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The Analysis of Proficient Learners' Metacognitive Reading Strategies: A Case Study of EFL Learners at English Language Studies Program of Hasanuddin University

Hartina Mahardhika
Postgraduate Student of English Language Studies
Faculty of Cultural Sciences - Hasanuddin University
Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

Abidin Pammu
Faculty of Cultural Sciences
Hasanuddin University
Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

Nasmilah
Faculty of Cultural Sciences
Hasanuddin University
Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

Abstract:- This research was an attempt to identify the level of metacognitive awareness of postgraduate learners of FIB in reading expository texts in the EFL context. The sample for the study is 8 English Language Studies (ELS) students who have been chosen randomly under emergent situation due to Covid-19. From the sample, 5 respondents were chosen to fill in the questionnaire offline because they were accessible on campus and the rest via online because they were beyond reach by the researcher. Two weeks' time was spent to obtain the returned questionnaires delivered to the samples. The data were analyzed by means of descriptive statistics using SPPSS version 15. The findings indicated a high level of metacognitive awareness for the entire sample, including Global, Help and Problem-Solving Strategies. The results suggest that metacognitive awareness is inherent within ELS learners regardless of their levels of proficiency. Despite the high level of metacognitive awareness, the quality of transfer to the students' reading task performance is low. This finding in turn will add to the existing corpus of knowledge in the field of language learning strategy in EFL context. The finding reaffirms the necessity for the design of strategy training focusing on raising learners' awareness and use of effective metacognitive and cognitive strategies to improve their reading performance.

Keywords: *Metacognitive Reading; Reading Strategies; Awareness; Hasanuddin University.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In an academic setting, vocabulary serves as a tool to ensure success in academic writing and publication because academic vocabulary plays an important role for learners and educators at University as a guide in writing academically and necessary in comprehending academic text. However, insufficient vocabulary knowledge is the most problem of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners faced in learning academic discourses. Thus, special attention should be paid to the English Academic Purposes (EAP) context, especially in developing academic vocabulary [1].

Reading for academic professionalism and success is important for learners regardless of their disciplines [2]. This is because most knowledge transfer occurs through printed materials. Hasanuddin University or *Unirveritas Hasanuddin* (Unhas) is one of the largest higher education institutions in Indonesia, especially in the eastern part of Indonesia[3]. Reading skills play essential roles among tertiary learners especially at Unhas then the ability to read has been the major concern of both university administrators and lecturers. Coleman [4] conducted a survey at 12 faculties at this university on the main purpose of learners taking English subject revealed that the majority of students surveyed put reading skills as their main goals for learning English. Coleman's survey has resulted in the publication of reading materials entitled 'Risking Fun' (Reading Skills for Unhas). The publication gained acclaim from the rector who later recommended revision in content due to dynamic development of the institution. The content needed revision with regard to its suitability for pure sciences, such as for Faculty of Mathematics and Pure Sciences (MIPA), Medicines, Forestry, Animal Husbandry and engineering. In short, these learners need to be able to read texts of different materials and with different reading purpose so that they need appropriate reading strategies to cater for such purposes.

Lie [5][6] regards that Some restrictions have been faced by ELT in Indonesia. Firstly, The number of students is so huge and their diversity is so high in terms of their level of motivation, academic capacity, cultural contexts, and access to opportunities for education that it is impossible to devise a program that will work well for the entire world [7]. Secondly, teachers of English have lacked skills in the process of knowledge transfer because they have limited

skills and training in this field. Teachers have limited skills in using the language because most teachers have little practice during their tertiary education. As an important part of curriculum content, English teaching has placed emphasis on the four skills, such as speaking, reading, listening, and writing. With the rapid development of science and technology, there has been a shift of teaching orientation due to the increasing demands of literacy skills, emphasizing reading ability but still maintaining the other three skills. Reading is even seen as an important process of self-empowerment.

This can be attributed to students' limited exposure to English reading activities and low interest and motivation to read [8]. Al-Jarf [9] also adds that this can also be due to non-challenging reading instruction; thus, students' cognitive and metacognitive reading abilities are not extensively developed. This research was designed to confirm previous study results on ELS students' reading comprehension success in order to resolve the academic issue in Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University, Indonesia. Additionally, it is also expected to discover if students are mindful of and practice different metacognitive strategies when they want to read the academic texts.

This analysis attempted to evaluate the techniques often used and least used during the whole reading process by experienced and less skilled learners. The aim is to develop appropriate subject materials, reading programs, and instructional strategies to enhance students' willingness and ability to read, While previous studies focused further on determining and surveying relationships of two variables: reading comprehension and metacognitive reading strategies. This research tried to comprise the strategies used by proficient learners.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Early investigation by Barnett [10] significantly found out the correlation between strategy use and reading performance from 278 students as the study's subject. Findings demonstrated that subjects who performed better in reading appeared to use better strategies than subjects who did not use effective strategies. Metacognitive awareness of the subjects appeared to correlate significantly with the subject performance in reading comprehension.

