



EFL Teacher’s Instructions in Implementing MARSİ to Enhance Students' Reading Strategies

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ABSTRACT

Reading comprehension is an essential skill in EFL learning, and students need appropriate reading strategies to support their understanding of texts. However, limited studies have examined how teachers implement metacognitive reading strategies during classroom instruction and how these strategies relate to students’ reading behavior. This study investigated the implementation of MARSİ-based reading strategies in an EFL classroom and explored the relationship between teacher instruction and students’ reported reading strategies across the stages of the Genre-Based Approach (GBA). A descriptive qualitative design was employed involving one English teacher and eleventh-grade students in an advanced English class. Data were collected through lesson plan analysis, classroom observation, teacher interviews, and students’ questionnaire adapted from the MARSİ framework. The data were analyzed based on the three MARSİ categories: Global Reading Strategies (GRS), Problem-Solving Strategies (PSS), and Support Reading Strategies (SRS). The findings revealed that although MARSİ-based strategies were not explicitly stated in the lesson plan, the teacher implemented all three categories during classroom instruction. Problem-Solving Strategies and Support Reading Strategies appeared more frequently during reading activities. Students also reported using strategies that were commonly reinforced by the teacher, such as rereading difficult sections, taking notes, identifying important information, and using dictionaries to understand unfamiliar words. These findings indicate that teacher instruction plays an important role in fostering students’ strategic reading behavior and metacognitive awareness in EFL classrooms. The study suggests that integrating metacognitive reading strategies into reading instruction may help students develop more effective and independent reading practices.

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most important skills for learning English as a foreign language (EFL) is reading, because it helps students learn new things, broaden their knowledge, and improve their academic performance. However, reading

comprehension is more than just word decoding and sentence translation. Throughout the reading process, readers must actively create meaning, make connections between concepts, assess their comprehension, and use the proper techniques. Many EFL students still have difficulty understanding English texts, especially in recognizing key concepts, interpreting meanings, making connections between ideas, and comprehending new vocabulary. These challenges frequently result from students concentrating on word-by-word translation rather than strategically engaging with the text. As a result, this habit leaves students heavily reliant on their teachers for meaning-making, with little sense of how to take charge of their own reading comprehension.

Previous research has found that EFL learners' reading difficulties are closely related to a lack of strategy knowledge and insufficient instructional direction. According to Pandiangan et al. (2021), teachers employ a variety of techniques in teaching reading, including scanning, skimming, active reading, speed reading, and SQ3R. However, the study also highlighted that teachers may not always offer strategies that are appropriate for students' needs and skills, thus not all students can comprehend and use these strategies effectively. In addition, Al-Kiyumi et al. (2021) explained that many EFL learners struggle with reading comprehension due to a lack of metacognitive strategies such as self-planning, self-monitoring, and self-evaluating. These findings show that students' reading comprehension issues are impacted not just by students' linguistic skills but also their awareness of and application of reading strategies, as well as teachers' instructional practices in the classroom.

Research on reading comprehension has extensively examined the importance of reading strategies. According to Akhmetova et al. (2022), when reading text, reading strategies are considered tools that help readers understand, process, and overcome comprehension because they assist readers in processing information and deriving meaning from texts. Furthermore, readers' awareness of and control over their own thinking processes while reading are explicitly referred to as metacognitive reading strategies. Mokhtari et al. (2018) explain that metacognitive awareness plays an important role in distinguishing skilled readers from less skilled readers because they consciously plan, monitor, and evaluate their comprehension processes while reading. While less proficient readers often struggle to assess their comprehension effectively, proficient readers frequently analyze the text, activate prior knowledge, reread difficult sections, adjust their reading speed, and use tools to enhance their comprehension.

To examine readers' metacognitive awareness of reading strategies, Mokhtari et al. (2018) developed the Metacognitive Awareness Reading

Strategies Inventory (MARSI), which is categorized into three main groups: Global Reading Strategies, Problem-Solving Reading Strategies, and Support Reading Strategies. Global Reading Strategies involve planning and previewing. Problem-Solving Reading Strategies refer to strategies used when readers encounter difficulties during reading. Meanwhile, Support Reading Strategies involve the use of external tools (Mokhtari et al., 2018).

