THE INFLUENCE OF ATTRIBUTIONAL BELIEFS ON INDONESIAN EFL LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION

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Abstract: This research investigated how Indonesian EFL learners attributed their success and failure in reading comprehension and whether or not there was any correlation between attributional beliefs and EFL learners' monitoring strategies in reading. The researchers distributed Attributional Beliefs Questionnaire (ABQ) and Reading Monitoring Strategies Questionnaire (RMSQ) to undergraduate students in the third semester (n=36) of a private university in Indonesia. The data were analyzed using Pearson Correlation scale. Six students were selected to be interviewed to obtain qualitative data. Based on the results, 56% of students attributed their success and failure in reading to the internal factors (efforts and strategies) rather than the external ones (reading text and learning environment). There was a moderate and insignificant correlation between attributional beliefs and reading monitoring strategies with r=0.51. It indicated that students need to regulate themselves and navigate their learning based on their attributional beliefs or they would experience learned helplessness. Language teachers were recommended to introduce attribution concepts and implement all reading strategies to their students.

Keywords: attributional beliefs; monitoring strategies; learned helplessness.

INTRODUCTION

Being literate requires English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners to not only be able to read English words and understand

their meaning, but also to have the ability to perform High Order Thinking skills (HOTs) in reading. The goals of the learning process are for learners to be able to analyze and evaluate the concepts, processes and procedures rather than just retrieve previous learned information Bloom's taxonomy (Veeravagu et al., 2010). Hence, in order to achieve success in reading, EFL learners must be able to comprehend the meaning, raise questions and solve the problems or in other words, be metacognitively active (cf. Bria & Mbato, 2019; Mbato, 2013; Syafi'i, 2015).

Moreover, a study from Ahmadi et. al. (2013) underlines the use of metacognitive reading strategies to understand the meaning of the text and construct meaning from the context either consciously or unconsciously.

To achieve successful reading comprehension, EFL learners should know what they have to do. Mbato (2013) suggests that learners who metacognitively understand the importance of efforts in applying some strategies possess good attributional beliefs in order to improve their reading performance. Weiner (1985) describes attribution as the individual belief on how they interpret an event and relate it to their thinking and behavior. He classifies the factors into external, internal, controllable and uncontrollable. This theory relates to the ways people perceive the causes of their behavior. Based on the attribution theory, EFL learners are expected to be able to attribute their reading development skill to internal and controllable causes. Learners' self-belief will motivate them to implement a strategy and gain their own goal in learning.

Numerous studies on reading comprehension in Indonesia are limited only to teachers' role. The students' inability is often associated with the lack of teacher strategies in teaching reading and the teachers' role as a source of knowledge (Par, 2018; Permatasari, 2015; Shafi'i, 2015; Ota et al., 2018). Meanwhile, students' awareness of their strengths and weaknesses in reading comprehension has not been investigated well. The learning process must go hand in hand, both externally (human resources and facilities) and internally (the

student themselves). Several studies in Indonesia have investigated motivation as the inner drive for EFL learners in enhancing their reading skills (Bria & Mbato, 2019; Farida, 2012). Motivation should be supported by effective reading strategies, which are influenced by their attributional beliefs. The combination of these elements in reading is expected to enhance the students' literacy skills.

The level of literacy skills in Indonesia is still relatively low (see, for example Devianty, 2019; Farida, 2012; Permatasari, 2015; Nirmala et al., 2018; Widodo, 2015), which means that students' understanding is only limited to the literal meaning of the text. All of these studies underline the importance of reading culture for Indonesian students. Without reading and writing skills, the transformation of the knowledge will be impossible to occur (Devianty, 2019). Similarly, Widodo (2015) claims that low literacy levels will have an impact on the low human resources, which in turn will make it difficult for Indonesians to compete with people from other countries. Another study was conducted by Nirmala, Rahman, & Musthafa (2018) underlined that teachers have an important role to practice all strategies and learning model in reading class so the students become familiar with those strategies and able to develop their literacy skills and critical thinking.

