

The Use of Reading Strategies among Non-English Majors: A Study in Nong Lam University

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ABSTRACT: *In reality, reading plays an important role in the academic and career development of learners. Learners need to work through a large number of foreign language books for their general and specialist subjects at school. Therefore, reading skills have been the subject of many investigations in the field of English language teaching and learning so far. Most researchers have been trying to find effective ways to improve learners' reading skills. With a new perspective, this study aimed to discover the use of reading strategies among non-English majors at NLU. The methods of the research used both a quantitative and qualitative approach based on the theory of the case study. A total of one hundred and fifty university freshmen took part in answering the questionnaire, and five students responded to the semi-structured interview questions. The results revealed that students at NLU frequently used reading strategies when they had reading lessons. Among reading strategies, cognitive strategies were used more frequently than metacognitive and socio-affective strategies. Based on the findings, several implications were made to contribute to teaching and learning reading skills.*

KEYWORDS: reading skills, reading strategies, non-English majors, Vietnamese university context

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1. Introduction

Reading is one of the four skills that is very important to learn. It plays an important role in language teaching to strengthen listening, speaking, and writing skills (Wang, 2021). Furthermore, reading is regarded as a crucial learning ability for students studying foreign languages (Anaktototy & Lesnussa, 2022). This is so because reading comprehension is the process of deriving and creating meaning from written language. Roomy (2022) asserts that developing an understanding of word meanings, writers' points of view, and vocabulary expansion are crucial components of reading comprehension help. Furthermore, in order to meet the requirements of most classroom environments, students must improve their reading comprehension in order to meet education goals. Furthermore, learners are able to accumulate vital knowledge by sharpening their reading skills. Thanks to practicing reading skills in school, learners find it easy to read and

understand authentic materials such as labels, directions, newspapers, technical guides, and so on (Mulatu & Regassa, 2022).

A range of reading strategies is employed by students, such as setting reading goals, creating plans for what needs to be done or steps to be taken, examining the text in advance, attempting to predict the text's contents or a portion of it, asking questions about the subject, looking up answers to specific queries, connecting the text to prior knowledge, summarizing details, reading the text again, speculating about the meaning of a word from context, utilizing language forms to see connections, connecting textual sections, closely observing language structures, critiquing the author, evaluating the text, determining the extent to which the reading instructions were followed, expressing an opinion on the lessons learned from the text, and drawing conclusions.

In reality, the English language is a compulsory subject in most universities in Vietnam. Of the four skills in the English language, reading plays

an important role in strengthening listening, speaking, and writing skills (Maxom, 2009). It is obvious that students need to have a good understanding of how to interpret information from reading passages. What is more, for EFL students, reading is the most important skill in order to develop their knowledge in academics and society. They read texts and other materials to gain new knowledge and perspectives. However, reading comprehension is a complex activity involving both perception and thought (Sari, 2015). Therefore, designing reading lessons and providing students with essential strategies have received much attention from many teachers. In most English reading classes, students are familiar with learning the meaning of new words and answering text-based questions. Students grow disinterested in reading assignments as a result. Aside from that, teachers are the primary source of support for the majority of reading activities, as they interpret and rectify students' work (Sari, 2015). Students seem passive in most activities. This condition tends to reduce students' choice of strategies.

In addition, the majority of students in reading classrooms receive insufficient instruction on reading methods, according to Mulatu and Regassa (2022). For this reason, employing appropriate reading practices encourages students to engage in reading. Reading strategies are strategies that learners use to cope with obstacles taking place during reading activities. It is crucial to keep in mind that students' reading comprehension is impacted by the reading strategies they choose. However, the picture of how non-English majors at NLU use reading strategies is still unclear. This study, therefore, explores their frequent use of reading strategies.

2. Literature review

According to the Dictionary of Contemporary English by Longman (1995), strategy is defined as "a series of well-planned actions to achieve a goal" (p. 1244). Hence, a teaching strategy is a conscious plan that encompasses a chosen range of skills and techniques connected to

how different types of learning and teaching activities are performed in class. For this reason, Ha (2020) argued that teaching strategies are key and appropriate to enhance their learning abilities and encourage students to activate their own learning styles. Furthermore, it can be easily seen that all appropriate reading skills strategies aim to broaden the goal of communicative competence, which requires practical interaction between readers and their documents in order to understand.

