EFL students' preferences on metacognitive reading strategies within an extensive reading program

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Abstract

Despite multiple studies that have broadly highlighted the positives of employing metacognitive reading strategies, there remains an absence of the rationale for adopting the reading strategy based on the students' perspectives. The present study aims to look into first-year EFL students' preferences for using metacognitive reading strategies as part of an extensive reading (ER) program at one of the public universities in Malang, Indonesia. The data were acquired from both quantitative and qualitative data sources. The fundamental data were garnered from a quantitative online survey, and the results were counted using descriptive statistics. Semi-structured interview sessions with six participants were carried out to collect qualitative data, and the results served as a means to strengthen the primary data. The results revealed that the problem-solving reading strategy proved to be the most commonly used in the ER program, followed by global and support reading strategies. The reading strategies advanced students' reading comprehension. Students could also strengthen their language skills, particularly reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and writing abilities. The study findings implied considering an alternative teaching strategy and understanding how students find it most helpful to assist them in a supervised ER program.

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Introduction

The metacognitive reading strategy has been one of the most crucial components students may employ to support their learning process. According to Baker and Brown (2014), metacognitive reading strategies can help readers better grasp the material they are reading, boost engagement by actively monitoring their reading, and develop problem-solving abilities by analyzing the text and highlighting uncertain areas. The three categories of reading strategies are global (G), problem-solving (PS), and support (S) reading strategy (Mokhtari & Sheorey, 2002). The three primary forms of reading strategies are generally distinguished by their distinct significant components. In the global reading strategy, students would deal with how to arrange the text, infer, and relate their general understanding to the material they are reading. Metacognitive reading strategies are highly advantageous to readers as they can improve their understanding and knowledge by activating prior information and using it to establish connections with the text (Thomas & Bharksdale-Ladd, 2000). With the aid of a problem-solving reading strategy, students can specify and provide solutions for their reading difficulties. Gersten et al. (2001) state that metacognitive problem-solving strategies seem pretty effective for struggling readers because they teach readers how to optimize the monitoring and regulation within their reading practices. The support reading strategy, however, deals with issues unrelated to the reading materials, such as using a dictionary, paraphrasing, summarizing, etc. It is necessary to utilize support strategies like summarization, questioning, and clarification to enable learners to become autonomous and strategic readers (Pressley, 2017). Furthermore, metacognitive reading practices provide multiple benefits to readers by increasing readers' aware of their mental processes, allowing them to become more effective and efficient readers.

Extensive reading (ER) has been one of the most popular language-learning strategies, particularly for L2/English foreign language (EFL) learners. Davis (1995) provided a comprehensive description of ER. He defined an ER program as an extra-class library plan for an English course where students are provided

with opportunities, motivation, and resources to read as many books as possible, gradually and at their own pace. Reading for pleasure or enjoyment is the main objective of ER. Since it emphasizes the large quantities of a number to read, the readers can choose appealing reading items independently. ER enables readers to read a significant amount of texts in a setting that promotes a long-term reading habit (Elley & Mangubhai, 2009). Moreover, Arifuddin (2019) added that ER could encourage students to select specific books and foster a passion for reading. Through the regular practice of ER, learners can build confidence, motivation, and responsibility while also being exposed to diverse literary and informative materials.

The application of ER has various types and names that experts specify. According to Renandya (2007), there are many names for ER, including Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR), Drop Everything and Read (DEAR), Silent Uninterrupted Reading for Fun (SURF), and the Book Flood Program. However, all of these names convey the same specific goal referring to a large number of reading materials and pleasurable reading practices. Day (2015) also asserted that ER activities have advanced in many ways. He mentioned three different types of advanced ER, including supervised, independent, blended intensive, and extensive reading. Supervised ER entails teachers monitoring and supporting students during their reading experience (Nation & Newton, 2018). Moreover, independent ER is interpreted as reading activities for personal enjoyment, without any external pressure to read or specialized knowledge of the material (Day & Bamford, 2016). Likewise, Renandya and Farrell (2019) state that blended reading programs include numerous reading resources and tasks to encourage learners to develop their reading abilities, strategies, and fluency. ER is an essential and valuable strategy to increase language fluency and promote lifelong learning regardless of the term.

