
DISCUSSION

METACOGNITIVE READING STRATEGIES USED BY ENGLISH-MAJORS AT A UNIVERSITY IN VIETNAM

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Abstract: Metacognitive reading strategies which include (1) global reading strategies, (2) support reading strategies, (3) problem solving strategies are critical for effective reading comprehension (Mokhtari & Reichard, 2002). This research aims to explore how high-achieving and low-achieving students at Faculty of Foreign Languages at a university in Vietnam use metacognitive reading strategies in comprehending English reading texts. A mixed research method is employed with two data collection instruments - a survey questionnaire adopted from MARS Scale by Mokhtari and Reichard (2002) and semi-structured interviews. Forty two English-majors participated in the questionnaire, then representatives of high-achievers and low-achievers participated in semi-structured interviews to provide deeper information. The findings revealed students' different frequency levels of using metacognitive reading strategy groups in reading comprehension. Additionally, the results indicated how frequently each metacognitive reading strategy is used by the high-achievers and low-achievers. This research would enhance teachers' awareness of using metacognitive reading strategies for English majors at their different levels and suggest how they instruct their students of different levels to practice metacognitive reading strategies appropriately and effectively.

Keywords: metacognitive reading strategies, reading comprehension, high-achievers, low-achievers

1. Introduction

In EFL teaching, reading is considered as one crucial skill to be developed for successful language comprehension. Among various ways to enhance this skill, reading strategies are proven to be effective tools to enable students at tertiary level to comprehend English reading texts. However, not many students can apply the reading strategies efficiently, which may contribute to students' poor reading comprehension. As EFL teachers, the researchers have been

concerned by the fact that many of their English-majors have difficulties in reading English texts effectively despite their training and practice of reading strategies. An analysis of reading test scores of the students by the researchers of reading skill showed that a number of students still struggled with comprehending the reading texts after two first reading courses. During the third course, many students did not show their comprehension at the target level: they often answered the questions in the reading texts incorrectly in class and their scores of the reading tests were not very high even

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though the reading strategies were learnt and frequently practiced. A question raised to the teachers was which factors contributed to the students' difficulties in reading comprehension. According to Grabe (2009), to be an effective reader, learners need to foster different reading strategies including metacognitive reading strategies which means they could "integrate information, summarize main points, build a coherent interpretation of the text, and critically evaluate that text information. All of these abilities require an effective combination of strategy uses that serve the reader's intended goals." Hence, there is a close relationship between learners' ability to apply metacognitive reading strategies and their reading competence. If learners are not able to combine these strategies, they will not comprehend the reading texts thoroughly, and their performance in reading tests during the course will not be as good as expected. Moreover, for certain purposes, using metacognitive reading strategies employed for achieving comprehension goals are the same for different readers. However, in spite of many studies on metacognitive reading strategies used by non-English majors around the world, very few studies have covered the use of metacognitive reading strategies in reading comprehension among English majors, especially in the context of Vietnam. Therefore, in the limit of this research, metacognitive reading strategies (MRS) were selected to study. It is questionable that which group of MRS and which individual MRS are most frequently used by the high-achieving and low-achieving students. This research is necessary to investigate which MRS group is most used in reading comprehension by the learners and the difference in usage frequency of each strategy between high-achievers and low-achievers. More detailed, the research aims to address two research questions as following:

(1) Which group of metacognitive reading strategies is most frequently used by high-achievers and low-achievers in reading comprehension?

(2) How frequently do high-achievers and low-achievers use each item of metacognitive reading strategies?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Definition of Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension has been defined by many researchers. According to Grellet (1981, p. 3), "reading comprehension is extracting the required information from the text as efficiently as possible." Similarly, Alderson (2000, p. 52) defined this ability as "actively constructing meaning internally from interacting with the material that is read." In line with this perspective, Grabe and Stoller (2002, p. 9) argued that reading comprehension is "the ability to draw meaning from the printed page and interpret this information appropriately." Grabe (2009) claimed that reading comprehension happens when the reader can combine his/her background knowledge with the information from the text to obtain the required information. According to Ahmadi et al. (2013), during the process of comprehending the text, the reader interacts with the text using various conscious and unconscious strategies in order to construct the meaning from the contexts. As can be seen from the above review, reading comprehension is to grasp the meaning of the text utilizing reading strategies. In this research, the authors narrow the focus of reading comprehension on understanding the text through giving right answers to questions about English reading texts in a reading skill course.

