

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION TO SECOND LANGUAGE**

**LEARNERS: A CASE OF RASHADIYYA ISLAMIC JHS**

**ABDUL RAZAK SALIFU BANSE**



**MASTER OF EDUCATION**

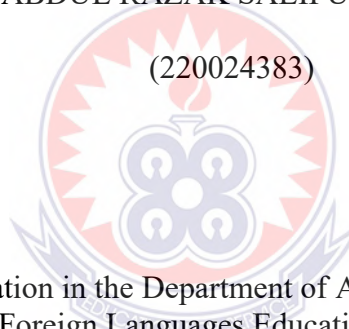
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TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION TO SECOND LANGUAGE  
LEARNERS: A CASE OF RASHADIYYA ISLAMIC JHS

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(220024383)



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## DECLARATION

### Student Declaration

I, Abdul Razak Salifu Banse, declare that this dissertation, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

### Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of this dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Supervisor's Name:.....

Signature: .....

Date: .....

## **DEDICATION**

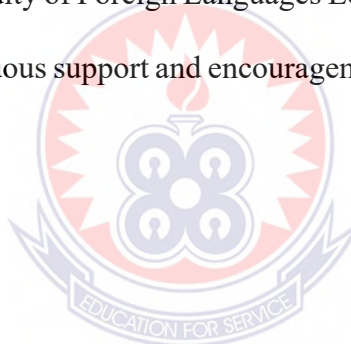
I dedicate this work to the memory of my late parents.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

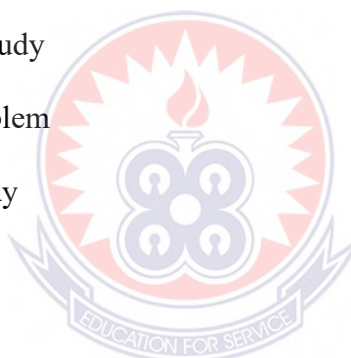
I am grateful to everyone who helped me with this project by providing support and encouragement along the way. The Linguistics Department at the University of Education has been supportive throughout my program. The Department has been generous with their time and ideas and I am especially grateful to Professor Rebecca Akpanglo-Nartey who approved the topic on time for me to start the project I am extremely grateful to my supervisor, Professor Rebecca Akpanglo- Nartey for her patience with me. I would like to thank the headteacher of Rashadiyya Islamic JHs and all teachers of the school for their support and encouragement.

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to enhance reading comprehension skills in students of Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School. The objectives of the study are; to identify challenges students encounter in reading comprehension, adopt effective comprehension strategies to overcome challenges students encounter in reading comprehension and identify effects of challenges on the performance of students. The study adopted the qualitative research approach with an interview guide and observation technique. The sample is made up of thirty-six (36) students drawn from one hundred and forty-seven students. The findings of the study showed that the phonic technique, which is commonly used for teaching reading at all levels, is the greatest strategy for teaching students to enhance their reading comprehension. It further showed that students face various levels of difficulties which include mispronunciation and word substitution; skipping and omitting words while reading, a limited grasp of English alphabet and sounds. The study concludes that reading difficulties faced by Basic 8 students of Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School could be significant barriers to the development of effective reading comprehension skills among the students. The study recommends that English Language teachers of Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School should facilitate students learning using phonic method of teaching reading.



## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

Reading comprehension is key to educational success. However, most students struggle with it on a daily basis. In order for students to comprehend or understand reading materials, it is helpful to look at the effective strategies of teaching reading comprehension.

Reading activity is characterized by the translation of symbols or letters into words and sentences that make meaning to the reader. The main aim of reading is to be able to understand written materials, evaluate it and to use it for one's needs. Reading comprehension is the process through which readers engage a text and extract meaning from it. Tindall and Nisbet (2010) call reading comprehension the focus of all reading engagement because readers need to be able to read text fluently, have sufficient prior knowledge and vocabulary, and be able to apply strategies when reading. Some limitations to L2 reading comprehension include limited vocabulary knowledge, unfamiliar content, and limited knowledge of L2 Language structures.

In addition, cultural and social elements related to language might also be a limitation to reading comprehension because values, experiences, beliefs, and concepts can vary across languages and cultures. Different studies suggest that L2 readers may benefit from working with culturally familiar texts (Kamil et al., 2000) because reading comprehension is enhanced in children and adult readers when they read culturally familiar content.

## 1.1 Background of the Study

Reading comprehension is a challenge to many students at the Junior High School and that usually results in low performance in the core subject of which English Language is one of them. According to Williams (1990), reading is the process of constructing meaning through the dynamic interaction among the reader, the text and the context of the reading situation. Reading process involves visual motor skills and perception of the symbol by the brain. It is generally broken down into two reading' the words, or decoding and understanding what is read or comprehension (Williams, 1990). This study used the definition according to LoBiondo-Wood and Haber (2014) that reading is an act of simultaneously reading the lines, reading between the lines, reading beyond the lines. Reading the lines is process of decoding the words in order to reconstruct the author's basic message. Reading between the lines is the process of making inferences in order to reconstruct the author's implied messages. This requires an understanding of the integral logic of facts presented as well as an understanding of connotative and figurative language. Reading beyond the lines is the process of judging the significance of the author's message and constructively applying it to other areas of knowledge and experience.