The learning environment now provides readers with a range of different easy-access reading materials to employ in ER activities. As stated by Chen and Chen (2018), the accessibility of digital reading resources and the widespread use of mobile devices has made it faster for language learners to access and read authentic texts. Students can search the internet for a selection of reading resources they may choose based on their individual preferences. Li (2020), the spread of digital reading resources has made it feasible for learners to read a wide variety of books at their own pace and level. Kembo (2020), on the other hand, claimed that increased access sometimes only leads to more effective learning. Due to the numerous reading source options available, ER does not always produce successful results. Bamford and Day (1997) said that a teacher-centered

approach to reading education, common in many Asian nations, is the main obstacle in integrating ER. Moreover, Chang and Renandya (2020) the students might have yet to experience personal success with ER while pursuing the target language at the high school or university level. To overcome those difficulties, other aspects need to be implemented to assist students in employing ER programs.

An investigation has been conducted into the use of metacognitive reading strategies, particularly in the EFL context. A study conducted by Lipp (2017) found that several things must be done to acquire students interested in their ER activity. As Lipp (2017) revealed in the result of his study, Student involvement in the use of metacognitive reading strategies benefits their reading process significantly. The students seem to be able to address the struggles they confront while reading. The metacognitive reading strategy may help them to be more focused, assisting them in reaching their goals, providing motivation, keeping records, and reflecting on their progress. Lipp (2017) conducted a study dealing with the employment of ER, self-efficacy, motivation, and strategy used to engage students more in ER activity. Following the study's findings, it was found that the students involved in ER activity had favorable results when they could consider a particular metacognitive reading strategy that applies to their condition. Moreover, Chen and Chen (2015) conducted a study to discover how Taiwanese high school students use their EFL reading abilities by incorporating a metacognitive reading strategy. The study's findings revealed the students frequently utilized specific metacognitive reading strategies in language learning. Global and support reading strategies were being two most regularly employed strategies, and both strategies enhanced learners' reading comprehension. Furthermore, a study by Par (2020) also showed positive results of applying metacognitive reading strategies and students' reading achievement. Thus, metacognitive reading strategies are essential components for developing reading abilities and boosting academic success by encouraging students to be used to their cognitive processes. Consequently, it can increase comprehension, retention, and critical thinking skills while also cultivating a desire to learn and a lifetime enthusiasm for reading.

The findings of Chen and Chen (2015), Lipp (2017), and Par (2020) indicated a substantial connection between learners' reading performance as well as the application of metacognitive reading strategies. The factors that led students to choose the proper strategy were not included because they did not affect how well the study would work in real-world situations (Chen & Chen, 2015; Lipp, 2017; Par, 2020). The previous research (Chen & Chen, 2015; Lipp, 2017; Par, 2020) put the focus on the preferred metacognitive strategy in the intensive reading

classes which the students implement in ER program as the students were required to complete the goals at the end of the semester with the good result to pass the program. Moreover, there is still limited explanation of the rationale behind the selection of reading strategy and the improvement of language skills based on the students' viewpoint. An in-depth regarding the impact of metacognitive reading strategy on the students' reading performance is essential to produce a holistic view of the utilization of reading strategy, especially in supervised ER programs in EFL settings based on the student's preferences.

Therefore, implementing a metacognitive reading strategy through an ER program could foster better reading performance. According to Cho and Schunn (2007), these strategies are successful over a range of ages, competence levels, and text types. However, the specific strategies employed may differ according to the individual and the material. Additionally, Nguyen et al. (2020) discovered that incorporating those certain strategies increased students' learning and reading abilities regardless of their beginning level of English proficiency. Those statements imply that metacognitive reading strategies can be generalized as an impactful way to increase comprehension and performance. However, those specific strategies and approaches used might differ depending on the setting and student. Through this study, we attempted to examine the students' metacognitive strategies preferences in ER program at one of the state universities in Malang, Indonesia. The previous studies conducted merely centered around the success of implementing the metacognitive reading strategy for reading ability (Chen & Chen, 2015; Lipp, 2017; Par, 2020). There is still a lack of information related to the reason underlying the use of particular strategy based on the student's viewpoint. In particular, this research is conducted as the insight for the readers who employed ER program by combining the reading strategies within it, especially for the EFL first-year students in the pre-intermediate and intermediate level who have not experienced the supervised ER before. This research will gather the information to resolve the issue, "What are the students' preferences in utilizing metacognitive reading strategies within the implementation of an ER program?"