2.2. Definition of Reading Strategies

Reading strategies used in language learning play an important role in progressing reading comprehension

(Anderson, 2003). Whether the readers master language or not are related to how they use their reading strategies (Hong-Nam & Leavell, 2006; Shen, 2003). A strategy is related to a conscious and systematic plan (Afflerbach et al., 2008). Some readers will not process appropriate strategies for a particular situation or they lack the knowledge of how to utilize the strategy (Gerstein et al., 2001). Reading strategies indicate how readers conceptualize a task, how they understand what they read, and what they handle when they don't understand the materials. These strategies consist of strategies including skimming and scanning, contextual guessing, and reading for meaning, utilizing background knowledge, recognizing text structure, and so forth (Hsu, 2006). Furthermore, based on a review of Pourhosein Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016), there are seven effective reading strategies for reading comprehension: 1) activating and using background knowledge, 2) generating and asking questions, 3) making inferences, 4) predicting, 5) summarizing, 6) visualizing, 7) comprehension monitoring. However, Chamot (1987), O'Malley and Chamot (1990) stated that reading strategies have been usually classified into three broad categories, depending on the level or type of thinking processing involved: cognitive, metacognitive strategies, and social affective strategies.

2.3. Metacognitive Reading Strategies

Reading strategies are categorized in a variety of types but to the limit of this study, the researchers focus on what MRS learners use in reading comprehension in class. Metacognitive reading strategy is a technique that learners use to plan for learning, think about the learning process, monitor their comprehension and evaluate learning after completing the task (Semtin & Maniam, 2015). Zhang and Seepho (2013) stated that metacognitive strategies in reading increased readers' knowledge of

awareness, improved their reading comprehension, and evaluated whether their attempt at comprehension had been achieved. Besides, metacognitive reading strategy is an effective factor that fosters reading comprehension among readers (Salataki & Akyel, 2002). Wang et al. (2009) believed that MRS were beneficial to students' reading comprehension and encouraged their learning activities. Research about MRS for learning on university EFL students in China revealed that students were confident about their ability to comprehend the texts when applying MRS and there was a positive association between MRS and learners' learning achievement results. Furthermore, students who could utilize metacognitive reading strategies such as, planning, monitoring and evaluating were more successful than those students that did not use this strategy in their learning and reading program (Wang et al., 2009). Metacognitive reading strategies were classified into three categories, namely 1) problem-solving strategies (PS), 2) global reading strategies (GS), and 3) support reading strategies (SS) (Mokhtari & Reichard, 2002; Semtin & Maniam, 2015). They showed that PS were means to overcome difficulties in reading such as adjusting the reading speed, rereading the text, reading aloud, guessing the meaning of the difficult words, and assessing learners' abilities to solve reading problems. Meanwhile, GS were used to guide learners to think about the reading purpose. Additionally, according to Mokhtari and Reichard (2002), SS were aimed to provide learners with extra reading techniques such as dictionary use, note-taking, sentence-underlining, paraphrasing, self-question asking and paraphrasing the paragraphs. In regards to the use of GS, Chen and Chen (2015) found a high frequency of occurrence in the use of GS, namely planning how to read and managing comprehension followed by PS and SS.

2.4. Previous Studies

A number of studies have been conducted on students' use of metacognitive reading strategies in the world in general and in Vietnam in particular, but few studies focused on such frequency level of using those strategies among high-achievers and low-achievers.

In the study of Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) which assessed students' metacognitive awareness and perceived use of reading strategies, low-achieving students seemed to have lower levels of awareness than high-achieving ones. Thus, students who had low metacognitive awareness usually had difficulties in terms of reading materials, for instance, they felt that they struggled with unfamiliar words from the text. Additionally, Pammu et al. (2014) indicated in their study that participants applied the reading strategies in their reading; however, the frequent usage was varied among three types of reading strategies. For PS, students usually applied the strategy of "reading slowly but carefully to be sure what to read" at a high level. In terms of GS, "setting purpose for reading, previewing text, determining what to read, resolving conflicting information, and confirming prediction" were recognised as high-frequency usage groups. For SS, underlining or circling information in the text to help comprehension and using reference materials to improve comprehension were also reported at high level. Moreover, the study by Rastegar et al. (2017) about the relationship between EFL learners' MRS use and their reading comprehension achievement on 120 senior BA students majoring in English Literature and English Translation also showed that there was a significant relationship between the use of overall MRS by the learners and their reading comprehension accomplishment. Especially in Vietnam, Do and Phan (2021) who studied on metacognitive awareness of

reading strategies on mixed-level undergraduates majoring in teaching English, revealed that MRS were used in comprehending academic texts at medium frequency level with the high usage of PS, followed by medium usage of SS and GS. The study also showed that high-reading-ability students applied metacognitive reading strategies more frequently than poor-reading-ability students.

It has been proved that metacognitive reading strategies awareness positively contribute to the learners' achievement in reading comprehension. However, no studies have been conducted on the impact of reading strategies on intermediate English majors in the setting of Vietnam. Therefore, there is a need to carry out this research to fill the gap.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Participants

The participants of this research were 42 students (21 high-achievers - the students with the highest score in Reading Skill 3 course and 21 low-achievers - the students with the lowest score of the course) selected from 198 second-year English majors of a university in Hanoi. All the students have completed three courses of English Reading Skill and are at intermediate level. They have learned most reading strategies needed for comprehending different types of texts at their level such as paraphrasing sentences, skimming, scanning, guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words from context, making inference, note-taking, summarizing, understanding charts and graphs, critical analysing and evaluating the information in the text, etc. Each Reading Skill course lasted 15 weeks, mostly each of which focused on one reading strategy and students practised applying it to comprehend the text. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, English Reading Skill 3 course was delivered online using Microsoft Teams.

