The Reading Teachers: Reading Strategies Employed in Teaching Reading in Grade School

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Abstract

This research aims to determine the teachers' reading style, determine their reading speed, and determine which reading methods are the teachers' strengths and weaknesses utilizing a thorough evaluation of reading techniques from Hawker Brownlow Education. Using pre-determined reading materials. Using Google Forms, this study utilized the comprehensive assessment of reading strategies from Hawker Brownlow Education. This material is composed of four series of tests, with different reading passages using the same 12 reading strategies. Results were interpreted using descriptive method to find out which strategy the participants could be weak. It is found that readers can effectively comprehend when they use the following strategies namely, finding word meaning in context, understanding sequence, and making predictions. Therefore, the four series of assessments, show that there are varied ways of comprehending a material that might directly influence the duration and time limit allocated in reading and answering the material, the recurring events of the same material used, and the scheduling of reading comprehension tests. The study allows educators and teachers to specify their activities in order to strengthen the weak points of the reading teachers identified from the samples. Through this, educational planners can create more skills targeted training based on the results of the study.

Keywords: public school teachers, reading strategies, reading comprehension, reading teachers

INTRODUCTION

Philippines has always been thought as one of the pioneering countries in the ASEAN region in terms of English language skills, however in recent years research found out that the country has been on the constant decline on the language (Jimenez, 2018). This is alarming specially that one of the country's sources of income is through the BPO (Business Processing Outsource) services which mainly use the English language as its mode of communication. Also, the Filipinos presence through the worker's diaspora is everywhere in the corner of the world. Hence the researchers have thought of finding a gap in this decline in one of the macro skills of the English language skill – reading.

Reading comprehension is a crucial cognitive skill for readers that helps them succeed in school and thereafter in most aspects of adult life (Hulme & Snowling, 2011). As a result, a person with learning impairments (LD) and special educational needs who struggle with text comprehension, often in conjunction with other issues, may be at a higher risk of failing in life and in school (Woolley, 2011). Reading comprehension is a

complex cognitive ability that includes not only linguistic (e.g., vocabulary, grammatical knowledge), but also cognitive e.g., working memory, and metacognitive both for the aspects of knowledge and control, skills, as well as higher-order comprehension skills such as the generation of inferences (Oakhill et al., 2003).

Text comprehension at school, at home during homework, and at work is increasingly based on an increasing number of digital reading devices (computers and laptops, e-books, and tablet devices) that can become a fundamental support to improve traditional reading comprehension and learning skills, thanks to the widespread adoption of technology in many areas of daily life (e.g., inference generation).

Some writers compared the impact of the technology interface on reading comprehension in children with typical development to printed texts in children with typical development (Kerr & Symons, 2006). Although children and teens performed worse on-screen texts than printed texts in terms of comprehension, they preferred digital texts (Singer & Alexander, 2017). Only a few studies looked at the differences between printed texts and digital devices in children with learning disabilities and found no significant differences, implying that the use of compensatory digital tools for children with learning disabilities could be a viable alternative to traditional written texts in facilitating their academic and work performance (Chen, 2009). A meta-analysis evaluating the use of digital tools and learning settings for boosting literacy acquisition in middle school pupils supports this finding, demonstrating that technology can increase reading comprehension (Moran et al, 2008).

In the study conducted by Ali and Razali (2019), EFL teachers shall use varied teaching strategies to be able to improve ESL/EFL reading strategies among learners. These strategies such as *Cognitive Reading Strategy* and *Metacognitive Reading Strategy* can be used to refresh reading teachers for them to improve their skills too. Reading comprehension abilities help readers to discern the author's goal as well as make sense of a piece. Students must develop a set of abilities that they may use as tools to comprehend texts to become proficient readers.

I. Understanding words. The way words or phrases are utilized in a sentence determines their meaning. To extend, it is worth applying the metacognitive approach to help students reflect on how they determine the meaning of a word or phrase.

II. Finding information. Reading and re-reading specific areas of a text is required to get a better understanding of a keyword. Teachers may help students develop this skill by demonstrating how to scan material for keywords and emphasizing the need of reading the text carefully-and as many times as necessary-to identify crucial and supporting information and details.

