

SCIENCEDIRECT: ESSENTIAL RESEARCH FOR DEVELOPING READING COMPREHENSION IN NARRATIVE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Aldina kamila¹, feri ferdiyanto², raudhatul islam³

¹²³Tadris bahasa inggris universitas islam zainul hasan genggong
aldinakamila012@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effectiveness of ScienceDirect in enhancing English reading comprehension among students at the Islamic University of Zainul Hasan Genggong. Employing a narrative qualitative approach, data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation involving two English education students who had actively used ScienceDirect. The analysis revealed that ScienceDirect contributed to improvements in academic vocabulary acquisition, critical reading skills, and information evaluation abilities. Despite challenges such as limited access to full-text articles and complex academic language, both participants acknowledged the platform's role in fostering independent and analytical reading habits. These findings suggest that ScienceDirect can serve as an innovative learning resource for improving English reading proficiency in higher education. The study recommends its strategic integration into English language instruction and proposes further research with larger and more diverse samples to explore its broader pedagogical impact.

Keywords: *ScienceDirect, Reading Comprehension, Narrative Qualitative*

1. Introduction

Technology has become a central component of students' academic lives, making its integration into the learning process increasingly essential. In the context of English language education, especially for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, technology offers valuable tools to support comprehension and literacy development. According to Islam (2024) lecturers play a crucial role in facilitating the acquisition of relevant and sufficient English skills. However, EFL students often encounter various challenges, including the simultaneous mastery of four language micro-skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Ferdiyanto et al., 2024). Moreover, for some learners, studying English can feel burdensome and obligatory rather than engaging (Zainuddin, 2022).

In line with the advancement of digital technologies, scientific publications have undergone a major transformation. The emergence of internet-based platforms has enabled broader, more efficient access to scholarly content. Electronic journals (e-journals) now serve

as a primary mode of academic publication, allowing researchers worldwide to disseminate and access up-to-date scientific information without the limitations of geography or time (Hilmi et al., 2018). This digital shift has significantly enhanced the accessibility of knowledge and fostered global academic collaboration.

One of the most widely used and reputable e-journal platforms is ScienceDirect, which offers access to thousands of peer-reviewed journals and academic e-books published by Elsevier and affiliated publishers. The platform enables users to search, download, and engage with current scholarly articles across diverse fields, including science, technology, medicine, and the social sciences. As a result, ScienceDirect has emerged as a key academic resource, supporting researchers and students in deepening their subject knowledge and advancing scholarly inquiry (Nashihuddin & Rahayu, 2013).

In the Rustic area, teaching English to young learners is not required although in Indonesia English has been taught in some schools since 1994 (Islam, 2023). ScienceDirect can also serve as an effective tool to improve English reading comprehension, as many scientific articles are published in English. In the world of education itself, foreign language skills such as English are one of the important and fundamental skills that allow a person to improve his performance (Islam, 2023). The integration of technology in education has revolutionized the way students learn to acquire and develop literacy skills in an increasingly digital world, making this platform a valuable tool to improve their ability to read and understand academic texts in English.

Reading is a crucial skill that should be accomplished by students in the English language. In general, reading refers to the capacity of a person to understand what they have read and derive the content of the text. Caroline defined reading as a combination of competencies that includes the interpretation and derivation of meaning from the written word. Additionally, Lydia pointed out that reading skills might be regarded as the capability to comprehend reading content. In other words, Reading is a complex skill, because it is primarily concerned with the ability to comprehend and interpret the reading's contents (Hasana Lydia, 2023). In accordance with the previous definitions, it could be drawn simply that by having reading skills someone is capable of understanding reading content both explicitly and implicitly. Beny says To understand a reading selection thoroughly, a person must be able to use the information to draw conclusions and read critically and creatively to understand figurative language, determine the author's purpose, evaluate the ideas presented, and apply those ideas to actual situations (Hamdani, 2020). fluency and proper comprehension restore lost confidence, instill joy in reading, and prevent excessive reliance on dictionaries. According to Ferry, reading is a stepping stone to success both in education and in everyday life. Reading helps students improve critical thinking, analytical skills, and effective communication skills (Ferdiyanto et al., 2024).