In addition, the reading skill strategy acts as a tool. When it is necessary to solve problems or complete tasks or objectives, the above strategies will be applied. For instance, the contextualization strategy will be used by the reader to fully understand the context of the text. Using contextual support for predictions is a strategy used when encountering new words in the text. In order to feel more comfortable and confident and reap more benefits, readers should practice reading strategies carefully.

Reading strategies are used to help students focus on reading tasks effectively (Ghafournia, 2021). Besides that, Thuy (2021) claimed that learners could improve their reading skills thanks to the application of reading strategies. Furthermore, Mulatu and Regassa (2022) said the appropriate employment of reading strategies helped to reinforce students' reading skills. Students can benefit from the use of reading strategies to have good results in reading subjects. In fact, reading strategies are considered the most important elements that affect reading comprehension (Hazaea & Almekhlafy, 2022).

Since the 1970s, researchers have confirmed the importance of reading strategies to solve reading tasks (Alharbi, 2015; Banditvilai, 2020; Huong et al., 2021). According to Alharbi (2015), reading strategies reflected the ways that students interacted with texts and how they solved tasks efficiently. In addition, Banditvilai (2020) affirmed that reading strategies exhibited the way students make efforts to comprehend the meaning of passages. Moreover, he also concluded that what learners do to comprehend

the texts depends on the strategies they use. The reading strategies range from simple to complicated. For instance, simple strategies consist of tasks such as predicting new words based on linguistic context or giving a summary of reading passages (Par, 2020). Goyi (2021) said that reading strategies are specific plans or steps to deal with difficulties faced in the process of reading.

There are a lot of studies that define reading strategies that readers can use. Rehman et al. (2020) claimed that to get effective reading comprehension, students need to integrate and take advantage of reading strategies. Using successful and effective reading strategies helps to improve reading skills in a short period of time (Andres, 2020).

In several sources, there is a list of reading strategies. Like Oxford (1990), there are common strategies like memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. In addition, Nunan (1999) listed a variety of reading strategies that students can take advantage of to improve their reading comprehension. They are skimming, scanning, textual genre, using non-verbal cues, using titles, making predications, using keywords, inferring, and summarizing. Grabe (2009) mentioned two strategies that can be applied to reading comprehension: KWL (know-want to know-learned) and SQ3R (survey, question, read, recall, review). O'Malley and Chamot (1990) emphasized the importance of reading strategies: metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective reading strategies. These strategies are useful for readers to master and achieve good outcomes for reading activities.

2.1. Metacognitive strategies

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) referred to metacognitive strategies as "higher-order executive skills that may entail planning, monitoring, or evaluating the success of a learning activity" (p. 44). They recommended the strategies as metacognitive ones for language reading skills tasks as follows:

Planning: Three phases of reading can be

distinguished: pre-reading while reading and post-reading. Planning is a metacognitive technique that happens during the pre-reading stage. During the planning phase, students would take into account the reading topic and additional elements that can assist them in developing a rough notion of the text's substance. As components of the planning method, images, graphics, headings, and subheadings also significantly aid readers in forming assumptions about the text's content.

Supervising: In order to ascertain their current degree or stage of learning, students keep track of how well they understand the subject matter. Students can employ various strategies to monitor certain aspects of the text, including but not limited to drawing connections, predictions, inferences, identifying text structures, using context clues, and using graphic organizers to highlight specific textual information. They can also write comments or questions on self-stick notes or in the margins.

Self-assessment: Students can ascertain three things through evaluation: (1) the significance of the information gleaned from the written text; (2) the veracity and correctness of the material read; (3) the applicability or utility of the concepts; (4) how much a text makes students personally happy to read; and (5) students' personal development as a reader (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).

