

EFL Students' Reading Preferences Based on Gender: A Study of Perceptions among EFL Learners of Mulawarman University

Titis Tustika Putri Indriyani¹, Istanti Hermagustiana¹, Yuni Utami Asih¹

1) Department of English Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Mulawarman, Jl. Muara Pahu, Kampus Gunung Kelua, Samarinda, Kalimantan Timur 75119, Indonesia

e-mail: 1)titistustika68@gmail.com; 2)istantihermagustiana@fkip.unmul.ac.id;
3)yuniutamiasih@fkipunmul.ac.id

Abstract

This study explores the perceptions of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students regarding their reading preferences at the English Department of Mulawarman University. Focusing on gender differences, the research aims to understand how male and female students perceive their reading interests. Using a qualitative case study design, six sixth-semester students from English Language Education Program at Mulawarman University were selected through stratified purposive sampling. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect in-depth data on students' views of reading for pleasure and their references in genre and reading habits. Thematic analysis revealed that students perceive reading as both an academic necessity and a personal interest, with noticeable gender-related patterns. Female students showed a balance preference for fiction and non-fiction genre, while male students leaned towards fiction. These preferences are shaped by individual interests, emotional engagement and exposure to various reading materials. Findings contribute to the understanding of how gender influences reading behavior among EFL learners.

Keywords: EFL learners, reading preferences, gender, student perception, qualitative study.

1. Introduction

Reading is a fundamental skill for academic, language acquisition and personal development, especially for students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

Among various aspects of reading behavior, students' preferences play a pivotal role in shaping reading motivation and engagement. Among the many factors influencing reading preferences, gender has been consistently highlighted in the literature. Studies show that gender can shape the type of texts students choose and the frequency which they read (Loh et al., 2019; Jabbar & Warraich, 2022). These differences may be rooted in cognitive, emotional, and sociocultural influences.

Despite extensive research on reading preferences and gender, limited attention has been given to how EFL students themselves perceive their reading choices. Understanding these perceptions is critical to developing inclusive and student-centered reading instruction. This study, therefore, aims to investigate how EFL students at Mulawarman University perceive their reading preferences, focusing on gender-based differences.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Reading and EFL Learning

Reading is a critical component of second language acquisition, providing learners with opportunities to develop vocabulary, grammar awareness, and reading fluency (Krashen, as cited in Milal et al., 2021). In EFL contexts, where exposure to the target language is often limited, reading serves as a major source of language input. According to Nunan (in Maharsi et al., 2019), reading is an active process of constructing meaning by combining textual information with background knowledge.

Reading for pleasure, in particular, promotes intrinsic motivation and learner autonomy. Defined as reading done out of free will and for enjoyment (Clark & Rumbold, 2006), it allows students to engage with texts in ways that reflect their personal interests and identities (Thorogood, 2021). The emphasis on choice and enjoyment differentiates pleasure reading from academic reading, which is often driven by external requirements.

2.2 Reading Preferences

Reading preferences refer to the types of reading materials individuals are drawn to, including genres, topics, and formats. These preferences are shaped by various internal factors such as interest, personality, and emotional needs, as well as external factors like social expectations, cultural norms, and educational background (Aydin & Bagci Ayranci, 2018). Identifying and supporting students' reading preferences can enhance motivation, improve reading comprehension, and foster lifelong reading habits (Zare & Othman, as cited in Maro et al., 2020).

Students with clearly defined reading preferences are more likely to experience reading as meaningful and enjoyable. Blau and Baker (in Maro et al., 2020) emphasize the importance of guiding students toward materials that match their interest, as this alignment promotes deeper engagement and better learning outcomes.

2.3 Gender Differences in Reading Preferences

Gender is one of the most frequently studied variables in reading preference research. Numerous studies have found that male and female students differ in both the frequency and nature of their reading. Girls are generally more frequent readers and show a greater interest in fiction genres such as romance, mystery, and fantasy. Boys, on the other hand, tend to prefer nonfiction texts such as science, history, and comics (Loh et al., 2019; Jabbar & Warraich, 2022; Milal et al., 2021).