In this study, the researchers focus on the East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) context. As a province with the third lowest level of Human Development Index (HDI) after Papua and West Papua from 2014 to 2017 (BPS, 2018), the local government of NTT province is continuously trying to develop the reading culture from the basic level. NTT is an island province consisting of five large islands, namely Flores, Sumba, Timor, Alor and Rote. Harman (2017) explains that the level of education in NTT, which is still low, is caused by several factors, such as high poverty rates, the difficulty of geographical access to various regions in NTT and the limited facilities and infrastructure.

Considering these limitations, the Indonesian government made various efforts and strategies to improve the literacy skills of

both the facilities and human resources (Florida & Mbato, 2020). Besides working with various local and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the Indonesian government also develops some programs, such as assigning teachers to work in remote areas known as Indonesia Teaching programs, and applying free shipping charges for books in Indonesia on every 17th each month (Stevanie, 2017). These programs are expected to supply the books demand in the remote area and to socialize the reading culture.

There have been a few studies about attributional beliefs in Indonesia (e.g., Iksan, 2015; Mali, 2016; Mbato, 2013; Sutantoputri & Watt, 2013). These studies were mostly conducted in some universities in Java island. They promote attribution training to enhance students' skills in language learning (Iksan, 2015; Mali, 2016; Mbato, 2013). Students who have controllable attributional beliefs (efforts) were more likely to achieve the mastery better than students who attribute to uncontrollable factors (ability and luck). Furthermore, Sutantoputri and Watt (2013) claim that there were no main effects of ethnicity or religious affiliations on attributional dimensions. Unfortunately, none of these studies investigated the relationship between attributional beliefs and students' reading comprehension in the East Nusa Tenggara province.

These previous studies provide background knowledge and the foundations for the current researchers to focus on the attributional beliefs and their relationship with monitoring strategies to enhance students' reading comprehension. Considering the importance of having internal and controllable attributional beliefs in EFL reading and limited studies in NTT, the researchers attempted to fill the gap by investigating the influence of attributional beliefs on NTT EFL learners' reading comprehension. The implication of this study is that teacher should explain the attribution concept in the classes and help students practice all reading strategies and how to monitor their progress.

This current study specifically focused on finding answers to these two research questions: (1) How do Indonesian EFL learners

perceive their attributional beliefs in reading comprehension? (2) Is there any correlation between attributional beliefs and EFL learners' monitoring strategies in reading? To this second research question, the following null hypotheses were formulated:

(1) H0: There is no significant correlation between attributional beliefs and EFL learners' monitoring strategies in reading

(2) H1: There is a significant correlation between attributional beliefs and EFL learners' monitoring strategies in reading

LITERATURE REVIEW
Attributional Beliefs

Attributional beliefs are the perceived causes of success or failure for goal selection in learning. EFL learners who tend to attribute failure to ability as a stable and uncontrollable cause need a suitable instruction so they can experience success, effortful learning and achieve their learning goals (Tsujimoto et al., 2017).

Those students whose failure is caused by internal and stable factors will view the future in the same way as the present. Therefore, nothing they can do will make any difference. On the other hand, students who attribute their failure in term of unstable factors (lack of effort) are better equipped to view failure and setback as things to be overcome. As Bandura said, 'What people think, believe and feel affects how they behave' (1986, p. 25), which is why to comprehend reading, the learners' thinking pattern should be changed from external uncontrollable to internal controllable. In this study, the attributional beliefs are that EFL learners' perspectives influence how they see their success and failure in reading comprehension (cf. Mbato, 2013).

Generally, success and failure in achieving something influence students' motivation. Iksan (2015) claims that someone who experiences repeated failure tend to be powerless, lack of self-control, and give up easily. These conditions are known as learned helplessness. In this manner, attributing the failure due to a stable and uncontrollable cause can be dangerous (Mali, 2016; Mbato, 2013). This

will make students feel demotivated, reduce their self-confidence, and experience negative emotions.

There are several studies on attributional beliefs in English language learning and reading monitoring strategies. Bouchaib et. al. (2018) investigate 113 Moroccan high school students' attribution in English language learning. Their findings show that self-rated high achievers make more internal attributions and allocate more time to their English language studies than perceived low achievers. Teacher influence and classroom atmosphere are the most influential external attributions. The researchers also emphasize how students' beliefs and attitudes can provide insight about improving classroom management and making language learning more successful.

