

Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies in Legal English: A Mixed-Methods Study of Vietnamese Economic Law Students

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Abstract

This study investigated the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among Economic Law students at Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade in the context of Legal English reading. Adopting a mixed-methods design, the study collected quantitative data through the MARSİ-R questionnaire from 414 undergraduate students who had completed a Legal English course, alongside qualitative data from semi-structured interviews with 12 purposively selected participants. The findings indicated that students reported moderate to high levels of metacognitive strategy use, with Problem-Solving and Support Reading Strategies employed more frequently than Global Reading Strategies. Among individual strategies, underlining important information emerged as the most frequently used, whereas having a clear reading purpose was among the least utilized. Independent samples *t*-tests revealed no statistically significant gender differences across all subscales. Qualitative findings further showed that students relied heavily on text-marking and specialized legal dictionaries to manage dense terminology and complex syntactic structures, while experiencing difficulties with pre-reading strategies and sustaining attention during reading. These findings extend existing research on metacognitive strategy use into the domain of Legal English and suggest the need for more explicit instruction in strategy use, particularly in relation to pre-reading planning and selective marking techniques.

1. Introduction

In the context of globalization and international economic integration, English has become an essential tool for legal professionals who must engage with cross-border legal information and communicate across legal systems. In Vietnam, Legal English has gained

increasing importance in tertiary education and professional preparation, as learners are expected to develop foreign-language competence linked to their disciplinary specialism and employability in globalized contexts (Nhac, 2023; Nguyen, 2022).

Legal English, commonly discussed as a branch of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), is widely recognized as challenging due to its specialized terminology and distinctive discourse conventions. Legal texts often contain dense technical vocabulary, Latinisms, archaic expressions, and syntactically complex sentence structures that can hinder comprehension for non-specialist and student readers (Boginskaya, 2022; Nhac, 2022). For law students, therefore, the ability to read and comprehend Legal English texts such as contracts, statutes, case reports, and legal opinions is crucial for academic achievement and future professional practice (Nhac, 2022).

Reading comprehension in a foreign language requires not only linguistic knowledge but also the strategic use of cognitive and metacognitive processes. Metacognition, classically defined as individuals' awareness and regulation of their own thinking and learning, supports readers in planning how to approach a text, monitoring understanding, and adjusting strategies when comprehension breaks down (Flavell, 1979). In reading research, skilled readers are consistently described as those who demonstrate strategic awareness and active monitoring of comprehension, selecting and adapting strategies to meet task demands and textual difficulty (Lahuerta Martínez, 2008; Mokhtari & Reichard, 2002).

To examine readers' metacognitive awareness of reading strategies, Mokhtari and Reichard (2002) developed the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSI), which conceptualizes strategy awareness across three dimensions: Global Reading Strategies, Problem-Solving Strategies, and Support Reading Strategies. Later work refined this instrument (MARSI-R) and provided additional validity evidence, strengthening its usefulness for research and educational practice (Mokhtari et al., 2018). MARSI and related instruments have been widely applied in EFL contexts to describe patterns of strategy use and to explore how awareness varies by learner characteristics and proficiency (Do & Phan, 2021; Zhang & Wu, 2009).

However, despite the recognized importance of Legal English reading, research in Vietnam has primarily focused on learners' challenges and pedagogical practices in Legal English instruction, with comparatively less attention given to metacognitive strategy awareness in this specific domain (Nhac, 2022, 2023). Although metacognitive reading strategies have been examined in Vietnamese EFL contexts, including studies employing instruments such as MARSI, this line of research has not been sufficiently extended to the context of Legal English, where texts are linguistically dense and discipline-specific.

At the same time, findings from ESP research indicate that strategy use may vary according to learner variables such as gender, although the direction and magnitude of these differences remain context-dependent (Lahuerta Martínez, 2008). In addition, recent studies highlight the role of learner-related factors, including motivation and autonomy, in shaping language learning outcomes, particularly in higher education contexts where students are expected to assume greater responsibility for their learning (Truong et al., 2025). Similarly, learner autonomy and motivational orientations have been identified as key determinants of engagement and success in foreign language learning, as students with clear goals and a strong

sense of responsibility are more likely to employ effective strategies and actively regulate their learning processes (Huynh, 2026).