According to Sheorey and Mokhatari (2001), students can plan specific behaviors to accomplish an outcome by using metacognitive strategies. Holden (2004) acknowledged that students benefit from this strategy. Moreover, Wenden (1998) demonstrated that this strategy serves as the cornerstone for developing students' character. Using this strategy makes it simple for learners to be autonomous in their learning. In order to practice and reinforce what they have learned, students become more proactive in controlling and determining the best solutions. This type of strategy requires students to arrange their reading, analyze it in real-time, and assess their progress through reading assignments. Students can understand what particular tactics are and when and how to apply them in conjunction with metacognitive strategies.

2.2. Cognitive strategies

In their study of the same year, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) showed that cognitive strategies are more directly relevant to individual learning tasks and require direct handling or learning materials' transformation. Notwithstanding, such cognitive strategies may be limited to applying to specific task types in learning activities. Typical strategies discussed in cognitive classifications for reading skills are:

The top-down approach has to do with figuring out what reading passages are trying to say. According to Liu (2010), students used their prior knowledge to infer the meaning of texts. Additionally, students use this method to draw conclusions, understand the key concepts of sections, or determine the overall aim of texts. In terms of the cognitive process, this strategy is the process of passage in students' minds. According to Sunraprajit (2019), the meaning retrieved from students' background knowledge is confirmed by the identification of letters and words that appear in passages. It means that students take advantage of their background knowledge or experience to comprehend the passage. In fact, students' guessing and background knowledge play an important role in this kind of strategy. Guessing, making efforts to interpret the meaning, and self-monitoring passages are useful methods when applying this strategy.

The bottom-up strategy is considered a decoding process for building meaning at the bottom (Jose, 2022). Students start decoding letters, words, and syntactic features, and then they will build the meaning of the texts. For this kind of strategy, students' background knowledge is completely ignored. Furthermore, Nadea et al. (2022) defined this strategy as a data-processing device to arrange linguistic signals together. This strategy also concentrates on individual words, ignoring grammatical features and repeated reading.

2.3. Socio-affective strategies

Finally, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) defined socio-affective strategies as a broad grouping that

involves either interaction with another person or ideational control over effect. The strategies and their definitions are illustrated as follows:

1. Clarifying by questioning: using the teacher or friends' supplementary explanations, rephrasing, examples, or verification.

2. Cooperation: Collaborating with friends in dealing with problems, collecting information, inspecting learning assignments, creating language activities, or obtaining feedback on oral or written performance.

3. Self-talk: enjoying more confidence in task performance and reducing anxiety by using mental techniques.

Socio-affective strategies were separated into social and affective strategies by Bacon (1992). As a social approach, students explain their thoughts to others in order to improve their reading comprehension. Social strategy was dubbed sociocultural strategy by Savignon and Sysoyev (2002). It aids in the learners' understanding of the target language and culture as well as their ability to interact with others. The term "affective strategy" describes one's own self-assurance when reading. Another name for it is a self-motivated approach (Dörnyei, 2003).

3. Methodology

3.1. Research context and participants

The research was carried out at a university in Ho Chi Minh City. The institution has two sub-campuses and a main campus that spans 118 hectares. NLU has evolved into a multidisciplinary institution over its 66-year history. NLU currently offers 62 undergraduate programs, 16 master's degrees, and 12 doctoral programs. The university has roughly 20,000 students enrolled. Over 140 universities, research institutes, and nongovernmental organizations in the United States, Australia, Japan, Taiwan, and different ASEAN nations have formed significant partnerships with NLU, fostering educational exchange programs and collaborative research projects.

In this study, the first-year students (283 students) of the academic year 2022-2023 were

chosen because the population was compatible with the aim of the study. Convenience sampling was employed to draw the students as samples from the six classes. Instead of choosing students randomly from a large population, the researchers decided to use convenience sampling for the purpose of getting information. There are some biases when analyzing the convenience sampling data; however, the survey was trial conducted to make sure the results truly presented the population. Therefore, one hundred and fifty first-year students were recruited for this study. By the time we conducted the research, these students had just finished English 1 at the university. They were familiar with the reading subject and aware of reading strategies. The ages of the participants ranged from 18 to 20, with an average of 18. The information about participants is illustrated in Table 1, with the details below:

Gender: The questionnaire was delivered to 150 students. The number of male students was 76 while that of female students was 74, which accounted for 50.6% and 49.3% respectively. The difference between the gender numbers was not much.