Another study from Tsujimoto et. al. (2017) discussed the relation between motivation and reading skills to children primarily from African American and Hispanic/Latino. The findings of this research are that attribution to ability increases from low to high skill levels and it has implications on the reading skills development. The researchers assume that reading–related causal attribution may drive reading skill acquisition. Similarly, Mbato (2013) investigates how Indonesian EFL learners' self-regulation in reading is facilitated by implementing a metacognitive approach. His research shows that most of the students attributed their success to efforts and strategies and that the students became more strategic in reading.

Reading Skills in Indonesia

Literacy skill is an important skill to empower people in Indonesia (Pammu et al., 2014). One of the efforts to improve the literacy skills and global development is to build a reading society. Nevertheless, Indonesian people still consider reading as an activity to kill time (Permatasari, 2015). Another study from Farida (2012) suggests that Indonesian students have low motivation in reading. Students are motivated to read only before the final assignment or a few days before the exam. It means that reading activity has not yet become a habit in Indonesia academically.

EFL learners in the upper grades face new challenges in reading a text. EFL learners are expected to think critically in order to gain new knowledge from the text (Berkeley et al., 2011). Mbato (2019) investigates Indonesian EFL learners' critical thinking in reading. His findings show that students were able to use some critical thinking in reading if they were in a supporting learning environment and regularly nurtured to become critical readers. It means that the teachers should support them and implement critical thinking in their reading lesson plan.

In the NTT context, most students seemed to face problems in determining the topic, main ideas and supporting ideas in reading, which make the students obtain low achievement (Misa, 2014). EFL students need to learn that their progress in reading is in line with their efforts to maintain their motivation. However, this expectation will not be realized in the traditional classroom unless it transforms from teacher centered to students centered learning atmosphere (cf. Widodo, 2015). Ota et. al. (2018) imply that elementary teacher education study program of Flores University still focuses on the teacher. They recommend that teachers should be creative in using various teaching methods so that the students could be engaged more in the classroom. Their research aimed to develop communicative learning materials in Flores University of NTT.

Reading Monitoring Strategies

Mistar et. al. (2016) argue that reading strategies training involved three strategies: predicting, text mapping and summarizing. These strategies are worth applying even for Indonesian students with elementary level of proficiency. In order to facilitate the students' reading comprehension, those strategies should be integrated in the syllabus. Moreover, the teachers should be more attentive to these strategies and try to teach the students to apply them in the actual process of reading.

Other strategies in reading are mentioned by Marzuki et. al. (2018). They divide strategies into direct (cognitive) and indirect

strategies (metacognitive). Cognitive strategies are identified as repeating, skimming, scanning, taking notes, summarizing and highlighting. While in metacognitive strategies, the readers do not only grasp the explicit meaning stated in the text but also be critical and use their higher order thinking skills to achieve reading comprehension (Gatcho & Hajan, 2019; Marzuki et al., 2018; Par, 2018; Rahmawati et al., 2020).

As discussed previously, there has been little research on the attributional beliefs involving Indonesian EFL learners especially East Nusa Tenggara EFL learners and how their beliefs influence their reading comprehension. This research attempted to fill in the gap by investigating university students from NTT on how they perceive their attributional beliefs in reading comprehension and whether or not there was any correlation between attributional beliefs and EFL learners' monitoring strategies in reading. This research was expected to provide readers, teachers and researchers a better understanding of attribution and how to use the theory to improve EFL learners' reading comprehension. It will also assist students to attribute their success and failure appropriately and to apply effective strategies to achieve the desirable learning outcomes (cf. Mbato, 2013) In addition, the current study will help teachers to design a suitable approach and lesson plan that meet every student's needs in their classroom.

METHOD

The researchers conducted a convergent parallel mixed method to analyze the data. This method made the research problems more understandable through the initial concurrent quantitative and qualitative data collection and the integration of the overall information into interpretation (Creswell, 2014).

