

English Education Master Students' Perceptions on Metacognitive Strategy in Academic Reading

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Abstract

Metacognitive strategy can bring varied fruitful influential impacts toward academic reading enterprises endured by graduate program university EFL learners. In this small-scale qualitative study, the researcher aimed to profoundly investigate English Education Graduate program Students' perceptions on metacognitive strategy in academic reading. To achieve this research objectivity, this study employed a qualitative content analysis method to obtain more specific portrayals out of the gathered data. 10 online Likert-scale questionnaire items were distributed to 18 English Education Graduate program Students, batch 2019, at Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta. After obtaining the data, the researcher also planned to make use of 5 open-ended written narrative inquiry questions to be responded to by 3 randomly selected interviewees derived from similar research samplings. Two major-specific themes were revealed namely: (1) Metacognitive strategy has successfully promoted more positive academic reading behaviors and (2) Metacognitive strategy allowed graduate program university EFL learners to achieve more fruitful academic reading outcomes. The main conclusion of these aforementioned findings is the internalization of metacognitive strategy at the beginning of academic reading dynamics is indispensably crucial in which graduate program university EFL learners can potentially transform into more mature, strategic, critical, and proficient L2 academic readers.

Keywords: *Metacognitive strategy, academic reading, students' perceptions*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the essential 21st-century learning skills requiring learners to profoundly analyse and interpret the texts by utilizing analytical thinking to proceed with myriad information. Floris and Divina (2015) stated that to be successful readers, learners are demanded to foster their analytical thinking skills constantly to obtain more fruitful reading learning rewards. In nowadays EFL teaching-learning context, it is also crucially indispensable to introduce learners toward a wide variety of L2 texts to enable them to thoroughly gain the target language learning outcomes and foster their reading skills into the utmost levels. Despite the availability of second language texts, majority of EFL learners still encounter serious obstacles while engaging in reading activities like struggling to get the main ideas, not being familiar with novel words, and not comprehensively understanding the whole contents forming in their texts. Ahmadi et al., (2013) indicate that most EFL learners continuously undergo various reading learning challenges like not comprehending the specific major ideas, lacking vocabulary, and failing to obtain important information. More complex reading learning issues also go similarly with graduate program university EFL learners. In academic reading, graduate program university EFL learners are required to read a vast range of academic texts to

broaden their specific understanding of the subject-specific skills. Nazhari et al., (2016) pinpoint that with the presence of academic reading learning enterprises, graduate program university EFL learners have wider opportunities to widen their perspective toward the particular topics they are going to discuss in the classroom contexts. However, this process is not easy at all since graduate program university EFL learners have to possess adequate background knowledge in reading their targeted academic texts unless they will not be able to accurately seize the major paramount information. Dodick et al., (2017) strongly theorize that with the support of background knowledge, EFL learners will have plenty of chances to precisely interpret varied information forming in the texts since they have gained more robust reading comprehension toward that information.

A wide range of teaching-learning strategies has been utilized by EFL teachers to elevate learners' reading competencies. One of the effective strategies worthwhile to be applied to actualize this aforementioned reading learning objectivity is through metacognitive strategy. Ahmadi et al., (2013) believe that under the supervision of proper metacognitive strategy, graduate program university EFL learners are more liable to increase their likelihood of reading reciprocally impacting their further development of reading skills. This potential positive reading learning outcome occurred since graduate program university EFL learners can regulate their cognitive processes by designing more in-depth planning, monitoring, and evaluating stages amid ongoing reading learning dynamics. Zhang and Seepho (2013) define metacognitive strategies as people's capabilities of planning, monitoring, and evaluating their cognitive enterprises to fully achieve the pre-determined objectivities before academic reading processes. Hence, it is strongly believed that highly metacognitive L2 readers will potentially obtain more satisfying reading learning outcomes and achievements since they heed their whole focus on both cognitive and affective aspects. Anjomshoaa et al., (2012) discover that a great number of university EFL learners have successfully improved their reading comprehension skills and gained more gratifying reading learning achievements after employing appropriate metacognitive strategies through their reading learning processes. Thus, EFL teachers are advocated to internalize metacognitive strategy at beginning of the L2 reading learning venture. To apply this learning approach successfully, EFL teachers are highly recommended to activate their learners' profound reading comprehension concerning the information they have not yet known, have known, and are going to know. By immersing them in these triadic metacognition conceptions, learners will be more capable of exerting stronger controls over their ongoing reading learning dynamics since they have been familiar with the in-depth planning, monitoring, and evaluating strategies helping them to holistically attain the major essential information. Forrest-Pressley and Waller (2013) strongly believe that by guiding EFL learners in locating what they have already known, have not known, and are going to know, they will undergo more meaningful reading learning enterprises due to the robust establishment of exhaustive reading planning, monitoring, and evaluating cycles.

