

METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES USED BY EFL UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN READING ENGLISH TEXT

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate most of metacognitive strategies used by fifth semester students of English Education Study Program in academic year 2020/2021 and also investigate their metacognitive awareness. Eighty-nine students were participated in this study including 27 males and 62 females. The current study used quantitative approach with survey design in which the author used a questionnaire to evaluate students' responses. Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) was used to investigate the reading strategies used by students while reading English texts. Furthermore, it also used to assess metacognitive reading awareness of students. The findings reveal that the participants' overall use of metacognitive reading strategies (Global, Problem-solving, and Support reading strategies) was at a high to medium level. There are 12 strategies used with high frequency while 18 strategies used with medium frequency and no strategy reported using low frequency. Among of these three metacognitive categories, problem solving appears to be the most strategies used by participants and followed by global reading and support reading. The present study also reveals that they are have high- to low-level awareness of metacognitive strategies. From the interview, also found that most students rely more on google translate.

Keywords: *Metacognition, Metacognitive Strategies, Reading Comprehension*

INTRODUCTION

One of the most significant current discussions in second language acquisition are learning strategies. According to Jenny & González (2017) learning strategies are "as set of tactics that people use in order to gain control over their own learning process". Research on second language acquisition showed that learning strategies have become the most influential factor of successful language learning. Good language learners usually develop their own strategies and use them as a tool to solve problem regarding to their own learning however, poor language learners need more helps. For this reason, teachers are demanded to using appropriate L2 models or approaches to stimulate the use of learning strategies among learners.

O'Malley and Chamot who are the researcher in learning strategies proposed the three significant strategies of language learning strategies: cognitive, metacognitive and social/affective. Cognitive strategies are the strategy that involve direct manipulation or transformation of the material or text. This strategy usually intends to enhance comprehension, acquisition or retention. Metacognitive strategies can be described as the way someone control over his/her own thinking process. These strategies include planning for learning, monitoring while learning process take place, and self-evaluation of learning after

learning has been completed. Social/affective strategies are strategies that involve interaction between the learner and the other learners. For example, in language learning context, someone may use these strategies to improve language learning and cross-cultural understanding. Meanwhile affective strategies may relate to how someone regulate his/her emotion, motivation and attitude toward learning. However, among of these three strategies, metacognitive has received many attentions from psychological theorists.

What differs metacognitive and cognitive are in term of use. Metacognitive which derive from word 'metacognition' can be described as 'thinking about thinking' or 'cognition about cognition'. It can also refer to one's awareness concerning to one's own cognitive process. Whereas cognitive which derived from the word 'cognition' can be defined as mental process that encompassed memory, attention, producing and understanding language, reasoning, problem solving and decision making. They sometimes have closer meaning, yet at the same time has different purposes and use. If you ask yourselves question like "what are the name of the character in the text?" or "what is the purpose of the text?" you use your knowledge or using your deep understanding about the text you are read. However, when it comes to metacognitive your knowledge or your understanding leads to self-question. For example, you may ask yourself "what am I supposed to learn? What should I do first? What should I look for in this reading? How much time I need to complete this task?". In the simple ways, metacognitive happens when someone talk to himself or when someone make judgement of what he actually thinking.

The role of metacognition in language learning is to help the learners to develop their own cognitive process such as problem solving, making decision or understanding a situation or text. Student who applies metacognitive strategies in learning is tend to perform better and learn more (Pintrich, 2002). Moreover, students who can apply different kinds of strategies will always know their strengths and weaknesses. Nevertheless, students who do not know or not developed their metacognitive knowledge is more likely less to use their critical thinking as it important to be developed. Finally, metacognitive skills can construct learners' characteristics, enhance learners' confidence in learning, become autonomous learners who not hesitate to ask help either from peer, teacher or family (ÖZ, 2005).

Although language instructors believe that students will be able to develop metacognition on their own, of course through experiences and ages. On the other hand, many students fail to do so. It is apparent that teachers should teach metacognitive knowledge in separate units or incorporate with another subject. In some skill area likes reading and writing metacognitive knowledge can be taught through general strategies both acceptable or desirable. One of the most important aspect in teaching metacognitive knowledge is explicit labelling (Pintrich, 2002). For examples, teacher can note moments when metacognitive knowledge happens and then connect the strategies to another knowledge that they already have. This method can enhance students' awareness of their metacognitive knowledge and use strategy in learning and thinking process.