The participants of this study were 36 students from the third semester of an undergraduate English Education program in a private university in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) Province. The students were taking the *Interpretative and Affective Reading* class. In this class, students learned how to identify key words, text types, organisation

and development of a text, topic, main ideas, and supporting details in fiction texts. The students were asked to read a novel entitled *Matilda* written by Roald Dahl (1988) in one semester. This course aimed to develop students' skills in understanding implicit information, figures of speech, diction, juxtaposition as well as culture-bound content used in a text.

In collecting the data, this study adapted the questionnaires from Mbato (2013). They were divided into two sections. The first section, Attributional Beliefs Questionnaire (ABQ), asked the participants to rate their reading performance, the major causes of their difficulties and how they solved them. The participants were then asked to imagine six scenarios on their success and failure in English learning and were asked to write down one possible reason of the cause, i.e., if it was due to their ability, luck, other people or circumstances or due to their efforts or strategies. The second section, Reading Monitoring Strategies Questionnaire (RMSQ), asked the participants on how often they implemented certain strategies when they encountered difficulties in reading. The questionnaire used a Likert scale. In this study, the researchers used five scales: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Unsure, 4= Agree and 5= Strongly Agree.

Open Ended Interviews

In addition, the researchers selected six students to be interviewed. The selection used purposive sampling based on their reading grade in the previous semester. Patton (2005) states that purposive sampling is typical of qualitative inquiry which focuses on in-depth small samples. Participants were selected to represent the high, middle and low rate achievements based on their reading grade in the previous semester. Two participants from each group were chosen. To protect their identities, the researchers named the participants as student A and student B (high achieving students), student C and student D (middle achieving students), student E and student F (low achievers). By conducting in-depth interviews, the

researchers aimed to gain the insights on the effects of attributional beliefs on the EFL learners' reading comprehension success.

The interviews were conducted in Indonesian language so that participants could give better responses. The participants were asked about their difficulties in reading, the causes of those problems and their strategies in reading. The interviews were recorded and transcribed in the form of paragraphs. Finally, the researchers concluded all of the data to find out how attributional beliefs influenced EFL learners' monitoring strategies in reading.

Since this research used mixed method, both quantitative and qualitative data were merged by side-by-side comparison and joint display. These procedures supported Creswell's (2014) idea on how to connect one data set and build the second. It aimed to show whether the databases were convergent or diverge.

The quantitative data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (also known as IBM SPSS) to find the correlation between attributional beliefs and reading monitoring strategies. Pearson correlation was used in this study. Meanwhile, the qualitative data from the interviews were analyzed to confirm their previous answers on the questionnaire (Mali, 2016).

FINDINGS

Indonesian EFL learners perception on attributional beliefs in reading comprehension

This study found that Indonesian EFL learners attributed their success or failure in reading comprehension to two major factors: internal (lack of vocabulary and pronunciation) and external (the content of the text, reading environment).
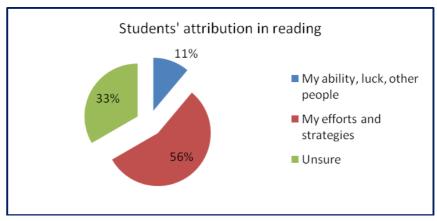
Figure 1. Students' attribution in reading

As illustrated above, from 36 participants, it was found that 4 students (11%) attributed their success and failure to external factors; 12 students (33%) were unsure and the rest (20 students or 56%) attributed them to the internal factors.

There are six statements in Table 1 focusing on students' attributional beliefs in reading comprehension. Statements (Att 1, Att 2, and Att 4) described that over 50% of the students believed that the mark for reading, the ability to summarize stories and express ideas were attributed to internal factors like efforts and strategies. However, more than 30% students were unsure whether it was caused by internal or external factors. It indicated that there was no wide gap between the students who attributed their reading comprehension to internal factors and those who were unsure about the reason.

Table 1. Students' responses regarding their attributional beliefs in reading

Florida, N.A. & Mbato, C.L. (2020). The influence of attributional beliefs on Indonesian EFL learners' reading comprehension.

