

DISENTANGLING GENDER ATTITUDES IN READING COMPREHENSION

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Abstract

Research on gender has been found in reading comprehension, where it has been explored. However, the literature provides limited empirical evidence to indicate whether males and females show similarities or different attitudes towards it. This analysis investigated male and female attitudes towards reading comprehension and their similarities or differences. The data was under a qualitative approach involving ten students. Five males and five females are taken from the management department. An interview is selected to collect the data. The data revealed that either males or females showed similar reading comprehension attitudes. They offer an unfavourable attitude since the same problem they faced was vocabulary and pronunciation. The differences rely on reading interest in motivation; males have more excellent reasons than females.

Keywords: Gender, Attitude, Reading Comprehension

INTRODUCTION

Researchers have become increasingly interested in describing language and gender in recent years. Knowledge of language and gender is significant for learning a language. One of the language skills which is stressed is reading. Reading is defined as the interaction process involving two aspects; reader and text. Readers' conscious effort in understanding what the authors imply in a text refers to reading comprehension. Each reader has a different viewpoint on the text that is read. Readers' background knowledge can cause it. The different gender of the readers is a vital factor. Other physical characteristics which males and females identify could be named as gender. Different genders are affected by the intellectual activity or prior knowledge, including reading or understanding a text (Asgarabadi, Rouhi & Jafarigohar, 2015).

As mentioned in the earlier paragraph, the reading activity involves two aspects; one of the two aspects is a text. The text could be regarded as a genre. The study of gender and genre showed that both males and females have different performances depending on the genre itself, and there were no significant differences in text comprehension (Asgarabadi, Rouhi & Jafarigohar, 2015; Salehi, Lari & Rezanejad, 2014). The text in the reading could be seen from the topic and the readers' content. In relating to gender, research has been conducted in terms of gender and content familiarity in reading comprehension. The findings have consistently indicated that content familiarity facilitated an effect on reading comprehension (Brantmeier, 2003; Al-Shumaimeri, 2006; Martinez., 2014).

Each reader has a different technique in catching what the text means. Getting the text's meaning was illustrated as a reading strategy. These researchers compared scilicet synthetic phonics and hybrid approach (Mohr & Price, 2017). The result revealed that males learn more efficiently using whole-word and synthetic phonics approaches. In addition, the evidence indicates that

males learn to read more efficiently using the natural-style language of 'real' books, including vocabulary which goes beyond their assumed decoding ability.

The other aspects that could influence both males and females to comprehend text were socioeconomic and home language. It proved that home language influenced text comprehension for gender, but different socioeconomic, either high or low, did not impact gender in reading comprehension (Seabi, Cockcroft & Goldschagg, 2016). At the same time, the study of gender and background knowledge that used test items revealed that females got a higher score than males in terms of identifying ideas (Yazdanpanah., K. 2007). The mean of earlier sentences can be concluded here that background knowledge recreated a crucial thing in reading comprehension. The result of those analyses is various. Some findings show that male score is higher than female in comprehending text by reading and vice versa.

The English language itself caused research into reasons affecting students' reading comprehension. It was too challenging to learn. So the students relied on their attitude toward negative perspectives (Alroud, 2015). Attitude is regarded as a complicated event. As mentioned in an earlier sentence, attitude could be positive or negative towards the issue's circumstances (Mukherjee, 1979). "Attitude exerts a great influence on reading, language learning, and general academic work" (Blair, Jones and Simpson, 1975, as cited in Awe, 2014, p. 205). The other findings (Pagal & Ypanto, 2017) found that students had positive attitudes toward reading comprehension. Based on that discoveries, it was unclear in terms of gender because the study focused on students. So, we did not know which gender students' attitudes specifically.

This contradiction needed to be examined intensely. There were similarities or differences in the attitude of gender in reading comprehension. The curiosity about issues is still infrequent. Therefore, the researchers formulate the research question such as:

- a. What are male attitudes toward reading comprehension?
- b. What are female attitudes toward reading comprehension?
- c. What are the similarities and differences between males and females in reading comprehension?

METHOD

The research is conducted at one private university in Karawang. The researchers considered the place representative of reading comprehension activities researches setting niche. Besides that, it was an appropriate place to investigate gender differences since the issues of males dominated reading achievement and females were underachievements. The data was underneath a qualitative approach involving ten students with strengthened interviewing as the tool for collecting data. Five males and five females are taken from the management department in one private university in Karawang. The topic was limited only to the text and did not embrace the GPA.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Reading is a kind of activity that is convoluted. Further, the reading activity demanded that readers detect what the text meant. The complexity itself relied on the uncomfortable words

English as a foreign language in Indonesia. This issue influenced readers' interest in reading comprehension, even their attitude towards it. As described earlier, this study focused on gender attitudes towards reading comprehension; it involved males and females. In responding to the question research, The researchers interviewed the participants who guided the indicator such as topic, motivation, and problem faced.

In terms of matter, females tended to be interested in trend issue topics since it would give them more knowledge, while males liked to read English text on technology and research related to media. It was clear that the case would influence reading interest in gender, in line with The findings revealed that gender affects learners' topic familiarity and influences their L2 reading comprehension (Ismail& Fadzil, 2010). The motivation was crucial since it would decide how high or low readers could comprehend English text. Although the problem they faced was the same, vocabulary and pronunciation, the other evidence showed females got less motivation to do reading than males. Male tended to read the summary, such as abstracts, while starting a task. They perceived that the abstract held the explanation in all chapters. Meanwhile, females directly notice the text, and if some unfamiliar words are identified, they move and change their reading text. In solving the problem faced, females attempted to look for dictionaries, ask for friends, and even search the internet. The other findings also revealed that females read while they had a task for their class, while males never waited for the job to read.

The question on various topics was given to recognise how both males and females perceive a different matter if they have to comprehend it. The findings showed that males tended to be curious about the topic that they did not know about by searching the case on the internet, while females left the text which topic was difficult to read even comprehend and stop to read; they referred it to lost mood.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion in the afore section, the authors endeavour to conclude the results of this study:

- a. The warm issues are that females have been positioned as the attractive learners, while the male gender prefers matters related to media and technology,
- b. The topic remains the central point of interest in learning within the framework of English reading comprehension for male and female learners,
- c. Vocabulary and pronunciation are challenging things to go through for male and female learners in English reading comprehension, and this ability will affect the motivation of learners in learning English reading comprehension,
- d. Female learners are more interested in reading the abstract first, while male learners are more interested in directly reading the text as a whole,
- e. Female learners prefer to use a dictionary to look up the meaning of words, while male learners are less likely to use a dictionary to find substances that are considered complex.

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