Therefore, this study investigates the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among Economic Law students at Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade when engaging with Legal English texts. Specifically, the study addresses the following research questions:

RQ1: What is the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among Economic Law students when reading Legal English texts?

RQ2: Is there any significant difference in reading strategy use between male and female students?

RQ3: What are the students' perceptions and challenges regarding reading strategy use in Legal English contexts?

The findings are expected to deepen understanding of how Vietnamese law students approach Legal English reading tasks and to offer practical implications for improving Legal English instruction in higher education.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Definition of Key Terms

Legal English is a specialized variety of English used in legal contexts such as statutes, contracts, and court documents. It is characterized by technical terminology, Latinisms, archaic expressions, and syntactically complex structures that serve the precision and formality required by legal discourse (Tiersma, 1999; Bhatia, 1993). These features make it particularly demanding for non-specialist readers and language learners (Nhac, 2022). As a branch of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Legal English instruction is oriented toward the genres, registers, and communicative functions relevant to learners' legal domain, linking language competence directly to disciplinary and professional literacy (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998).

Reading comprehension in a foreign language involves the active construction of meaning from text by integrating linguistic input with prior knowledge (Grabe, 2009). In L2 contexts, this process is further constrained by limited vocabulary, weaker syntactic processing, and reduced familiarity with target-language discourse conventions (Alderson, 2000). Metacognition, classically defined by Flavell (1979) as individuals' awareness and regulation of their own cognitive processes, plays a central role in reading by enabling readers to plan how to approach a text, monitor ongoing comprehension, and repair breakdowns when they occur. In this study, metacognitive awareness of reading strategies refers specifically to learners' self-reported knowledge and use of strategies that facilitate comprehension, operationalized through Mokhtari and Reichard's (2002) MARS framework, which distinguishes three dimensions: Global Reading Strategies (broad, purposive behaviors such as previewing and identifying text structure), Problem-Solving Strategies (localized, reactive behaviors such as re-reading difficult passages), and Support Reading Strategies (use of external aids such as dictionaries and note-taking).

2.2. Theoretical Background

The present study is grounded in the metacognitive theory of reading and the strategic reading framework. Flavell's (1979) foundational account of metacognition, extended by Baker and Brown (1984) to the domain of reading, established that skilled readers are distinguished not merely by linguistic competence but by their capacity to monitor comprehension and flexibly regulate their reading behavior. This view underpins the strategic reading framework, which conceptualizes reading strategies as intentional, goal-directed actions that differ from automatized skills in their conscious, deliberate character (Afflerbach, Pearson, & Paris, 2008). Research consistently demonstrates that skilled readers engage in purposive behaviors- activating prior knowledge, setting reading goals, making inferences, and self-monitoring- while less skilled readers tend toward passive, linear processing with limited self-repair (Pressley et al., 1992).

In L2 reading research, proficiency is recognized as a key mediator of strategy deployment. The language threshold hypothesis (Alderson, 2000; Grabe, 2009) suggests that below a certain level of linguistic competence, cognitive resources are consumed by lower-level decoding, leaving insufficient capacity for strategic, top-down processing. Consequently, more proficient EFL readers tend to demonstrate greater use of global and inferential strategies, while less proficient readers rely more heavily on localized, compensatory behaviors. Gender has also been explored as a variable influencing strategy awareness. Oxford (1990) theorized that socialization differences may orient female learners toward more reflective and monitoring-oriented learning behaviors, though empirical findings on gender and reading strategy use have been inconsistent, with some studies reporting significant differences on specific strategy dimensions and others finding no significant effects (Lahuerta Martínez, 2008). This inconsistency underscores the need for context-specific investigation rather than broad generalization.

In ESP reading contexts, the demands of disciplinary texts add a further layer of complexity. Legal discourse in particular requires readers to manage dense nominalization, embedded conditional structures, and intertextual references to other legal instruments, all of which strain working memory and require deliberate comprehension monitoring (Bhatia, 1993). These text-specific demands suggest that strategy awareness in Legal English reading may not be fully captured by findings from general EFL reading research, and that learners' strategic responses must be understood in relation to the particular features of the texts they encounter.