3.2. Research Instruments and Procedures

The study employed a mixed method design which combines both quantitative and qualitative methods to address the research questions. A survey questionnaire was chosen as the main instrument to collect quantitative data, then interviews were conducted to get in-depth qualitative data for the study.

The survey questionnaire for students which consists of 30 questions are adopted from the MARSIScale survey questionnaire by Mokhtari and Reichard (2002). This study shares the same purpose with their study, which is investigating the frequency of using MRS among students. The MARSIScale questionnaire was piloted by Mokhtari and Reichard (2002) on a large number of students (N=825) in grade 6-12 drawn from 10 urban, suburban, and rural school districts in five midwestern states and proven the reliability. In the study of Nguyen (2016), MARSIScale survey questionnaire proved its reliability in Vietnamese context. The MARSIScale questionnaire was designed based on (1) a review of recent research literature on metacognition and reading comprehension, (2) the use of expert judgment with respect to assignment and categorization of items within the inventory, (3) insights gained from existing reading strategies instruments regarding format and content, and (d) the use of factor analyses to examine the structure of the scale.

The questionnaire consists of 30 items arranged in three categories (Global Reading Strategies: 13 items, Support Reading Strategies: 8 items and Problem-Solving Strategies: 9 items). The questionnaire was transferred to Google form and delivered to the research participants via email after the course of Reading Skill 3. The instruments use a Likert scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high) for reporting the use of each strategy by the

respondents. The researchers gave Vietnamese oral instructions and explanations in an online meeting (Microsoft Teams) before the students answered the questions in the survey to avoid any misunderstanding and the participants were perceived to comprehend the items of the questionnaires well.

Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) provided a key to interpreting the mean for each item and overall item ratings of the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) with 5-level Likert scale. They considered a mean ≤ 2.4 as low usage, 2.5–3.4 as medium usage, and ≥ 3.5 as high usage. We used the same rating to interpret item means in the present study.

After getting the survey result, semi-structured interviews were conducted by the researchers. The purpose of the interviews was to provide deeper information about the students' use of metacognitive reading strategies. The interview questions consist of 14 questions adapted from the MARSIScale questionnaire. Ten students were chosen for the interview based on the results of the course mentioned above: five are high-achievers (HA1-HA5) and the other five are low-achievers (LA1-LA5). Each of the students was interviewed for about 20 minutes at a time convenient to them. The interviews were recorded and later transcribed for analysis.

3.3. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The procedure of the data analysis is as follows. The survey questionnaires were analyzed with the help of SPSS application and displayed in the form of statistics. Then the data from the interviews were analyzed and simultaneously presented with the results from the questionnaire. The researchers analyzed the results based on the two data sets for in-depth interpretation and used the interviews' results to shed light on the survey's findings.

4. Findings

4.1. Which Group of Metacognitive Reading Strategies are Most Frequently Used by High-Achievers and Low-Achievers in Reading Comprehension?

Table 1 below shows the differences in the degree of three reading strategies usage perceived by high achievers and low-achievers.

Table 1

Frequency of Metacognitive Strategies Used Among High-Achievers and Low-Achievers

Strategies	High-achievers		Low-achievers	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Global strategies	4.02	0.75	2.86	0.56
Support strategies	3.83	0.77	2.56	0.73
Problem-solving strategies	3.96	0.72	2.76	0.61

As can be seen from Table 1 all the three groups of MRS were used frequently by high-achievers with the means of more than 3.5. The most frequently used reading strategies are GS (mean > 4), followed by PS (nearly 4) and SS (more than 3.8). In contrast, low-achievers used all the three groups of strategies at a low level of frequency with the means of less than 3.00. The students supposed that the group of strategies they applied most frequently while reading were GS (2.85) followed by PS (2.75). SS were believed to be used least (less than 2.5). Obviously, the low-achievers were not aware of the importance of

applying metacognitive reading strategies in comprehending the texts. Although each strategy group focuses on an aspect of reading comprehension, low-achievers still seldom use them to get more comprehensive. On the contrary, the high-achievers better perceive the usage of MRS in three groups at a much higher level of frequency. It is highlighted that such high awareness of MRS supported them to understand the texts more effectively.