Meanwhile, studies on metacognition and reading comprehension reveal that there is strong relation between the use of strategies, awareness and reading comprehension. Moreover, research on reading comprehension done by (Zhang & Wu, 2009) showed that most of the comprehension activities used by effective readers take place at the metacognitive level which means high proficiency readers is more aware to use strategy than those who don't. This strategy, believed, can be an effective way in promoting students' reading comprehension.

METHODS

Research Design

The research used quantitative design along with interview. Quantitative method was used to describe a research problem through analyzing trends, comparing group or relating variables, using statistical analysis and interpreting results by comparing them with prior predictions or previous research. While, interview was used to make sure the results of this study were truly represented students' metacognitive awareness of reading strategies.

Population and Sample

The population of the research was all students in fifth semester of English Study Program in Jambi university. The amount of fifth semester students had total 27 males and 62 females. The fifth students of English study program were divided into three classes which consists of R-001, R-002, and R-003, each of them has 29, 29 and 31 of students. This study used total sampling to gather data from the participant. Totalsampling was chosen because the study wanted to draw the entirely metacognitive strategies used by the fifth semester students of English Education Study Program.

Gender	R-001	R-002	R-003
Male	9	8	10
Female	20	21	21
Total	29	29	31

Table 1 Population of fifth semester students

Data Collection Procedure

In this study, the data were collected using two research instruments, that are questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire was adopted from Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) which has named SORS. It designed to assess ESL readers' metacognitive awareness and perceived use of reading strategies while reading academic or school related materials. The SORS instrument measured three broad categories of reading strategies: Global Reading Strategies (GLOB), Problem Solving Strategies (PROB) and Support Reading Strategies (SUP). The questionnaire has 30 items, consisted of 13 items of GLOB, 8 items of PROB and 9 items of SUP. Meanwhile, Interview was conducted in order to support the finding from students' questionnaire score. The interviewees were asked to clarify the actions that they might take before and while reading to aid or assist their comprehension and how they adjust their reading strategies according to each situation to repair their comprehension failure or weakness. The 8-questions were arranged based on the questionnaire which represent students use of global reading, problem solving and support reading. *Validity and Reliability*

The validity and reliability of the instrument was tested by 89 students. It is obtained that r_{table} for 30 items of questions were 0,208 with level of significance of 5%. The instrument is said to be valid if r_{count} is equal to or greater than r_{table} . Thus, it is found that each item of this instrument is valid and can be used. For the reliability, as determined by Cronbach's alpha was reported as 0.92, which means that this instrument is reliable.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using MS. Excel 2013 and SPSS 20. As for MS. Excel was used to collect data on student responses to the questionnaire given. Meanwhile, SPSS 20 is used to calculate the mean score of each strategy. In order to identify strategies with the highest and lowest scores, the data was described as quantitative form using frequencies and percentage. The awareness of metacognitive reading strategy used is also calculated through frequencies and percentage

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results: Metacognitive Strategy Used by EFL Undergraduate Students

Item	Strategy	N (Participants)	Mean	Evaluation
1	Setting purpose for reading	89	3.91	High
3	Using background knowledge	89	3.65	High
4	Previewing text	89	3.25	Medium
6	Checking if text content fits purpose	89	3.38	Medium
8	Skimming to note	89	2.67	Medium
12	Deciding what to read	89	3.21	Medium
15	Using tables, figures & pictures	89	3.25	Medium
17	Using context clues	89	3.66	High
20	Using typographical aids	89	3.31	Medium
21	Analyzing and evaluating	89	3.03	Medium
23	Checking understanding	89	3.54	High
24	Guessing what material is about	89	3.47	Medium
27	Checking if guesses are right	89	3.12	Medium

2. Students use of GLOB

Item	Strategy	N (Participants)	Mean	Evaluation
7	Reading slowly and carefully	89	3.66	High
9	Getting back when distracted	89	3.76	High
11	Adjusting reading speed	89	3.66	High
14	Paying closer attention when facing text difficulties	89	3.61	High
16	Pausing to reflect on reading	89	3.27	Medium
19	Visualizing information	89	3.12	Medium
25	Re-reading	89	3.63	High
28	Guessing unknown words	89	3.33	Medium

3. Students use of PROB

Item	Strategy	N (Participants)	Mean	Evaluation
2	Taking notes while reading	89	3.13	Medium
5	Reading out loud	89	3.02	Medium
10	Underlining and circling	89	3.54	High
13	Using dictionaries	89	3.69	High
18	Paraphrasing	89	3.07	Medium
22	Going back and forth to find Relationships	89	3.34	Medium
26	Asking self-questions	89	3.04	Medium
29	Translating English into native language	89	3.30	Medium
30	Thinking about information in both English and mothertongue	89	3.67	High

4. Students use of SUP

From table 2 above, it can be seen that the high score from global reading strategies (GLOB) are fallen into setting purpose for reading. This strategy is the highest of all strategies and also higher than the other strategies in 13 items of GLOB. The mean score is (3,91) which means it indicate that the students use of this strategy is more often than the other strategies. Another strategy in GLOB that fallen into high category are using context clues (3.66); using background knowledge (3.65); and checking understanding (3.54) and while the rests are fallen into medium usage.