These differences are not absolute, and overlaps exist. Recent studies suggest that while boys may lean toward nonfiction, many still enjoy fiction, particularly if it includes action or science fiction themes (Merga, as cited in Loh et al., 2019). Similarly, reading preferences may change over time as students mature and are exposed to diverse reading materials.

2.4 Students' Perceptions

Perception refers to the process of interpreting and making meaning from information received through the senses. In educational settings, students' perceptions influence their attitudes, behaviors, and academic engagement (Santrock, as cited in Ansow et al., 2022). Students' perceptions of their reading preferences are shaped by their experiences, emotions, cognitive development, and social environment. These perceptions can impact how students approach reading tasks, select reading materials, and value reading as a skill.

Understanding students' self-perceived reading preferences is essential for educators aiming to create responsive and affective reading programs. When students feel that their interests and preferences are acknowledged, they are more likely to develop positive reading habits and improve their language proficiency (Reedy & De Carvalho, 2019).

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a qualitative case study design to explore EFL students' perceptions of their reading preferences. As Creswell (2018) explain, qualitative research is suitable for investigating individuals' lived experiences and perspectives in depth. A case study was chosen because the research focused on a specific group of students in a particular academic context-sixth-semester students in the English Language Education Program at Mulawarman University.

3.2 Research Participant

Participants were selected using stratified purposive sampling. The criteria for participation included: (1) being a sixth-semester student enrolled in the English Language Education Program, (2) having completed reading courses, and (3) demonstrating an interest in reading, whether fiction or nonfiction. From an initial pool of students who completed a close-ended questionnaire adapted from Daniels (2019) and Griva et al. (2012), six students (three female and three male) were selected for in-depth interviews.

3.3 Data Collection

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted in either English or Indonesian, depending on the participants' comfort level. The interview protocol as adapted from Maro et al. (2020) and focused on students' perceptions of reading for pleasure, their preferred reading genres, and their reasons for these preferences. Each interview was recorded, transcribed, and coded for thematic analysis.

3.4 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used to interpret the data, following the six-phase approach proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006): (1) familiarization, (2) coding, (3) theme identification, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the report.

3.5 Trustworthiness

To ensure the credibility of the finding, member checking was conducted. After the interviews were transcribed and analyzed, participants were asked to review the summarized findings to confirm the accuracy of the interpretations. This process helped validate the authenticity and trustworthiness of the data (Creswell, 2018).

4. Results

EFL learner's perception on reading preferences are represented in three themes: reading habit, reading preferences and personal growth and identity.

4.1 Reading Habit

This section presents the findings related to the reading habits of the participants. The analysis focuses on three main aspects: reading frequency, language preference (English or Indonesian) and reading platform (online or offline).

4.1.1 Frequency of Reading

The analysis of interview data revealed a wide variation in the frequency of reading among participants, highlighting differing levels of engagement with reading materials. Some participants reported minimal reading activity, while others demonstrated regular and high-frequency reading habits.

One female participant (P1) admitted to having a very low frequency of reading, stating, "I made it a habit to buy one book to read each year" (P1/L11/RH). This response suggests that reading is an infrequent, goal-oriented activity rather than a routine practice.

In contrast, several participants reported reading three to five times per week. For example, P3, P4, and P6 stated:

"Maybe 3–5 times per week" (P3/L11/RH)

"I read maybe three times a week" (P4/L11–12/RH)

"Usually, I read four times a week" (P6/L6/RH)

These responses reflect a moderate but consistent engagement with reading, likely influenced by academic obligations or personal interests.

A higher level of reading engagement was indicated by P2, a male participant, who stated: "In one week, I read at least two to three books or texts" (P2/L12–13/RH). This illustrates a strong reading habit and intrinsic motivation toward reading. Similarly, P5, a female participant, noted simply: "I read frequently" (P5/L13/RH), suggesting regular integration of reading into daily life.