Statement No	Statement	My ability, luck, other people	Unsure	My efforts and strategies	Mean	Standard Deviation
Att 1	Low mark for reading comprehension	6%	33%	61%	3.67	0.86
Att 2	Able to summarize a story	14%	36%	50%	3.58	1.00
Att 3	Little progress in English	14%	25%	61%	3.69	1.06
Att 4	Able to express ideas to the group	11%	39%	50%	3.53	0.88
Att 5	Unable to express an idea to the group	25%	25%	50%	3.44	1.08
Att 6	English lesson goes well	8%	28%	64%	3.92	1.00

50% students (Att 5) attributed their inability to express an idea to internal factors. The rest of the students share the same percentage (25% each) between internal and unsure. On the contrary, statements Att 3 and Att 6 had a wide gap between students who attributed their progress in English and the situation while learning to internal and external factors. More than 60% of the students believe it was caused by internal factors and only 14% (Att 3) and 8% (Att 6) who attributed to external factors.

This result was also corroborated by the participants' statements in the interview. These six students were asked to rate their reading skills from 1 to 10. Four of them gave a reading score of 8, while the rest were 6 and 7.

> *"Actually reading is not difficult, but if there is no motivation inside, then it will be very difficult. If it comes from a book or text which has too complicated vocabularies, it will definitely make me no motivation to read."* (Int-A)

Student A believed that the content of the reading had to be interesting so that she could be motivated to read and to find out how the story ends. The same thing was expressed by student B.

> *"My biggest problem with reading is lack of motivation, unless the title is very interesting. Honestly, my progress depends on my efforts. I do my best for learning new knowledge." (Int-B)*

Five students realized that their lack of vocabulary became the main reason why reading was challenging. Another believed her progress in reading depends on the lecturer. As she said in the interview, "The lecturer's explanation sometimes cannot be understood well. I am also embarrassed to ask." (Int-P4)

Those answers validated the questionnaires that more than half of the class believed that internal factors would drive their motivation to achieve their goals in reading.

Correlation between attributional beliefs and EFL learners' monitoring strategies in reading

Figure 1 shows 56% students believed that their success or failure in reading was due to their efforts and strategies. Based on their attributional beliefs, the researchers tried to figure out how they monitored their reading strategies.

Seven statements from table 2 above focused on the reading monitoring strategies implemented for students reading activities. 81% (RMS 3) students agreed that they always motivated themselves to be able to read and understand the whole text. The majority of the students believed that motivation was the most important thing to overcome all the reading difficulties. The second most used strategy by the students was dictionary. 78% (RMS 7) students stated that dictionary or internet helped them find the meaning of difficult words. Other statements showed that 75 % students agree to imagine things (RMS 2) and work in group (RMS 4). From all the disagree responses, RMS 4 was mostly chosen by participants (14%).

Florida, N.A. & Mbato, C.L. (2020). The influence of attributional beliefs on Indonesian EFL learners' reading comprehension.

Table 2 Students' responses regarding their reading monitoring strategies

Statement No	Statement	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation
RMS 1	While reading, I periodically check if the material is making sense to me	8%	19%	72%	3.72	0.74
RMS 2	I imagine things, or draw pictures of what I am reading	6%	19%	75%	3.86	0.87
RMS 3	I encourage myself as I read by saying positive statements such as "You can do it"	6%	14%	81%	4.08	0.94
RMS 4	I work with classmates when reading English texts or solve problems	14%	11%	75%	3.78	0.90
RMS 5	When I encounter a difficult or unfamiliar word I try to work out its meaning from the context surrounding it (such as other words or pictures)	3%	28%	69%	3.86	0.87
RMS 6	I identify what I don't understand in the reading and I ask a precise question to solve the problem	8%	39%	53%	3.47	0.91
RMS 7	I use reference materials (such as a dictionary, textbook, or website) to help solve a comprehension problem	3%	19%	78%	4.11	0.92

When students encountered difficulties in reading, their responses were quite different. There were 69% students who agreed and 28% who were unsure in terms of guessing the meaning from the context (RMS 5). In terms of the students who asked a question to solve the problem (RMS 6), 53% chose agree and 39% chose unsure. These small gaps indicated that many students were unsure to do these reading monitoring strategies when they faced a problem in reading activity.

In order to test the validity of the questionnaires, the researchers conducted Pearson Correlation through SSPS. It was used to calculate the correlation between attributional beliefs and reading monitoring strategies.