Teachers play a crucial role in helping students develop these reading strategies in the classroom. Teachers' instruction refers to how educators design lessons, explain tasks, and assist students in their learning process. According to Harmer (2001), effective instruction should be as simple and logical as possible so that students can easily understand what is expected of them to do. Teachers are expected to help students use the appropriate skills to comprehend texts correctly, in addition to providing reading resources and assignments. Consequently, teachers' instructional methods play a vital role in encouraging students to read strategically and develop their independent reading skills.

Furthermore, the Genre-Based Approach (GBA), which emphasizes learning strategies consisting of Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF), Modeling of the Text (MOT), Joint Construction of the Text (JCOT), and Independent Construction of the Text (ICOT). According to Hyland (2004), each stage of GBA serves different instructional purposes and involves different teacher and learner roles during classroom interaction. Teachers can gradually support students in becoming more independent readers by helping them build their knowledge through these stages. Moreover, according to Pangesti Wibowo & Lengkanawati (2024), GBA places strong emphasis on explicit instruction, where teachers explain the goals and objectives of classroom activities to foster student understanding and participation. As a result, GBA offers a suitable framework for analyzing how teachers implement reading strategies in classroom instructions.

Despite the growing number of studies on reading strategies and metacognitive awareness, several gaps remain. Previous studies have generally concentrated on students' use of reading strategies, rather than on teachers' implementation of these strategies in classroom instruction. Furthermore, MARSI is frequently used as a questionnaire tool rather than as an analytical framework for analyzing instructional strategies. Research exploring the relationship between teachers' instructional practices and students' reported strategies is also limited, particularly in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction in Indonesian high schools and across all stages of the Genre-Based Approach. By integrating lesson plan analysis, classroom observation, teacher interviews, and students' questionnaires, this study is

expected to provide a deeper understanding of the implementation of metacognitive reading strategies in the EFL classroom and contribute to the development of more effective reading practices.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to investigate how an EFL teacher implemented MARSİ-based reading strategies during reading instruction. Creswell (2018) explain that qualitative research is used to explore and understand social or human problems through data in the form of texts and images. The study was conducted at SMA Negeri 13 Semarang involving one English teacher and eleventh-grade students as the participants. The participants were selected purposively because they were considered relevant to the objectives of the research and capable of providing meaningful data related to reading strategy instruction.

The data of this study consisted of lesson plans, classroom observations, teacher interviews, and students' questionnaires adapted from the MARSİ-R framework proposed by Mokhtari et al. (2018). The lesson plans were analyzed to identify whether metacognitive reading strategies were explicitly or implicitly integrated into the instructional design and classroom activities. The analysis focused on the implementation of reading strategies across the stages of the Genre-Based Approach (GBA), including Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF), Modeling of the Text (MOT), Joint Construction of the Text (JCOT), and Independent Construction of the Text (ICOT). Classroom observations were conducted to examine the teacher's instructional practices and verbal instructions related to Global Reading Strategies (GRS), Problem-Solving Strategies (PSS), and Support Reading Strategies (SRS) during reading activities. Observation data were supported by field notes, classroom recordings, and examples of teacher instructions during the lesson. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the teacher to explore the reasons behind the use of certain instructional strategies and the challenges encountered during reading instruction. Meanwhile, the questionnaire was distributed through Google Forms to identify students' reported reading strategies and their metacognitive awareness during reading activities. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended statements adapted from the MARSİ categories to examine the frequency of students' strategy use while reading English texts.

Data analysis was conducted through familiarization, categorization, and interpretation. According to Mezmir (2020), qualitative data analysis involves identifying and interpreting patterns and meanings from qualitative data. The collected data were repeatedly reviewed to gain a deeper understanding of the

classroom interactions and instructional practices. The data were then categorized based on MARSİ classifications, instructional stages, and students' reported strategies to identify patterns related to the implementation of metacognitive reading strategies.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of this research are presented based on four sources of data, namely lesson plan analysis, classroom observation, teacher interviews, and students' questionnaires. The analysis focused on identifying how MARSİ-based reading strategies were implemented during reading instruction and how those strategies were reflected in students' reported reading behavior. According to Mokhtari et al. (2018) metacognitive reading strategies are categorized into Global Reading Strategies (GRS), Problem-Solving Strategies (PSS), and Support Reading Strategies (SRS), which help readers plan, monitor, and support their comprehension processes. Therefore, the discussion of the findings is organized based on those categories and their implementation across the stages of the Genre-Based Approach (GBA), including Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF), Modeling of the Text (MOT), Joint Construction of the Text (JCOT), and Independent Construction of the Text (ICOT).