Gender differences were observed in reading frequency. Male participants (P2, P3, and P4) generally exhibited more consistent reading patterns, with P2 showing the highest frequency. Female participants, however, displayed more varied reading behaviors. While P5 and P6 engaged in frequent or regular reading, P1 reported minimal reading activity.

Overall, the findings indicate a spectrum of reading frequency among EFL students, ranging from very low to highly frequent. These variations appear to be shaped not only by gender but also by personal factors such as interest, motivation, and academic demands. While most participants engaged in reading several times per week, the degree of regularity differed notably across individuals.

4.1.2 Language Preference

The interviews revealed varying language preferences among participants, shaped by both linguistic background and academic motivations. While most participants preferred reading in Indonesian due to ease of comprehension and familiarity, others showed interest in reading English texts, especially for academic development.

Several participants reported reading in both Indonesian and English. For instance, P1, a female participant, stated: *“I read books in both Indonesian and English because Indonesian is my mother tongue or first language, and English is a foreign language that I have mastered”* (P1/L43–45/RH). Similarly, P4 expressed bilingual reading habits, noting: *“I usually read in Indonesian or English... to better my grammar, writing, and reading skills, as well as to expand my vocabulary and enjoy the work of writers I admire”* (P4/L26–29/RH). These responses reflect a dual motivation—comfort in the native language and the perceived academic and personal benefits of reading in English.

Other participants indicated a stronger preference for one language. P3, a male participant, preferred reading novels and journals in English due to his academic background in English Education: *“When it comes to novels and journals, I like to read them in English... which helps me improve my reading comprehension skills”* (P3/L37–39/RH). In contrast, P2, another male participant, preferred Indonesian: *“It’s usually better to read in Indonesian... I like Indonesian since it is easier for me to understand the book’s meaning and ideas”* (P2/L46–48/RH).

Among female participants, P5 and P6 reported a clear preference for reading in Indonesian. P5 explained: *“Most of the literature I’m interested in are available in Indonesian, which helps me widen my understanding”* (P5/L31–33/RH). P6 added: *“I usually read in Indonesian to make it easier to understand”* (P6/L27/RH). These responses indicate that accessibility of materials and ease of comprehension strongly influence language choice.

Overall, Indonesian was the preferred reading language for the majority of participants, especially females, due to its role as their native language and its familiarity. However, English was also viewed as valuable—particularly by male participants—for its role in supporting academic growth, enhancing language skills, and accessing international literature.

These findings suggest that language preference in reading is shaped by a combination of factors: native language comfort, academic or professional goals, exposure to English education, and availability of reading materials. The coexistence of these factors reflects the complex nature of language use in the reading practices of EFL students.

4.1.3 Reading Platform Preference (Online vs. Offline)

The findings reveal a distinct division in participants' preferences regarding reading platforms, with most expressing a preference for offline reading for leisure and online reading for academic purposes. These preferences are influenced by factors such as convenience, physical comfort, screen fatigue, and the sensory appeal of printed materials.

The majority of participants—including P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5—preferred offline reading, particularly when reading for pleasure. P1, a female participant, stated: *"I prefer to read offline for entertainment purposes... I enjoy reading physical books that I can open page by page and mark the section I wish to read"* (P1/L34–38/RH). This preference was echoed by P5, who appreciated the immersive nature of physical books and even cited the scent of books as a positive factor: *"I prefer to read offline because I appreciate physically touching a book, breathing its perfume, and concentrate without the distraction of technology"* (P5/L27–29/RH).

Male participants P2 and P3 cited screen-related discomfort, such as eye strain and radiation, as key reasons for favoring physical books:

"Reading online can be difficult because radiation is emitted from the eyes... I like to read it physically" (P2/L40–44/RH),

"I prefer offline reading... When I read online, my eyes ache" (P3/L34–35/RH).

P4 also noted that offline reading provides deeper engagement and fewer distractions: *"I enjoy reading offline since it provides a more in-depth impression and is free of distractions, such as notifications or eye fatigue"* (P4/L22–24/RH).