Further development in metacognitive strategy work has gained another important momentum in approximate successive years after a series of research undertaken by the same researcher. Vandergrift [11] found that the effective use of metacognitive listening strategies plays a large role in successful listening comprehension. Metacognitive strategy also helps students increase their self-regulation and autonomy in listening [11] [12]. It has a powerful relationship with the inspiration of students for language learning and self-efficacy. However, very limited studies have examined the issue of knowledge of metacognitive listening techniques and the form of language task, particularly where the use of technology includes doing the listening task [13]. Azevedo [14] and Tsai [15] began to integrate metacognitive research with technology within the same year. They came up with surprising findings that using computers as metacognitive tools and metacognitively active participants could enhance learning in technology-based environments [13].

III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are 1) to reveal the profiles of the proficient and less proficient learners' metacognitive reading strategies at ELS program and 2) to find out the most dominant category of the proficient and less proficient learners' metacognitive reading strategy at ELS program.

IV. RESEARCH METHOD

The present study adopts a quantitative method that required data collection through the questionnaire. The quantitative method's strength is The capacity to offer elaborate textual explanations of how a given study challenge is interpreted by individuals. The quantitative approach is also useful in identifying the description generally. Therefore, it can provide reliable information about proficient learners' metacognitive reading strategies in EFL context [16]. The research instrument is the standardized research instrument by Mochtary and Reichard [17], a form of questionnaire called MARSI questionnaire that has been used in many context of learning. The questionnaire was sent to the determined samples and samples will have 2 weeks' time to return the questionnaires.

V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Findings

The learners' overall pattern of perceived strategy is presented using the mean score (M) and standard deviation (S D) of MAR SI that measures adult learners' metacognitive awareness in their reading of the academic text. Three sub-scales of strategy in M ARSI are: 1) Global Strategy (GLOB) with 13 items, 2) Support Strategy (SUP) with 9 items, and 3) Problem-Solving Strategy (PROB) with 8 items.

They are used to disclose the metacognitive knowledge standard. The cumulative average shows how often, when reading an instructional material, learners use those techniques. The average for each sub-scale of the inventory indicates a tactic sub-category (i.e., GLOB, SUP, PROB) in each skill group has a higher propensity to interpret knowledge. This will relay details about whether the community of learners in each of the three classes belongs to the LOW , MEDIUM , or HIGH level.

In this section, the mean score of each strategy is analyzed by adding together the objects which are under the same construct and finding the grand mean score. To obtain the mean score for the metacognitive technique, for example, a scale 1 to 5 from the report of the respondents is clustered together to find the mean score. For other structures, the same holds. The higher the mean score, the higher the likelihood to use technique as viewed. The selection of scores received would also suggest the advent of the use of technique uncertainty. Basic technique, however, does not appear to be

in use in the investigation by a single group of students. The degree of understanding would then allow the investigator to explain the use of metacognitive reading strategies by the learners to address the research question one (RQ1): "*What are the profiles of metacognitive reading strategies that are selected by proficient and less proficient learners in EFL context?"*

Table 1-3 showed the mean score and level of Global Strategy used by proficient learners (500 > TOEFL), mean score and level of Support Strategy used by proficient learners, and mean score and level of Problem-Solving strategy used by proficient student.

TABLE 1. MEAN SCORE AND LEVEL OF GLOBAL STRATEGY USED BY PROFICIENT LEARNERS (500 > TOEFL)

Global	Mean	S.td	Level
1. When I read, I have a goal in mind.	3. 78	. 95	High
2. I think about whether the text material suits my intention of reading.	3. 28	1. 15	Medium
3. To make me understand what I read, I wonder about what I know	3. 95	. 85	High
4. I preview the text before reading it to get what it's about.	3. 70	1. 11	High
5. To improve my comprehension, I use text table, statistics, and photos	3. 40	1. 17	Medium
6. To recognise key information, I use typographical aids such as **bold** or *italics*	3. 30	1. 11	Medium
7. I check to see if my text predictions are accurate or inaccurate.	3. 78	. 97	High
8. At First, I skim the text by mentioning features such as duration and organization.	2. 83	. 87	Medium
9. When I'm reading, I want to imagine what the content is about.	3. 98	. 89	High
10. I choose what to read carefully and what to skip.	3. 50	1. 01	High
11. I interpret the knowledge contained in the document objectively and review it.	3. 18	1. 06	Medium
12. To help me grasp what I am reading, I use background hints.	3. 45	1. 26	Medium
13. When I come across contradictory details, I check my comprehension.	3. 70	. 76	High
Overall Global	**3. 52**	**. 60**	**High**

