

Online systematic guided reading strategies to improve EFL students' reading performance

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Abstract

The present study aims to examine the effects of incorporating online systematic guided reading strategies (SGRS) on the reading performance of English as a foreign language (EFL) learners. The study employed a mixed-method approach with a one-group pre-test and post-test design. The participants were recruited from second-year students majoring in English language. The quantitative data were subjected to statistical analysis using a t-test, while the qualitative data were analyzed and interpreted based on the participants' responses to open-ended survey questions and in-depth interviews regarding the use of online SGRS. The findings indicate that the implementation of SGRS significantly improved the reading performance of EFL students ($p < 0.05$). The study's implications for EFL teaching and research on learners' reading competence are also discussed in depth.

Key words: Systematic guided reading strategies, reading performance, English written texts, EFL Students

Introduction

The proliferation of information communication technology (ICT) has facilitated the dissemination of novel pedagogical methodologies, including online teaching strategies. Notably, the COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated the adoption of remote teaching and learning practices to an unprecedented extent. This phenomenon has expanded the conceptualization of reading literacy, in part due to the widespread utilization of online learning platforms. (Carrillo & Flores, 2020). Given the emergence of innovative reading comprehension strategies, which facilitate expedited information retrieval from texts, it is necessary to consider their integration into contemporary reading instruction (Fathi & Shirazizadeh, 2020; Zhang et al., 2019). In the digital age, reading proficiency necessitates a range of competencies, including perusing, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information, all of which are essential for enhancing reading performance (Manu et al., 2021; Wijaya, 2022). (According to a report published by the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), students' reading proficiency rates are markedly lower compared to their abilities in mathematics and pure sciences (Vázquez-Cano et al., 2020). As a remedial measure, the Indonesian government is actively encouraging teachers to enhance students' reading abilities through research, with the ultimate objective of addressing this issue.

Systematic Guided Reading Strategies (SGRS), which refer to a set of guidelines designed to facilitate reading comprehension and are commonly utilized in educational instruction, are the subject of active discourse across various print and electronic media platforms (Ramsa & Rawian, 2021). Effective implementation of suitable reading strategies represents a key approach to enhancing learners' reading proficiency in English as a Foreign Language (EFL). In comparison to the other three language skills (e.g., listening, speaking, and writing), reading has been subjected to the most comprehensive and in-depth analysis by language scholars. (Dong et al., 2022; Handayani et al., 2019). Several previous studies on reading strategies have identified systematic and targeted employment of these techniques as a means of enhancing reading proficiency. Thus, it is anticipated that the implementation of these

strategies will yield improvements in reading performance (LI, 2022; Widawati Tedjo et al., 2022). Reading is an interactive process where readers engage with written materials, actively constructing their own interpretations of the intended meaning conveyed by the author (Ascenzi-Moreno & Quiñones, 2020; Ramsa & Rawian, 2021).

Reading strategies are frequently employed to facilitate comprehension among readers experiencing difficulties in understanding written materials. Through the application of guided reading practices, students can acquire the necessary skills to enhance their comprehension abilities and develop a heightened awareness of the functional aspects of the text (Ascenzi-Moreno & Quiñones, 2020). In the guided reading process, educators must initially demonstrate the requisite "tips and tricks" before providing continuous assistance to enable students to become self-sufficient readers and writers (Ascenzi-Moreno & Quiñones, 2020; Ling & Yamat, 2020). To ensure optimal efficacy, the implementation of systematic reading strategies for learners experiencing challenges in reading comprehension must be carefully modeled and practically demonstrated. Consequently, guided reading techniques represent valuable instructional resources for enhancing students' reading comprehension abilities (Fathi & Shirazizadeh, 2020; Yapp et al., 2021). To expedite the learning process and elevate literacy, pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading strategies are effectively integrated (Ramsa & Rawian, 2021, 2021).