As a result, it is worth suggesting for EFL teachers lead their learners to a wide variety of metacognitive reading strategies after being equipped with conscientious planning, monitoring, and evaluating stages. This action should be carried out to enable learners to fully gain a deeper understanding of their particular reading strengths as well as weaknesses. After noticing their reading strengths and drawbacks, they will be more able to incorporate various metacognitive reading strategies compatible with their specific reading learning situations eventually leading them to experience more rewarding reading learning dynamics constantly. Baum et al., (2020) frankly acknowledge that the successful identification of specific reading strengths and weaknesses will fully strengthen EFL learners' metacognitive reading learning strategies they are going to implement in their reading learning processes since they have known the best reading learning approaches working

best for them. In the academic reading learning realm undergone by graduate program university EFL learners, metacognitive strategies can also bring about various impactful effects toward learners' further reading learning dynamics. The first positive impact is they will transform into more strategic and resilient L2 readers capable of internalizing various reading strategies appropriately since they can devise their solutions to overcome the targeted reading hurdles. The second advantageous value of metacognitive reading strategies is graduate program university EFL learners are highly motivated to engage in various challenging reading learning activities since they have gained a higher level of reading comprehension. This robust reading comprehension construction emanated from their success in managing all reading hindrances, which advance them to proceed into the higher reading learning levels. Ahmed (2020) claims that with the continual existence of metacognitive strategies, graduate program university EFL learners are more motivated to handle varied reading difficulties simultaneously resulted in more significant development of their reading comprehension levels. The last benefit of incorporating metacognitive strategies is graduate program university EFL learners will potentially showcase constant proactive reading learning behaviors due to the enjoyable reading learning atmosphere promoted by this approach.

Five prior relevant studies were conducted to profoundly investigate the apparent utilities of metacognitive strategy toward Indonesian EFL learners' reading learning enterprises. Andriani and Mbato (2021) strongly prompt Indonesian EFL teachers to provide clearer metacognitive strategies guidance for learners to fully reap more fruitful reading learning outcomes in future events. Muhid et al., (2020) unveil that the majority of Indonesian university EFL learners possessing more advanced metacognitive strategies are far better in planning, monitoring, and evaluating their reading activities compared to those who lack metacognitive strategies. Bria and Mbato (2019) unfold that a considerable number of graduate program university EFL learners have shown a higher level of reading maturity and higher-order thinking skills after being equipped with proper metacognitive strategies instruction. Dardjito (2019) highly encourages Indonesian EFL teachers to introduce their learners to metacognitive strategies at the onset of reading learning activities to transfigure them into more competent, resilient, and well-organized L2 readers. In the last study, Djudin (2017) strongly motivates Indonesian EFL teachers to promote various second language learning enterprises provoking the continual utilization of metacognitive strategies to generate more autonomous academicians capable of devising varied problem-solving approaches to overcome their particular learning hindrances. Concerning all these findings, the researcher is eager to critically examine the significance of metacognitive strategies in academic reading enterprises based on English Education Master Students' perceptions. By conducting this present small-scale qualitative study, the researcher felt quite assured that the specific research findings could pave the new pathway for Indonesian ELT experts, educators, practitioners, and policy-makers to start implementing metacognitive strategies as one of the beneficial pedagogical approaches in diverse reading classrooms. Thus, it is extremely indispensable for all ELT parties in this nation to establish more solid collaborative networking to promote more favourable, meaningful, and transformative reading learning enterprises in which metacognitive strategies exist to continually assist EFL learners to become more independent, strategic, mature, and proficient L2 readers. To fulfil this research objectivity, one research problem was formulated: "what is the significance of metacognitive strategies on academic reading learning enterprises?"