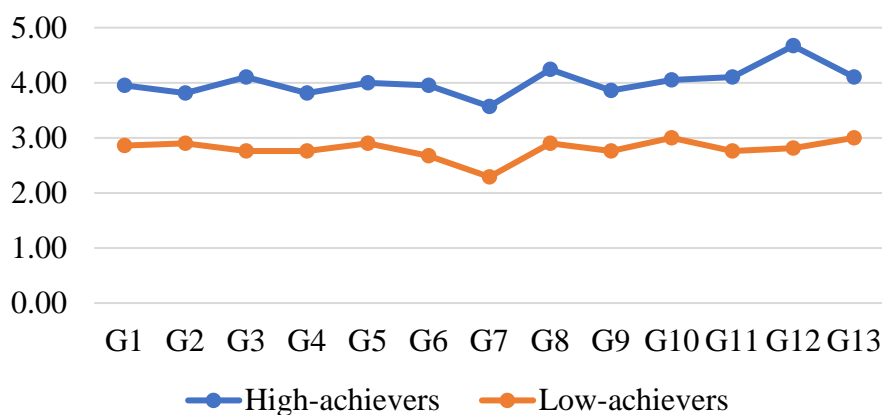
In brief, it is shown that high-achievers applied reading strategies more frequently (the means of more than 3.5) in reading comprehension than low-achievers (the means of under 3). For both, the strategies used at the highest level were GS (for high-achievers $M = 4.02$ and for low-achievers, $M = 2.86$) and the lowest was SS with mean of high-achievers and low-achievers of 3.83 and 2.56 respectively). PS were ranked at the second with the mean of high-achievers of nearly 4 and the mean of low-achievers of more than 2.7.

4.2. How Frequently do High-Achievers and Low-Achievers Use Metacognitive Reading Strategy Items?

Participants' reading strategy use showed that only 6 reading strategies were used at a low-usage level. In fact, 18 strategies of the 30 strategies were reported to be used at a high-usage level (Mean ≥ 3.5) and the 12 remaining strategies were at a moderate-usage level (Mean ≥ 2.5). The reason for the overall high usage of reading strategies might be that when students read academic texts for any purpose, they are stimulated to use more strategies, as reading academic texts makes greater metacognitive demands (Mokhtari & Reichard, 2008, p. 94).

Figure 1

High-Achievers' and Low-Achievers' Use of Global Reading Strategies



The above chart shows the differences in the degree of reading strategy use of high-achievers (the upper line) and low-achievers (the lower line) within each item. The means of the reading strategy use of high-achievers ranged between 3.5 and more than 4.5. G12 (guessing what the passage is about), G3 (previewing the text to see what it is about before reading), G10 (analysing critically and evaluating the information presented in the text), G11 (check my understanding when I come across conflicting information) have the means from 4 and up. Among those strategies, high-achievers try to guess what the passage is about when they read the most (G12) and then G3, G10, G11, G13 are followed with means of more than 4. As being interviewed, HA5 revealed that before-reading strategies such as guessing the main idea of the text, “previewing the text by looking at the title, the headings, the subheadings or the first sentence of each paragraph” could help them to “visualise the content of the text and prepare enough background knowledge to deal with the while-reading stage and post-reading stage.” Some other strategies such as thinking about what they know to help understand what they read (G2), thinking about whether the content of the text fits their reading purpose (G4), using typographical aids like boldface

and italics to identify key information (G9) and having a purpose in mind when they read (G1) were used a little less often but still at high usage (means from 3.8 to 3.95). High-achievers used tables, figures and pictures in the text to increase their understanding (S7) the least frequently with the mean of 3.57. They said that “they can easily catch the information from the tables, figures and pictures because it is short and supports their understanding of the text” (HA2, HA4).

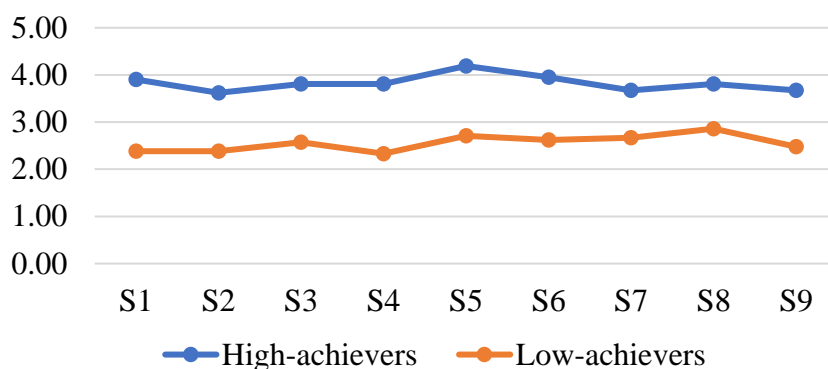
On the opposite side, all the GS items were used at medium level of frequency by the low-achieving students with the means from around 2.5 to 3.00. The students perceived to apply some GS more often: G5 - skimming, G2 - relating previous knowledge, S8 - using context to understand the text, G13 - checking guesses about the text while reading and G10 - critically analysing and evaluating the information presented in the text (means around 3.00). The least applied strategy was using tables, figures and pictures in the text to increase their understanding, which was at low-level of use (mean of G7 = 2.34). Low-achievers rarely used tables, figures and pictures in the text for reading comprehension because when reading the texts, they usually “pay attention to new words and handle them” but “ignore the information from figures and

tables.” They thought such information “is not important” and “it just illustrates the content of the text a little bit” and they also didn’t “understand what it means” (LA3, LA4).

