS can be classified into three groups, i.e. (1.0-2.4) = low, (2.5-3.4) = medium, and (3.5-5.0) = high, this categories based on classification in Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995).

### ***Data analysis***

The survey results from the google questionnaire were downloaded for data analysis then data tabulated into Excel. Then descriptive statistics and independent sample t-tests was used to analyze the data.

**Tabel 1.** Demographic information of the respondents

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Female	149	69
Male	67	31
Total	216	100,0
<b>Level of Education</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Diploma	14	6,5
Undegraduate	198	91,7
Postgraduate	4	1,9
Total	216	100,0
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
< 18 Years old	3	1,4
18-20 Years old	30	13,9
21-24 Years old	176	81,5
> 24 Years old	7	3,2
Total	216	100,0

### Analysis of Result

#### Answer for the first research question

What are the online reading strategies use by EFL learners?

Reported Strategies by usage level

Based on Oxford and Burry-Stock(1995), there are three categories used to determine strategies based on the frequency of use, there are (1.0-2.4) means low, (2.5-3.4) means medium, and (3.5-5, 0) means high. Table 2 contains the division of use strategies.

**Tabel 2.** Reported Strategies by usage level

Type of usage	No of strategies	Percent
High	11	29 %
Medium	25	66 %
Low	2	5 %

For the 38 items found in the online reading strategies, 11 (29 %) items are listed in the high group as the mean value between 3.5-5.0. This can be interpreted that these strategy high usage by students as they learn online. Meanwhile, there are 24 (66 %) products that fall into the medium category with an average value of 2.5-3.4. That can be taken to mean that these strategies medium usage by students when reading online. The last category is the low category, which has a mean value between 1.0-2.4, there are only 2 (5 percent) items, this indicated that there are only 2 items that they low usage or almost never use while reading online.

Reported strategy based on Individual Strategies

Table 3 reveals the result of the top seven strategies and bottom seven strategies. In the highest strategy section, items *I try to get back on track when I lose concentration* (**Problem solving**) with a mean value 4,26 became the highest strategy that most often used by students, then followed by *I think about what I know to help me understand what I read online* (**Global Strategy**). Of the top seven strategies, four of them are Problem Solving strategies, three of them are Global strategies. While for bottom seven

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strategies, the bottom strategies is items *I participate in live chat with native speakers of English* (**Global Strategy**) with mean value 1,64.

**Tabel 3.** Top and Bottom Seven Strategies

Top seven strategies	Mean	Bottom seven strategies	Mean
11. I try to get back on track when I lose concentration ( <b>Problem Solving</b> )	4,27	12. I print out a hard copy of the on-line text then underline or circle information to help me remember it. ( <b>Support Strategy</b> )	3,02
5. I think about what I know to help me understand what I read online ( <b>Global Strategy</b> )	4,18	29. I ask myself questions I like to have answered in the on-line text. ( <b>Support Strategy</b> )	3,00
6. I take an overall view of the online text to see what it is about before reading it. ( <b>Global Strategy</b> )	4,05	7. When on-line text becomes difficult, I read aloud to help me understand what I read. ( <b>Support Strategy</b> )	2,82
16. When on-line text becomes difficult, I pay closer attention to what I am reading. ( <b>Problem Solving</b> )	4,05	4. I take notes while reading on-line to help me understand what I read. ( <b>Support Strategy</b> )	2,81
9. I read slowly and carefully to make sure I understand what I am reading on-line. ( <b>Problem Solving</b> )	4,00	18. I use tables, figures, and pictures in the on-line text to increase my understanding. ( <b>Global Strategy</b> )	2,79
28. When on-line text becomes difficult, I re-read it to increase my understanding. ( <b>Problem Solving</b> )	3,86	1. I participate in live chat with other learners of English. ( <b>Global Strategy</b> )	2,02
1. I have a purpose in mind when I read on line. ( <b>Global Strategy</b> )	3,83	3. I participate in live chat with native speakers of English. ( <b>Global Strategy</b> )	1,64

**Answer for the second research question**

*Are there any differences of online reading strategy use between males and females?*

The results were analyzed using an independent sample t-test to compare and investigate variations in the use of online reading strategies in both male and female. There were 149 female, and 67 male in this sample. The results show that there is no significant difference in the overall strategy based on the basis of taking a decision if the value of sig. (2-tailed) > 0.05, then there is no significant difference.

		Independent Samples Test				
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Overall Strategy	Equal variances assumed	,003	,953	1,473	646	,141
	Equal variances not assumed			1,461	378,199	,145

This study used OSORS to collect information about the students' use of reading strategies. 38 Such strategies are the reading strategies that are commonly used by anyone as they read online. The first thing discussed in this research is about Strategies usage by level. There are 3 categories in this section, including high, medium and low, used to assess the degree of use of the Strategy. The finding show that 11 items (29 %) are listed in the high group as the mean value between 3.5- 5.0. This can be interpreted that these strategy high usage by students as they learn online, In this high category, the strategy used

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is dominated by a global strategy of five items, four items are problem-solving and two items support strategy. Meanwhile, there are 24 (66 %) products that fall into the medium category with an average value of 2.5-3.4. That can be taken to mean that these strategies medium usage by students when reading online. The last category is the low category, which has a mean value between 1.0- 2.4, there are only 2 (5 percent) items, this indicated that there are only 2 items that they low usage or almost never use while reading online.

The second thing discussed in this research is about the strategy usage based on Individual Strategies. The findings show that students use problem solving strategies more often when doing online reading activities, This is also the same with previous research that shows that students more frequently use problem solving strategies when doing online reading activities (Jusoh & Abdullah, 2015). It is clear from the results obtained in the top and bottom strategies table, problem solving strategy is on the top, followed by Global strategy. Problem solving strategy has the highest mean value that include in the high category. It found that EFL's online readers tend to use more problem solving strategy, such as to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words, to read slowly and to re-read the text to increase comprehension (Lee et al., 2013). Otherwise, eventhough the lowest mean value of the bottom ten strategies is a global strategy, it was found that the strategy least used by students was support strategy based on overall value compared to the other two strategies. This finding is similar to the research findings carried out by Ramli, Darus and Bakar(2011). Another finding is that there was no significant difference in the reading strategies used by male and female, this finding is supported by previous studies that show the same results (Taki & Soleimani, 2012).

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings and discussion above, this study found that the use of the strategy most frequently used by EFL students is problem-solving strategy. This result can be seen from table 3 which showed that the problem-solving strategy stan on the top with the highest mean value. It can be interpreted that students prefer to use strategies such as changing reading speed, paying more attention to reading and pausing to focus on reading to make it easier for them to read online. Then, it was found that the strategy least used by students was global strategy based on overall value compared to the other two strategies. The most rarely used of global strategy is the point "I participate in live chat with native speakers of English", it can be explained that students rarely participated in live chat when they are reading online. This research also show that there is no different between male and female on their online reading strategy. It can be seen from the table of independent sample t-test that the value of sig (2-tailed) is .141. Based on the basic of taking a decision, if the value of Sig. (2-tailed)> 0.05, then there is no significant difference.

This research also has limitations including the number of participants, of the total 216 participants, 69 percent of them are female, although it does not cause problems, however it would be better if the number of participants could be balanced or not much different in number. In addition, variations in educational level are some of the limitations, in this study there are three educational levels, there are Diploma, Undergraduate, and Postgraduate. Differences in educational level can allow for differences in ability. For this reason, participants with the same level of education will be much better for achieving better outcomes in future studies.

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