METHODS

This present small-scale qualitative study attempted to exhaustively investigate English Education Master Students' perceptions on metacognitive strategy in academic reading.

Qualitative content analysis was employed to obtain more comprehensive portrayals out of the observed phenomenon. Mayring (2014) stated that the main benefit of applying qualitative content analysis is to enable researchers to attain more trustworthy data from the life-specific events shared by research participants. Concerning the data gathering processes, the researcher utilized 10 online Likert-scale questionnaire items about the metacognitive strategy to 18 English Education Masteral program Students, batch 2019, Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta. This first research instrument is of paramount importance since the researcher will be more capable of discovering graduate program university EFL learners' specific perceptions on metacognitive strategy in academic reading processes. Specifically, these 10 online Likert-scale questionnaire items were distributed to the targeted research participants with the support of Google Forms due to the distant location hindering the researcher from meeting with the participants physically. To reinforce the data obtained from this aforementioned research instrument, the researcher also made use of 5 open-ended written narrative inquiry questions to be administered to 3 randomly selected interviewees derived from similar research samplings. The major utility of utilizing this second research instrument was the researcher will gain a more profound understanding concerning the significance of metacognitive strategy implementations in academic reading learning enterprises. Clandinin and Caine (2013) postulated that in the light of open-ended written narrative inquiry questions, researchers will potentially reap more fruitful and reliable data since the targeted research participants experience a higher degree of independence while disseminating their concerns, thoughts, and opinions. This set of written narrative inquiry questions would be sent via WhatsApp. Furthermore, one of the impetus triggering the researcher to involve English Education Masteral program Students to participate in this study was their metacognitive strategy development has been well-trained by all lecturers teaching them in all compulsory and elective courses. For the information, all these specific knowledge-based as well as pedagogical courses commissioned each graduate program EFL learner to constantly engage in academic reading enterprises both inside and outside the classroom contexts since the finalized academic reading learning results would be well-represented in their scientific writing publications at the end of each semester. After obtaining all the intended data, the researcher planned to cluster all the participant's responses in the form of a bar chart to enable the worldwide readers to easily follow the provided argumentations and explications. The researcher would explain each obtained data argumentatively to strongly convey to Indonesian ELT parties that metacognitive strategy is indispensably crucial to be internalized at the onset of academic reading learning enterprises. To holistically address more reliable and robust data descriptions, the researcher also attempted to attach some specific prior metacognitive strategy theories, findings, and interview excerpts taken from 3 randomly selected interviewees who emerged after each in-depth argumentation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the researcher attempted to profoundly explicate 2 major specific themes obtained from the research participants. These themes derived from the Likert-scale questionnaire categorization are strongly supported by selected interview excerpts, relevant theories, and prior findings. Those two themes are (1) Positive academic reading behaviors promoted by metacognitive strategy and (2) More fruitful academic reading outcomes are progressively obtained. All complete delineations can be discerned in the following lines.

