

**SPEED READING: UNIVERSITY EFL STUDENTS'  
STRATEGIES AND PERCEPTIONS**

**A Thesis**

**Presented in partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Master of Education Degree in English**

**by**

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## ABSTRAK

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Pengajaran *Reading* di kelas seringkali *teacher centered* dan berfokus pada paparan pengetahuan dari teks yang dibaca, penekanan pembelajaran lebih kepada hasil pemahaman daripada proses memahami itu sendiri. Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk memaksimalkan partisipasi siswa dalam mengevaluasi dirinya dengan melalui program *Speed Reading*, untuk menemukan strategi-strategi yang mereka gunakan dalam proses membaca, dan juga untuk menemukan persepsi siswa terhadap teknik *Speed Reading* dalam meningkatkan pemahaman membaca teks berbahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini dilakukan pada 21 mahasiswa semester 5 Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pengetahuan tahun akademik 20017/20018.

Metode penelitian kualitatif ini adalah *case study*. Penelitian ini mengambil data dari mahasiswa dengan meminta mahasiswa membaca beberapa jenis genre teks berbahasa Inggris yang berbeda dan mengukur kecepatan membacanya (*Speed Reading*), menjawab pertanyaan bacaan, menuliskan hasil dan pemahaman membaca pada grafik, menulis jurnal refleksi tentang proses membaca, dan melakukan wawancara dengan peneliti. Grafik, jurnal, dan hasil wawancara tersebut di analisa untuk menemukan bagaimana proses mahasiswa dalam membaca, pencapaian pemahaman, penggunaan strategi membaca dan persepsi mereka terhadap program *Speed Reading*.

Berdasarkan hasil dari grafik, meskipun rata-rata kecepatan membaca mahasiswa tidak mencapai kecepatan ideal yaitu 300wpm, namun terlihat kenaikan dalam pencapaian kecepatan dan pemahaman membaca. Pada jurnal dan wawancara mahasiswa mengatakan bahwa sebagian besar dari mereka tidak memikirkan strategi ketika membaca teks, mereka hanya membaca judul dan isi teks secara langsung. Sebagian besar dari mereka membaca secara perlahan dan bahkan membaca ulang keseluruhan teks untuk memastikan mereka dapat memahami bagian-bagian yang sulit dari teks tersebut, tapi jika mereka merasa dapat memahami teks dengan mudah mereka hanya membaca dengan cepat sekali saja, beberapa mahasiswa sudah menerapkan reading strategi seperti skimming, scanning, dan previewing. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa tanpa mereka sadari sebenarnya mereka telah menerapkan *cognitive strategies* saat mereka membaca, dan karena mereka juga terlibat dalam memikirkan proses membaca, melakukan *self-monitoring* dan *self-evaluation*, ini berarti mahasiswa telah menerapkan *meta-cognitive strategies*. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa meskipun rata-rata kecepatan membaca mahasiswa masih rendah, ini tidak berarti pemahaman mereka terhadap teks juga rendah. Pada level ini, mereka telah menerapkan kemampuan dan strategi membaca, dan dengan mengetahui kelemahan mereka sendiri, mereka dapat memperbaiki kemampuan mereka untuk menjadi lebih baik.

## ABSTRACT

Poppy Sofia Hidayati. Speed Reading: University EFL Students' Strategies and Perceptions. Thesis. Master of English Education. Graduate School University of Muhammadiyah Prof. DR. HAMKA. February 2018.

EFL reading classes are often teacher-centered and focus on direct knowledge transmission, the emphasis is often put on the production of comprehension rather than the processing skills. The present study attempted to maximize the students' participation in evaluating themselves by using speed reading program, to find out the strategies the use in the reading process, and to know the students' perceptions on speed reading in order to enhance their reading comprehension in English. The participants of the study were twenty one students of English Education Study Program of Faculty of Teachers Training and Educational Sciences, in the fifth semester of 2017/2018 academic year.

The method used for this study was qualitative case study research design. This design involved collecting data about and from the students by means of reading different types of English texts, answering the comprehension questions, putting the result of the speed and comprehension in the graphs, writing a reflection journal regarding the process of reading and answering the interview. Their graphs, reflection journals, and the result of interview were analyzed to find out how the students read the texts, how the achievement of the comprehension was, what strategies they used during the reading process and what perceptions they have toward the speed reading program.