In contrast, P6 (female) was the only participant who preferred online reading, valuing its flexibility and accessibility. She explained: *"I usually enjoy reading online because it allows me to relax while eating... reading online can be done at any time and is usually accessible by cellphone"* (P6/L21–25/RH).

Interestingly, P1 also recognized the practical benefits of online reading for academic tasks, even though she preferred offline formats for personal enjoyment: *"When it comes to lectures, I prefer online because my lecture assignments are in the form of files"* (P1/L38–41/RH). This dual preference reflects a pragmatic adaptation to academic demands.

Overall, while offline reading is favored for personal engagement and sensory enjoyment, online reading is often adopted for its practical advantages, especially in academic contexts. These findings suggest that platform preferences are context-dependent, influenced by the purpose of reading (leisure vs. academic), physical comfort, and time management.

4.2 Reading Preferences Across Gender

This section explores the reading preferences of participants across gender, revealing both shared interests and distinct tendencies between male and female respondents. The findings indicate that gender may influence genre preferences, reading purposes and author choices, although overlaps are also evident.

4.2.1 Female Participants' Reading Preferences

The reading preferences of female participants (P1, P5, and P6) in this study reflect a diverse range of interests across both fiction and nonfiction genres. Their choices are shaped by emotional engagement, intellectual curiosity, and a desire for personal development.

Participant 1 (P1) expressed a strong preference for fiction, particularly romance and adventure genres, including both local and international literature. She enjoys novels, short stories, and English poetry collections, mentioning *Percy Jackson* by Rick Riordan and *Floating in Space* by Naela Ali as her favorite works. These selections reflect her appreciation for emotionally rich and imaginative storytelling:

"In terms of book types, I prefer fiction, such as novels and short tales, as well as English poetry collections" (P1/L13–14/RP);

"From outside Indonesia, I enjoy Rick Riordan's Percy Jackson, and from within Indonesia, I enjoy Naela Ali's Floating in Space" (P1/L21–22/RP).

Participant 5 (P5) showed a broader interest in both fiction and nonfiction, with a stronger inclination toward nonfiction genres such as scientific literature, biographies, and educational content. Her favorite book, *Laskar Pelangi* by Andrea Hirata, reveals a preference for inspiring real-life stories rooted in social and educational themes:

"I enjoy reading a variety of books and texts, including fiction and nonfiction" (P5/L13–16/RP);

"I prefer to read nonfiction because I enjoy learning new things and expanding my knowledge of the world" (P5/L41–43/RP).

Participant 6 (P6) also preferred nonfiction, especially books related to science and history, due to their practical value and insightful content. However, she noted an interest in fiction, particularly novels and comics that explore personal and social issues. She cited *Cantik Itu Luka* by Eka Kurniawan as a favorite:

"I favor nonfiction books, particularly those about science or history, since I enjoy learning new things... that can be implemented in everyday life" (P6/L33–37/RP);

"I enjoy novels, and one of my favorites is Cantik Itu Luka by Eka Kurniawan" (P6/L10–11/RP).

In summary, female participants displayed a balanced preference for both fiction and nonfiction, with individual variations in emphasis. Fiction, particularly romance and socially themed novels, served as a source of emotional connection and imaginative engagement. Nonfiction, on the other hand, appealed to participants' desire for learning, critical thinking, and real-world application. This dual interest illustrates the multidimensional role reading plays in their academic, personal, and emotional lives.

4.2.2 Male Participants' Reading Preferences

The male participants (P2, P3, and P4) in this study generally showed a strong preference for fiction, particularly genres that encourage imagination and critical thinking, such as fantasy, mystery, and romance. However, their reading interests also included nonfiction, especially when tied to academic or self-improvement goals, indicating a nuanced and context-dependent approach to reading.

Participant 2 (P2) reported a mixed preference for both nonfiction and romantic or horror fiction. His nonfiction interests were primarily goal-oriented, such as reading theses or books about study strategies in preparation for academic tasks:

"I'm currently reading theses or literature on how to study more effectively in the future in order to prepare for my seminar" (P2/L13–16/RP).