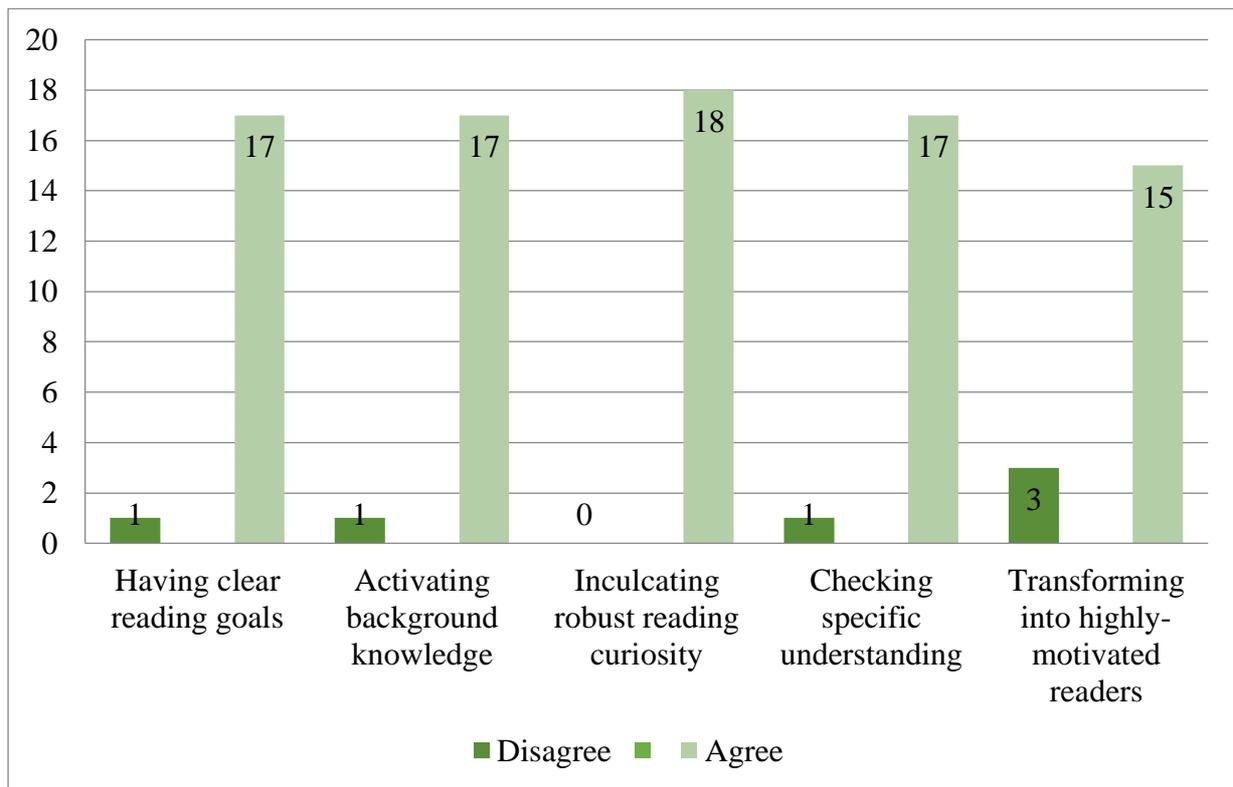


Figure 1: Positive Academic Reading Behaviour Promoted by Metacognitive Strategy (93% Participants Agree)

From figure 1 above, it can be fairly inferred that the majority of English Education Master Students have successfully ingrained more positive academic reading behaviour after being armed with metacognitive strategy. One of the tangible indicators to judge whether these students have transformed into more positive L2 academic readers is they determine more obvious reading objectives at the commencement of reading activities. 17 out of 18 participants agreed to this first finding. By stipulating clearer academic reading goals, these students can utilize various useful strategies compatible with their specific academic reading contexts. As a result, they will reap more fruitful academic reading outcomes due to the versatile reading strategies they interchange every time in accord with the ongoing reading situations they are facing. Othman et al., (2014) state that under the guidance of in-depth planning strategies, EFL learners will be more capable of utilizing various effective strategies in reading plenty of texts leading them to obtain more fruitful academic reading learning outcomes. Furthermore, activating robust background knowledge at the onset of academic reading enterprises is also extremely essential. This second finding is strongly supported by 17 out of 18 participants. The central idea of conducting this in-depth planning reading stage is to enable L2 readers to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the texts. A higher level of reading comprehension attainment can be correlated with the current reading proficiency, maturity, and advanced development of their readiness to confront more complex academic reading texts. With this in mind, it can be probably ascertained that graduate program university EFL learners possessing a higher degree of reading comprehension will proactively explore a wide variety of academic texts since they can establish a mutual association between their prior knowledge with the targeted passages. Muñoz and Valenzuela (2020) strongly suggest university EFL learners activate their background knowledge at the commencement of academic reading enterprises to

gain a more profound reading comprehension in line with the specific texts they are currently reading. Raising a more exhaustive academic reading awareness can also be deemed as one of the crucial reading behaviors necessary in breeding more positive readers. All research participants thoroughly assented to this third finding. Thus, requiring graduate program university EFL learners to write some potential predictions concerning specific academic reading texts will bring about plentiful positive influences. One of those apparent impacts is they can transform into more strategic L2 academic readers due to the analytical thinking processes while analyzing some texts. Due to this matter, they will be more confident in overcoming various academic reading barriers simultaneously resulted in the significant enhancement of the familiarization toward diverse texts. Thuy (2020) scientifically theorizes that the internalization of proper metacognitive strategies can allow EFL learners to implement a wide array of strategies compatible with their academic reading contexts and become more aware of the targeted texts they attempt to read. All these argumentations are closely interlinked with the following three interviewees' excerpts.