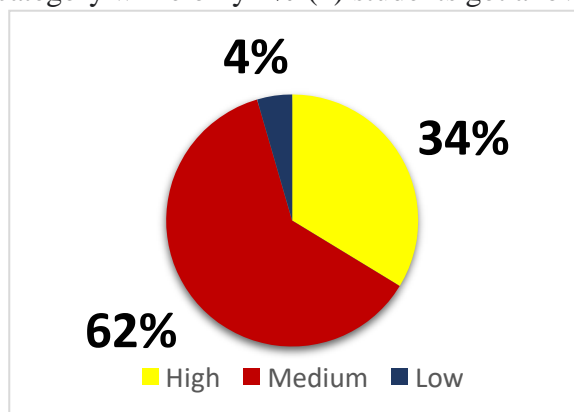
With regard to 8-item problem-solving strategies (PROB), 5 strategies are used highly (62.5%) while 3 strategies are used moderately (37.5%). Table above shows that students use strategies of getting back when distracted (3.76); reading slowly and carefully (3.66); adjusting reading speed (3.66); re-reading (3.63); and paying closer attention when facing text difficulties (3.61) are among the highest. Whereas, in the category of support reading strategies (SUP), students are reported using moderately 6 strategies although 3 strategies are reported at the high levels of use. It includes using dictionaries (3.69); thinking about both information in English and mother tongue (3.67); and underlining and circling (3.54).

	Mean	Level of usage
Global reading Strategy (GLOB)	3.34	Medium
Problem solving strategy (PROB)	3.50	High
Support Reading Strategy	3.31	Medium

Table 5 The Participants Overall Use of Metacognitive Reading Strategy

Results: Students Awareness of Metacognitive Strategies in Reading

The chart below provides the results of students' individual score of questionnaires. It can be seen that there were 34% (30) students who got high questionnaire score and 62% (55) students got score in the moderate category while only 4% (4) students got a low score.



Furthermore, to support this research findings, the interview was conducted with 3 students in each level (high, medium, low). Most students answered that the first thing they do when reading is read the title first and then read the text. If asked if they know their purpose in reading,

they agree to answer that their purpose is to obtain information. However, the most striking difference was shown when they answered whether they used background knowledge when reading. It showed that high proficient readers tend to use their background knowledge when reading as student (23) says that “I always use my background knowledge when I reading because when it makes me easier to understand the text” Meanwhile, low proficient readers don't even use it at all as students (65) says that “I don't use my background knowledge as I am reading”

High proficient reader focus on not only the main idea of the text but also focus on the details. Their focus on details is a foresight of how they catch all the information in the text as student (2) says that “I pay attention to the main idea and all the details, because main idea is only providing general information but details provide more information to support the main idea such as: when, how and why”. However, poor readers only focus on main idea as student (68) says that “I focus more on the details”. Furthermore, most of students agreed that they focus more on the logical relation rather than the shape of paragraph.

Students who categorized as high proficient readers and medium readers are agreed that they main purpose of reading English text is to get information and enrich vocabulary as student (9) say that “I think the most important purpose of reading English texts is to get information, add insight and enrich vocabulary” and student (30) says that “I think getting new information, gaining knowledge and enriching vocabulary are my main goals”. Meanwhile students who categorized as poor readers (60) says that “I think my main goal in reading English texts is to learn a lot of vocabulary because I don't remember much English vocabulary”.

Most students answer that they usually reread the text more than once trying to conclude the meaning of the word or sentence. However, students who in the medium and low level prefer to use google translate if they do not know the meaning of some words as students (40) says that “I reread the text but if I don't understand then just use google translate”.

Good readers answers that they often reread the text until they get the meaning or idea, other than that they usually read slowly word per word, sentence per sentence until they got the point as student (23) says that “I will reread the text, read it slowly while grasping the meaning of the reading itself”. However poor readers often use google translate to solve their problem as student (68) says that “I always use google translate if I don't understand what I'm reading”. Good readers usually underline or circling information then paraphrase it to help them better understand in reading as student (9) says that “I don't take notes when I read, but rather underline important sentences and paraphrase it. I also translate it into Indonesian if I don't understand”. However, poor reader and medium reader usually use underlining or circling information and use google translate as student (60) says that “I underline or circle information and translating it using google translate and student (49) says that “translating into Indonesia, underlining key information”.