Age: The age of participants varied from 18 to 22. The number of students between the ages of 18-20 was 109 (72.7%), and the rest was 41 students (27.3%).

Years of learning English: Participants with three years of learning English were 8 (5%). The number of participants with seven years of learning English was 131 (87.3%). The last group with more than seven years was 11 (7%).

Hours per week for reading activities at home: Hours per week for reading activities were categorized into three main groups. The first group belonged to less than one hour, with a number of 52 students accounting for 34.7%. The second group spent from 2 to 4 hours a day with a total of 86 students, accounting for 57.3%. The last group of 12 students spent more than 4 hours a week on reading activity, accounting for 8%.

In terms of the semi-structured interview, the number of students was limited to five selected by convenience sampling in reading classes. This selection helped the researcher save time and money (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990).

3.2. Research instruments

With the review of the related literature and the research purposes, the researcher developed a questionnaire of 17 statements to collect quantitative data regarding students' reading strategies.

This questionnaire was prepared in English first and then translated into Vietnamese so

Table 1. Participants' general information

No.	Information No. of respondents	N = 150		
		Percent		
1	Gender	Male	76	50.6%
		Female	74	49.3%
2	Age	18-20	109	72.7%
		20-22	41	27.3%
3	Years of learning English	3 years	8	5%
		7 years	131	87.3%
		More than 7 years	11	7%
4	Hours per week for reading activities at home	Less than 1 hour	52	34.7%
		2-4 hours	86	57.3%
		More than 4 hours	12	8%

that it could be delivered to the Vietnamese students for the actual collection of data. In this study, the questionnaire was designed with questions separated into two parts, A and B: the participants' general information and the reading strategies used by non-English majors. In Part A, students were required to give their demographic information, including their gender, age, years of learning English, and hours per week for reading activities. In Part B, students were asked to answer the question, in which a Likert scale was used to collect the students' responses. Part B focused on finding out the reading strategies used among students. The responses include '5' for Always, '4' for Usually, '3' for Sometimes, '2' for Seldom, and '1' for Never.

The semi-structured interview was chosen because it helped to explore more of the students' insights into their reading strategies. It is a fact that students may take advantage of different reading strategies; therefore, the interview was conducted to make clear the reasons for choosing each strategy for their reading skills. The interview consisted of 12 questions separated into two parts, A and B: the interviewees' background and questions for discussion. Each interview was conducted between the researcher and one student. The semi-structured interview helped the researcher have a clear viewpoint on the reading strategies of the participants. This instrument has some advantages, as follows: focusing on a specific issue and generating data in a short time. Besides, the questions for the interview were translated into Vietnamese. The researcher collected the students' answers in Vietnamese and then translated them into English.

3.3. Data collection procedures

The data collection was conducted from April to the end of June in the academic school year 2022–2023. The questionnaire consisted of about 17 statements to explore the main aspects. It took students 20 minutes in total. The researcher translated the questionnaire into Vietnamese so that students could understand the meanings of the statements. The questionnaire was analyzed

for its qualitative value. The data collected from the questionnaire was calculated using SPSS software.

The interview was conducted with five students who were chosen conveniently from the classes. Each student had twenty-five to thirty minutes to answer the interview questions. The students' answers were recorded for analysis. The information collected from the interview was analyzed using qualitative content analysis.

3.4. Data analysis procedures

In order to examine the findings, the researcher analyzed the quantitative and qualitative data using SPSS and the questionnaire instruments. The value was determined by calculating quantitative data from the surveys using SPSS 22. The summary of the data was provided via descriptive statistics.

For research purposes only, the semi-structured interview questions' qualitative data was recorded and translated into English. The interview responses were examined through the application of content analysis methodology. The content analysis method was used to examine the interviewee's responses. The analysis of interview question data could be done in three steps: familiarization and organization, coding and recoding, and summarization and interpretation. The answers from each student were coded as S1, S2, S3, S4, and S5 in order to make data collection easier.