Table 3 Correlation between attributional beliefs and reading monitoring strategies

		Att Beliefs	Reading Monitoring Strategies
Att Beliefs	Pearson Correlation	1	.051
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.767
	N	36	36
Reading Monitoring Strategies	Pearson Correlation	.051	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.767	
	N	36	36

As shown in table 3, the Pearson correlation indicated that there was a moderate correlation between attributional beliefs and reading monitoring strategies, which was not statistically significant (r = .051, n = 36, p = .767) (cf. Schober et al., 2018).

This data highlighted the findings stated in Figure 1. The correlation between attributional beliefs and reading monitoring strategies were moderate since many students (33%) were unsure about the cause of their success or failure in reading. Even though some of them were not metacognitively active, they believed that motivation – both internal and external should be well maintained. The results conclude that the null hypothesis (H0) was accepted and (H1) was rejected. The correlation was insignificant for the total participants (p = 0,767 > α = 0,5).

The interviews revealed that student A predicted whenever she found difficult words.

"First, I just read it and then if I find a new word, I associate with the previous word or in a sentence. Then guessing, roughly what this word means in what sentence, then check in the dictionary. Then make a note."(Int-A).

In order to be motivated, student A always set a goal for her reading activity. It would keep her more focused. She also mentioned that the internet sometimes distracted her from reading. Her answer indicated that she was aware of her weaknesses and did metacognitive strategies in reading.

Florida, N.A. & Mbato, C.L. (2020). The influence of attributional beliefs on Indonesian EFL learners' reading comprehension.

> *"I set goals, for example, today I must read two chapters from e-book, then I turn off the internet data. Because if I read through my phone with internet on, it will distract me to open another app unrelated to my reading. I should read it right and try to dive into the text. I think through these strategies I will have a really good reading comprehension." (Int-A).*

On the other hand, students B, C, D and E explained that they did some repetitions in reading one text. First, they read without really understanding what the text was about. Second, they re-read, marked the difficult words and then checked the dictionary. Third, they re-read the whole text from the beginning.

> *"While reading, if I find difficult words, I search the meaning from dictionary and reread it from the beginning. This method seems ineffective and wasted time. But I don't know any other way besides this." (Int-C)*

Those five students were trying hard to grasp the meaning even though the text might not be interesting. They applied low order cognitive strategies. They did not try other strategies when they faced a problem while implementing a strategy in reading. It indicated that their goal in reading was only to meet an obligation from the lecturer and they were not interested to read another text from other sources. As student E revealed "I have never read any other English text than what is given by lecturers on campus." (Int-E).

Another answer came from student F. When he felt overwhelmed with reading task, he gave up. He said "If I'm lazy, even if tomorrow there will be a quiz, I can't read. I know it is not good for me. I am still struggling (to regulate myself)." (Int-F). His answer indicated that he might have learned helplessness. Overall, there was a moderate correlation between attributional beliefs and EFL learners' monitoring strategies in reading.

DISCUSSION

This research attempted to investigate the attributional beliefs in reading comprehension which involved 36 students in a private

university in Kupang. Particularly, it aimed to find out the answers to these following research questions: 1) how do Indonesian EFL learners perceive their attributional beliefs in reading comprehension and 2) was there any correlation between attributional beliefs and EFL learners' monitoring strategies in reading? The following discussion will highlight one major finding related to the first research question and two key findings related to the second research question.

The data analysis results showed that students tended to believe that their success and failure were caused by their own motivation and their efforts (internal factors). The findings showed that the majority of the students (56%) attributed their success and failure in reading to internal factors like efforts and motivation. However, some students (33%) were unsure about their attributional beliefs. It seems that attribution was a difficult concept to understand and apply in the learning process. It was because the students did not know their strengths and weaknesses in learning. When experiencing difficult things in the learning process, they did not reflect on what was gained, the obstacles and how to solve them. As Gatcho & Hajan (2019) said,

> *"Students do not learn much just by sitting in class listening to teachers, memorizing prepackaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to experiences, apply it to their daily lives." (p.5)*

This finding strengthened Mbato's study (2013) who found that students became more successful in EFL learning when they were facilitated by their teachers to attribute their success and failure appropriately.