Prior research pertinent to this inquiry indicates that the reader's utilization of strategies substantially impacts reading comprehension. Proficient readers employ a diverse range of strategic tactics, including but not limited to previewing the text (Dong et al., 2022), formulating objectives, generating predictions, appraising comprehension, posing inquiries, and evaluating textual content are fundamental components of proficient reading strategies (Ramsa & Rawian, 2021, 2021; Yapp et al., 2021; Yulia & Sulisty, 2019). Furthermore, proficient readers demonstrate the ability to establish various interconnections within texts (Alek, 2019). Combining background knowledge with textual clues can improve comprehension (Singh et al., 2021). Similarly, other scholars concur that these tactics are indispensable for comprehending written works (Capodiecì et al., 2020; Ramsa & Rawian, 2021).

In the contemporary digital age, it remains imperative to give earnest consideration to the selection and identification of suitable approaches and techniques to enhance the proficiency of university students, particularly those pursuing EFL or pre-service teaching, in the comprehension of written materials, including scientific and authentic texts employed in their learning pursuits. Nevertheless, the adeptness in choosing applicable strategies and methods for the comprehension of the diverse range of reading materials encountered during the course of study remains a challenge for some students. Moreover, the students' insufficient resilience in grappling with the complexities presented by diverse reading texts is another impediment. Additionally, inconsistency in the implementation of strategies and methods in the pursuit of comprehension can exacerbate the situation. These difficulties may be attributed to a variety of factors, including the allure of experimenting with multiple strategies and learning media that may be unsuitable for instructional materials).

Within this framework, it is essential that students cultivate robust reading competencies to attain a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. The implementation of this strategy has the potential to engender pedagogical prospects and heighten students' reading proficiency, whether in group or individual settings. Furthermore, this reading strategy can augment students' interactions and foster a heightened inquisitiveness in response to instructors' queries. In an effort to surmount the obstacles associated with advancing EFL students' reading abilities, the authors endeavored to address the following questions.

1. Does the use of the SGRS affect the EFL learners' reading performance of written texts?
2. How do the EFL learners respond to the use of SGRS during online learning in the "new normal" of the COVID-19 pandemic?

Literature review

Reading Performance

The PISA evaluation framework considers reading proficiency as a key determinant of an individual's ability to comprehend, utilize, and contemplate written material with the aim of achieving objectives, enhancing knowledge acquisition, and potentially contributing to social participation (Hall Colby et al., 2020). An individual's capacity to comprehend written texts without soliciting guidance from instructors serves as a metric of teacher efficacy in their pedagogical role. Therefore, reading is regarded as a form of discourse between the author and the reader (Manoharan, 2023).

Scholars have engaged in discourse surrounding the concept of 'reading performance' as it pertains to language acquisition. Individuals who encounter difficulties in reading comprehension can often benefit from the implementation of guided reading strategies (Alek, 2019). During reading activities, readers frequently draw upon their existing knowledge base, referred to as schemata, to facilitate their comprehension of written material. This process of activating prior knowledge is integral to promoting effective comprehension of textual content (Lin, 2019). A prerequisite for successful reading comprehension among students is the attainment of a robust comprehension of the textual material that they are tasked with reading (Fathi & Shirazizadeh, 2020). When reading English texts, students may encounter two primary challenges: (1) comprehending the substance of the text and (2) deciphering how words and phrases are arranged to convey the intended meaning (Coiro & Dobler, 2007; Handayani et al., 2019; Kubanyiova, 2020; Muhamad et al., 2019; Qian, 2002).

Drawing upon the aforementioned viewpoints, it can be inferred that reading performance corresponds to the level of reading comprehension proficiency attained by individuals, as assessed over a given period of time. In the process of reading, readers are able to optimize their prior knowledge to facilitate their understanding of the intended message conveyed by the author within the text. Consequently, teachers should exercise particular care in the design and preparation of reading materials, taking into account their students' current knowledge and comprehension level (Muhyidin A., 2020).