[Interviewee 1: *I usually employed metacognitive reading strategies to all academic reading activities.*]

[Interviewee 2: *Yes, I do. It's because by setting the objectives, I am directed and motivated to reading with deep understanding and purpose.*]

[Interviewee 3: *Of course, before going to read particular texts or readings, I commonly set the goals and plan what to do to achieve the desired outcomes.*]

Another paramount positive academic reading behavior that has been fully showcased by graduate program university EFL learners taking part in this study is the stronger willingness to conduct an in-depth monitoring comprehension approach. 17 out of 18 participants concurred with this finding. More profound monitoring reading comprehension strategy has an intertwining relationship with the academic reading achievements learners aimed before since they will gradually minimize their particular reading weaknesses to be superseded by potential reading strengths. When their academic reading awareness is already well-built in terms of strategy, individuals, and texts, it will be probable for them to heed more intensive reading focus resulted in the successful attainment of academic reading achievements. Bria and Mbato (2019) discover that a great number of undergraduate and postgraduate program university EFL learners are more capable of attaining more satisfying academic reading achievements due to the constant monitoring strategy they apply in their academic reading processes. Concerning this conception, it is of utmost importance for graduate program university EFL learners to transform into more highly-motivated academic L2 readers. 15 out of 18 participants agreed to this last finding. This commendable reading behavior is improbable to be obtained overnight since learners are required to critically reflect on the academic reading processes, strategies, and contexts they are dealing with to develop their reading proficiency to the utmost levels. Due to the significant elevation of reading levels, these learners will potentially transfigure into more life-long academic readers strongly willing to explore a vast range of advanced texts. Therefore, it is essentially pivotal for language teachers to maintain a higher level of academic reading motivation amid the challenging reading dynamics to implant a more positive mindset toward this pain-staking activity in their perspective. Schwartz and Diaz (2014) highly recommend university EFL learners conduct more exhaustive self-reflections concerning their academic reading strengths and weaknesses to proactively explore plenty of distinctive texts transforming them into more critical, proficient, and life-long L2

readers. These above-mentioned conceptions are tightly interwoven with the excerpts taken from three interviewees.

[Interviewee 1: *To monitor my reading I make summary or mind mapping, give some highlight to some important information because it's really helps me to understand my reading.*]

[Interviewee 2: *I continuously monitor my exhaustive understanding of the targeted academic reading texts as long as my aim of exploring text is fulfilled.*]

[Interviewee 3: *Yes, I commonly monitor my activities during reading in order to check my understanding of the particular readings and question myself whether I am on the right track of reading to achieve the outcomes.*]