He also stated a fondness for romantic fiction, especially works by local authors like Pidi Baiq:

"I prefer local authors such as Pidi Baiq, whose romantic novels include Dilan, Ancika, and Milea" (P2/L19–22/RP).

Despite his academic engagement, P2 reflected on the value of nonfiction genres such as autobiographies and documentaries, which he viewed as more grounded and useful:

"I may favor the nonfiction genre, as well as anything like a documentary or autobiography... because I prefer to see what the tale is about without having fantasies that interfere with my thoughts" (P2/L51–56/RP).

Participant 3 (P3) showed a clear preference for fiction, particularly in genres like mystery, slice-of-life, and romantic comedy. He highlighted how fiction helps develop his critical thinking:

"I enjoy reading Agatha Christie's Murderers Make Mistakes... I was able to improve my critical thinking skills in order to determine who the murderer was" (P3/L19–25/RP).

He contrasted fiction with nonfiction, emphasizing fiction's imaginative freedom and narrative appeal:

"I prefer fiction because it allows for a more open tale than nonfiction... you can envision it and read it, making it more fascinating" (P3/L48–51/RP).

Participant 4 (P4) favored fantasy fiction, particularly the Percy Jackson series by Rick Riordan:

“My favorite book in the fantasy and fiction category is Rick Riordan's Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief” (P4/L15–16/RP).

His preference highlights a strong inclination toward imaginative and adventurous storytelling, consistent with the broader trend observed among male participants.

In summary, male participants in this study exhibited a dominant preference for fiction, with genres like fantasy, mystery, and romance being the most favored. Fiction was valued not only for entertainment but also for its capacity to stimulate imagination and critical thought. While nonfiction was read occasionally—mainly for academic preparation or personal growth—it did not hold the same appeal as fiction for most male respondents.

These findings indicate that male students' reading preferences are shaped by both personal interests and functional goals, often balancing leisure with learning. Compared to female participants—who tended to engage more with nonfiction for educational purposes—male participants were more consistently drawn to fiction for its narrative complexity, entertainment value, and cognitive challenge. Nevertheless, individual motivations and situational contexts also played significant roles, underscoring the dynamic and personalized nature of reading preferences.

4.3 Personal Growth and Identity

The interview data revealed that reading habits and preferences played a significant role in the personal growth and identity formation of all six participants. Reading was consistently described not only as a source of information or entertainment but also as a transformative experience that shaped participants' values, behaviors, and self-perceptions.

Participant 1 (P1) connected her interest in adventurous and courageous characters, such as Percy Jackson, with her own willingness to take risks and embrace new challenges. She attributed major academic and personal decisions—such as enrolling in a university far from home and participating in a national teaching program—to the inspiration drawn from the fictional bravery she admired:

“From my habits and preferences in reading, I think I am a person who likes challenges” (P1/L141–142/PGI).

Participant 2 (P2) experienced a notable personality transformation through reading. Initially introverted and reserved, P2 reported becoming more social and confident after engaging with emotionally expressive genres like romance. This shift not only affected his communication style but also his identity as a more outgoing and articulate individual:

“I started to get motivation... I eventually gradually changed... to suddenly becoming a friendly, extroverted child... I think I am comfortable with myself now because I can speak comfortably and fluently” (P2/L148–161/PGI).

Participant 3 (P3) emphasized the impact of reading on their intellectual development. Regularly reading academic texts and detective novels helped enhance their critical thinking skills and shaped a reflective, knowledge-oriented self-image:

“Reading books in specific subjects broadens my knowledge... which develop my critical thinking skills” (P3/L96–101/PGI).

Participant 4 (P4) discussed how fantasy literature encouraged imagination and moral reflection. Themes of mythological adventures helped him internalize life values such as courage, friendship, and empathy, thus contributing to emotional maturity and ethical awareness:

“Fantasy books help me develop my imagination... have given me fresh insights on courage, friendship, help, and other life virtues” (P4/L86–91/PGI).