Systematic Guided Reading Strategy

Adopting specific reading strategies can enhance and expedite the process of reading comprehension of written material. The application of methodical guided reading techniques in educational settings can aid both instructors and learners in expanding their knowledge during reading activities and foster a heightened awareness of, and proficiency in, accommodating the diverse needs and backgrounds of students (O'Connor et al., 2019). The authors cited above highlight the necessity of employing a systematic guided reading strategy that involves demonstrating the various reading stages and providing ongoing support to enable students to achieve independent reading proficiency. Such a pedagogical approach imparts an understanding of guided reading practices, thereby enhancing learners' reading comprehension. Integration of pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading tactics has been shown to be efficacious in accelerating learning and promoting literacy. The process of learning to read is underpinned by three key theoretical perspectives, including the 'bottom-up processing' theory that emphasizes the importance of the printed form of a text (Pardede, 2018). Second, the cognitive perspective, also referred to as 'top-down processing,' prioritizes the role of preexisting knowledge over the content of the text on the page (Ramsa & Rawian, 2021). Third, The metacognitive perspective centers

on the reader's ability to control and manipulate the process of comprehending a text, and thus, underscores the importance of active engagement with the text and the reader's cognitive processes while reading (Habók et al., 2019b; Pardede, 2018). Notwithstanding the aforementioned theoretical perspectives, targeted instructional techniques are needed to assist students in constructing a knowledge base that can be applied to unfamiliar reading tasks in subsequent stages (Hamada, 2021; Ramsa & Rawian, 2021). The fundamental techniques of the reading strategy include three distinct stages, namely pre-reading, during-reading, and post-reading (Ling & Yamat, 2020). Pre-reading strategies encompass devising an instructional reading plan, determining optimal reading pace, identifying paragraph topic sentences, and making predictions based on the primary heading, subheadings, and visual aids. Subsequently, the utilization of SGRS warrants consideration of seven pertinent issues, including but not limited to:

- (1) effective promotion of students' literacy development,
- (2) selection of appropriate reading material based on learners' reading levels,
- (3) exposition of key textual concepts through relevant examples or contexts,
- (4) introduction of the text's main ideas using relatable experiences or events,
- (5) active enhancement of students' comprehension,
- (6) sustained student engagement and comprehension improvement through encouraging pre-, during-, and post-reading dialogue, and
- (7) facilitation of readers' active cognitive and affective processes (LI, 2022).

As students connect with books and gain a deeper understanding of the author's message, their cognitive and emotional processes are enriched (Karamalak & Pesina, 2017; Shea & Robert, 2016). The continuous improvement of learners' reading comprehension necessitates the teacher's direct involvement in their development. By closely observing each student's approach to texts, the teacher can modify strategies and text selection based on their reactions, thereby strengthening their requirements and capabilities for achieving greater comprehension mastery. Maximizing students' prior knowledge or schemata when reading written texts facilitates the creation of meaningful connections, thereby aiding in their understanding and mastery of the material (Ramsa & Rawian, 2021).

When applying SGRS for teaching reading comprehension, it is imperative to take into account the learners' requirements, preferences, and the complexity and readability level of the texts selected for curriculum design (Fitriani Siti Sarah et al., 2021).

Method

The present study employed a mixed-methods design, as recommended by Creswell (2012). It attempted to examine the efficacy of the systematic guided reading strategy (SGRS) on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' reading performance. The study utilized a pre-test and post-test design with a single group for the intervention. The data obtained from the participants' responses to the use of online SGRS in teaching and learning were triangulated with the findings of the study. The participants recruited for this study consisted of twenty-eight individuals majoring in English.

The present study utilized both test and non-test instruments to evaluate the effectiveness of systematic guided reading strategy (SGRS) on the reading performance of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. The test instrument, consisting of 40 items, was designed to measure various aspects of reading comprehension, which include:

- (1) identifying the general idea of the text (reading from first to last),
- (2) reading for gist (subject, topic, main idea, purpose, main point),
- (3) identifying main ideas,
- (4) finding implicit meanings,

- (5) concluding implicit meanings,
- (6) interpreting words or sentences' meanings,
- (7) and identifying synonyms and antonyms based on written materials.