3.5. Reliability and validity

The semi-structured interview questions were considered by the three experts. They are the colleagues of the researchers at the university. They have been teaching English for more than ten years. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS software. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed by Cronbach's alpha value. The Cronbach's alpha of the whole questionnaire was .948, so the reliability of the questionnaire was high.

In the domain of the questionnaire, the designed items were dependent on the distinctive

construction of the conceptual framework and literature review, and they reflected the variables that were required to be measured. It is related to the main parts and the sub-items given in the conceptual framework. Some of the questions were also tailored to ensure that they could reflect the variables the researcher wanted to measure.

The questions were also gone over by the experts before the semi-structured interview. In addition, the questions were translated into Vietnamese so that the participants could easily understand their meanings. The interview procedure was conducted with great care. At the beginning of the interview, the researchers provided a three-minute overview of the goals of the study. The researchers also gave clarification on the questions in case any participants had any doubts. Following the interview, the researchers reviewed each response to make sure it was accurate. In the end, Word files with the recorded responses' transcriptions were created.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Results

Table 2 shows the reading strategies that students used in reading skills. It could be seen that the frequency of using reading strategies was rather high ($M = 3.71$; $SD = .528$). It means that students used reading strategies rather frequently.

Table 2. Students' reading strategies

No.	Reading strategies	N=150	
		M	SD
1	Meta-cognitive	3.74	.555
2	Cognitive	3.75	.526
3	Socio-affective	3.63	.504
Total		3.71	.528

Note: M: mean; SD: Standard deviation

The data of reading strategies were discussed descriptively as follows:

Metacognitive strategies

As can be seen in Table 3, most students

frequently clarified the objectives of reading periods (item 1: $M = 3.95$; $SD = .519$). Moreover, students admitted that they often prepared to focus on new words and structures in passages (item 2: $M = 3.65$; $SD = .604$). The results further confirmed that students always had clear plans for reading activities and were prepared to pick up specific information from passages (items 3 & 4: $M = 3.78$; $SD = .512$ & $.500$). In addition, students frequently reflected on reading problems that they did not understand (item 5: $M = 3.71$; $SD = .516$). Students sometimes evaluated their understanding by doing reading tasks (item 6: $M = 3.61$; $SD = .680$).

In short, students clarified the learning objectives of reading periods, set up clear plans for reading activities, and were prepared to choose specific information from each passage while reading. Besides, they often reflected on their obstacles while reading, concentrated on new words and structures, and evaluated their understanding.

Regarding the collected data from the interview, most students (65%) admitted that they

Table 3. The frequency of using a meta-cognitive reading strategy

No.	Meta-cognitive reading strategy	N=150	
		M	SD
1	I clarify the objectives of reading periods.	3.95	.519
2	I prepare to focus on new words and structures.	3.65	.604
3	I have a clear plan for how I will read and finish reading tasks.	3.78	.512
4	I prepare to select specific information.	3.78	.500
5	I reflect on problems, such as strange words that I do not understand.	3.71	.516
6	I evaluate my understanding by doing reading tasks.	3.61	.680
Total		3.74	.555

Note: M: mean; SD: Standard deviation

often followed this strategy for reading activities. Besides that, they said that this strategy should be taught before reading because of the following reasons:

“It helps me have specific steps to read the texts or passages carefully.” (S1)

“By applying this strategy, I know how to solve problems in reading, such as focusing on keywords or strange structures.” (S2)

“This strategy reminds me of the objectives of lessons, and I always keep in mind to follow reading periods efficiently.” (S3)

Cognitive strategies

Cognitive strategies were the most frequently used by students at NLU ($M = 3.75$; $SD = .526$). As can be noticed in Table 4, students always took notes of difficult and strange words in passages (item 7: $M = 3.74$; $SD = .510$). In addition, they sometimes guessed the meanings of words by connecting them with the passages (item 8: $M = 3.55$; $SD = .473$). Furthermore, they often made efforts to understand each word in passages (item 9: $M = 3.73$; $SD = .600$). Besides, they always focused on keywords and read in detail for information (item 10: $M = 3.90$; $SD = .560$). Finally, they frequently evaluated their understanding by doing reading tasks (item 11: $M = 3.90$; $SD = .560$).