TABLE 2. MEAN SCORE AND LEVEL OF SUPPORT STRATEGY USED BY PROFICIENT LEARNERS

Support	Mean	SD	Level
1. To help me recall it, I underline or circle the text with details.	4.28	1.01	High
2. I read aloud when text gets difficult, to make me learn.	3.58	1.26	High
3. I tell myself questions that I would like to answer in the letter.	3.43	.96	Medium
4. To confirm my comprehension, I share what I read with others.	3.33	1.10	Medium
5. To focus on crucial details in the text, I summarize what I read.	3.48	1.04	Medium
6. To aid me understand what I am reading, I take some notes.	3.18	.98	Medium
7. To better comprehend what I read, I restate ideas in my own words (paraphrase).	3. 30	1. 20	Medium
8. In the letter, I go back and forth to make a link with the ideas in it.	3. 25	1. 03	Medium
9. I use reference tools to help me understand what I am reading, such as dictionaries.	4. 08	. 97	High
Support	**3. 54**	**. 55**	**High**

TABLE 3. MEAN SCORE AND LEVEL OF PROBLEM-SOLVING STRATEGY USED BY PROFICIENT LEARNER

Problem Solving	Mean	S.td	Level
1. I re-read to improve my comprehension as text gets difficult.	4. 18	. 87	High
2. I try to infer the meaning of words or phrases which are unknown.	4. 10	. 90	High
3. When I lose focus, I attempt to get back on the right path.	3. 78	. 97	High
4. In compliance with what I read, I change my reading speed.	3. 63	. 93	High
5. I pay more attention to what I am reading as the text gets complicated.	3. 95	1. 11	High
6. To help recall what I read, I try to imagine or envision details.	3. 38	1. 13	High
7. In order to convince, I grasp what I am reading, I read slowly but deliberately.	3. 98	1. 10	High
8. From time to time, I pause to contemplate what I'm hearing.	3. 33	1. 19	High
Problem Solving	**3. 79**	**. 54**	**High**

B. Discussion

The summary of the three tables of mean scores presentation can be seen in the Table. 4

TABLE 4. METACOGNITIVE READING STRATEGIES SELECTED BY THE PROFICIENT GROUP

Metacognitive Strategy	Mean	Std	Level
Problem Solving	3. 79	. 54	High
Support	3.54	.55	High
Global	3.52	.60	High

For global strategy, the proficient group exhibits a range of 3.18 to 3.95 mean score which indicates that these strategies are used at medium and high level. The overall mean score of 3.52 shows that the strategy constructs are being used at a relatively high level. The high awareness level infers that the proficient group are regularly aware of universal strategy in their reading that includes previewing and predicting a text while reading, and also setting a purpose. The high mean score in the three respective constructs (M=3.78, 3.95, and 3.70) clearly indicates that the surveyed learners are constantly well aware of their metacognitive reading strategies during reading process.

For support strategy, the earners exhibit a range of (M= 3.18 to M= 4.28) mean score which indicates that these strategies are used at both medium and high level. The average mean score of (M=3.54) shows that Support Strategy is being used at a relatively high level of awareness. The reason for this high level of awareness is most probably due to the fact that support strategy concerns conscious attempts for the use of other practical strategies to achieve better comprehension.

With eight constructs within this reading strategy group, it appears to be the most significant sub-strategy performed by the proficient learners. All items in this group exhibit high level of awareness with the mean score ranging from the lowest (M = 3.33) to the highest (M = 4.18) and the overall mean score is then (M = 3.79), standard deviation (SD = .54). The first item is concerned with reading gradually but cautiously sure to understand what was read (M = 3.98). This item indicates that the proficient learners have a high preference for the text's slow reading to ensure comprehension, with the standard deviation of (S D = 1.10) yielding at a high level of awareness. The item will prove if these learners are less effective in reading because they tend to generate more time reading consolidation while reading academic materials.

VI. CONCLUSION

It may be inferred that the proficient learners are well aware of strategies that concern the text's overall global analysis. However, it seems that Global strategy requires higher level of linguistic maturity to make it works effectively for improving comprehension. This group does not seem to be at the required level so that the strategy does not serve as an effective tool for them. Therefore, high level of awareness does not reinforce better comprehension as it does in learners with second language background. Investigation on more factors of reading is needed in order to venture into the myriad profiles of learners with diverse cultural and language background. All of these contribute to the level of linguistic performance thus affecting the level of reading proficiency.

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