The instrument was validated prior to administration to ensure its reliability and validity.

The second measurement tool utilized in this study was a non-test instrument designed to assess participants' attitudes and perceptions toward the use of SGRS. This questionnaire consisted of five items and was developed using a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The use of this scale aimed to obtain a wider range of responses and minimize potential misunderstandings among respondents (Ratna Sari Dewi et al., 2020). The third instrument employed in this study was a semi-structured interview protocol that comprised seven questions.

The data collected from the pre-test, post-test, and questionnaire were classified as quantitative data. On the other hand, qualitative data were gathered through in-depth interviews. To accommodate the participants' communication mode preference, five participants were interviewed via Zoom.

Statistical analysis was employed to analyze the quantitative data using the paired two-sample t-test formula (Creswell, 2012; Jack R. Fraenkel & Wallen., 2009). Meanwhile, the qualitative data was utilized to provide an interpretation for each response obtained from the questions regarding the participants' preference for using SGRS.

Results

After conducting an experiment on fourth-semester EFL pre-service teacher students during the academic year 2021/2022 to assess their understanding of English reading materials based on authentic sources such as those currently discussed in mass media, the research data were collected as follows.

Description of Initial Test Results

The initial performance of the EFL pre-service students' reading is presented in the following table (see Table 1).

Table 1: The students' reading performance of written materials on the pre-test

Score Range	Level	Frequency N=28	Percentage (%)
0%—20%	Very low	-	0
21%—50%	Low	3	10.71
51%—70%	Middle	20	71.42
71%—80%	High	3	10.71
81%—100%	Very high	2	7.14

Table 1 illustrates that the EFL students' reading performance was at a low level before the implementation of the intervention using SGRS. The pre-test results revealed four distinct levels of reading performance among the participants, as shown in the table. Only 7.14% of the students obtained the highest score range of 81-100, whereas 10.71% attained a score range of 21-50, indicating a low level of reading performance. Additionally, only 10.71% achieved a score range of 71-80, which implies a high level of reading performance. The majority of the participants, accounting for 71.42%, obtained scores in the middle level (51-70). Based on these

results, it can be deduced that the EFL students' reading performance prior to the implementation of the intervention was predominantly in the middle level. Table 2 presents the frequency distribution and percentage of EFL students' reading performance after participating in the two-month intervention that employed the SGRS method.

Table 2: The frequency distribution and percentage of EFL students' reading performance after intervention using SGRS

Score Range	Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
0 - 50%	Very low	-	-
51 - 65%	Low	-	-
66 - 70%	Middle	5	23.00
71 - 80%	High	20	65.00
81 - 100%	Very high	3	20.00

Table 2 illustrates that the majority of participants (65%) achieved high scores (70-80), indicating a substantial improvement in their reading performance. Only a small percentage of participants (23%) attained scores in the middle range, while the remaining participants received lower scores. The results indicate that the implementation of SGRS during the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly enhanced EFL students' reading performance. The number of participants who scored in the 70-80 range increased from 3 (10.71%) to 20 (65%). These findings suggest that the use of SGRS in online learning during the pandemic has had a positive impact on EFL students' reading abilities. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the application of SGRS in online learning in the new norm of COVID-19 pandemic has significantly contributed to the improvement of EFL students' reading performance. It can be inferred that the implementation of SGRS in the context of online instruction, which has become ubiquitous in the era of the COVID-19 pandemic, has a discernible impact on the reading performance of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students). A quantitative data analysis was employed to explore the discrepancy difference between the pre-test and post-test scores subsequent to the implementation of online teaching and learning with SGRS. The analysis employed the formula below to calculate the difference scores.

$$t = \frac{\bar{B} - \bar{A}}{\frac{s}{\sqrt{n}}}$$

\bar{B} = average from the post-test is reduced by the pre-test $\frac{\sum B}{n}$

S = standard deviation

N = total participants

The following table depicts the results of the statistical analysis of the test paired with two samples for means.