2.3. Previous Studies

Studies employing the MARSİ and MARSİ-R have consistently found that university-level EFL learners report moderate to high overall strategy awareness, with problem-solving strategies typically receiving the highest endorsement and support strategies the lowest (Mokhtari & Reichard, 2002; Zhang & Wu, 2009). Zhang and Wu (2009), in a large-scale study of Chinese EFL university students, found that re-reading and slowing down when encountering difficulty were among the most frequently reported behaviors, while broader global strategies such as previewing text structure were used less consistently. Mokhtari et al. (2018) refined the MARSİ instrument psychometrically through the MARSİ-R, providing improved factor structure and stronger validity evidence for its application across EFL populations.

Proficiency has emerged as a significant predictor of strategy awareness patterns. Do and Phan (2021), investigating Vietnamese EFL university learners, found that more proficient readers demonstrated broader and more flexible strategy repertoires, particularly in the global strategy dimension, consistent with the expectation that strategic reading becomes more accessible as linguistic demands become less taxing. Gender differences have yielded more mixed results. Lahuerta Martínez (2008) reported that female EFL learners in a Spanish university context scored significantly higher on certain strategy subscales, particularly those related to comprehension monitoring; however, such differences have not been replicated uniformly across studies, suggesting that gender effects are context-dependent rather than universal.

In Vietnam, research on Legal English has grown in recent years, though it has focused predominantly on learner difficulties, pedagogical challenges, and curriculum issues rather than on metacognitive reading processes. Nhac (2022) documented the extensive vocabulary and structural difficulties faced by Vietnamese law students when reading legal texts, while Nhac (2023) situated these challenges within the broader policy context of developing disciplinary English competence in Vietnamese legal education. Nguyen (2022) similarly highlighted growing institutional expectations for law graduates to engage professionally with English-language legal materials. Despite establishing the importance and difficulty of Legal English reading in Vietnam, these studies leave largely unexamined the metacognitive strategies that learners employ when engaging with such texts. The present study addresses this gap by investigating metacognitive reading strategy awareness among Economic Law students, a population whose reading demands are both practically significant and theoretically distinct from those of general EFL readers.

3. Research Methods

3.1. Research Design

3.1.1. Research Approach

This study employed a mixed-methods research design (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to investigate law students' metacognitive awareness of reading strategies in Legal English contexts. The quantitative phase utilized a survey questionnaire to measure strategy use patterns across a large sample, while the qualitative phase involved semi-structured interviews to gain deeper insights into students' reading experiences with legal texts. This convergent design allowed for triangulation of data, enhancing the validity and comprehensiveness of the findings.

3.1.2. Research Instrument

The primary instrument was an adapted version of the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory-Revised (MARSIR) developed by Mokhtari et al. (2018). The revised questionnaire consisted of 15 items measuring three subscales: Global Reading Strategies (5 items), Support Reading Strategies (5 items), and Problem-Solving Strategies (5 items).

Table 1 presents the structure and items of the MARSI-R instrument.

Table 1. Structure of the MARSI-R Instrument

Item	Description
Global Reading Strategies	
Q1	Having a purpose in mind when I read
Q3	Previewing the text to see what it is about before reading it
Q5	Checking to see if the content of the text fits my purpose for reading
Q12	Using typographical aids like bold face and italics to pick out key information
Q13	Critically analyzing and evaluating the information read
Support Reading Strategies	
Q2	Taking notes while reading
Q4	Reading aloud to help me understand what I'm reading
Q6	Discussing what I read with others to check my understanding
Q8	Underlining or circling important information in the text
Q10	Using reference materials such as dictionaries to support my reading
Problem-Solving Strategies	
Q7	Getting back on track when getting sidetracked or distracted
Q9	Adjusting my reading pace or speed based on what I'm reading
Q11	Stopping from time to time to think about what I'm reading
Q14	Re-reading to make sure I understand what I'm reading
Q15	Guessing the meaning of unknown words or phrases

The questionnaire was translated into Vietnamese to ensure participants' comprehension. Responses were measured on a 5-point Likert scale: (1) I have never heard of this strategy before; (2) I have heard of this strategy, but I don't know what it means; (3) I have heard of this strategy, and I think I know what it means; (4) I know this strategy, and I can explain how and when to use it; (5) I know this strategy quite well, and I often use it when I read.