Most of high reader and medium reader says that they refer to mother tongue when text become difficult and also think in Indonesian to help them more understand about the content as student (23) says that “I refer to Indonesia when there are words that are difficult because it helps me understand” and student (40) says that “Not really, sometimes if the words are in English, I don't refer to Indonesia” but poor reader are always refer to Indonesia as they read as student (66) says that “I refer to my mother tongue most of the time because when I translate into Indonesia, I better understand what I am reading”. If they are asked what are the biggest obstacle they faced when they read. Most of the answers are difficult words, boring topic, and complicated grammar as student (9) says that “when the topic is boring, complicated grammar and lot of difficult words”.

Discussion

The findings of this study obtained that problem solving strategies appeared to be the most widely strategies used by participants due to the learners were generally conscious of their comprehension process and were able to take appropriate actions when comprehension failure. For example, when they get distracted when reading, they usually go back for text to find the idea, reading slowly and carefully, and re-read to increase understanding, adjusting reading speed and pay close attention to what they are reading. Whereas global reading strategies are reported in the medium use, in fact, these students used 'setting purpose for reading as one of the highest usages. This showed that these students have demonstrated a capacity of planning for reading. Then, the students are highly used skimming to note, using context clues and checking understanding as a part of monitoring while reading.

And last, support reading strategies which seemed to be the least used strategies by the students. However, it turns out that using dictionaries is one of the most strategies use by students. Support strategies were used by learners to enhance understanding and memory. In ESL context, the use of support strategies was naturally higher as these strategies were meant to enhance understanding. In one of his studies, as cited in Maasum and Maarof (201), "Michael (1998) stated that low achievers used a dictionary to understand their reading similarly, Nunan (1991) also stated that the poor language learner relied on dictionary more than good language learners do". Mokhtari and Reichard (2002) also mentioned that students who reported using dictionary more often, look every word in text may have a restricted view of reading.

Meanwhile, the second question suggested that the fifth students of English Education Program were in the high-to-low level of awareness of using metacognitive strategies in reading. In the data listed in the table above, it is known that students use problem solving strategies the most among other categories. It can be seen from acquisition of three categories. Mokhtari and Reichard (2002) say that readers who claim to be good readers usually use a lot of problem-solving strategies followed by global reading strategies. They also stated that poor readers tend to use higher support reading strategies such as using dictionaries and lower use global reading strategies and problem-solving strategies. Garner and Alexander (1989) also mentioned that a child who rely on a single criterion for textual understanding may indicate lack awareness of reading strategies (as cited in Mokhtari & Reichard (2002).

From the interview of 9 students show that 60% percent students can be categorized as good readers while 40% students are poor readers who cannot manage reading when it breaks down. Poor readers tend to use one single strategy and did not consider to use other strategies or they applied several strategies and allowed several strategies as well. Moreover, they also often use tools such as google translate to understand the content of the text. This is actually not entirely wrong, but students who rely heavily on assistive devices can cause lack of vocabulary.

This study once again reveals the same results obtained by many past researches. Paris & Jacob (1984) as cited in Mokhtari & Reichard (2002) emphasized the importance of increasing metacognitive awareness in reading comprehension. Metacognitive awareness can distinguish between skilled and unskilled readers. Skilled readers often participate in any activity that requires planful thinking, flexible strategies, and periodic self-monitoring. Meanwhile unskilled readers do not participate in using these skills. Unskilled readers are often oblivious to these strategies and its use.

CONCLUSION

The result of this study concluded that the fifth students of English Education Study Program of Jambi University are, in general, using metacognitive strategy in medium to high level. Based on the result of the research, the most metacognitive strategies used are setting purpose for reading, getting back when distracted, using dictionaries, thinking about information in both English and mother tongue, using context clues. From 3 categories of metacognitive strategy, global strategy, problem solving strategy, and supporting strategy, student used 12 strategies with high frequency while 18 strategies with medium frequency and no strategy reported using low frequency. Among of these three metacognitive categories, problem solving appears to be the most strategies used by participants and followed by global reading and support reading. The present study also reveals that the fifth students of English Education Study Program of Jambi University are high- to low-level awareness of metacognitive strategies. from the interview, also found that most students rely more on google translate. Indeed, metacognitive awareness is critically important aspect in skilled reading. It is important for poor students to improve their awareness of metacognitive strategies.

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