One strategy to facilitate students' attribution in reading was by providing them with interesting reading materials. This technique was potential to increase students active participation and raise their motivation in reading class (Marzuki et al., 2018; Mbato, 2013; Misa, 2014). Data from questionnaire (RMS 3) and interview of six students

indicated that the majority of the NTT EFL learners' motivation to read was influenced by the text content. This statement was in line with Astriningsih & Mbato (2019) who argued that "students who have a strong motivation can learn faster than those who are not motivated" (p. 66).

The results of the second research question indicated that there was a moderate correlation (r=0.51) between attributional beliefs and reading monitoring strategies. This means that the correlation was not significant for all the students (n=36). This results suggested that students need to be introduced to a variety of strategies and do experiments with each strategy to find the best strategy and make learning plans for themselves (cf. Gatcho & Hajan, 2019; Mbato, 2013; Mbato, 2019). The interview results revealed that the reading strategy applied by many students was reading the text and interpreting every word and then rereading it to understand the entire meaning. They admitted that the strategy was time consuming and ineffective, but because of their lack knowledge of other types of strategies, they were stuck with that strategy. The data supported the null hypothesis (H0) i.e., there was no significant correlation between attributional beliefs and EFL learners' monitoring strategies in reading.

Other findings from the research showed that students had some difficulties in reading such as lack of vocabulary and strategies. Even though they realize that the strategy was ineffective, they kept doing it due to lack of knowledge of other strategies. In addition, students had no interest in reading English text outside the class. The purpose of their reading was to pass reading class and not to acquire the ability in reading English or find new information. In this case, Mistar et al., (2016) suggest that teachers should provide effective guideline instruction to their students by 1) using the strategy's concept, 2) using the model of reading strategies, 3) providing the feedback in every practice, 4) encouraging students to train their reading skills, and 5) providing content-based materials so students understand the reading purpose. Students must be introduced with two kinds of strategies in reading, i.e., cognitive and metacognitive

strategies (see Mbato, 2013; Mbato, 2019). Once they were familiar with these strategies and developed the ability to think metacognitively, they would be able to perform higher order thinking skills. The students would learn to evaluate and monitor the development of their progress independently (Mbato, 2019). The finding supported earlier researchers' (Gatcho & Hajan, 2019; Mbato, 2013) recommendation, who argue that language teachers should introduce metacognitive strategies in their reading classes so that their students could have a large number of skills at their disposal and experiment them in various reading contexts. This way, they could become independent and critical readers (cf. Mbato, 2019).

From the findings, it could be seen that one interviewee had an indication of learned helplessness. This finding also supported the claim by Mbato (2013) that helpless students function poorly when it comes to the metacognition implementation in reading. They tended to believe that ability is the key to success rather than efforts and strategies. These students need special attention from their teacher. They should be empowered to recognise that success depends mostly on their own efforts and strategies in learning rather than on external factors (see Mbato, 2013). The findings of this study advanced the idea by Mbato (2013) that attributional beliefs play a crucial role in students' reading progress in particular and EFL learning in general.

CONCLUSION

This research investigated the influence of attributional beliefs on Indonesian EFL learners' reading comprehension. The findings showed that students attributed their success and failure in reading comprehension to internal factors like motivation and efforts. It was also shown that there was a moderate and insignificant correlation between attribution and reading monitoring strategies. The results indicated that students did not understand the importance of regulating themselves and putting efforts and strategies while reading.

Based on these findings, the researchers offered the following recommendations. First, language teachers should explain attribution concepts and apply them in their classes in order to help their students develop internal attributions in reading. This will in turn gave their students a greater opportunity to experience more reading success. Second, language teachers should help students practice all reading strategies, including how to monitor their progress in order to develop reading enjoyment and achievements. Despite its' positive findings, this study was limited to a reading class in one private university (n = 36), so the researchers could not generalize its findings to a larger population of universities in Indonesia. Future researchers can conduct similar studies with a bigger number of respondents and involve more universities in Indonesia. They can also compare students who apply attribution in reading and those who do not. Since this study only used a convergent parallel mixed method to collect the data, future researchers may implement a true experimental study.

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