Based on the results of students' reading rate and reading comprehension, although the average rate cannot achieve the ideal speed 300 wpm, the sign of the students' improvement was seen both on the students' reading speed rate and also the reading comprehension. Findings from the students' journals and interview showed that most of the students did not think the reading strategies when they got a text, they used to see the title and just read it. Most of them still read slowly and even re-read the whole passage to measure the understanding for difficult texts, but when it came to the easier and interesting texts they read it once and faster. Some students had already applied skimming, scanning, and previewing. It can be concluded that the students that the students actually had used some cognitive strategies by applying some techniques while they read, and as they involved in thinking about their own reading process, doing the self-monitoring and self-evaluation, it means that they used metacognitive strategies. This study also reveals that although the students' reading rate remains low, they are not poor readers. At this level, they have acquired some reading skills and strategies, and by recognizing their own weaknesses, they have tried to improve themselves to get better.

## THESIS COMMITTEE APPROVAL

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>TITLE</b> .....	i
<b>ABSTRAK</b> .....	ii
<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	iii
<b>THESIS ADVISOR APPROVAL</b> .....	iv
<b>THESIS COMMITTEE APPROVAL</b> .....	v
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b> .....	vi
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	vii
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b> .....	ix
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b> .....	x
<b>LIST OF APPENDICES</b> .....	xi
<b>CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION</b>	
A. Background to the Problems.....	1
B. Identification of the Problems.....	4
C. Limitation of the Problems.....	4
D. Research Questions .....	4
E. Objectives of the Research.....	5
F. Significance of the Research.....	5
G. The Definition of Key Terms .....	6
<b>CHAPTER II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK</b>	
A. Review of Previous Research.....	7
B. Theoretical Framework.....	10
1. Reading Comprehension Skill.....	10
2. Reading Comprehension Strategy.....	13
3. Speed Reading .....	15

### CHAPTER III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Setting .....	29
B. Research Design... ..	29
C. Research Participants... ..	31
D. Data Collecting Techniques... ..	31
E. Research Instrument... ..	32
F. Data Analysis .....	34

### CHAPTER IV. RESULT OF DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

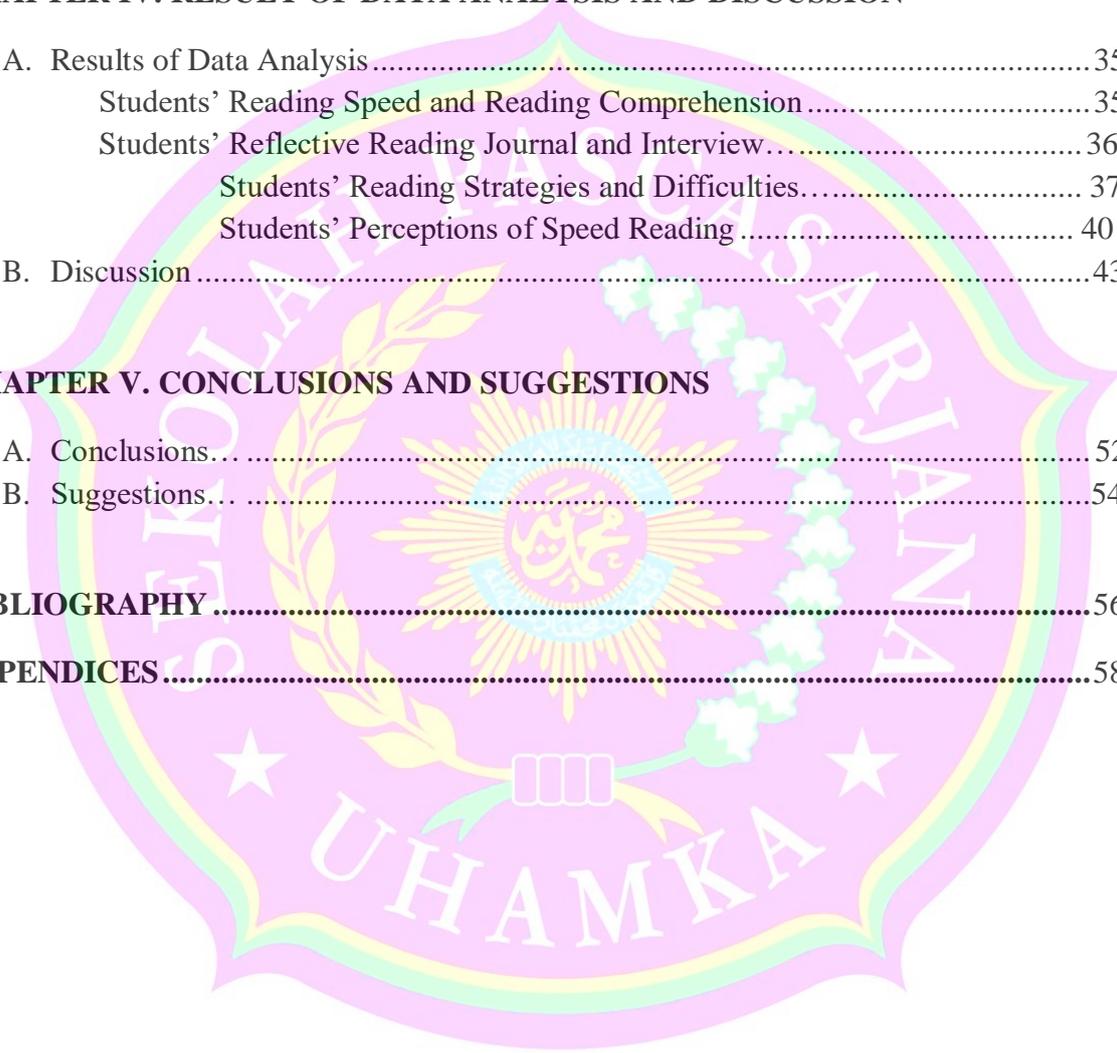
A. Results of Data Analysis .....	35
Students' Reading Speed and Reading Comprehension .....	35
Students' Reflective Reading Journal and Interview... ..	36
Students' Reading Strategies and Difficulties.....	37
Students' Perceptions of Speed Reading .....	40
B. Discussion .....	43