III. Identifying the main idea. If students can identify the main idea of a text, they are more likely to comprehend it. The primary theme unifies the narrative by connecting the ideas stated in the paragraphs.

IV. Sequencing. This skill is about being able to sequence the order in which events occur, sometimes using time markers and other strategies to identify the relationship between events. Students will discover that knowing the order of events is a crucial aspect in understanding a book by deciding the events they need to sequence from the question, discovering them in the text, and seeking for 'help' terms.

V. Finding similarities and differences. The capacity to compare and contrast facts in a book will aid a reader's comprehension; as such, it is an important comprehension skill that students must practice and perfect. Categorizing information to discover what certain individuals, places, and events have in common or how they vary is one method.

VI. Predicting. Predicting is one of the trickier skills that students can sometimes struggle with. It entails using information from a book to anticipate outcomes that are not clearly expressed in the text. One of the proposed teaching comprehension tactics is to

educate students how to discover and apply the information in the text to predict outcomes and then to assess their predictions.

VII. Concluding. This ability involves gathering all the information offered by the text, forming judgments, and drawing conclusions based on the facts and details provided by the text. It is also critical to educate students on how to seek evidence to support a certain conclusion by discovering relevant material in the text.

VIII. Summarizing. For this skill, students summarize text by linking valuable information and identifying the main points. To do so successfully, students must first comprehend the structure necessary in their response. Is it a one-word response? A brief paragraph? Giving students direction on how to approach each format and where to find the information they need may truly help them learn this ability.

IX. Inferring. Inferences are opinions about what is most likely to be true. They are produced after a thorough examination of all relevant data. This skill focuses on teaching students how to use contextual information (both written and visual) to determine what they think to be true.

X. Cause and effect. Understanding that the cause leads to the consequence and that they are linked is the goal of this skill. While this may seem obvious, introducing a few comprehension methods may be quite beneficial to pupils. For example, assign students to read several types of content and couple together cause and effect words.

XI. Fact or opinion. Students must be able to discriminate between truth and opinion to become critical readers. This requires distinguishing between them, locating each within the text, and explaining how one links to the other.

XII. Point of view and purpose. Every piece of literature is written with a goal in mind by an author, and their point of view is his or her perspective on a subject. Students must study what has been written, grasp the content, and be able to determine why the author set out to create the text for this skill. It is simple to mix up abilities and strategies. It is critical to remember that skills are related to competent performance and are derived from information, practice, and aptitude, whereas strategies require planning and tactics. In short, what teachers can do is teach strategies for the students to acquire the skills (Brownlow, H., 2022).

RESEARCH METHOD

The aims of this research are to determine the teachers' reading style, determine their reading speed, and determine which reading methods are the teachers' strengths and weaknesses utilizing a thorough evaluation of reading techniques from Hawker Brownlow Education. The researchers used a descriptive method of interpreting the results of the study based on the frequency of responses of the participants (McCombs, 2022).

With the respondents' consent as per Data Privacy Law in the Philippines that no personal information must be divulged by the research on the conduct of the study, the teachers agreed to participate in the study. On the onset, the researchers shared using a self-formatted Google Forms, the participants during the study and timed time to read and answer the materials on each Form.

Research Design

The data on reading style, reading speed, and the strengths and weaknesses of the reading techniques utilized were collected using a descriptive study approach. Descriptive research is a non-experimental study that seeks to evaluate the characteristics of a phenomenon as it happens (Schwarzkopf, 2008). Hawker Brownlow Education is Australasia's premier provider of educational resources, events, and professional development services, and is a Solution Tree company. It has provided teachers and educators with the resources and skills they need to enhance classrooms and boost student

success since 1985. This assessment focuses on the usage of reading strategies with various levels of difficulty applied on different reading material.

Research Environment

This study was conducted using google forms with a ready-made questionnaire. Their personal profile stays highly confidential which means that the questionnaire does not contain any questions asking such. Traditionally, the location was conducted both inside and outside the school (homes). In the present conduct of the research, everything was done online. The participants of this study are Grade 5 Filipino classroom teachers from the public school (DepEd or Department of Education) with majors in Science, Mathematics, English, MAPEH (Music Arts, Physical Education, and Health), and General Education who are taking a Diploma in Teaching Reading.