Method

Design

Throughout this study, we applied the combination of the quantitative and qualitative research designs that used either method itself (Creswell & Clark, 2007), as we investigated the students' preferences along with the utilization of

metacognitive reading strategies as well as the rationale behind the favored strategies. This research provides a more comprehensive grasp of the topic by examining both the numerical and descriptive aspects of the issue by showing the interdependence of the results from the participants. It is supported by Tashakkori and Teddlie (2015), integrating the strengths of quantitative and qualitative processes designed to offer a more thorough as well as nuanced comprehension of study concerns.

Participants

About forty-four first-year students from one of the state universities in Malang, Indonesia, majoring in English language teaching (ELT), took part in the study. As shown in Table 1, the majority of participants (88%) were female students, while the remaining participants (12%) were male students. Their age ranges from 16-20 years old, and comes from three different classes. The study involved twenty-five students from offering A, ten from offering C, and nine from offering D.

A specific kind of non-probability or non-random sampling was employed to accomplish the study's objectives. In this study, we selected participants from the population using convenience sampling. A particular kind of sampling where participants are chosen from the study population based on their ability to fulfill certain practical requirements, such as ease of access, location, availability, or willingness to take part (Etikan et al., 2016), are included to provide the compatible source for the study. In selecting the participants, we used three types of criteria. Firstly, the participants were EFL students in one state of universities in Malang, Indonesia. Secondly, they are currently enrolled in an ER program. Lastly, the participants confirmed their approval to contribute to the study by signing the permission letter.

Hence, all participants identified as active readers who used metacognitive reading strategies in an ER program. Forty-four ELT students who met the criteria for being the participants had already completed the permission letter and the survey. Furthermore, six students were selected for the interview session from their questionnaire responses, and we distributed the consent form to obtain their willingness to contribute to the interview section. As a result, we obtained two students for each category from the metacognitive reading strategy. Table 1 displays detailed details regarding the research's participants.

Table 1

The detailed information of the study participants

No	Variable	Sub-variable	Frequency (%)
1.	Gender	Female	88
		Male	12
2.	Survey participants	44	100
3.	Interviewees	6	13.6
4.	Age	16	2.2
		17	2.2
		18	52.2
		19	29.5
		20	13.6
5.	Semester	1	100
6.	Course name	Extensive Reading	100
7.	Class/ Offering	A	20.5
		C	22.7
		D	56.8

Data collection

In the present study, a survey was utilized to gather the data (Codo, 2009) and interview questions (Harimurti et al., 2021; Jamshed, 2014) to relate the interdependence of the primary and secondary data. Questionnaires are essential for gathering participants' biographical details and quantitative information on their linguistic skills, habits, and attitudes (Codo, 2009). In contrast, interviews are utilized to get a detailed response to the complex questions in a specific study. The primary data came from the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) questionnaire, adapted from Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002). Many studies utilized these instruments to look into the correlation between metacognitive reading strategies and a multitude of outcomes, such as reading comprehension, academic achievement, and language proficiency (Jiang & Grabe, 2007; Scharff, 2013). The widespread use of this instrument in the literature has helped to build a solid body of evidence concerning the nature and impact of metacognitive reading strategies. Each statement of the questionnaire was then adjusted based on the topic of the study and subjects, and it contained 25 statements focusing on the application of the strategies. The survey is then categorized into three sections: global reading strategy containing six statements and problem-solving reading strategy. The survey is divided into three main parts: global reading strategy (six statements), problem-solving reading strategy (twelve statements), and support reading strategy (seven statements). The students employ these

three reading strategies as they read extensively. Students might consider how they use the reading strategies in ER by choosing the Likert scale options (strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree) that were provided. The questionnaire was distributed through google forms, which was done online, and the students only needed approximately ten to fifteen minutes to fill out the questionnaires.