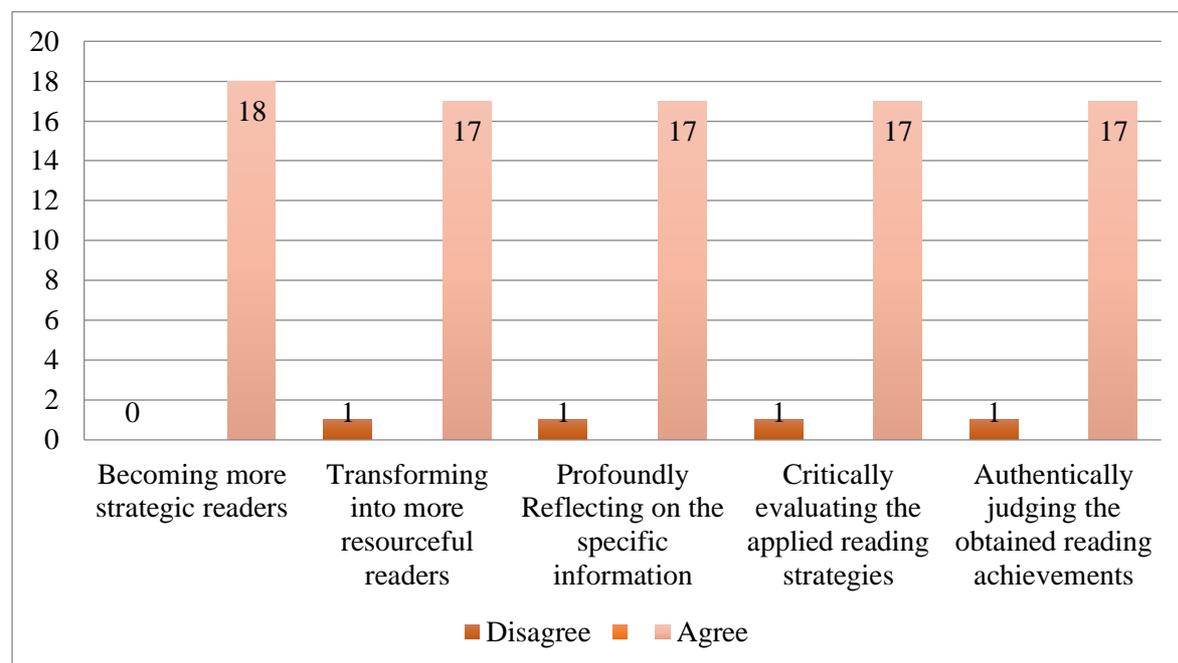


Figure 2: More Fruitful Academic Reading Outcomes are progressively obtained (99% Participants Agree)

Impressive academic reading performances are inextricably associated with more fruitful academic reading outcomes attained by learners. Based on this figure, there are 5 rewarding strategies worthwhile to be implemented by graduate program university EFL learners enrolling in other academic institutions since these aforementioned approaches have worked successfully in the academic reading contexts confronted by this study's participants. The first strategy refers to becoming more strategic L2 academic readers. All research participants wholly assented to this strategy. In this vein, becoming more strategic means learners are capable of internalizing various academic reading strategies more flexibly. Meaning to say, they possess a higher degree of wisdom in when, why, and how to operate some particular strategies working best for their academic reading situations. This first strategy should be well-applied in diverse wide-ranging academic reading classroom circumstances to holistically promote more meaningful reading enterprises where all learners' comprehension levels, maturity, and motivation continually thrive. Dilek (2017) unveils that by equipping university EFL learners with precise metacognitive reading strategies,

they will have broader opportunities to hone their critical reading skills as well as internalize the suitable reading strategies to experience more meaningful academic reading venture. All three interviewees strongly agreed with this premise.

[Interviewee 1: *I use a bit different strategies in my long reading to tell the whole information that I got from the reading.*]

[Interviewee 2: *Taking notes is also a good strategy to find out the gaps to be filled and criticize the text to be questioned and clarified.*]

[Interviewee 3: *If my previous reading strategies are not effective enough to help me achieve the reading comprehension and desired reading outcomes. I need to change or modify the strategies so that I can find the most effective strategies in reading.*]

After transforming into more strategic L2 academic readers, graduate program university EFL learners are also commissioned to become more resourceful information seekers. 17 out of 18 participants agreed to this finding. Put more simply, they should be more capable of utilizing a wide variety of potential resources supportively assisting their ongoing academic reading processes like the dictionary and relevant academic texts. To actualize this laudable academic reading behavior, language teachers are highly advocated to internalize metacognitive reading strategy and conduct insistent reading classroom training concerning the relevant academic reading sources learners can pick up, specific criteria in selecting those resources, and the significance of becoming more critical knowledge discoverers to readily prepare them to confront with more complex academic reading journeys. Meniado (2016) unfolds that it is urgently important for worldwide EFL teachers to introduce a metacognitive strategy toward their learners in diverse wide-ranging academic reading classroom contexts to holistically transfigure them into more strategic, resourceful, and resilient L2 academic readers capable of overcoming heterogeneous reading hindrances.