Table 3: The difference in reading performance between pre-test and post-test

	Post-test	Pre-test
Mean	77.32143	70.8928571
Variance	21.6336	86.8399471
Observations	28	28

Pearson Correlation	0.513524	
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	27	
t Stat	4.253507	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000113	
t Critical one-tail	1.703288	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000226	
t Critical two-tail	2.051831	

Table 3 presents the descriptive statistics of the pre-test and post-test scores of the participants. The mean score of the post-test (77.32) was higher than that of the pre-test (70.89), indicating an improvement in the participants' reading performance. The standard deviation of the post-test (21.63) was lower than that of the pre-test (86.83), which suggests that the scores of the post-test were more consistent than those of the pre-test. The t-value obtained from the statistical analysis was 4.25, which indicates that there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. The p-value of 0.000113 was smaller than the conventional threshold of 0.05, implying that the online teaching approach using SGRS was effective in enhancing the EFL students' reading performance.

Students' responses to learning with SGRS

The participants' responses regarding the use of SGRS were gathered through a questionnaire that employed closed and open-ended questions. The closed questions utilized a Likert scale that ranged from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (4). Table 4 presents the summary of the participants' responses and their corresponding average scores.

Table 4: Students' responses to learning with SGRS

Statements	SD	D	A	SA	N	Average
	%	%	%	%		
1. I felt happy to follow the learning of reading comprehension using Systematic Guided Reading Strategies (SGRS) during the COVID-19 pandemic	7.14	17.85	39.28	35.73	28	3.03
2. I had not encountered difficulty in understanding the English written texts during teaching using Systematic Guided Reading Strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic.	3.57	21.42	28.57	46.42	28	3.32
3. I felt motivated to read more English written texts after being taught using SGRS during the COVID-19 pandemic.	0	17.85	35.71	46.42	28	3.28
4. I felt challenged to understand the content of English written texts after being taught using SGRS during the	7.14	21.42	21.44	50	28	3.07

COVID-19 pandemic.						
5. I felt that my reading speed and understanding of English written texts after being taught using SGRS online during the COVID-19 pandemic.	7.14	14.28	17.85	60.71	28	3.28

Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics of the participants' responses to the questionnaire on the use of SGRS in teaching and learning reading comprehension for EFL students. The average score obtained was above 3.00 out of 4, indicating a high level of acceptance for the use of SGRS among the participants. This finding suggests that the participants recognized the value and effectiveness of SGRS as a tool for enhancing their reading performance.

Discussion

The objective of this mixed-methods study was to address the primary research questions that were formulated. The first research question sought to examine the efficacy of SGRS in enhancing the reading performance of EFL students when reading written texts. The second research question aimed to investigate the students' perceptions and responses to the use of SGRS during online teaching and learning. The ensuing discussion provides a detailed analysis of the study's findings in relation to the aforementioned research questions.

EFL students' reading performance in online learning

The analysis of the data indicates that the implementation of SGRS in online learning had a substantial positive effect on the reading proficiency of EFL students, specifically those in their fourth semester at an Indonesian State Islamic University. These findings highlight the significant impact of SGRS interventions on reading performance in the context of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The present research adds further findings of prior research. For instance, Ascenzi-Moreno and Quiñones (2020) concluded that guided reading is typically implemented in monolingual contexts, and bilingualism can be incorporated to assist teachers in adopting these practices in their classrooms. However, the present study found that the students initially exhibited low levels of reading performance, which improved significantly following the SGRS intervention. The students were able to enhance their reading performance by motivating themselves, practicing consistently, selecting appropriate reading materials, determining the appropriate time and place to read, and demonstrating resilience in their reading (Yaacob et al., 2019). Furthermore, the students demonstrated resilience in their ability to engage in continuous reading and were able to monitor their learning strategies effectively during the online learning environment.