### CHAPTER V. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusions.....	52
B. Suggestions.....	54

<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>56</b>
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<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>58</b>
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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background to the Problem

Nowadays, the ability to read and understand materials written in English is very important. It is one of the requirements to succeed not only in academic life but also in occupation, as most information and references are written in English. This condition turns out to be one of the major concerns in the development of English teaching in Indonesia, then it is understandable that reading ability should be acquired by Indonesian' students and that the institutions should involve in preparing their graduates to be the efficient readers.

Research on reading has shown that reading is a complex cognitive activity that is indispensable for adequate functioning and for obtaining information in contemporary society. To enter the present literate society, students must know how to learn from reading (Graesser, in McNamara<sup>1</sup>) However, when students enter higher education with the reading demands that are placed upon them, they often select ineffective and inefficient strategies with little strategic intent, those are the fact based on the researcher experience in teaching reading at English education study program of FKIP Universitas Pakuan Bogor. Furthermore students in this study program assume that, when reading English texts, the author's intended meaning lies within the printed words, leaving the reading process as no more than obtaining meaning from the words on the page. They approach reading passively, relying heavily on the bilingual dictionary and spending long hours laboring over sentence-by-sentence translations. Despite all the efforts they make, their reading comprehension still remains poor. This condition happens because they are not equipped with the ability to comprehend the text. Comprehension refers to the ability to go beyond the words, to understand the ideas and the

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<sup>1</sup>McNamara, D. S. 2007. *Reading comprehension strategies*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

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relationships between ideas conveyed in a text (McNamara<sup>2</sup>). Some readers may understand each word separately, but linking them together into meaningful ideas often doesn't happen as it should. These readers can decode the words, but have not developed sufficient skills to comprehend the underlying, deeper meaning of the sentences, the paragraphs, and the entire text (McNamara<sup>3</sup>).

The use of effective and efficient reading comprehension strategies might be important in helping readers improve comprehension and learning from text. In addition to effective and efficient, as the researcher observes in her reading class, eight out of ten students would list reading as a frivolous activity in which they have no inclination due to the amount of time it takes them to get through a single book. Students feel the pressure of time as they are faced with lots of homework and required reading. Some others feel that reading is frustrating because they are lack of purpose and concentration. The answer for their problem might lay on how to make the process of reading shorter in time but gain a good comprehension. One of the strategies that can make reading comprehension effective and efficient is by applying speed reading. Speed reading is the act of quickly absorbing written information. The goal is to read quickly but still retain comprehension of the material (Konstant<sup>4</sup>). Speed reading is characterized by an analysis of trade-offs between measures of speed and comprehension, recognizing that different types of reading call for different speed and comprehension rates, and that those rates may be improved with practice. (McNamara<sup>5</sup>). The rate at which people read material is not a constant and varies greatly depending on several factors. Students might find it hard to comprehend the text in a limited time, yet it

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<sup>2</sup> McNamara, D. S. 2007. *Reading comprehension strategies*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

<sup>3</sup> McNamara, D. S. 2007. *Reading comprehension strategies*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

<sup>4</sup> Konstant, T. 2003. *Speed reading*. London: McGraw- Hill.

<sup>5</sup> McNamara, D. S. 2007. *Reading comprehension strategies*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

will force them to use some techniques such as skimming, scanning, therefore they will not rely on translating individual words.