We adapted a semi-structured interview from Harimurti et al. (2021) and Jamshed (2014) as the supported data to comprehensively understand the student's reason for choosing a certain metacognitive reading strategy. We developed the interview questions as the follow-up questions from the questionnaire to get deeper information about the rationale behind the preferred strategy used by the students. The interviewees were chosen based on their questionnaire results, and we chose two students from each category in the metacognitive reading strategy. After obtaining the students' questionnaire results, we addressed them and enquired about their willingness to be interviewed. Students who willingly filled out the consent form were representatives from each reading strategy. Seven questions were made to have in-depth explanations related to the student's preferences in choosing the reading strategies. The questions allowed students to respond freely to the given question. We conducted an online interview with the representative students through WhatsApp since it was convenient and pleasant for the interviewees as well as the interviewer. The interview results were then recorded, and each student was interviewed for fifteen to twenty minutes.

Data analysis

The responses from the questionnaire were counted into descriptive statistics (Osborne, 2015) in the form of mean and standard deviation. Descriptive statistics are particularly useful for summarizing survey data since they may uncover patterns and trends in the data and characterize the respondents' characteristics (Osborne, 2015). Particularly, the mean and standard deviation are used to summarize the distribution of responses to a survey question. Each statement in the questionnaire has different scores ranging from 1 to 4. From the students' responses, we then incorporated all the scores. We counted them to find the means and standard deviation to compare the differences in the preferred metacognitive reading strategy utilized by the students. The data is then verified by the qualitative data obtained from the interview session. We coded, categorized, and analyzed the interview results. After analyzing the two data, we applied the inductive analysis. The data are simplified into a few themes using an inductive approach by providing the result of the data and relating it to the

theory or the previous study in the same field, which was used to justify the study's finding (Creswell, 2007). Therefore, this study could provide a holistic understanding of the data.

Validity and reliability test

The primary instruments from the questionnaire were adapted from Mokhtary and Shorey (2002), and we made the interview questions the extended instruments to get in-depth explanations of the questionnaire results. The experts have validated both instruments to make sure the validity of the research finding. The expert read all the statements and questions that were used as the instruments and filled out the expert validation checklist, which has five categories (very high valid (5), high valid (4), valid (3), less valid (2), and not valid at all (1) for the quality of the instruments. We validated the instruments to ensure that the instruments fit the condition of the participants in terms of the application and the language used. After being validated, we piloted those two instruments to know whether the instruments were feasible or needed to be modified based on the subject's feedback. We distributed the questionnaires online and interviewed the participants through an online platform that can be recorded as the research data. The Cronbach alpha value was also employed to test the questionnaire reliability for every metacognitive reading category (Table 2). George and Mallery (2003) characterize Cronbach Alpha values as "_ > .9 – Excellent, _ > .8 – Good, _ > .7 – Acceptable, _ > .6 – Questionable, _ > .5 – Poor, and _ < .5 – Unacceptable". After gathering both primary and secondary data, it is easier to obtain detailed explanations from the participants for the discussion session.

Table 2
Cronbach Alpha value of metacognitive reading strategy

Component	α	Interpretation
Problem-solving	.859	Good
Global	.827	Good
Support	.778	Acceptable

Findings

In this section, we presented the results from quantitative and qualitative information under the objective of this research topic. This study aimed to determine the students' metacognitive reading strategy preferences and the rationale for the students' preferred strategy. Therefore, we divided them into

three subtopics: the employment of metacognitive reading strategy, the most preferred category, and the distribution of the strategy use.

The employment of a metacognitive reading strategy

According to the survey results, forty-four students acknowledged using a specific reading method while involved in extensive reading (ER) program. We then counted the results using descriptive statistics to determine the score using the three reading strategies mentioned. According to the accepted standards established by Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995), an overall mean score of 3.5 or more was regarded as high, a mean score of 2.5 to 3.4 was regarded as intermediate, and a mean score of 2.4 or less was regarded as low. Table 3 shows a breakdown of how the data were calculated.