Thus, ScienceDirect is not only a source of extensive and easily accessible scientific information (Dewi, 2019). but also an effective means to improve students' English language

and literacy skills, so that they can be better prepared to face academic and professional challenges in this digital era. Therefore, the integration of ScienceDirect in education can be an effective strategy to improve the quality of education and improve students' ability to access and utilize the latest scientific information. Previous studies have shown that English reading ability is important for both students and researchers. However, little is known about how ScienceDirect specifically supports reading comprehension. Although widely used as an academic resource, its impact on English reading development has not been thoroughly studied. This research fills that gap by examining how ScienceDirect helps students improve their reading skills through a narrative qualitative approach.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design with a narrative approach. Narrative research focuses on capturing individual experiences and presenting them in the form of chronological stories (Yusanto, 2020). The aim was to explore how ScienceDirect serves as a tool for developing reading comprehension among university students. Data collection centered on students' personal accounts of using ScienceDirect to access and engage with academic texts. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather in-depth insights into their perceptions of the platform's effectiveness, as well as the challenges and benefits encountered during their reading and learning processes.

In this study, data were collected using three instruments: observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to capture natural student behavior while using ScienceDirect, allowing the researchers to gather firsthand data from real-life academic settings. This method provided initial insights into how students engaged with the platform to support their reading comprehension. In addition, in-depth semi-structured interviews were used to explore students' perceptions, challenges, and benefits related to ScienceDirect. These narratives offered a deeper understanding of their experiences and attitudes toward using the platform for academic reading.

This study utilized semi-structured interviews, conducted online via telephone, to explore participants' experiences in depth. Two student informants (referred to as S1 and S2) from the English Education Department at Zainul Hasan Islamic University Genggong were selected as the participants. To complement the interviews, the researchers also employed documentation techniques by collecting and analyzing the scientific articles accessed by the students through ScienceDirect. This analysis provided additional insight into the types of texts the students engaged with and helped identify factors that supported or hindered their reading comprehension.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1. Findings

3.1.1 Observation

The observation results revealed several advantages of using ScienceDirect. The platform provided access to high-quality, up-to-date scientific articles, enabling students to obtain relevant information to support their academic work. It also assisted users in locating accurate sources, thereby strengthening the quality of their arguments and research output. Moreover, ScienceDirect contributed to improved reading comprehension by offering students broader and deeper insights into their study topics. However, some limitations were observed. Access to certain articles was restricted by paywalls, which required users to consider budget constraints. Additionally, effective use of the platform demanded specific digital literacy skills, highlighting the need for user familiarity with advanced search and filtering functions. These findings were further supported and elaborated through interview data, which provided deeper insights into the students' individual experiences with the platform.

3.1.2 Interview

The results of the interviews with the participants showed that both participants had different perceptions about the benefits of ScienceDirect in developing reading skills. S1 felt that ScienceDirect helped improve the ability to understand academic vocabulary and trained oneself in the ability to analyze and evaluate information, while S2 felt that ScienceDirect helped improve understanding of certain topics. Below were the participants' narratives about how they perceived themselves as ScienceDirect users in developing reading skills in English and how this platform helped them achieve their academic goals.

S1 felt that ScienceDirect helped her improve her ability to understand academic vocabulary and trained her in her ability to analyze and evaluate information. By using ScienceDirect, S1 could access scientific articles that were relevant to her field of study and expand her knowledge of specific academic vocabulary. In addition, S1 also felt that ScienceDirect helped her train her ability to analyze and evaluate by providing complex articles that required critical thinking to understand. Thus, S1 felt that ScienceDirect was a very valuable resource in improving her academic reading skills.

“I used ScienceDirect after my lecturer recommended it. It was difficult at first, but after getting used to it, I found advantages such as reliable sources, new vocabulary, and improved analytical skills. ScienceDirect helped me improve my critical thinking and understanding of scientific literature.”

S1's experience in using ScienceDirect showed that this platform could help improve reading comprehension skills and information analysis in scientific and academic contexts. S1 learned how to distinguish between primary and secondary data, and how to assess the validity and relevance of research results. This showed that S1 became a more independent and critical reader in evaluating information. S1 also shared the challenges she faced in using ScienceDirect.

“In my opinion, Using ScienceDirect has several challenges, namely: limited access to paid articles, complex academic English with technical terms, and taking a long time to read information-dense articles.”

According to S1's narrative, S1 identified several challenges in using ScienceDirect as a reading resource, namely limited access to paid articles, complex language, and the need for a long time to read and understand scientific articles. S1 felt that articles on ScienceDirect required a deeper understanding and a longer time to read, especially because the content was complex and dense with information. Thus, S1 needed an effective reading strategy to overcome these challenges. According to the researcher's analysis, the challenges that S1 faced could be a lesson for others to better prepare themselves in using digital resources such as ScienceDirect. However, despite these challenges, S1 also mentioned that ScienceDirect had several advantages that made it a valuable reading resource.