Obviously, high-achievers are still in high usage of GS compared to low-achievers with the medium use of them. While the most common GS high-achievers used was guessing what the passage was about (G12) with the means of over 4.5, critically

Figure 2

High-Achievers’ and Low-Achievers’ Use of Support Reading Strategies



The chart clearly shows that high-achievers generally used SS more often especially S5 (underlining and circling information in the text to help them remember it) with the mean of 4.2 which aids them to comprehend the texts more while S2 (reading aloud to help understand what they read when texts become difficult), S7 (paraphrasing - restating ideas in their own words - to better understand what they read), S9 (asking themselves questions they like to have answered in the texts) are the least applied with the means of between 3.62 and 3.67. It was implied that high-achievers were relatively flexible in applying SS effectively. They were aware of which suitable SS should use in the right contexts for more reading comprehension. Their perception of using S5 in comprehending the texts was at high-use level because “underlining and circling key words in the text” was “an important technique to

analysing and evaluating the information presented in the text (G10) was the most commonly used strategy by low-achievers at the means of 3.05. It was shown that high-achievers’ perception of using GS was at a considerably higher level of frequency than low-achievers’.

Figure 2 below illustrates the frequency of using SS among low-achieving and high-achieving students.

understand the text” (HA2). It could support their reading comprehension and “have an overview about the main idea of the text” (HA5).

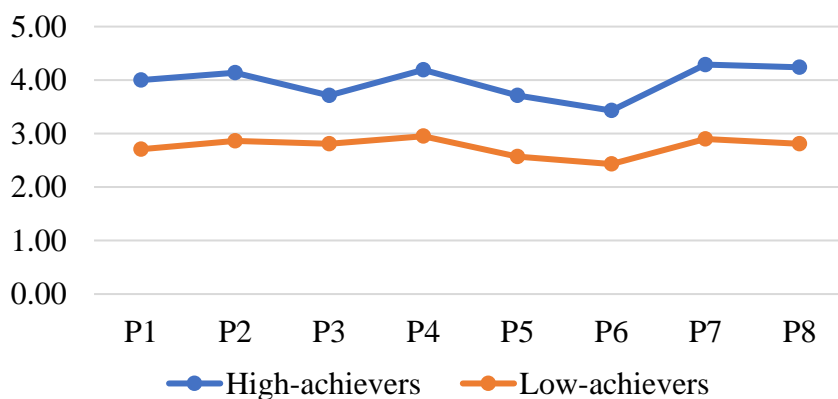
On the contrary, low-achievers recognised their low usage of SS (means < 3.00). They only sometimes used the strategies of going back and forth in the text to find relationships among ideas in it (S8), underlining and circling information in the text to help they remember it (S5), paraphrasing (S7), using dictionary to understand the text (S6) and summarising the text (S3) (means from 2.50 to 2.86) among which S8 was most frequently used. They tended to rarely discuss what they read with others to check their understanding (S4), take note while reading (S1) or read aloud when texts become difficult (S2) with means of less than 2.5. In the interview, some students confirmed that reading aloud made them “hard to

concentrate on the reading text” and this strategy was “ineffective,” thus they “only read silently and think twice” (HA2, HA3).

As shown in figure 2, high-achieving students used the SS much more often than those of the low-achievers’ group. The most frequently used strategy among high-achievers was S5 (underlining and circling

Figure 3

High-Achievers’ and Low-Achievers’ Perceived Use of Problem-Solving Strategies



It can be clearly seen from the figure that PS were used quite frequently among high-achievers with the means of 3.5 and 4.3. Specifically, they tended to read slowly but carefully in order to understand what they were reading (P1, M = 4) and pay more attention to what they were reading when reading difficult texts (P4, M = 4.2). Even though high-achievers used P1 frequently, they said that they used it only when they read “a difficult paragraph” and they “need to control the time.” In addition, they used the strategy of guessing the meaning of unknown words or phrases more often (P8, M = 4.24) and reread the texts to get more comprehension (P7, M = 4.29). Among these PS, P7 was used at the highest frequency, especially P6 (trying to picture or visualise information to help remember what they read). In the survey, HA2 said that they often reread the difficult texts to “identify the link between different pieces of information” but they “often leave those questions till the later stage of the test.” This is obvious because they said “difficult

information in the text to help them remember it) while that of low-achievers was S8 (going back and forth in the text to find relationships among ideas in it).