Table 3

The total use of metacognitive strategy

	Descriptive statistics		
	f	**$\bar{x}$**	**σ**
The usage of metacognitive reading strategy	44	3.14	.62

Table 3 demonstrates the overall reading strategies used by EFL students in their ER program. Forty-four students expressed a willingness to contribute to this research. The average score was 3.14, which showed that a high proportion of subjects agreed with their claim in utilizing the metacognitive reading strategy. The findings were supported by the interview results, as they stated:

> I believe that reading strategies are crucial because they can support us when we have reading obstacles. However, the reading method is particularly suitable for the extensive reading program since we can use it to determine whether or not we truly understand the story. (Student 1)

> I consider that when reading extensively, reading strategies must be used. The reading strategies are effective and appropriate for extensive reading, regardless of the kinds of reading materials, whether they are online or physical books. (Student 2)

As the students had already recognized their difficulties while doing ER activity, they immediately recognized that they needed a particular strategy to assist them in overcoming their obstacles. The students believed that they needed to employ a metacognitive reading strategy while they were reading extensively. As they could comprehend the reading materials better, the employment of the

metacognitive reading strategy is also applicable to different kinds of reading materials. Thus, utilizing the metacognitive reading strategy played an essential role in students reading activity in ER program.

The most preferred category of metacognitive reading strategy

Twenty-five statements were employed in the survey to determine the students' preferred metacognitive reading strategy. Table 4 displays the result of the students' preferences of the three categories in metacognitive reading strategy.

Table 4
Descriptive statistics findings of metacognitive reading categories

Categories	$\bar{x}$	σ
Problem-solving	3.3	.61
Global	3.1	.58
Support	3.0	.57

Table 4 reveals that, as compared to the other reading categories, the problem-solving reading strategy had the highest mean score of 3.3. The global reading strategy took second place with an average score of 3.1, while the support reading strategy received the least average score of 3.0 points. In the interview, the students confirmed the same assertion as explained by the student:

> The strategy that I often use is the problem-solving reading strategy. Since I might have encountered unknown words and phrases while reading extensively, I try to infer their meaning. Without having to use a dictionary to determine the definition of each different word, it assists me in comprehending the reading materials. (Student 6)

> I intensively utilized the problem-solving reading strategy. Using the problem-solving reading strategy helps me increase my reading efficiency and engagement with the books' content by employing the strategy. (Student 3)

Problem-solving reading strategy category received the highest points out of the three reading categories. The interview results indicated that using a metacognitive reading strategy in ER led to positive outcomes for the students' performance in the ER program. As a result, the students asserted that problem-solving reading strategies helped them use fewer additional resources, such as dictionaries. However, it was consistent with ER's goal of encouraging students to use dictionaries less frequently as Koch (2009) argued that ER's main goal is to make sure that Students read texts which were ideal for their degree of comprehension, so avoiding dictionaries is a more reliable way of discovering how to derive meaning from text.

The distribution of the strategy used

We provided a detailed mean score for each of the statements utilized in the questionnaire. The results can be viewed in Table 5.

Table 5
The detailed results of each statement

No	Strategy	Category	$\bar{x}$
1	Reading slowly and thoroughly.	PS	3.3
2	Trying to return on track.	PS	3.3
3	Adjusting reading tempo	PS	3.1
4	Devoting more attention to the text	PS	3.4
5	Reading the text again	PS	3.1
6	Guessing unknown words.	PS	3.2
7	Having a certain objective in mind.	G	3.2
8	Using memories to have a good understanding	G	3.2
9	Having an overview of the text.	G	3.2
10	Considering the text's substance to the reading needs.	G	3.1
11	Reviewing the content, length, and structure of the text.	G	3
12	Defining important aspects of reading materials	G	3
13	Using context cues	G	3
14	Highlighting important information using typographic elements	G	3
15	Analyzing the information in the book.	G	3
16	Re-reading the text to ensure clarity.	G	3.3
17	Seeking the essence of the text.	G	3.1
18	Evaluating personal assumptions about the text	G	3.4
19	Trying to make notes.	S	3
20	Reading aloud to ensure clarity	S	3
21	Highlighting or underlining important information	S	3.1
22	Utilizing dictionaries and other reference resources	S	3.3
23	Paraphrasing the important statements or idea	S	3
24	Switching from English to Indonesian when reading	S	3.1
25	Considering the information in both Indonesian while reading	S	3

Table 5 displays the detailed mean score for each statement. It ranged from 3-3.4, demonstrating that the students achieved average scores applying the reading strategies (2.5 to 3.4). The problem-solving strategy of "When the text is challenging to understand, I devote more attention to the text " and "I evaluate to

see if my assumptions about the text were accurate or inaccurate" resulted in the highest mean of 3.4. Table 5 revealed that multiple items from the global and supporting reading methods contributed to the lowest score. As the students revealed:

> I guess about the text's contents and then confirm whether or not my assumption was accurate. My understanding of the text's content is improved, allowing me to draw conclusions about the plot. (Student 4)

> I reread and focused more on the reading materials when I came across difficult-to-understand lines or phrases. This makes it easier for me to comprehend the material. (Student 5)

Students 4 and 5 claimed they used a global and support reading strategy in the ER program. Table 5 shows that the students employed the two categories in the second and least preferred arrangement. Despite being classified in these two categories, the students could better understand their reading materials due to the use of both global and support reading strategies.