Participant 5 (P5) reflected on the role of literature in enhancing empathy and global awareness. Books like Laskar Pelangi provided exposure to diverse life stories and struggles, expanding her ability to understand and relate to others:

“Reading greatly contributes to my personal development by widening my perspective... and deepening my awareness of several different points of view” (P5/L90–93/PGI).

Participant 6 (P6) shared that reading self-help and psychology books contributed to her emotional intelligence and leadership abilities. Motivated by what she learned, she became more engaged in social and organizational activities, which helped her develop a more confident and proactive identity:

“Reading allows me to gain new ideas and skills... resulting in a more confident and active identity” (P6/L99–107/PGI).

In sum, reading served as a catalyst for self-discovery and personal transformation. Each participant described ways in which literature influenced their outlook on life, emotional expression, social behavior, or intellectual orientation. These findings highlight the role of reading not just as a cognitive activity, but as a deeply personal process of identity construction and growth.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study highlight that EFL learners' reading preferences are shaped by a range of personal, academic, and contextual factors, with notable variations observed across gender lines. The perceptions of reading expressed by participants revealed not only their preferred genres, languages, and platforms but

also the underlying motivations and developmental impacts associated with their reading behaviors.

Female participants in this study demonstrated a balance between fiction and nonfiction reading, with a notable emphasis on materials that foster emotional connection, self-development, and social awareness. For instance, P1 preferred emotionally engaging fiction such as romance and adventure, while P5 and P6 leaned toward nonfiction genres—especially in science, biography, and history—for knowledge enhancement and critical reflection. This aligns with prior research by Milal et al. (2021) and Maro et al. (2020), which suggests that female EFL learners are more inclined to read for personal growth and educational purposes.

Male participants, on the other hand, consistently favored fiction genres such as fantasy, mystery, and romance. Their choices were often driven by imaginative engagement and critical thinking stimulation. P3, for example, expressed admiration for detective fiction that challenges cognitive reasoning. However, male participants also acknowledged the value of nonfiction texts for academic or self-improvement goals, such as in the case of P2 who read educational and reflective texts when needed. These patterns are consistent with the findings of Loh et al. (2019) and Jabbar & Warraich (2022), who noted that while male students are generally more fiction-oriented, their preferences may shift depending on context and purpose.

Language preference also played a key role in shaping students' reading experiences. While the majority of participants favored reading in Indonesian due to linguistic comfort and comprehension ease, some, particularly male students like P3 and P4, engaged with English texts to enhance their language skills. This dual-language engagement reflects EFL learners' pragmatic use of language for both enjoyment and academic development, as supported by Zare and Othman (in Maro et al., 2020).

In terms of reading platforms, most participants preferred offline reading for leisure due to the physical and sensory appeal of printed books and the reduced distractions compared to digital screens. Nonetheless, online reading was recognized for its practicality, especially for academic purposes. This reflects a broader trend noted by Loh et al. (2019), in which readers selectively use platforms based on task orientation and convenience.

An especially important theme that emerged was the role of reading in personal growth and identity development. Across both genders, participants described how literature influenced their real-life behaviors, values, and self-perceptions. For example, P1 was inspired by the bravery of fictional characters to take bold steps in her academic life, while P2 credited his evolving reading habits for transforming his social personality. These insights support the assertion by Hussain and Munshi (in Maro et al., 2020) that reading can contribute significantly to maturity, self-awareness, and emotional intelligence.

In summary, EFL learners' reading preferences are influenced by a complex interplay of gender, genre appeal, language accessibility, platform usability, and personal growth goals. While gender patterns are evident, particularly in genre preferences, individual variation remains substantial, emphasizing the importance of

contextual and personal factors. These findings underscore the value of offering diverse reading materials in EFL settings and recognizing students' agency in choosing what, how, and why they read.