“In my opinion, ScienceDirect has several advantages, namely: providing high-quality articles that have been peer-reviewed, covering a wide range of disciplines, having advanced search features, providing open access articles, having a user-friendly interface, and making it easy to create scientific references with complete information about authors and articles that can be exported to reference management software.”

This was another finding from S1's experience of using ScienceDirect. She stated that she became more aware of the importance of accessing accurate and up-to-date information through this platform and also compared her analytical and understanding skills before and after using ScienceDirect.

S2 felt that ScienceDirect was very helpful in improving his understanding of a particular topic. With access to quality scientific articles, S2 could deepen his sssknowledge of various topics and improve his ability to identify the author's mindset.

“The experience of using ScienceDirect to develop reading comprehension skills was very beneficial because, with access to scientific articles, I was able to deepen my understanding of certain topics.”

The experience of using ScienceDirect to develop reading comprehension skills was very beneficial because, with access to scientific articles, S2 was able to deepen his understanding of certain topics. Through this platform, S2 improved his ability to analyze and evaluate information and became more critical in assessing the validity and relevance of research results. Thus, S2 became a more independent reader and was able to identify information that was relevant to his needs. S2 also shared the challenges he faced in using ScienceDirect.

“The challenges I face in using ScienceDirect include difficulties in understanding the language terms because I think the language is too scientific, difficulty finding relevant articles among the many publications, and sometimes limited access to full articles if they are not affiliated with an institution that has a subscription.”

S2's experience using ScienceDirect had some similarities to S1's. Both had difficulty understanding complex scientific language and finding relevant articles. However, S2 also highlighted another challenge, namely limited access to full articles without a subscription. However, after using the platform, S2 realized that several aspects made it very valuable.

“The advantage in my opinion is that the quality of the topics is guaranteed because all articles have gone through a peer-review process.”

Based on S2's narrative, the main advantage of using ScienceDirect was the reliability of its peer-reviewed articles. S2 felt confident in the accuracy and credibility of the information provided. While challenges included difficulty understanding technical terms, locating relevant articles, and limited access to full texts, the platform's strengths outweighed these issues. The guaranteed quality of content made ScienceDirect a valuable tool for developing academic skills, particularly information literacy and analytical thinking.

3.1.3 Documentation

Documentation analysis supported the findings of this study. Researchers examined scientific articles accessed by the participants through ScienceDirect. These documents showed the types of texts students selected and how they engaged with

academic content. Most articles were closely related to their course topics, suggesting that students used ScienceDirect purposefully to support their reading comprehension. The documentation confirmed that ScienceDirect was actively used to access accurate and relevant materials, reinforcing its role in the learning process.

3.2. Discussion

This study examined in depth the role of ScienceDirect in improving reading skills and supporting the implementation of qualitative narrative research in English. The results showed that ScienceDirect not only provided access to high-quality and up-to-date scientific articles, but also contributed to the development of analytical and synthesis skills relevant to the research topic (Nashihuddin & Rahayu, 2013). Furthermore, the results of data analysis showed that the use of ScienceDirect supported the narrative qualitative research process by improving researchers' ability to evaluate information sources and understand complex concepts in English (Zhao et al., 2024). This implied improved critical and analytical thinking skills, as emphasized by Sukirno et al. (2018).

Unlike other studies Cheung & Tai (2023) Focusing on the use of user-interactive English language learning applications, this study emphasized the importance of access to quality academic content. ScienceDirect excelled in providing up-to-date and relevant scientific literature, making it more than just a learning tool, but also a primary reference in academic research.

In the context of academic language proficiency, ScienceDirect also made a significant contribution. Habibillah & Hadjri (2023) highlighted researchers' ability to use technical terms and complex concepts in English, which could be improved through exposure to academic literature available on the platform. This indicated that ScienceDirect not only enhanced reading comprehension but also strengthened researchers' ability to write academically using English effectively.

As a methodological contribution, this study demonstrated how the integration of ScienceDirect into the narrative qualitative research process could enrich data collection and interpretation strategies. Compared to other approaches that relied on AI-based technology for personalized learning (Zhao et al. 2024), ScienceDirect offered the advantage of direct access to scientific sources that could support the formation of theoretical frameworks and in-depth analysis.

Thus, this study provided strategic recommendations for educators and researchers in utilizing ScienceDirect as a primary source of information. This was in line with the findings of Sukirno et al. (2018). which confirmed that the use of digital sources could improve researchers' ability to filter and evaluate relevant information. It was this advantage that made ScienceDirect an effective tool in improving the overall quality of English-language qualitative narrative research.