Discussion

Numerous studies have been carried out on using metacognitive reading strategies, particularly for an intensive reading class. However, few studies have looked into the use of metacognitive reading strategies in extensive reading (ER) classes, particularly in EFL settings. The objective of this study was to discover the most preferred metacognitive reading strategy, including problem-solving, global, and support reading strategies used in an ER program, and the rationale behind the use of the strategy. The research findings verified that students who read extensively implemented specific reading strategies. Since they recognized their difficulties in reading activity, all students who participated in this study employed specific reading strategies (Table 5) from those three categories and were active readers who understood the importance of using those strategies to perform at their best in ER program. This result is consistent with research from Yüksel and Yüksel (2012), Chen and Chen (2015), Zhang and Zheng (2020), and Chou (2022), all of which found that students were the active readers who involved metacognitive reading strategy.

The results of this analysis revealed that the use of metacognitive reading strategies was at the middle- or moderate level. El-Koumy (2004) proposed that when utilizing a variety of metacognitive reading strategies in teaching and learning, an emphasis should center on the "how," "when," and "why" of each

strategy as students can integrate them when reading different types of texts. The problem-solving reading strategy is the one that is most regularly utilized, followed by the global and support reading strategies. It was consistent with the study from Par (2020). Learners reported that the problem-solving reading strategy assisted them in resolving personal issues. The students stated that they struggled to pay attention in class activities, comprehend the text's content, and find new and unfamiliar words when they read a lot. The issues raised by the students were their inability to concentrate while reading, their inability to comprehend the text's content, and their repeated discovery of new and unfamiliar words in the text. It is consistent with Berkowitz and Cicchelli (2004), who asserted that comprehension problems might cause learners to feel uncomfortable, hesitant, and unmotivated while reading. Problem-solving strategies will assist participants in resolving these issues and effectively focusing on the reading materials. It is supported by Oxford (2011), who stated that knowing and using appropriate reading strategies in an orchestrated manner while reading is essential for becoming successful independent L2 readers.

The various issues that the students encounter will inevitably cause the flow of their reading activity to be disrupted. This study's findings were in contrast to a finding by Chen and Chen (2015). Among the three strategies, the global reading strategy emerged as the most frequently adopted, supported by problem-solving and support reading strategies. The differences may come from different aspects involved in each setting. According to Par (2020), the variation between the results of using metacognitive reading strategies may depend on the type of research environment, the readers' language competency, the text's complexity, and the learners' preferred learning models. Phakiti (2003) also emphasized that a person's personality may impact how well students read. Thus, Wigfield et al. (2014) claimed that readers should use both implicit and explicit techniques as readers can use particular strategies to fully grasp texts as well drawing upon their experiences and prior knowledge to effectively retain information reading methods were applied in various methods, demonstrating that despite the difficulties students may encounter, they could still develop a strategy that would enable them to comprehend reading materials more clearly. It is in line with Baker and Brown (1984) claim that proficient readers understand and control their cognitive processes while reading. Metacognitive strategies were designed to teach students how to set goals and be efficient and self-reliant. The utilization of metacognitive reading strategies helps students learn more by supporting them in their learning process, as the implementation of ER also encourages them to read independently. It is supported by Avila and Baetiong

(2012), who highlighted, "If students want and intend to develop a sufficient degree of communicative competence, language learning requires active self-direction on their own."