Figure 3 below shows how frequently the students in two groups used problem-solving strategies.

reading passages will leave them feeling confused” so they needed to “read more carefully to be sure 80% of what the passage is about and what it means.” HA could figure out which PS should be relevant to deal with the text and they could adjust reasonably to comprehend what the author referred to and implied even the texts had some new words.

On the other hand, low-achievers used PS at the same tendency as GS and SS with the means of all the strategies below 3.00. The students seemed to rarely try to picture or visualise information to help remember what they read (mean of P6 = 2.43). Some students knew this strategy would help them “understand the text better”, but they often skipped it because they did “not have enough time for it” (LA1, LA3). The strategies of P5 (stopping from time to time and thinking about what they are reading) and P1 (reading slowly but carefully to be sure they understand what they are reading) were used slightly more often (means = 2.57, 2.71). The rest strategies were used at almost the same frequency level (nearly 3.00): P3 -

adjusting their reading speed, P8 - trying to guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases, P2 - trying to get back on track when they lose concentration, P7 - rereading when texts become difficult, P4 - paying closer attention to what they are reading. The interviews revealed that most of the students did not have strategies of adjusting reading speed as they needed to “read slowly to thoroughly understand the text, especially when the passage included a lot of new words” (LA2, LA5). The students also shared that they may “know the strategies” but they “couldn’t use them as they did not have enough time to practice before.” What students answered was in great relation to their logical thinking of the strategy use.

The figure indicates that high-achievers used PS at higher frequency than low-achievers. The most frequently used strategies among both groups of students were P7 - rereading when texts became difficult, P8 - trying to guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases, P4 - paying closer attention to what they were reading.

5. Discussion

The research findings mostly align with the previous studies. Like other studies (Mokhtari & Sheorey, 2002; Pammu et al., 2014; Rastegar et al., 2017), this research proved the significant relationship between the use of metacognitive reading strategies and students’ reading competence. While high-achieving students applied those strategies very frequently, the opposite tendency is found among low-achievers.

However, this research shows some different findings compared with those reported before. While Do and Phan (2021) proved that the highest usage of MRS were PS, followed by SS and GS, this study indicates that GS is ranked the highest level with the runners-up of PS and GS. This difference may be derived from the participants’ selection: this research only

aimed at students of the same level (intermediate) while Do and Phan (2011) targeted a wider range of mixed level students. This can be inferred that students of different levels vary in the use of MRS.

Another difference should be underlined is in terms of the most frequently used strategies of each type by low-proficiency learners. Pammu et al. (2014) revealed that the strategies of “setting purpose for reading, previewing text, determining what to read, resolving conflicting information, and confirming prediction” (global strategies), underlining or circling information in the text to help comprehension and using reference materials to improve comprehension (support strategies) and “reading slowly but carefully to be sure what to read” (problem-solving strategies) were used at highest level of frequency. However, this study indicated that the most frequently used strategies of GS, SS and PS were “critically analysing and evaluating the information presented in the text”, “going back and forth in the text to find relationships among ideas” and “rereading when tests became difficult” respectively. This difference indicates that low-achieving students with different backgrounds may apply MRS in dissimilar ways.

6. Conclusion, Recommendations and Limitations

6.1. Conclusion

This research focused on the high-achievers’ and low-achievers’ frequency level of using MRS groups and their individual items in reading comprehension. The results indicate a significant difference of the two groups of students in using Global Reading Strategies (GS), Problem-Solving Strategies (PS), and Support Reading Strategies (SS), but a similar gap among the means of three types of strategies with PS ranking the most

frequently used, followed by GS and SS. This study also provided an insight into high-achievers' and low-achievers' using individual MRS. It could be concluded that the low-achievers applied MRS at low frequency in comprehending texts. The research findings suggested that educators in the education programs at the university level must recognize the influential role of MRS and their positive impacts on students' reading comprehension.

6.2. Recommendations

It can be revealed from the findings of the study that although both high-achievers and low-achievers learn metacognitive reading skills in the courses, the high-achievers use MRS in reading comprehension more frequently than the low-achievers. Specially, the low-achieving students were proven to use problem-solving skills and support skills less effectively. This fact indicates that low-achievers need more support from their teachers to gain their reading competence. Therefore, some suggestions may be offered for ESL teachers in order that they can help their students read more efficiently.

First, low-achievers should be taught how to use strategies of which they lack knowledge and skills. The teaching may include explicit modeling (Rupley et al., 2009), thinking aloud instructional strategies (Dunston & Headley, 2002) and a high level of scaffolding (Gibbons, 2002), as well as when to use them in certain contexts as a critical element of their teaching. They should not only introduce students to these strategies, but also explicitly teach how to implement and when to use them effectively in classes.