Research Instrument

This study utilized the comprehensive assessment of reading strategies from Hawker Brownlow Education. This material is composed of four series of tests namely: Reading Comprehension 1 - Historical Fiction, Reading Comprehension 2 - History Article, Reading Comprehension 3, and Reading Comprehension 4 - Email written by Carl with different reading passages using the same reading strategies, starting from Finding Main Idea, Recalling Facts and Details, Understanding Sequence, Recognizing Cause and Effect, Comparing and Contrasting, Making Predictions, Finding Word Meaning in Context, Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences, Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion, Identifying Author's Purpose, Interpreting Figurative Language and lastly Summarizing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Doing the research, the researchers wanted to test where the reading teachers, among the samples, have weak points in the above strategies. As the country's reading competency declined in the past years (de la Fuente, 2022). It allowed researchers to point out strong and weak points of teachers of reading in the country.

This study utilized the comprehensive assessment of reading strategies from Hawker Brownlow Education. This material is composed of four series of tests namely, Reading Comprehension 1- Historical Fiction, Reading Comprehension 2- History Article, Reading Comprehension 3- Kate Wrote About a Special Zoo, and Reading Comprehension 4 - Email written by Carl with different reading passages using the same 12 reading strategies.

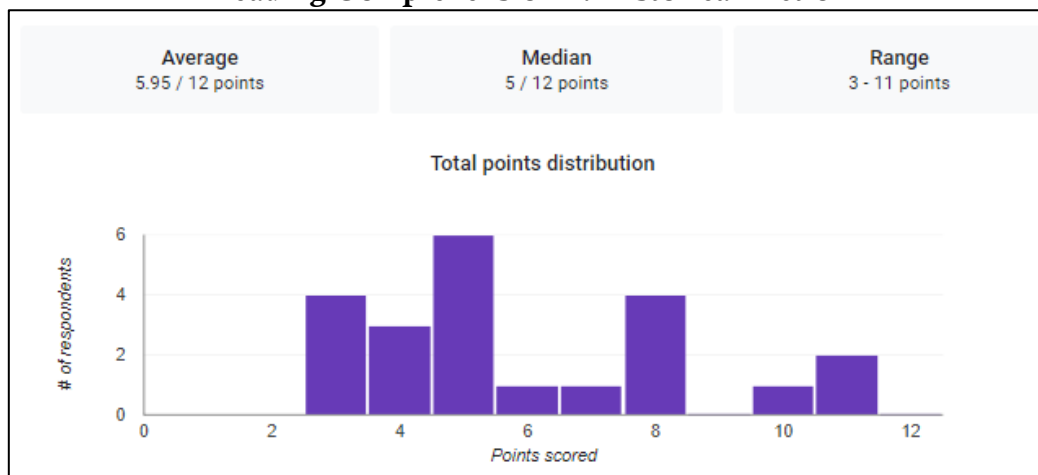**Reading Comprehension 1: Historical Fiction**

Figure 1. Overall Points Distribution of Reading Comprehension 1: Historical Fiction

It shows that the overall average score of the respondents is 5.95 out of 12 points which is less than half of the respondents with a 3-to-11-points range.

Table 1. Frequently missed questions

Frequently Missed Questions		
Questions	Percentage	Total
• Recalling Facts and Details: Which fact is supported by information in the passage?	40.90%	9
• Comparing and Contrasting: Which of these tells a way that Louis and his grandfather were not alike?	31.81%	7
• Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences: From the passage, readers can conclude that Louis	45.45%	10
• Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion: Which of these is an opinion?	45.45%	10
• Identifying Author's Purpose: What is the author's purpose in paragraph 3?	40.90%	9
• Interpreting Figurative Language: The phrase presence of mind means	40.90%	9
• Summarizing: What is the best summary of the passage?	4.54%	1
Total Items	100%	22

The above data contains questions that most of the respondents have a common mistake. Less than half of the respondents 10 (45.45%) were only able to answer correctly on the parts Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences and Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion. And the question with the least percentage only 4.54% is the summarizing part in which only one of the 22 respondents was able to answer it correctly.