Additionally, we obtained data on applying the global and support reading strategy. We collected data on the global and support reading strategies. The global reading method became the second-favored reading strategy, while the support reading strategy was the least preferred. Some of the interviewees stated that they employed a variety of techniques in their overall reading approach. According to Ahmadi et al. (2013), utilizing specific metacognitive strategies can potentially boost learning and improved performance, particularly among students who devote considerable work to comprehending the written context. In this study, the students engaged in certain reading strategies, including paying attention to the text's qualities, creating reasonable assumptions about its content, and relying on their memories to grasp the reading text. To obtain a thorough understanding of the book and determine the story's implications, the students thoroughly examined the elements of the text, then made guesses about its context. Thus, it affected students' comprehension abilities and achieved the goal of generating meaning from context (Navarro, 2021).

In addition to the complexity of the text, according to Deane et al. (2006), different inferences will be drawn based on the text's semantic, syntactic, and related features. It could be used to infer the text's context once its qualities have been understood. In enabling students to determine whether or not their guessing was accurate, Clarke and Nation (1980) stated that the reader must examine and analyze the available data, guess what might happen, and look for confirmation of the prediction to make an accurate assumption about a meaning. Additionally, students remember they recalled their memories when they read extensively. Meneghetti et al. (2006) stated that when students are motivated to read well, it is essentially a complicated cognitive competence that gives them the ability to combine text material with the reader's prior knowledge and produce the explanation of a mental process. Moreover, some authors prefer certain phrases and have a specific vocabulary, or it can be stated that they frequently and repeatedly utilize the same twists of phrases. In a series, they reuse characters and settings from earlier books, all of which make reading books by the same author more acceptable for readers (Krashen, 2004). Since the author provides several similar aspects within the reading materials, the information in the text was more accessible for the students to comprehend. Thus, by adopting metacognitive reading strategies, students can better concentrate, understand the text, connect prior knowledge content to new knowledge, and remember what they have learned (Paris & Jacobs, 1984). They seemed better at comprehending

the text's context and engaging in more ER activities while still finding it interesting since they had background knowledge from the reading materials they had already read.

The results of the interview section clarified why the students had selected the reading strategies they had used in the classroom for ER. When reading extensively in an ER class, most participants who participated in the interview said they used specific reading strategies to gain greater knowledge of the reading materials. It was in line with Grabe and Stoller (2011), who discovered that reading strategies used in reading programs that integrated cognitive and metacognitive processes greatly increased Reading comprehension performance. Students asserted that implementing an ER program was made more successful by using reading strategies. The finding was connected to their use of guessing terms they encountered in the reading materials. Students must understand the material without any help, including the use of a dictionary, according to Clarke and Nation (1980). It is in line with Harimurti et al. (2021) that when students inferred the context and meaning from the reading materials, they could absorb the text without interruptions. Additionally, if students use dictionaries less, they will not be as likely to become bored or frustrated, which allows them to find the right meaning concerning the context of the text (Bensoussan et al., 1981). When students encountered a lack of vocabulary, they also stated that they found it challenging to comprehend the reading material to not having the ER program enjoyable. The extended reading program would not be as effective as it should be given that L2 learning in ER is mostly meaning-oriented since learners' attention is focused on "understanding and obtaining information or enjoyment," as stated by Nation and Beglar (2007). It would be best for the students to move on to another reading material that is appropriate for them when they encounter that kind of difficulty. It complies with the ideal norms for ER as proposed by Day and Bamford (Schmitt, Jiang, & Grabe, 2011) that learners should be free to read as much as they wish to read and make their independent reading selections based on their reading proficiency. The students will do better in their ER class if the reading materials they chose are adequate and neither too simple nor too complex to understand.

Referring to the study's findings (Table 3), positive results from students show that they are good strategic readers who consciously employ strategies to derive meaning from the reading materials. Since the students use the strategy for a specific goal based on their issues, they naturally find a way to improve their language skills. We proceeded with the study by stating that the students acknowledged that they had trouble comprehending new vocabulary within the text. Consequently, the students utilized the metacognitive reading strategy and

found that their language skills, particularly in reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and writing skills, had shown improvement. Their reading comprehension and vocabulary growth are tools for them to engage in productive activities like speaking and writing. According to Fitzgerald and Shanahan (2000), the capacity to comprehend and write text is substantially correlated with vocabulary knowledge. Additionally, a student's reading comprehension is greatly influenced by their sense of word recognition, actual knowledge, and the ability for inference (Allen et al., 2014). Specific strategies may benefit students in learning challenging words, including words that represent complex ideas that are not a part of the students' actual experiences (Teale & Yokota, 2000). Thus, the students insisted they could get past the vocabulary difficulties when reading extensively and used reading strategies that supported their skills. It is in line with Navarro's (2021) findings students could still increase their vocabulary development and reading comprehension if given sufficient time to identify the language barriers they encounter and learn how to employ metacognitive reading strategies to assist their reading. Consequently, this study revealed that students successfully overcame the difficulties with vocabulary learning, which impacted both their writing and reading comprehension skills.