In summary, students used cognitive reading strategies very frequently while reading. They usually checked their understanding, concentrated on keywords, and tried to guess the meaning. Besides that, they often connected the new words with the titles of passages or sentences for understanding.

Concerning the collected data from the interview, 80% of students said that it was useful to apply this strategy for reading activities. Besides that, they claimed that this strategy was the most important for reading texts and should be instructed carefully by teachers for the following reasons:

“Cognitive strategy helps me recognize the main ideas of passages easily.” (S1)

“It is the most important strategy for my reading skills. It is because I often checked my

Table 4. The frequency of using a cognitive reading strategy

No.	Cognitive reading strategy	N=150	
		M	SD
7	I take notes of difficult and strange words in passages.	3.74	.510
8	I guess the meanings of words by connecting them with the titles or sentences inside passages.	3.55	.473
9	I try to understand each word in the passages.	3.73	.600
10	I focus on keywords and then read in detail for information.	3.85	.490
11	I evaluate my understanding by doing reading tasks.	3.90	.560
Total		3.75	.526

Note: M: mean; SD: Standard deviation

understanding after each passage by doing tasks with my classmates.” (S2)

“It was so meaningful for me because I know how to take notes of keywords and guess their meanings after my teachers give me specific instructions.” (S3)

“I accumulate more essential words by building a bank of words in passages.” (S5)

Socio-affective strategy

Socio-affective strategy was the least used by students ($M = 3.63$; $SD = .504$). As can be seen in Table 5, students frequently asked their teachers questions when they faced difficulties in reading (item 12: $M = 3.58$; $SD = .507$). Besides that, they tried to work and share answers with their classmates (items 13 & 14: $M = 3.62$ & 3.72 ; $SD = .419$ & $.401$). Furthermore, students often asked teachers to give comments on their reading skills (item 15: $M = 3.67$; $SD = .601$). Besides that, students also did their best to focus on passages (item 16: $M = 3.71$; $SD = .409$). Last but not least, students often relaxed their minds while reading texts or doing reading tasks (item 17: $M = 3.47$; $SD = .688$).

In a word, students used a socio-affective reading strategy while reading. They often checked their answers with classmates and concentrated while they were reading. In addition, they also usually asked teachers for comments and explanations when they had difficulties. What is more, they often worked with their friends and kept their minds relaxed when they were reading texts.

Table 5. The frequency of using a socio-affective reading strategy

No.	Socio-affective reading strategy	N=150	
		M	SD
12	I ask my teachers when I have difficulties in reading.	3.58	.507
13	My classmates and I often read passages together.	3.62	.419
14	I check the answers with my classmates.	3.72	.401
15	I ask teachers to give comments on my reading skills.	3.67	.601
16	I try to concentrate when I am reading texts.	3.71	.409
17	I relax my mind when I read texts or do reading tasks.	3.47	.688
Total		3.63	.504

Note: M: mean; SD: Standard deviation

Concerning the collected data from the interview, 43.5% of students also agreed that it was essential to apply this strategy when they were reading texts. Students said that it is necessary to teach this strategy because of the following reasons:

“I felt more confident to read and share exercises with friends thanks to teachers’ comments.” (S1)

“I feel relaxed to focus on passages even though there are distractions.” (S2)

“Whenever I need support to explain difficult or strange words, I hope to see my teachers and classmates immediately.” (S3)

“I try to feel comfortable and focus on texts while reading. I can keep information longer if I have a relaxing mind.” (S4)

“Sharing answers makes me feel relaxed; moreover, I find reading periods interesting and comfortable.” (S5)

4.2. Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that NLU students used different reading strategies, which include metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective strategies rather frequently. The cognitive reading strategies were used at the highest level (M = 3.75). The following reading strategies were metacognitive and socio-affective, with mean scores of 3.74 and 3.63, respectively.