6. Conclusion

This study explored the reading preferences of EFL learners with a focus on gender-based tendencies, language and platform preferences, and the perceived impact of reading on personal growth. The findings revealed that while both male and female students engage actively in reading, their choices are shaped by distinct motivations and contextual factors.

Female participants showed a stronger inclination toward nonfiction reading for self-development, academic enrichment, and emotional understanding, while also appreciating fiction for its imaginative and reflective value. In contrast, male participants predominantly preferred fiction genres—such as fantasy, mystery, and romance—that stimulated critical thinking and creative engagement, though they also read nonfiction texts when aligned with academic or personal goals.

In terms of language, most participants preferred reading in Indonesian due to familiarity and ease of comprehension, while English texts were commonly used to support language acquisition and academic development. Similarly, offline reading was favored for leisure and deep engagement, whereas online platforms were primarily utilized for academic convenience.

Importantly, the study found that reading plays a significant role in shaping learners' identities, influencing not only how they think and feel, but also how they interact socially and pursue personal goals. Through literature, participants reflected on values such as courage, empathy, imagination, and intellectual growth—demonstrating the transformative potential of reading in the context of language learning.

In conclusion, EFL learners' reading preferences are multifaceted and influenced by gender, personal interest, educational needs, and identity development. These insights highlight the importance for educators to provide diverse, accessible, and meaningful reading materials that accommodate different learner profiles and promote both linguistic and personal growth.

References

- Ansow, D. F., Oliy, S. T., & Kumayas, T. (2022). A study on students' perception toward English learning at SMP Katolik St. Theresia Tanawangko. *Journal of Teaching English, Linguistics, and Literature*, 1(3), 375–385.
- Aydin, G., & Ayranci, B. B. (2018). Reading Preferences of Middle School Students. *World Journal of Education*, 8(2), 127. <https://doi.org/10.5430/wje.v8n2p127>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Clark, C., & Rumbold, K. (2006). Reading for Pleasure: A Research Overview. *National Literacy Trust*. <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED496343.pdf>

- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. SAGE Publications.
- Griva, E., Alevriadou, A., & Semoglou, K. (2012). Reading Preferences and Strategies Employed by Primary School Students: Gender, Socio-Cognitive and Citizenship Issues. *International Education Studies*, 5(2), 24–35. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v5n2p24>
- Jabbar, A., & Warraich, N. F. (2022). Gender differences in leisure reading habits: a systematic review of literature. *Global Knowledge, Memory and Communication*, 72(6/7), 572–592. <https://doi.org/10.1108/gkmc-12-2020-0200>
- Loh, C. E., Sun, B., & Majid, S. (2019). Do girls read differently from boys? Adolescents and their gendered reading habits and preferences. *English in Education*, 54(2), 174–190. <https://doi.org/10.1080/04250494.2019.1610328>
- Maharsi, I., Ghali, M. I., & Maulani, S. (2019). High School Students' Reading Habit and Perception on Reading for Pleasure. *IJIET (International Journal of Indonesian Education and Teaching)*, 3(1), 80–89. <https://doi.org/10.24071/ijiet.v3i1.1711>
- Maro, R. K., Gusdian, R. ismayoeng, & Safitri, B. F. (2020). Investigating English Language Education Students' Reading Preferences. *English Review: Journal of English Education*, 8(2), 323–328. <https://doi.org/10.25134/erjee.v8i2.3029>. Received
- Milal, A.D., Jannah, R., Sa'adah, S.I., Fitria, A.A.. (2021). Reading Preferences across Genders of Undergraduate EFL Students in Indonesia. *Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics*, 6(1), 141-153
- Reedy, A., & De Carvalho, R. (2019). Children's perspectives on reading, agency and their environment: what can we learn about reading for pleasure from an East London primary school? *Education 3-13*, 49(2), 134–147.
- Thorogood, L. (2021). Reflecting choice: Reading for pleasure through focusing on a variety of texts in the Primary classroom. <https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/reflect.ucl.ac.uk/dist/6/2307/files/2020/09/English-Research-Report-Louis-Thorogood-19-20-Final.pdf>