Second, as low-achievers did not realise the importance of using these MRS, thus there is a need to gain their awareness of this issue. As studies demonstrate, students benefit from receiving a direct explanation of strategies that facilitate their

reading outcome (Anderson & Roit, 1993; Baker, 1996; Dole et al., 1991). Clarifying for the students why it is important to learn a variety of strategies helps them understand and motivates them to apply the strategies in reading.

Third, from low-achievers' complaint about not having enough practice to master the strategies for later using independently, it is recommended that EFL/ESL teachers select diverse reading materials which provide students opportunities to deeply practise each metacognitive reading strategy during the classroom. This can help students flexibly apply each strategy in suitable contexts. After teaching a group of strategies, there should be a pause for students to do further practice which covers all the learned strategies. Moreover, students need to reinforce their self-study time so as to be skilled in obtaining the strategies.

Finally, among three groups of reading strategies, PS and SS are less used than GS. This is a fundamental factor that teachers should pay more attention to focus on by the way that aids students to apply these strategies at a higher level of frequency. Furthermore, teachers are suggested to recognise the needs of low-achieving students and offer help in time. Meanwhile, group work with a mixture of high-achievers and low-achievers can increase opportunities for low-achievers to get more support from high-achievers, which narrows the gap of their awareness in using metacognitive reading strategies for reading comprehension.

Hopefully, the above recommendations can contribute to the improvement of teaching and learning English reading at universities.

6.3. Limitations

This study has certain limitations. First, this research investigates MRS used by the students according to their own

perception. Therefore, it needs further study to explore whether they actually apply the strategies using other research tools such as think-aloud. Second, the data sampling was limited to intermediate English majors at a Vietnamese university, hence the findings may not be generalizable across different groups of language learners. Further research of this study may include more participants across a wider range of students' abilities and at different contexts so that research data can be subjected to more proper analysis.

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Appendix 1

Survey Questionnaire for Students

Directions: Listed below are statements about what English-majored students do when they read *academic or school-related materials* such as textbooks or library books. Five numbers follow each statement (1, 2, 3, 4, 5), and each number means the following:

- 1 means “I **never or almost never** do this.”
- 2 means “I do this **only occasionally**.”
- 3 means “I **sometimes** do this” (about **50%** of the time).
- 4 means “I **usually** do this.”
- 5 means “I **always or almost always** do this.”

After reading each statement, **circle the number** (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) that applies to you using the scale provided. Please note that there are **no right or wrong answers** to the statements in this inventory.

Strategies	Questions		Scales				
			1	2	3	4	5
G1	1	I have a purpose in mind when I read.					
G2	2	I think about what I know to help me understand what I read.					
G3	3	I preview the text to see what it is about before reading.					
G4	4	I think about whether the content of the text fits my reading purpose.					
G5	5	I skim the text first by noticing characteristics like length and organisation.					

G6	6	I decide what to read closely and what to ignore.					
G7	7	I use tables, figures and pictures in the text to increase my understanding.					
G8	8	I use context clues to help me better understand what I am reading.					
G9	9	I use typographical aids like boldface and italics to identify key information.					
G10	10	I critically analyse and evaluate the information presented in the text.					
G11	11	I check my understanding when I come across conflicting information.					
G12	12	I try to guess what the passage is about when I read.					
G13	13	I check to see if my guesses about the text are right or wrong.					
S1	14	I take notes while reading to help me understand what I read.					
S2	15	When texts become difficult, I read aloud to help me understand what I read.					
S3	16	I summarise what I read to reflect on important information in the text.					
S4	17	I discuss what I read with others to check my understanding.					
S5	18	I underline and circle information in the text to help me remember it.					
S6	19	I use reference materials such as dictionary to help me understand what I read.					
S7	20	I paraphrase (restate ideas in my own words) to better understand what I read.					
S8	21	I go back and forth in the text to find relationships among ideas in it.					
S9	22	I ask myself questions I like to have answered in the texts.					
P1	23	I read slowly but carefully to be sure I understand what I am reading.					
P2	24	I try to get back on track when I lose concentration.					
P3	25	I adjust my reading speed according to what I am reading.					
P4	26	When the text becomes difficult, I pay closer attention to what I am reading.					

P5	27	I stop from time to time and think about what I am reading.					
P6	28	I try to picture or visualise information to help remember what I read.					
P7	29	When the text becomes difficult, I re-read it to increase my understanding.					
P8	30	I try to guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases.					