A pilot study was conducted with 20 law students to assess the reliability of the instrument. Cronbach's alpha coefficients indicated acceptable internal consistency for all subscales: Global Reading Strategies ($\alpha = .82$), Support Reading Strategies ($\alpha = .85$), and Problem-Solving Strategies ($\alpha = .87$). In the main study ($N = 414$), the instrument demonstrated high reliability with Cronbach's alpha values of .87 for Global Reading Strategies, .88 for Support Reading Strategies, and .89 for Problem-Solving Strategies (see Table 2).

Table 2. Reliability Statistics of MARSI-R Subscales

Subscale	N of Items	Pilot Questionnaire (N=20)	Revised Questionnaire (N=414)
Global Reading Strategies	5	.82	.87
Support Reading Strategies	5	.85	.88
Problem-Solving Strategies	5	.87	.89
Overall	15	.86	.89

The semi-structured interview protocol included open-ended questions exploring students' reading strategy use, challenges encountered when reading legal English texts, and their perceptions of effective reading practices.

3.2. Data Collection

3.2.1. Participants

Participants were undergraduate students majoring in Economic Law at Ho Chi Minh City University of Industry and Trade (HUIT) who had completed a Legal English course. A total of 414 students participated in the quantitative phase and were recruited through convenience sampling. While this sampling approach enabled efficient access to a relatively large cohort within the institutional context, it may limit the representativeness of the sample. Table 3 presents the demographic characteristics of the participants.

Table 3. Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N = 414)

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	93	22.5
	Female	321	77.5

For the qualitative phase, 12 students (6 males and 6 females) were purposively selected based on their questionnaire responses, representing high, medium, and low strategy users. Pseudonyms (P1–P12) were used to ensure anonymity.

3.2.2. Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was conducted in 2025. Before participation, all students were provided with a consent form explaining the purpose of the research, voluntary participation, and their right to withdraw at any time without affecting their academic grades. For the quantitative phase, the online questionnaire was distributed via Google Forms. The qualitative phase involved individual semi-structured interviews lasting approximately 20 minutes each, conducted in Vietnamese to allow participants to express themselves freely. All interviews were audio-recorded with participants' permission and subsequently transcribed for analysis.

3.3. Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS version 27. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) were computed to examine overall strategy use patterns before it was interpreted using Oxford and Burry-Stock's (1995) Framework, following criteria: high usage (M = 3.5 or above), medium usage (M = 2.5 to 3.4), and low usage (M = 2.4 or below). Independent samples t-tests were conducted to investigate gender differences in reading strategy use. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006),

involving systematic coding and identification of recurring themes related to students' legal English reading experiences.

4. Results and Findings

4.1. Overall Use of Reading Strategies in Legal English Contexts

Following Oxford and Burry-Stock's (1995) criteria, as presented in Table 4, law students reported moderate to high use of all three strategy categories when engaging with legal English texts such as contracts, case law, and statutes.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Reading Strategy Use by Category

Strategy Category	N	Mean	SD	Usage Level
Global Reading Strategies	414	3.35	.91	Medium
Support Reading Strategies	414	3.45	.92	High
Problem-Solving Strategies	414	3.45	.91	High

Problem-Solving Strategies and Support Reading Strategies (both $M = 3.45$) were employed most frequently, while Global Reading Strategies ranked third ($M = 3.35$). This pattern suggests that law students rely more on reactive strategies when encountering difficulties with legal terminology and complex sentence structures.

4.2. Global Reading Strategies

Table 5 shows the descriptive statistics for Global Reading Strategies.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics for Global Reading Strategies Items

Item	N	Mean	SD
Q1. Having a purpose in mind when I read	414	3.09	1.163
Q3. Previewing the text to see what it is about before reading it	414	3.24	1.121
Q5. Checking to see if the content fits my purpose for reading	414	3.43	1.093
Q12. Using typographical aids to pick out key information	414	3.54	1.132
Q13. Critically analyzing and evaluating the information read	414	3.46	1.068

Q12 "Using typographical aids" was the most frequently used strategy ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 1.132$). In legal documents, formatting conventions highlight defined terms and key provisions:

"In contracts, defined terms are capitalized or bold- 'the Parties,' 'the Agreement.' If I don't pay attention, I might confuse a general word with a specific legal definition." (P2)

However, Q1 "Having a purpose in mind" received the lowest score ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 1.163$). Many students did not set reading goals before engaging with legal texts:

"When the lecturer assigns a contract to read, I just start from the beginning. I don't think about what specific legal issues I should focus on." (P9)

In contrast, high strategy users recognized the importance of purposeful legal reading:

“Before reading a case, I identify the legal issue I’m researching. Am I looking for the ratio decidendi? How does the court interpret a statute? Without a clear purpose, I would waste hours reading irrelevant sections.” (P2)

4.3. Support Reading Strategies

Table 6 shows the descriptive statistics for Support Reading Strategies.

Table 6. Descriptive Statistics for Support Reading Strategies Items

Item	N	Mean	SD
Q2. Taking notes while reading	414	3.22	1.127
Q4. Reading aloud to help me understand	414	3.41	1.146
Q6. Discussing what I read with others	414	3.41	1.060
Q8. Underlining or circling important information	414	3.70	1.093
Q10. Using reference materials such as dictionaries	414	3.54	1.088

Q8 “Underlining or circling important information” was the highest-rated strategy overall (M = 3.70, SD = 1.093). Law students used text marking to highlight legal terms, key provisions, and Latin terminology:

“I use different colors- yellow for definitions, pink for obligations, blue for rights and remedies. This helps me quickly identify key elements when analyzing contracts.” (P1)

“I circle every Latin term- ‘prima facie,’ ‘ultra vires,’ ‘bona fide’- and write the meaning in the margin. Legal English has so many Latin phrases.” (P6)

Q10 “Using dictionaries” ranked second (M = 3.54, SD = 1.088). Students emphasized the need for specialized legal dictionaries:

“General dictionaries are useless for legal English. Words like ‘consideration,’ ‘party,’ ‘execution’ have completely different meanings in law. I always use Black’s Law Dictionary.” (P3)

4.4. Problem-Solving Strategies

Table 7 shows the descriptive statistics for Problem-Solving Strategies.

Table 7. Descriptive Statistics for Problem-Solving Strategies Items

Item	N	Mean	SD
Q7. Getting back on track when distracted	414	3.30	1.017
Q9. Adjusting my reading pace based on what I’m reading	414	3.45	1.090
Q11. Stopping from time to time to think about what I’m reading	414	3.51	1.104
Q14. Re-reading to make sure I understand	414	3.59	1.083
Q15. Guessing the meaning of unknown words or phrases	414	3.42	1.081

Q14 “Re-reading” was the most frequently used problem-solving strategy (M = 3.59, SD = 1.083), reaching high usage level. Law students viewed re-reading as essential for comprehending complex legal language:

“Legal sentences can be incredibly long with multiple clauses and conditions. I always read important provisions at least twice- first for general structure, then for precise meaning.” (P1)

“When reading court judgments, the legal reasoning is very dense. I might read the ratio decidendi five or six times before I truly understand it.” (P2)

Q7 “Getting back on track when distracted” received the lowest score (M = 3.30, SD = 1.017). Students reported difficulty maintaining focus due to the demanding nature of legal language:

“Legal English is mentally exhausting- long sentences, formal language, Latin terms. After 30 minutes, my brain feels tired, and I start checking my phone.” (P10)

4.5. Gender Differences in Strategy Use

Independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare reading strategy use between male (n = 93) and female (n = 321) law students. As shown in Table 8, results indicated no statistically significant differences between genders across all three subscales (p > .05), with negligible effect sizes.

Table 8. Independent Samples t-test Results by Gender

Strategy Category	t	df	Sig.	Cohen's d
Global Reading Strategies	-.302	412	.763	-.036
Support Reading Strategies	-.183	412	.855	-.022
Problem-Solving Strategies	-.096	412	.923	-.011

The interview data supported this finding. Both male and female students reported using similar strategies:

“I don’t think gender affects how we read legal texts. We all struggle with the same Latin terms and complex clauses.” (P4)

5. Discussion

5.1. Metacognitive awareness patterns in Legal English reading

The findings indicate that Economic Law students demonstrate generally solid metacognitive awareness when reading Legal English texts. This pattern is consistent with the view that metacognition involves awareness and regulation of cognition, including planning, monitoring, and evaluating comprehension while reading (Flavell, 1979). The MARSI-R framework captures this regulation through global strategies, problem-solving strategies, and support strategies, providing a coherent lens for interpreting how readers manage demanding texts (Mokhtari et al., 2018).