Several previous studies (Čeljo et al., 2021; Karimi & Dastgoshadeh, 2018) support the finding of this study. It demonstrates how crucial it is for EFL learners to consistently use a particular reading strategy to improve their reading performance. The implementation of online SGRS not only helps students assess the effectiveness of their learning strategies but also enables them to choose the subject that best suits their needs, track their learning progress, and exercise independence in completing tasks (Clemens et al., 2019; Habók et al., 2019a; Handayani et al., 2019; Hasim, 2018). The findings also suggest that online learning can help students identify their strengths and weaknesses, particularly in using SGRS, with a medium level of achievement among Indonesian students who typically prioritize the learning process over improving their learning outcomes (Irianto et al., 2019; Irwansyah et al., 2019). It is evident that a variety of factors significantly contribute to the improvement of EFL students' reading performance, and this finding represents the real and

novel contribution of our research during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in developing students' further reading performance.

Students' Response to the Use of SGRS in Online Learning

The current study provides novel insights into the application of reading comprehension strategies. Specifically, it sheds light on the ways in which such strategies can enhance the performance of EFL students when reading written texts. The present findings thus serve to supplement existing research in this area and build upon the work of other scholars (Andoko et al., 2020; Čeljo et al., 2021; Habók et al., 2019b; Irianto et al., 2019; Mehrak Rahimi & Babaei, 2021). Moreover, gaining an understanding of reading strategies for reading written texts may offer a new perspective and enhance learners' motivation. This motivation can empower students with varying abilities to achieve their desired goals, prevent boredom while reading, and encourage a sustained enthusiasm for reading (Lin, 2019).

The results above are supported by the comments of participants through online interviews related to the experience and the impact of using strategies in reading written texts. Here are the participants' comments:

P5. In my opinion, it is very important to understand strategies in reading, as for those who don't know complex sentences, they will be searched first and combined with easy ones. This is very important because it can improve students' reading skills... And... If I can understand the strategies. I can understand the meaning of a sentence based on the context.

P6. My reading strategy, Firstly, is to preview the texts I will read. Previewing and scanning texts can be another step toward improving my reading skills. I applied this strategy by previewing titles, captions, headlines, and other text features to get an idea of what you are reading about. This can help you form central ideas about the text before you begin reading it.

Drawing on the comments made by the participants, it can be concluded that guided reading strategies can serve as a valuable tool for teachers to offer substantial assistance to students who face difficulties with reading and comprehending written texts. Furthermore, these strategies can be applied to a variety of reading activities, including collaborative reading, self-directed reading, and reading aloud (Habók et al., 2019a; Lin, 2019; Zheltukhina et al., 2021). This finding is supported by the participants' comments. The one below is an example.

P2. Yes, the benefits of using a systematic guided strategy were very easy to follow and knowing the detailly regarding the texts contain. Tue other benefits of learning through guided reading gave me easiness and foster my motivation to peruse or read carefully....so that I could grasp the meaning or messages delivered by the writers within the texts.

SGRS plays a crucial role in promoting the success of English teachers and students in Indonesia, as demonstrated by the participants in this study. Moreover, this method can be adapted to various types of reading, including group reading, individual reading, and even reading aloud. In terms of literacy development, teachers hold a central position in guiding students through systematic reading practices, commonly referred to as scaffolding measures (Magnusson et al., 2019; Navarro & Mourgues-Codern, 2018). Using guided reading strategies can help students improve their reading comprehension skills and overall performance. EFL teachers should have the necessary skills to support students' understanding of instructional materials.

Therefore, it is essential to identify and use effective reading strategies that achieve this objective (Basallo Gómez, 2016; Ramsa & Rawian, 2021, 2021).

This study was conducted during the first semester of 2022, which is characterized as the "new normal" era of learning. Despite the online learning policy still in effect in Indonesia, a significant proportion of the respondents (scoring 3.32 on a scale of 1-4) agreed with the statement in the survey that "I had not encountered difficulty in understanding the English written texts during taught using systematic guided reading strategies during the COVID-19 pandemic."

The present study brings significant value to prior research that highlights the importance of the teacher's role in providing clear guidance to students during online teaching and learning, particularly in terms of directing their attention toward the comprehension and understanding of instructional materials and information (Ali, 2020; Carrillo & Flores, 2020). As a result, the chronological, sequential factors and levels of students' knowledge can be effectively accommodated. The participants' comments provided below support this finding.