Several previous studies have emphasized the importance of metacognitive reading strategies in improving students' reading comprehension and reading awareness. Abd Halim et al. (2022) reported that students with higher metacognitive awareness tended to demonstrate better reading comprehension performance, particularly in the use of Problem-Solving Strategies. Similarly, Manurung et al. (2023) found that EFL students most frequently used Problem-Solving Strategies such as rereading difficult parts, slowing down while reading, and guessing unfamiliar words from context. These findings are relevant to the present research because similar patterns also appeared during classroom observations and students' questionnaire responses. In addition, previous studies mostly focused on students' awareness and frequency of reading strategy use, while limited research explored how teachers implemented those strategies during classroom interaction. Therefore, this section discusses not only students' reported reading strategies but also how teacher instructions reflected MARSİ categories during reading activities.

MARSİ Distribution Across GBA Stages

The lesson plan indicates that the instructional design does not specifically mention MARSİ-based reading strategies. Rather than directly teaching metacognitive strategies, the lesson plan focused more on classroom activities and task completion. Some activities, particularly the Global Reading Strategy

(GRS), subtly reflect the MARSIs categories proposed by Mokhtari et al. (2018). During the Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF) phase, the teacher employed guiding questions before students read the text, which is one of the indentified strategy. In addition to encouraging students to anticipate and make connections between concepts related to the subject before reading, these questions are designed to draw on their prior knowledge.

Guiding Questions in the BKOF Stage of the Lesson Plan.

Pertemuan 2 (2 JP)

Pertanyaan Pemantik

1. *When is the greatest time to post anything on social media?*
2. *What kind of content or information should we post on social media?*

In order to stimulate students’ prior knowledge of the topic of the text, the teacher asked a number of guiding questions at the beginning of the lesson. Because students were encouraged to reflect on the topic before reading and to make connections between the new material and their prior knowledge, this activity reflects Global Reading Strategies. However, the lesson plan showed an uneven distribution of MARSIs categories, as Problem-Solving Strategies and Support Reading Strategies were not clearly emphasized in the instructional planning. This finding implies that although metacognitive reading strategies are subtly represented in classroom activities, their integration into the lesson plan was still limited and not systematically structured across all stages of the Genre-Based Approach.

Teacher’s Implementation of MARSIs-based Strategies

The classroom observation revealed that the teacher implemented various MARSIs categories during the reading lesson across the stages of the Genre-Based Approach. According to Mokhtari et al. (2018), MARSIs categorizes metacognitive reading strategies into three categories: Global Reading Strategies (GRS), Problem-Solving Strategies (PSS), and Support Reading Strategies (SRS). These strategies help readers organize, monitor, and support their reading comprehension process. The three MARSIs categories were reflected in the teacher’s instructions during classroom observations, although the implementation varied across the instructional stages. Table 1 shows examples of the teacher’s instruction observed during reading lessons.

Table 1.

Teacher’s Implementation of MARSIs during Reading Instruction

GBA Stage	MARSIs Category	Teacher’s Instruction	Interpretation
BKOF	GRS	“Do you still remember hortatory exposition text?”	Activating Prior Knowledge

MOT	GRS	"What do you think this text is about?"	Predicting Text Content
MOT	SRS	"If you have difficulties, you can use a dictionary to look up the meaning."	Using a dictionary
MOT	SRS	"You can find difficult words and write them down in your notebook."	Taking notes
ICOT	GRS	"Make sure to find the issues or something that will convince you."	Setting a purpose
ICOT	PSS	"If you still don't understand, you can read it slowly."	Adjusting reading speed
ICOT	PSS	"Have you reread the text?"	Rereading difficult parts
ICOT	PSS	"Try to focus on the part you think is difficult."	Focusing more carefully
ICOT	SRS	"Write down in your notebook the things you think are important."	Taking notes