(Adopted from MARSII questionnaire)

Appendix 2
High-Achievers and Low-Achievers' Awareness
of Metacognitive Reading Strategies in Reading Comprehension

Strategies	High-achievers		Low-achievers	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
G1 I have a purpose in mind when I read	3.95	0.669	2.86	0.573
G2 I think about what I know to help me understand what I read.	3.81	0.873	2.90	0.539
G3 I preview the text to see what it is about before reading.	4.10	0.768	2.76	0.625
G4 I think about whether the content of the text fits my reading purpose.	3.81	0.928	2.76	0.700
G5 I skim the text first by noticing characteristics like length and organisation.	4.00	0.775	2.90	0.539
G6 I decide what to read closely and what to ignore.	3.95	0.921	2.67	0.730
G7 I use tables, figures and pictures in the text to increase my understanding.	3.57	0.811	2.29	0.845
G8 I use context clues to help me better understand what I am reading.	4.24	0.768	2.90	0.301
G9 I use typographical aids like boldface and italics to identify key information.	3.86	0.964	2.76	0.625
G10 I critically analyse and evaluate the information presented in the text.	4.05	0.590	3.00	0.316

G11	I check my understanding when I come across conflicting information.	4.10	0.539	2.76	0.625
G12	I try to guess what the passage is about when I read.	4.67	0.483	2.81	0.512
G13	I check to see if my guesses about the text are right or wrong.	4.10	0.768	3.00	0.316
S1	I take notes while reading to help me understand what I read.	3.90	0.831	2.38	0.865
S2	When texts become difficult, I read aloud to help me understand what I read.	3.62	0.865	2.38	0.865
S3	I summarise what I read to reflect on important information in the text.	3.81	0.814	2.57	0.598
S4	I discuss what I read with others to check my understanding.	3.81	0.602	2.33	0.730
S5	I underline and circle information in the text to help me remember it.	4.19	0.928	2.71	0.644
S6	I use reference materials such as dictionary to help me understand what I read.	3.95	0.805	2.62	0.740
S7	I paraphrase (restate ideas in my own words) to better understand what I read.	3.67	0.658	2.67	0.658
S8	I go back and forth in the text to find relationships among ideas in it.	3.81	0.750	2.86	0.573
S9	I ask myself questions I like to have answered in the texts.	3.67	0.658	2.48	0.873
P1	I read slowly but carefully to be sure I understand what I am reading.	4.00	0.707	2.71	0.644
P2	I try to get back on track when I lose concentration.	4.14	0.727	2.86	0.655
P3	I adjust my reading speed according to what I am reading.	3.71	0.784	2.81	0.602
P4	When the text becomes difficult, I pay closer attention to what I am reading.	4.19	0.602	2.95	0.384
P5	I stop from time to time and think about what I am reading.	3.71	0.784	2.57	0.676
P6	I try to picture or visualise information to help remember what I read.	3.43	0.676	2.43	0.746
P7	When the text becomes difficult, I re-read it to increase my	4.29	0.784	2.90	0.539

understanding.

P8	I try to guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases.	4.24	0.700	2.81	0.602
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VIỆC SỬ DỤNG CHIẾN LƯỢC ĐỌC SIÊU NHẬN THỨC CỦA SINH VIÊN CHUYÊN NGỮ TẠI MỘT TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC VIỆT NAM

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Tóm tắt: Các chiến lược đọc siêu nhận thức bao gồm 1) chiến lược đọc tổng thể, 2) chiến lược đọc hỗ trợ, 3) chiến lược giải quyết vấn đề, là các chiến lược quan trọng cho việc đọc hiểu hiệu quả (Mokhtari & Reichard, 2002). Nghiên cứu này nhằm tìm hiểu mức độ thường xuyên sử dụng các chiến lược đọc siêu nhận thức trong việc hiểu các văn bản đọc hiểu bằng tiếng Anh của nhóm sinh viên có khả năng đọc tốt và nhóm sinh viên có khả năng đọc yếu của ngành Ngôn ngữ Anh tại một trường đại học ở Việt Nam. Phương pháp nghiên cứu sử dụng kết hợp hai công cụ thu thập dữ liệu - bảng câu hỏi khảo sát theo thang đo MARSÍ của Mokhtari và Reichard (2002) và phỏng vấn bán cấu trúc. Bốn mươi hai sinh viên chuyên ngành tiếng Anh đã tham gia khảo sát, sau đó đại diện của nhóm sinh viên có khả năng đọc tốt và nhóm sinh viên có khả năng đọc yếu tham gia vào các cuộc phỏng vấn bán cấu trúc. Các kết quả cho thấy tần suất sử dụng các nhóm chiến lược đọc siêu nhận thức trong đọc hiểu khác nhau giữa hai nhóm sinh viên. Ngoài ra, nghiên cứu cũng chỉ ra tần suất những chiến lược đọc siêu nhận thức riêng lẻ được sử dụng bởi những người đạt thành tích cao và người đạt thành tích thấp. Nghiên cứu giúp nâng cao nhận thức của giáo viên về việc sử dụng các chiến lược đọc siêu nhận thức của sinh viên chuyên ngữ ở các trình độ đọc hiểu khác nhau và gợi ý về việc dạy các chiến lược này cho các nhóm sinh viên một cách phù hợp nhằm đạt hiệu quả cao nhất.

Từ khóa: chiến lược đọc siêu nhận thức, đọc hiểu, sinh viên có khả năng đọc tốt, sinh viên có khả năng đọc yếu