Table 2. Reading comprehension strategies

Reading Strategies	Percentage	Total Correct Response
1. Finding Main Idea: The best title for the passage is	59.1%	13
2. Recalling Facts and Details: Which fact is supported by information in the passage?	40.9%	9
3. Understanding Sequence: The sentences below describe events that took place in the passage.	72.7%	16
4. Recognizing Cause and Effect: Why were animal skins in great demand in Europe?	68.2%	15
5. Comparing and Contrasting: Which of these tells a way that Louis and his grandfather were not alike?	31.8%	7
6. Making Predictions: In the future, Louis will probably	72.7%	16
7. Finding Word Meaning in Context: In paragraph 3, what is the best meaning of the word support?	72.7%	16
8. Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences: From the passage, readers can conclude that Louis	45.5%	10

9. Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion: Which of these is an opinion?	45.5%	10
10. Identifying Author's Purpose: What is the author's purpose in paragraph 3?	40.9%	9
11. Interpreting Figurative Language: The phrase presence of mind means	40.9%	9
12. Summarizing: What is the best summary of the passage?	4.5 %	1

The first part of the reading comprehension assessment is historical fiction. The standard reading comprehension strategy being used for the entire assessment is the Hawker-Brownlow education method. Every part has a question to be answered by the respondents with a multiple-choice design of the test. There are 16 (72.7%) out of 22 respondents who were able to correctly answer the strategies namely "Understanding Sequence," with a question in which among the choices below describe events that took place in the passage. "Making Predictions," with the question "In the future, Louis will probably..." and "Finding Word Meaning in Context," with the question "In paragraph 3, what is the best meaning of the word support?". The strategy wherein only 1 (4.5%) out of 22 respondents is the summarizing part with the least respondents who answered it correctly. In this assessment more than half of the respondents were able to answer the questions successfully.
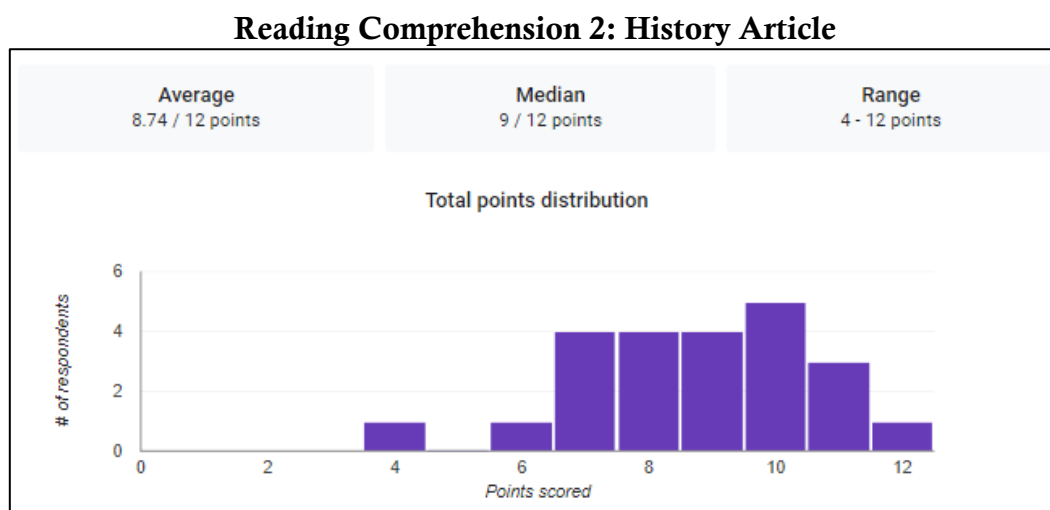
Reading Comprehension 2: History Article

Figure 2. *Overall Points Distribution of Reading Comprehension 2: History Article*

It shows that the overall average score of the respondents is 8.74 out of 12 points which are more than half of the respondents with a 4-to-12-points range.

Table 3. Reading comprehension strategies.