As shown in Table 1, the teacher implemented all three categories of MARSI throughout the reading lesson, although the distribution of the strategies differed across the GBA stages. During the BKOF stage, the teacher mainly implemented Global Reading Strategies (GRS) by activating students' prior knowledge and encouraging them to predict the topic before reading. This finding was supported by the interview in which the teacher explained that he usually asked students to guess the topic and connected the text with students' interests and urban legends to help students relate to the reading material. During the MOT stage, Support Reading Strategies (SRS) became more dominant through activities such as using dictionaries and taking notes while reading. The teacher also stated in the interview that note-taking was frequently used because students worked with borrowed books that could not be written on. Reading strategy instruction could boost reading strategy use and reading comprehension (Li et al., 2022). Meanwhile, during the ICOT stage, Problem-Solving Strategies (PSS) appeared more frequently, especially when students found difficulties in understanding the text. These findings suggest that the teacher's instructional choices across the

GBA stages were purposeful and responsive to the classroom condition. The teacher's role as a facilitator who adjusted strategies based on students' needs reflects the idea of differentiated instruction in the EFL classroom, where instructional strategies should accommodate students' learning conditions and support comprehension development (Mardhatillah & Suharyadi, 2023).

Students' Reported Reading Strategies

The data revealed varied patterns in students' perceived use of reading strategies across the three MARS categories.

Table 2.

Global Reading Strategies (GRS)

Strategy	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Always (5)	Level
Read the title first	0.0%	0.0%	6.5%	22.6%	71%	High
Predict content	3.2%	6.5%	41.9%	29.0%	19.4%	High
Activate prior knowledge	3.2%	12.9%	41.9%	22.6%	19.4%	Medium
Set a reading purpose	0.0%	6.5%	48.4%	32.3%	12.9%	High

Table 2 presents the Global Reading Strategies. Reading the title before engaging with the text was the most consistently applied strategy, with 71% of students always doing so. This aligned with what (Mokhtari et al., 2018) described as an awareness of Global Reading Strategies in general rather than those consistently linked to specific contexts, where students may recognize certain strategies without regularly applying them while reading.

Table 3.

Problem-Solving Strategies (PSS)

Strategy	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Always (5)	Level
Reread difficult parts	0.0%	9.7%	9.7%	35.5%	45.2%	High
Slow down when difficult	0.0%	0.0%	9.7%	45.2%	45.2%	High
Guess word meaning	0.0%	0.0%	29%	38.7%	32.3%	High
Focus on challenging text	0.0%	3.2%	9.7%	38.7%	48.4%	High

Regarding Problem-Solving Strategies, students demonstrated the highest levels of awareness across all four items. The majority of students reported always or often focusing on challenging text (87.1%), slowing down when the text is difficult (90.4%), rereading difficult parts (80.7%), and guessing word meaning from context (71%), indicating a persistent high dependence during reading. This result is in line with Rahman (2020) findings that the most

commonly perceived strategies among EFL learners are Problem-Solving Strategies, since non-native readers usually rely on localized strategies while processing difficult texts.

Table 4.
Support Reading Strategies (SRS)

Strategy	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Often (4)	Always (5)	Level
Underline/highlight	0.0%	19.4%	29%	22.6%	29%	High
Take notes	0.0%	16.1%	45.2%	16.1%	22.6%	Medium
Use dictionary	0.0%	6.5%	29%	38.7%	25.8%	High
Summarize	0.0%	22.6%	35.5%	25.8%	16.1%	Medium

As for Support Reading Strategies on Table 4, dictionary use was the most frequently applied, with 64.5% of students often or always using this strategy. The remaining strategies suggest that these strategies are underutilized among students. These findings are aligned with previous studies indicating that EFL learners tend to favor Problem-Solving Strategies over Global and Support Strategies in their reading practices (He et al., 2023; Mokhtari et al., 2018; Rahman, 2020).