4. Conclusion

This study explored students' experiences using ScienceDirect for academic reading. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings showed that students actively used the platform to find relevant materials. However, they faced challenges such as limited academic vocabulary, complex article structures, and low English proficiency. Reading success depended largely on internal factors like literacy skills, reading strategies, and academic readiness. Documentation revealed that students often chose articles they were already familiar with. While ScienceDirect supported reading development, it was not the only factor. Future research should use quantitative or mixed-method approaches with a larger and more diverse sample. Educators should also provide training in information literacy, academic vocabulary, and critical reading to improve students' comprehension skills.

References

- Cheung, K. K. C., & Tai, K. W. H. (2023). The use of intercoder reliability in qualitative interview data analysis in science education. *Research in Science and Technological Education*, 41(3), 1155–1175. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02635143.2021.1993179>
- Dewi, M. (2019). Analisis statistik keterpakaian database online Science Direct (Januari- Juni 2018) dalam mengambil kebijakan pengadaan bahan pustaka elektronik pada Perpustakaan Universitas Islam Indonesia. *Al-Kuttab : Jurnal Kajian Perpustakaan, Informasi Dan Kearsipan*, 1(1), 23–34. <https://doi.org/10.24952/ktb.v1i1.1028>
- Ferdiyanto, F., Islam, U., & Hasan, Z. (2024). *THE ROLE OF METACOGNITIVE SKILLS IN IMPROVING READING COMPREHENSION AMONG*. 6(2), 149–160.
- Habibillah, R., & Hadjri, M. I. (2023). Pengaruh Perkembangan Teknologi di Era Digital bagi Pengembangan Sumber Daya Manusia di Daerah Tertinggal di Indonesia (The Influence of Technological Development in the Digital Era for Human Resource Development in Disadvantaged Regions in Indonesia) Riw. *Jurnal Bisnis Dan Pemasaran Digital*, 2(2), 115–125. <https://doi.org/10.35912/JBPD.v2i2.2600>
- Hamdani, B. (2020). Teaching Reading Through Reciprocal Teaching Method. *Celtic: A Journal of Culture, English Language Teaching, Literature and Linguistics*, 7(1), 23. <https://doi.org/10.22219/celtic.v7i1.11936>
- Hasana Lydia. (2023). *THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL TEXT ON STUDENT'S READING SKILL (A Quasi-Experimental Study at First Grade Students of SMA 3 Rejang Lebong in Academic Written*.
- Hilmi, R. Z., Hurriyati, R., & Lisnawati. (2018). No 主観的健康感を中心とした在宅高齢者における健康関連指標に関する共分散構造分析Title. 3(2), 91–102.
- Islam, R. (2023a). Parents' Perception and Involvement toward English for Young Learners in Rustic Area. *Jurnal Pendidikan*, 9(2), 2548–4419.

- Islam, R. (2023b). Teaching Material and Method toward English Students at Vocational High School. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Cultural Studies*, 6(2), 167–175. <https://doi.org/10.48181/jelts.v6i2.21373>
- Islam, R. (2024). *Analysis of English Learning Activities for Medical Students*. 11(2), 209–215.
- Nashihuddin, W., & Rahayu, R. N. (2013). Aksesibilitas Informasi Ilmiah Science Direct Pustaka Ristek di Lingkungan Ristek dan LPNK. *Jurnal Pustakawan Indonesia*, 12(2), 1–9.
- Sukirno, S., Mukhotib, M., & Purwandari, A. (2018). Evaluasi Pemanfaatan Database ScienceDirect oleh Civitas Akademika Fakultas Kedokteran Universitas Gadjah Mada. *Khazanah Al-Hikmah : Jurnal Ilmu Perpustakaan, Informasi, Dan Kearsipan*, 6(2), 112. <https://doi.org/10.24252/kah.v6i2a3>
- Yusanto, Y. (2020). Ragam Pendekatan Penelitian Kualitatif. *Journal of Scientific Communication (Jsc)*, 1(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.31506/jsc.v1i1.7764>
- Zainuddin 3 Zainul Hasan Genggong Islamic University, East Java, Indonesia 3. (2022). 95–106.
- Zhao, M., Noordin, N., Ahmad, N. K. B., & Liu, L. (2024). Effectiveness of Mobile-assisted Language Learning in Developing Oral English in Higher Education: A Comparative Systematic Review. *World Journal of English Language*, 15(1), 56. <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v15n1p56>