Reading Strategies	Percentage	Total Correct Response
1. Finding Main Idea: What is the main idea of paragraph 3?	*69.6%*	*16*
2. Recalling Facts and Details: Which of these can be found in Wellington today?	*52.2%*	*12*

3.	Understanding Sequence: The boxes talk about some things that happened in the article. What belongs in the empty box?	*78.3%*	*18*
4.	Recognizing Cause and Effect: An Australian might be surprised to see the statue at the National War Memorial in Wellington because	*73.9%*	*17*
5.	Comparing and Contrasting: How were John Simpson Kirkpatrick and Richard Henderson alike?	*95.7%*	*22*
6.	Making Predictions: Predict what would have happened if Simpson had not been killed during the campaign.	*82.6%*	*19*
7.	Finding Word Meaning in Context: In paragraph 3, the word enlisted means	*82.6%*	*19*
8.	Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences: From the article, readers can conclude that	*73.9%*	*17*
9.	Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion: What if these states a fact from the article?	*82.6*	*19*
10.	Identifying Author's Purpose: The author wrote the article mainly to	*52.2%*	*12*
11.	Interpreting Figurative Language: The phrase screaming gunfire is an example of	*69.6%*	*16*
12.	Summarizing: What is the best summary of the article?	*60.9%*	*14*

In this table, there are three strategies that were answered excellently by 19 (82.6%) respondents namely, "Making Predictions" with a question of predicting what would have happened if Simpson had not been killed during the campaign, "Finding Word Meaning in Context" and "Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion," with a question of "What if these states a fact from the article?". There are 12(52.2%) respondents who were able to answer the two strategies as the least questions correctly answered, these are "Recalling Facts and Details: Which of these can be found in Wellington today? and Identifying Author's Purpose: The author wrote the article mainly to...".

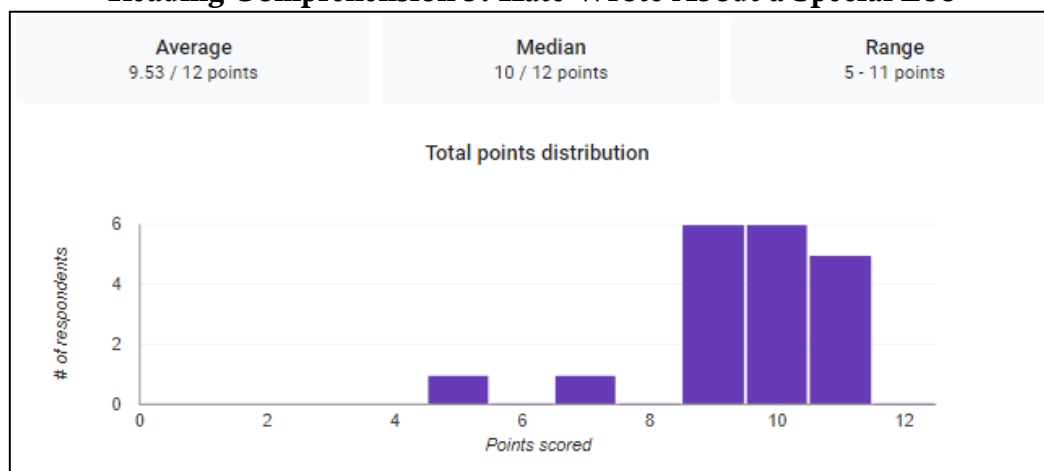**Reading Comprehension 3: Kate Wrote About a Special Zoo**

Figure 3. *Overall Points Distribution of Reading Comprehension 3: Kate Wrote About a Special Zoo*

It shows that the overall average score of the respondents is 9.53 out of 12 points which is more than half of the respondents with a 5-to-11-points range.

Table 4. Frequently missed questions

Frequently Missed Questions		
Questions	Percentage	Total
Finding Main Idea: What is a good name for this story?	*0.00%*	*0*
	100%	*19*

In this third reading comprehension assessment, there is a specific strategy that none of the 19 respondents were able to answer correctly "Finding Main Idea" strategy, with a question asking for a good name of the story.