The interdependence of students' reading comprehension abilities and metacognitive reading strategies, as stated by Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001), was crucial and significant for the reading process. Moreover, Ismail and Tawalbeh (2015) also highlighted that readers could better manage the reading obstacles in a foreign language by employing metacognitive reading strategies. Accordingly, their reading comprehension improved. Moreover, students who used the metacognitive reading strategy in an ER course demonstrated better cognition. Afflerbach et al. (2008) revealed that metacognitive reading strategies are specific, purposeful, goal-directed mental processes or behavior which regulate and modify the reader's attempts to comprehend texts. Moreover, the study findings are in line with Schunk and Zimmerman (2012); students were able to control their learning process through the application of metacognitive strategies to organize and monitor their comprehension process, explore the existing experience, resolve the issues they encountered when on a task or activity, and to evaluate how they overcame them as well as complete the task or reading activities that were being implemented. Thus, implementing a metacognitive reading strategy was proven to produce significant benefits, especially in reading comprehension, when the students employ their reading activities to develop their language acquisition.

The students could explain what they had already comprehended in both writing and oral formats if they had improved comprehension of the reading materials. The students used the strategy to connect what they understood and how they recognized it, as well as why and when they needed to use pieces of information, as the metacognitive strategy fosters learners' personal experience, abilities, and understandings about their ability to deal with contextual, stylistic, language, and speech structures (Lu & Liu, 2011). The students have already become familiar with the authors' specific structure as they can understand the context from the reading materials. As a result, it was clarified that using the metacognitive reading strategy in an ER course also provided promising results in the students' productive skills, such as writing and speaking. It is supported by the idea from Wenden (1998) that learner training programs should incorporate the essential learning strategy known as metacognitive strategies to enhance students' learning performance. Phakiti (2003) claimed that metacognitive strategies impact motivation by influencing recognition and self-efficacy. When readers acquire metacognition, they believe that their competence and work ultimately determine their success (or failure). Meniado (2016) argued that because students are aware of what tends to work and what does not throughout the reading process, they are assured that they can come up with solutions or strategies for resolving new and demanding tasks throughout the entire reading instruction. In addition, the students are more enthusiastic about using extended reading and metacognitive reading strategies in their language learning.

Conclusion

This research assessed students' preferences for using metacognitive reading strategies in a supervised extensive reading (ER) program in an EFL setting. It was found that the participants, who were first-year EFL learners, actively used specific reading strategies in a supervised ER program. Among the categories in the metacognitive reading strategy, the students most utilized the problem-solving reading strategy. It was then followed by global and support reading strategies. The results revealed that the students found difficulties such as losing interest in reading, meeting new and unfamiliar vocabulary within the text, and cannot comprehend the text well. Thus, using specific metacognitive reading strategies helped them in facing those difficulties. The analysis indicated that using reading strategies affected students to have a better understanding of the text as well as overcome vocabulary and reading material difficulties.

Furthermore, the students successfully completed the ER program and enhanced their language abilities, particularly reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and writing skills.

There were some limitations in this study. Since we employed convenience sampling, we only took less than fifty students as participants. Future research to use other sampling techniques which could gather more samples for the study participants. Additionally, the study only focused on the students' preferences using the metacognitive reading strategy. It might be more insightful if the metacognitive reading strategy was implemented through sequenced learning activities to know whether the students successfully applied the implementation. However, applying metacognitive reading strategies may be learners' best option to improve their performance in a supervised ER program. Employing a metacognitive reading strategy is essential to increase students' engagement in supervised ER programs conducted in schools and universities. By introducing the concepts from the three categories of metacognitive reading strategy: problem-solving, global, and support reading strategy, students can have a specific strategy to support them in acquiring a foreign language.

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