A study conducted by Abdelrahman & Bsharah <sup>6</sup>(2014) find that there was a significant difference on reading comprehension due to speed reading strategies and that indicated that training was effective for the experimental group which can be due training procedures and the instructional activities improved the students' performance on the reading comprehension scale as there were no learning chances for the controlled group. The students who participated in the study showed the motivation and attraction during the training sessions based on speed reading. In line with this study, Wardani <sup>7</sup>(2014) conducted a study which reveals that speed reading and extensive reading activities benefited students by making them aware of using certain strategy to understand the meaning of text quickly, improved their reading fluency, and increase and encourage a positive attitude towards reading fluency.

However, as the researcher observes in 3 reading classrooms at English education study program of FKIP Universitas Pakuan Bogor, it can be seen that students have received inadequate instruction on reading skills and strategies, to observe further, EFL language classes are often teacher centered and focus on direct knowledge transmission. In other words, teachers' emphasis is often put on the production of comprehension rather than the processing skills. The present study attempted to maximize the students' participation in evaluating themselves regarding the process of gaining information by using speed reading strategies, in order to enhance their reading comprehension in English.

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<sup>6</sup> Abdelrahman, M. & Bsharah, M. 2014. *The effect of Speed Reading Strategies on Developing Reading Comprehension among the 2<sup>nd</sup> Secondary Students in English Language*. English language Teaching; Vol.7, No 6: ISSN 1916-4742 E-ISSN 1916-4750. Canadian Center of Science and Education

<sup>7</sup> Wardani, Sri. 2014. *Using Speed Reading and extensive Reading Activities to Improve Students' reading Fluency*. Jurnal Pendidikan Humaniora, Vol.2 No 3. ISSN 2338-8110

## **B. Identification of the Problems**

Referring to the background of the study, in reading classes at English education study program of FKIP Universitas Pakuan Bogor, the following problems can be identified:

1. Students still have difficulty to master vocabulary, they are still relying heavily on the bilingual dictionary.
2. Students are not able to link the words into meaningful ideas, spending long hours laboring over sentence-by-sentence translations to get the comprehension.
3. Students are lack of purpose and focus in reading; therefore they tend to grasp the information on the text slowly.
4. Lack of guidance and assistance in applying the reading strategies. Students might have knowledge on some reading strategies given by the teacher but they are not given enough guidance and assistance to apply and evaluate it in and outside the class.
5. Insufficient practices and encouragement to apply reading strategies in and outside the class. Encouragement can be given by asking students to make graphs and journals regarding their process in facing reading texts.

## **C. Limitation of the Problems**

This study focuses on investigating the use of speed reading as a process of gaining more information from different texts in a limited amount of time as a way to improve the comprehension, by finding the students' strategies and perception during its process

## **D. Research Questions**

Referring to the limitation of problems, the following research questions are formulated:

1. How is the students' reading rate and reading comprehension achievement?
2. What are the strategies used by the students in the process of speed reading?

3. What are the students' perceptions on speed reading?

### **E. Objectives of the Research**

Based on the formulation of the problems above, the study, therefore, aims to:

1. find out the achievement of students' reading rate and reading comprehension.
2. find out the reading strategies used by the students when they read English texts in a limited time.
3. identify the perceptions of the students when they apply speed reading

### **F. Significance of the Research**

It is expected that the findings of the study would give contributions not only theoretically but also practically for the EFL teaching and learning process.

#### **a. Theoretical Contributions**

Theoretically, the findings of the research may be of benefit for supporting the theories on reading comprehension.

#### **b. Practical Contributions**

The result of the study is expected to give some valuable input to:

- 1) the development of teaching reading which derives from practices in the classroom;
- 2) the reading teachers as it can be used as a syllabus to design the teaching reading and learning process, the data can be used as guidance for the teachers to improve the quality of their lessons as a feedback to what they have taught in the class;
- 3) the students to encourage them to improve their reading comprehension by applying the speed reading; and

- 4) to other researchers who are interested in further development of reading instructions to be developed on further research.

### G. The Definition of Key Terms

A *reading comprehension strategy* is a cognitive or behavioral action that is enacted under particular contextual conditions, with the goal of improving some aspect of comprehension. *Reading speed strategy* is the strategy of how fast the reader reads, usually silently, consciously or unconsciously for the purpose of facilitating text. *Reading ability* is the ability to gain the information from the text rapidly and accurately.

*Reflection* is the process of considering an experience, idea, or feeling in light of other experiences, ideas, or feelings. To *reflect on reading* is to take the ideas and sense impressions, the mood and expressions that the author has conveyed to by language, and compare them to other mental constructs such as your own experiences, beliefs, values, or other texts someone has read, or other ideas or sense impressions within the text itself.

*Perception* is the awareness of something through the senses. In other words it's the ability to see, hear, understand or become aware of something.

*Stimulated Recall Interview* is a subset of introspective research methods which accesses participants' reflection on mental processes and has its origins in philosophy and psychology.

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