Table 5. Reading comprehension strategies

Reading Strategies	**Percentage**	**Total Correct Response**
1. Finding Main Idea: What is a good name for this story?	0.00%	0
2. Recalling Facts and Details: Which animal is not in Kate's Zoo?	100%	19
3. Understanding Sequence: The boxes tell some things about sparrows. What belongs in the empty box?	100%	19
4. Recognizing Cause and Effect: Why are the animals in Kate's Zoo lucky?	94.7%	18
5. Comparing and Contrasting: What is one way the city zoo is different from Kate's Zoo?	84.2%	16
6. Making Predictions: What will happen next year when the weather gets warm?	78.9%	15
7. Finding Word Meaning in Context: You can tell that a sparrow is a kind of	100%	19
8. Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences: You can tell those ants are	68.4%	13
9. Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion: Which of these tells something that can be proved?	68.4%	13
10. Understanding Author's Purpose: Why did Kate write the story?	68.4%	13
11. Interpreting Figurative Language: Kate writes "I am not kidding." What does she mean?	100%	19
12. Distinguishing Between Real and Make-believe: Which of these could not really happen?	89.5%	17

There are four reading strategies that were answered perfectly by the 19 (100%) respondents namely, "Recalling Facts and Details: Which animal is not in Kate's Zoo?", "Understanding Sequence: The boxes tell some things about sparrows. What belongs in the empty box?", "Finding Word Meaning in Context: You can tell that a sparrow is a kind of", and "Interpreting Figurative Language: Kate writes "I am not kidding." What does she mean?". There is one question that none of the respondents were able to answer correctly which is "Finding Main Idea" strategy, with a question asking for a good name of the story.
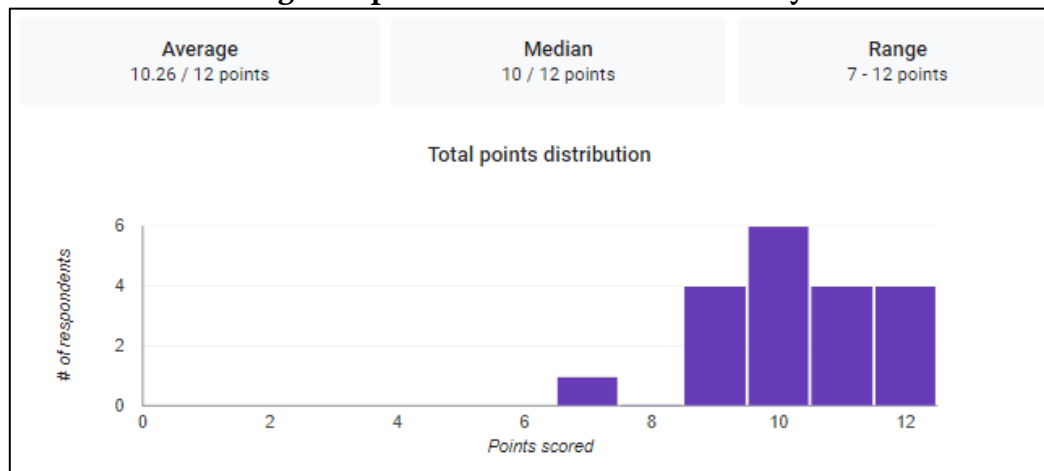
Reading Comprehension 4: Email written by Carl.

Figure 4. *Overall Points Distribution of Reading Comprehension 4: Email written by Carl.*

It shows that the overall average score of the respondents is 10.26 out of 12 points which is close to perfect with a 7-to-12-points range.

Table 6. Reading comprehension strategies

Reading Strategies	Percentage	Total Correct Response
1. Finding Main Idea: What is the email mostly about?	100%	19
2. Recalling Facts and Details: Who was on Carl's football team?	94.7%	18
3. Understanding Sequence: Which of these happened first?	84.2%	16
4. Recognizing Cause and Effect: Grandfather left the party because	100%	19
5. Comparing and Contrasting: How are the twins different?	94.7%	18
6. Making Predictions: What will Aunt Sarah probably do at next year's family barbecue?	52.6%	10
7. Finding Word Meaning in Context: In the email, the word annual means	100%	19
8. Drawing Conclusions and Making Inferences: What did Carl probably enjoy most?	78.9%	15
9. Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion: Which of these is a fact?	78.9%	15
10. Identifying Author's Purpose: Why did the author probably use an email to talk about Carl and his family?	68.4%	13
11. Interpreting Figurative Language: The phrase pipe down means	89.5%	17
12. Distinguishing Between Real and Make-believe: Which of these events could not happen at the barbecue?	84.2%	16

There are three questions that 19 (100%) respondents answered perfectly namely, "Finding Main Idea: What is the email mostly about?", "Recognizing Cause and Effect: Grandfather left the party because...", and "Finding Word Meaning in Context: In the email, the word annual means". The least percentage of the respondents who answered it correctly with 10 (52.6%) is "Making Predictions: What will Aunt Sarah probably do at next year's family barbecue?".