In terms of metacognitive reading strategies, the findings of this study were consistent with those of O’Malley and Chamot (1990), who carefully described the process of metacognition. In fact, the study showed that students had clear objectives and plans for reading activities. Besides, they had careful preparation for their reading comprehension. These findings were in line with Elmekawy (2014), who showed that students had specific strategies for reading subjects, such as planning, monitoring, and evaluating their reading. Besides, the findings were partially confirmed by Jaengsaengthong (2007), Albazi and Shukari (2016), and Thuy (2021). These previous studies confirmed that metacognitive reading strategies were used at a moderate level. It could be said that NLU students were aware of metacognitive strategies in reading comprehension. They tried to accumulate the necessary reading skills through the use of this strategy. In reality, thanks to self-preparation, they became confident and active in reading activities.

Regarding cognitive reading strategies, the findings of this study proved that this strategy was the most frequently used by NLU students. It was consistent with Banditvilai (2020), Ghafournia (2021), and Par (2021). Furthermore, it was partially supported by O’Malley and

Chamot (1990), who defined that this strategy was directly related to individual learning tasks. In fact, NLU students efficiently applied this strategy to their reading comprehension. NLU students were more independent in their learning styles. They formulated learning habits such as taking notes of difficult and strange words and trying to understand them.

With regard to socio-affective reading strategies, the findings were completely consistent with those of O'Malley and Chamot (1990), who illustrated this strategy in detail. It showed that students at NLU had effective ways of comprehending their reading skills by clarifying questions with teachers, cooperating with classmates, and becoming enjoyable with their reading skills. Although this strategy was used at a moderate level, students realized the importance of this strategy for their reading comprehension (Mulatu & Regassa, 2022).

Overall, this study's data confirmed the reading strategies used by the students. Even though the frequency of each strategy varied, the results demonstrated that students consistently made an effort to utilize reading strategies in order to enhance their reading abilities and successfully complete a variety of reading assignments.

5. Conclusion

This study reveals that non-English majors frequently used reading strategies to improve their reading skills. Students' use of reading strategies included metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective.

Every reading strategy was applied in a distinct way. Students utilized the cognitive reading strategy the most out of all the tactics. There was a moderate utilization of both metacognitive and socio-affective reading strategies. The results, however, demonstrated that the majority of students used these strategies to improve their reading skills. Students usually organized their reading and followed precise stages while using a metacognitive reading strategy. In terms of cognitive strategy, students consistently attempted to make notes and infer the meaning of the passages' keywords. Regarding the socio-affective reading strategy, students consistently

collaborated with peers, discussed issues with teachers, and tried to relax during reading periods.

6. Implications

Several implications were made based on the findings. First and foremost, the university's board of deans ought to think about giving students access to an active learning environment. Building well-equipped libraries or reading rooms should be a priority in order to provide students with opportunities to advance their literacy. They also need to plan conferences to help English teachers advance their pedagogical practices.

Secondly, English teachers should pay attention to building an attractive learning environment by choosing suitable reading passages that can motivate the students. Equally important, the teachers should provide students with the linguistic knowledge they need. They should instruct students to pay attention to grammar structures, vocabulary, cultural backgrounds, and reading strategies. Furthermore, feedback and comments are really essential. Teachers should consider choosing appropriate words to evaluate or give comments on students' performance. Careful feedback and comments should be produced more frequently during reading periods.

Finally, students should acquire the necessary comprehension of vocabulary, grammar structures, and reading strategies and learn more from texts. Besides, students should practice reading strategies frequently. In addition, students should form positive learning habits so that they can solve questions from the texts. More importantly, these habits will force them to improve their reading skills and motivate them during reading periods.

7. Limitations

There are still certain restrictions on this study. To start with, the study only included freshmen as participants. It is advised that participants be from various academic years in order to increase the validity of the results. Second, because the study was limited to one NLU site, it was unable to provide a comprehensive view of the subject

matter. Thirdly, the participants struggled to comprehend the questions posed in the survey. The researcher was unable to provide participants with clarification or assistance with the questionnaires if they believed that the questions were confusing. As a result, the information obtained from the questionnaire might not fairly reflect the participants' viewpoints.

8. Recommendations for further research

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In the event that more research pertinent to this work needs to be done, it is advised that a sizable participant pool be used. This can greatly help to paint a clearer and better image of the research. Moreover, conducting interviews for the study with both teachers and students would increase validity and reliability. These participants provide valuable insights into the study for the researchers.

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