P5. My experience in taking all courses is that I can read quickly and get used to reading the benefits for me are my reading speed has increased, it is easier to understand the meaning of the reading context, and more vocabulary I know. so I learned, not only the skin, but the roots can be understood when I read, and this is very helpful to make it easier for me to read

P8. During the reading [...] makes me get used to reading some kinds of text like articles, textbooks, and also novels. It also makes me more interested in reading and realize that reading is very important. I also can recognize the punctuation in articles & book writing, as well as the daily use of vocab from novels. Post-reading [...] I still read some books right now and more in the future.

The aforementioned comments from the participants indicate that they experience greater ease and efficiency in adapting to the online learning environment with the assistance of SGRS, as compared to the results of a significant number of prior studies on this subject (Magnusson et al., 2019; Mehrak Rahimi & Babaei, 2021; Ramsa & Rawian, 2021; Yusuf et al., 2018) who have found that students did not encounter significant difficulties in reading and comprehending online texts amidst the pandemic-related shift to remote learning.

Furthermore, the selection of written texts by the researchers was purposeful, with the aim of ensuring that students possess the ability to comprehend the author's intended message conveyed in the text (Bernad-mechó, 2021). Despite the importance of the teacher's ability to establish connections between students' background knowledge and instructional materials, it is equally essential that students themselves are able to draw connections between their prior knowledge and the content of the reading texts (Cahyo et al., 2019; Setyono & Widodo, 2019). This finding is corroborated by the participants' comments provided below.

P6. Pre-reading exercises allow me to reflect on my prior knowledge of a subject and make educated guesses about the material to be read or heard. While-Reading Activities are those that students can do while reading to help me concentrate on specific details and gain a deeper understanding of the material. By engaging in critical reflection on what I have read, I get a deeper understanding of texts through post-reading exercises.

Reading activities serve as a reinforcement of tasks that are carried out during the reading stage. As such, students are frequently required to respond to questions pertaining to the texts that they have read. Moreover, post-reading activities often involve collaborative efforts among groups (Teng, 2020).

Given that the current study pertains to the implementation of SGRS and its impact on EFL students, it is imperative that students possess prior knowledge to effectively comprehend the content of the reading texts. The adoption and enjoyment of learning facilitated through the use of SGRS may enhance students' interest, motivation, and positive attitude toward reading. Notably, students who possess a favorable outlook and adequate knowledge regarding independent learning are more likely to exhibit these traits (Lin, 2019; Zheltukhina et al., 2021). Finally, yet importantly, online learning provides students with the opportunity to study not only linguistic competencies but also non-linguistic aspects (Octoberlina & Muslimin, 2021; Weda et al., 2021). As students become increasingly accustomed to utilizing digital devices to support a variety of learning activities, including online, offline, or bichronous learning, it is necessary to conduct a thorough and comprehensive investigation of these factors (Puspitasari et al., 2021).

Conclusion

The study seeks to contribute to the existing literature on teaching reading comprehension methods by investigating the impact of applying strategies in online EFL learning. Specifically, the focus is on examining the effects of the SGRS on EFL students' reading performance and learning experience with written texts. The use of SGRS in comprehending English texts is highly relevant for EFL students.

In the context of online English language education, particularly with respect to reading comprehension, the findings of this study suggest that online instruction can significantly enhance EFL students' reading performance. Furthermore, utilizing the SGRS as a tool for comprehending English written texts can significantly enhance students' interest and motivation to learn, particularly in the context of reading comprehension courses.

This investigation provides valuable pedagogical insights for the continued implementation of reading strategies in both online and offline reading habits, with a particular emphasis on enhancing the teaching and learning of the English language. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of developing EFL students' awareness of reading strategies to enable them to apply them in various online learning models, including blended learning, asynchronous, and synchronous online learning. The use of SGRS can help expand and accelerate students' independent reading comprehension of written texts.

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