The strategy that emerged as the most frequently used to help the readers in comprehending the material and answering the questions correctly is the strategy "Finding Word Meaning in Context" followed by the other two as a potential strategy in reading comprehension namely understanding sequence and making predictions. It also helps students to improve vocabulary mastery (Firman et al., 2021; Baiq-Sumarni et al., 2022; Jupri et al., 2022).

Table 7. Reading comprehension placement test number 1

Time Taken	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 1 minute	*0*	*0.00%*
1 minute- 3 minutes and 60 seconds	*2*	*7.69%*
4 minutes- 6 minutes and 60 seconds	*13*	*50%*
7 minutes- 9 minutes and 60 seconds	*7*	*26.92%*
10 minutes- 12 minutes and 60 seconds	*3*	*11.53%*
13 minutes- 15 minutes and 60 seconds	*0*	*0.00%*
15 minutes and beyond	*1*	*3.84%*

The reading comprehension assessment was conducted with the employment of time duration with a limit of 15 minutes. However, the readers can exceed this time depending on the pace of their comprehension. In reading comprehension placement test 1, it shows that half the number of readers 13(50%) finished the test between the time range from 4 minutes to 6 minutes and 60 seconds.

Table 8. Reading comprehension placement test number 2

Time Taken	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 1 minute	*0*	*0.00%*
1 minute- 3 minutes and 60 seconds	*3*	*11.11%*
4 minutes- 6 minutes and 60 seconds	*6*	*22.22%*
7 minutes- 9 minutes and 60 seconds	*7*	*25.92%*
10 minutes- 12 minutes and 60 seconds	*7*	*25.92%*
13 minutes- 15 minutes and 60 seconds	*2*	*7.40%*
15 minutes and beyond	*1*	*3.70%*

In reading comprehension placement test 2, it shows that the emerging number of readers was divided into two sets of 7(25.92%) readers with the time range from 7 minutes to 9 minutes and 60 seconds and from 10 minutes to 12 minutes and 60 seconds. In general, the results above show that reading teachers among the sample there are three strategies, though more than half of them got correctly manifested the lowest frequency with the correct answers. Identifying author's purpose, making predictions, and drawing conclusions were among those weak points among the participants.

It is important that teachers of reading have necessary improved skills in this macro aspect of learning. Teachers training program must be intensified and provided with more access to training and professional courses (Kraut, Chandler, & Hertenstein, 2016). This can enable them to higher their self-efficacy in relation to reading strategies that are taught

in the classroom. It is in line with Haerazi and Irawan (2019) who argue English teachers should have teaching skills in order to provide students with various reading texts and reading strategies.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Reading comprehension has 12 identified strategies that are useful in analyzing and understanding reading material. It is found that readers can effectively comprehend when they use the following strategies namely, finding word meaning in context, understanding sequence, and making predictions. In the four series of assessments, it shows that there are varied ways of comprehending a material that might directly influence the duration and time limit allocated in reading and answering the material, the recurring events of the same material used, and the scheduling of reading comprehension tests.

This study is a description of how the different strategies were utilized and effectively aid the readers in comprehending and analyzing the reading material, which allowed the researchers to tabulate and present in clear manner. For future studies, it is recommended that researchers must look into the employment of the range of time limit and duration in answering and comprehending the material. The increasing and consistent difficulty of the reading material are also advised to be used in order to understand how these strategies can shortcut the time of answering a question thru enhanced comprehension. The recency of the content used places also a very crucial part of reading comprehension where it helps the readers to be more familiar with the concept and the ideas of the material.

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