Concerning the above-explained academic reading strategies, it is also greatly essential for language teachers to strongly suggest their learners become more critical self-evaluators after reading plenty of texts with distinctive genres. 17 out of 18 participants are in accord with this finding. Indisputably, critical self-reflection skills play such a major role in this monitoring reading stage since all learners will integrate their utmost reading performances to survive in adverse academic reading enterprises. These types of readers constantly hold a strong belief that every taxing academic reading impediment act as the stepping stone of success for them to achieve better reading learning outcomes, increase their reading competencies, and elevate their reading learning autonomy. Razi and Çubukçu (2014) adduce that highly metacognitive L2 academic readers are more liable to stipulate more well-organized reading learning planning, monitoring, and evaluating stages encouraging them to enhance their reading comprehension skills into the utmost levels harmonious with the specific reading learning contexts as well as objectivities. Moving forward to the next strategy, successful L2 academic readers can also be assumed as the highly-aware academicians continuously reflecting on the reading strategies useful for them in future academic reading events. 17 out of 18 participants strongly supported this strategy. Anchored on this contention, language teachers are urgently required to elevate their learners' awareness concerning the advantageous values of incorporating metacognitive strategy in a vast range of academic reading dynamics. By actualizing this approach at the outset of the academic reading venture, graduate program university EFL learners can exert more rigorous controls over the ongoing

academic reading processes, judiciously implement various appropriate academic reading strategies, and become more effective problem-solvers better in deciding whether the applied reading approaches are appropriately usable or not for future academic reading processes. Ceylan (2015) strongly advocates globalized EFL teachers to raise their learners' awareness concerning the pivotal utilities of metacognitive reading strategy to better manage their academic reading processes in a better purpose, successfully overcome varied academic reading hurdles, and incorporate more appropriate strategies in the upcoming academic reading events. In the last finding, it is also interesting to be observed that 17 out of 18 participants agreed to judge if they have fully obtained more gratifying academic reading achievements. This ultimate strategy is overwhelmingly crucial to eradicate unmotivated academic reading behavior since particular reading achievements obtained by learners will work as one of the major driving forces for them to establish, maintain, and even enhance their academic reading performances. Concerning this belief, evaluating the reading stage can simultaneously provide substantiate incentives for the further significant development of learners' higher-order thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, planning, and monitoring skills since they have been fully aware of specific academic reading texts they are going to face. Conrady (2015) believes that university EFL learners have to be able to thoroughly evaluate the academic reading processes to progressively elevate their higher-order thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, planning, and monitoring skills. These above-explicated rationales are positively linked with the following three interviewees' excerpts.

[Interviewee 1: *I always evaluate my applied reading strategies to improve my specific understanding of the topics.*]

[Interviewee 2: *I often evaluate my reading progress and strategies in order to be a better reader.*]

[Interviewee 3: *Evaluating strategies helps me to confirm whether or not my understanding of the readings is correct.*]

CONCLUSION

As a taken point, it can be briefly phrased here that the insistent metacognitive strategy can potentially bring about a wide array of potential academic reading benefits cognitively, affectively, and psychologically. Highly-metacognitive academic readers are the academicians knowing the best strategies working best to overcome varied upcoming reading obstacles. They are also the figures who can manage their academic reading enterprises for a better purpose due to the in-depth planning, monitoring, and evaluating stages they repeatedly utilize. Thus, language teachers all around the globe are strongly encouraged to incorporate metacognitive strategy at the commencement of graduate program university EFL learners' academic reading venture to breed more autonomous, proficient, accountable, confident, and mature future L2 academic readers. In contrast, this present small-scale qualitative study was also presented with two particular drawbacks. First, since this study has not yet touched upon the significance of metacognitive strategy toward undergraduate program university EFL learners, it will be more beneficial for future researchers to profoundly investigate the tangible impacts of this approach in academic reading processes undergone by these undergraduate programs to provide more robust data. Second, since this study merely heeds its investigation by collecting the data for a short period, longitudinal qualitative study is strongly suggested for future researchers aiming to replicate this study to generate more generalizable research findings benefitting worldwide

ELT experts, educators, practitioners, and policy-makers concerning the precise applicability of metacognitive strategy in multivariate academic reading circumstances. Apart from these aforesaid limitations, the obtained results derived from this present small-scale qualitative study had paved the way for all ELT parties concerning the proper strategies of utilizing metacognitive strategy in the presence of heterogeneous academic reading vicinities. By internalizing corresponding strategies potentially supporting this approach, it can be reasonably stated that university EFL learners enrolling in extensive reading levels will transform into more mindful, strategic, and competent academic readers.

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