Discussion

This study examined the distribution and implementation of MARSIS within a GBA and explored students' reported use of reading strategies based on three categories of MARSIS: Global Reading Strategies (GRS), Problem-Solving Strategies (PSS), and Support Reading Strategies (SRS). The findings revealed three principal patterns. First, the lesson plan did not systematically integrate all three MARSIS categories, with GRS being the most visibly represented in the instructional planning phase (guiding questions). Second, the classroom observation demonstrated that the teacher implemented all three MARSIS categories across the GBA stages, though the distribution was uneven. GRS was predominant during the Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF) stage, SRS was more apparent during the Modelling of Text (MOT) stage, and PSS became most prominent during the Independent Construction of the Text (ICOT) stage. The interviews also showed that the teacher purposefully chose particular strategies to help students connect with the reading content and overcome comprehension difficulties. Third, students' reported strategy use indicated a consistently high reliance on PSS, moderate-to-high engagement with GRS, and comparatively lower utilization of SRS strategies. This points to a connection between students' reported reading strategies and teachers' instruction, showing that students tended to apply strategies that were frequently taught and reinforced during classroom instruction.

Metacognitive reading strategies have been widely recognized as important in supporting students' reading comprehension and strategic reading behaviour in the EFL classroom. Reading instruction that incorporates reading strategies and promotes strategic reading behaviour is conducive and helpful in the development of students' academic reading ability (Yapp et al., 2023). Students frequently applied strategies such as rereading difficult parts, slowing down while reading, taking notes, and using a dictionary, particularly after those strategies were repeatedly implemented through teacher instruction during classroom activities. This condition also reflects He et al. (2023), who stated that proficient readers are more conscious about how reading strategies are used. Khellab et al. (2022) argued that strategic readers can organize, monitor, and evaluate their reading performance according to their involvement in practicing metacognitive strategies. This could be seen in how students in this study tended to use Problem-Solving Strategies and Support Reading Strategies when facing difficulties during reading activities. Unlike many previous studies that mainly focused on students' awareness of reading strategies, this study specifically examined how MARSI was implemented by the teacher during classroom instructions. These conditions indicate that teacher instruction may encourage students to become more independent readers in the EFL classroom.

The implementation of MARSI implies that teacher instruction plays a crucial role in helping students develop metacognitive awareness and strategic reading in EFL classrooms. Students were encouraged to monitor and support their own comprehension throughout reading activities by utilizing a dictionary, taking notes, rereading difficult parts, and making predictions about the text's content. The limited use of Support Reading Strategies points to the necessity for more structured instruction in the classroom to enhance SRS engagement. These circumstances suggest that lesson plan and classroom instruction should be integrated with metacognitive reading strategies more systematically, especially across all phases of the Genre-Based Approach. Additionally, clear and consistent strategy instruction may help students become more independent, active, and strategic readers.

The dominance of Problem-Solving Strategies may be influenced by the difficulty level of reading tasks in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction. Students' interest in English is also relatively low, so they are not familiar with complex texts, where students require strategies that can be applied directly to overcome comprehension difficulties during reading activities. Strategies such as rereading difficult parts, slowing down while reading, and focusing more carefully on confusing sections were frequently used because they helped students process the text more effectively. In addition, the teacher also

encouraged students to take notes to identify key or important information from the text and use dictionaries when they found unfamiliar words. These classroom practices indicate that metacognitive strategies naturally emerged through classroom interaction and guided reading activities. Therefore, teachers may strengthen the implementation of MARSIS to help students become more aware of the strategies they use during reading processes.

CONCLUSION

The implementation of MARSIS-based reading strategies in the EFL classroom demonstrated that metacognitive reading strategies were reflected in both classroom instruction and students' reported reading strategies, despite the strategies not always being explicitly stated in the lesson plan. Problem-Solving Strategies and Support Reading Strategies appeared more frequently during reading activities, particularly when students faced comprehension difficulties. The correlation between teacher instruction and students' reported strategies indicated that students were more likely to apply strategies that were reinforced through classroom interactions. This highlights the important role of teacher instruction in enhancing students' metacognitive awareness and strategic reading in EFL learning contexts.

This research contributes to the existing literature by examining MARSIS not only as a questionnaire instrument to measure students' metacognitive awareness, but also as an analytical framework to investigate teachers' reading strategy implementation in the classroom. By integrating MARSIS with GBA, it aims to enhance understanding of metacognitive reading strategies throughout various instructional stages in the EFL classroom. However, this research was limited to one classroom context and involved a relatively small number of participants. Future research may investigate metacognitive reading strategy instruction across diverse educational contexts and teaching methods to gain a more comprehensive understanding of its implementation in EFL settings.

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