The stronger emphasis on problem-solving and support strategies than on global strategies is also in line with prior EFL and ESP research. When texts are difficult, readers often rely on immediate comprehension management such as rereading, slowing down, using reference tools, and taking notes, rather than on broad planning strategies (Do & Phan, 2021; Lahuerta Martínez, 2008; Zhang & Wu, 2009). From the perspective of constructively responsive reading, strategic readers actively monitor meaning construction and apply repair

actions when comprehension weakens, which helps explain why problem-solving strategies frequently dominate during complex academic reading tasks (Pressley & Afflerbach, 1995).

5.2. Gender differences in reading strategy use

The absence of meaningful gender differences aligns with evidence that gender effects in metacognitive strategy use are often small, inconsistent, or dependent on local learning conditions. Wallace et al. (2021) reported no significant gender differences in metacognitive strategy use among EFL readers, and Do and Phan (2021) similarly found that gender was not a strong driver of overall metacognitive awareness in Vietnamese EFL settings. In ESP contexts, results also suggest that strategy patterns tend to be shaped more by task demands and proficiency-related factors than by gender alone (Lahuerta Martínez, 2008). In Legal English reading, the heavy conceptual and linguistic load may function as a shared constraint that leads students to adopt similar coping strategies regardless of gender.

5.3. Students' perceptions and challenges in Legal English reading

Qualitative themes showing reliance on text marking and dictionary use are consistent with what is known about Legal English as a high-density register. Legal texts typically contain specialized terminology, Latin expressions, and structurally complex sentences, which commonly create comprehension barriers for student readers (Nhac, 2022). In Vietnam, research has documented that vocabulary burden and limited background knowledge can strongly restrict Legal English reading comprehension, encouraging learners to depend on reference tools and other support mechanisms (Nhac, 2022). Related Vietnamese ESP research also highlights technical vocabulary and limited disciplinary knowledge as persistent constraints in ESP reading, often accompanied by calls for more explicit strategy instruction and better prereading support (Tran & Duong, 2018; Duong & Nguyen, 2024).

Reported difficulty with prereading strategies and sustaining concentration further suggests that higher-level global regulation may be underdeveloped compared with in-text coping strategies. This is important because purpose setting and previewing can reduce cognitive overload by helping readers allocate attention and anticipate text structure and key concepts, especially in discipline-specific reading. In addition, the perceived mental demands of Legal English reading are consistent with observations that content knowledge and the integration of language and disciplinary concepts create major learning challenges in legal English classrooms (Nhac, 2023).

6. Conclusion

This study provides context-specific insights into the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among Vietnamese Economic Law students engaging with Legal English texts. Overall, the findings indicate that students tend to rely more on problem-solving and support strategies, while demonstrating relatively limited use of global strategies, particularly those related to pre-reading planning. The absence of statistically significant gender differences suggests that the challenges associated with Legal English reading may be broadly shared across learners; however, this finding should be interpreted with caution due to the unequal gender distribution in the sample.

The study contributes to the existing body of research by extending investigations of metacognitive reading strategies into the domain of Legal English, an area that has received comparatively limited attention in the Vietnamese context. Pedagogically, the findings

highlight the need for more explicit instruction in metacognitive strategy use, especially in relation to planning, monitoring, and strategic text engagement, rather than focusing solely on content and terminology.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. The reliance on self-reported data may not fully capture actual strategy use, and the use of a convenience sample from a single institution restricts the generalizability of the findings. In addition, the gender imbalance in the sample may have reduced the statistical power for detecting potential differences between male and female students. Furthermore, the study did not examine the relationship between strategy awareness and reading performance. Future research could address these limitations by employing real-time data collection methods, ensuring more balanced sampling, incorporating measures of reading comprehension, and expanding the scope to multiple institutional contexts. Longitudinal studies would also be valuable in examining how metacognitive strategy awareness develops over time in Legal English learning.

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