As a result of the problem, a lot of efforts in terms of workshops, departmental meetings were organized in order to find an appropriate remedy to this challenge. The school also invited various resource persons on several occasions to deliver lectures on ways of solving problems associated with reading comprehension in the school. The aim is to develop pupils interest in reading. A look at the performance of pupils in class exercises in reading comprehension, home work in English Language and other subjects, the school recorded in 2021 BECE, it was realized that the problem still persisted in spite of the efforts the Language Department put in place. It is against this

background that the researcher has decided to conduct a study in order to resolve this challenge.

This study is geared towards developing reading comprehension in pupils in Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School. There is no doubt that students' knowledge in reading comprehension has a bearing on their performance and their subsequent life after school. This assertion has been supported by Kamili, Mosenthal, Pearson and Barr (2000) who state that the impact of reading comprehension on our daily lives has never been as crucial as in our modern society today. Individuals use literacy skills very often to communicate relationship between complex concepts and knowledge. Considerable literature has documented some of the researches conducted on the state of reading. Notable among them is the research conducted by Duran in the 1990s, which were based literacy instructions and scientific studies of reading.

The researcher has come to know that effective strategies were missing in almost all efforts to resolve the problem of reading comprehension by teachers of English in Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School. It is common that some teachers at the Junior High School do not place emphasis on the key mechanisms for developing reading skills which can help in addressing difficulties in learning to read. This is a problem that needs to be addressed seriously. How do we address challenges students encounter in reading comprehension? There are many ways to address reading comprehension challenges. One way is to teach students how to use effective comprehension strategies, such as making inferences.

In the past, several studies on lack of reading comprehension have been done by researchers. Prominent among them is the study of Duran in the 1990's. These studies were based on literacy instructions and scientific studies of reading. The

researchers carried out these studies in fourth and fifth grade classrooms in New York. The studies concluded the following.

In general, learners were given the opportunity to practice skills, but were not actually taught the strategies on how to apply them. They observed only rare instances of comprehension instruction, with a great deal of testing but very little explicit meta cognitive awareness. There was almost complete absence of direct instructions about comprehension strategies as well as little evidence that students were being taught to self-regulate comprehension problems as they read. (Durkin, 1985).

Empirical research indicates that in many reading classrooms, students have received inadequate instructions on reading skills and strategies (Morrison, 2004). There is lack of connection between reading instruction and reading activity. A very practical way to understand both the distinction between strategies and skills and their interaction is to think about the sport of a basketball. Player practices different types of shots-three-point play, hak-shots and dunk. They work on different types of dribbling from pull back to crossover to behind the back. All of these skills become automatic with practice, just as reading skills become automatic. But skills are not sufficient to win the game. Players also need to play strategically by looking at which shot makes the most sense. Reading the court and players is key to knowing which play to make. The same is true with reading. The fundamental skills of reading are necessary but not sufficient. Skills must work in partnership with strategies. Skills are used automatically while strategies are used thoughtfully and intentionally. Like basketball shots, main idea, sequencing, compare and contrast and other reading skills need to be learned and practiced. They are fundamental skills that enable the reader to use comprehension strategies effectively. For example, understanding the concept of main ideas underlines summarizing. The teacher's emphasis is often put on the production of comprehension

rather than on the processing skills (Williams, 1990). Developing good reading comprehension is more than just thinking about how to make meaning of it, students are also to be taught specific skills that are essential to reading comprehension. These include: phonological skills, knowledge of the structure of the text, flunky and vocabulary.

Most students find reading comprehension as a difficult task. The reason for this assertion is that most students do not even think about the content of the material nor even ask questions about new words and concepts. This makes it difficult for the students to understand what they read, hence the need to undertake this study to help solve the problem. Reading comprehension skills are essential in education success of learners or students. Without adequate reading comprehension skills, students will struggle in many subject areas of school.

Subjects, other than reading or literature, where comprehension skills are significantly needed include Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Science, Social studies, Religious and Moral Education, Mathematics, Economics etc. In the area of science, research indicates that many students lack prior knowledge and reading strategies to generate inferences, thus, the student comprehend science texts poorly. It is also found that student lack the specific reading strategies to generate inferences that aid in the understanding of science texts.

This shows how important reading is in the learning of all subjects in the school system. The onus is on teachers to ensure that students who face challenges in reading comprehension are given the necessary assistance.

In fact, many students in Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School have problems in reading comprehension. Therefore, there is the need to investigate the strategies that could be adopted to curb these challenges that the students face.



## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

According to Lerner (2006), a number of learners, for unexplained reasons, are unable to use reading as a tool for learning getting new information, ideas, attitudes and values from JHS one upwards. Even after they have been taught, it is quite unfortunate that a large number (17.5 per cent) of them are unable to read efficiently at higher class levels (Laurel & Brinton, 2012). According to Nisbet (2010), between 10 per cent and 15 per cent of school -going learners have reading challenges.

According to studies conducted by Kispal (2008) and Njoroge (2000), learners with reading problem in English have problems in school performance in general. This study is therefore aimed at investigating the problems Mispronunciation and skipping of words by students of Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School face in reading comprehension and find a workable means of developing reading comprehension among them. A very important life skill appears to be at risk. Reading is a basic life and lack of it affects students' academic growth. Reading is the cornerstone of a learner's success in school and consequently through life.

Without the ability to read effectively, opportunities for personal fulfillment and job success inevitably will be lost (Alderson, 2000). Reading is the heart and soul of learning. A students' success or failure at every level of education resonates throughout the rest of their lives. According to Illinois State Board of Education, 1997, a child's opportunity to succeed in life depends on the right to read. In modern days, helping students acquire and develop stronger literacy abilities is a prime goal of teaching. Students have to develop the ability to read in order to gain access to knowledge, enjoy literature and engage in daily activities. It is also important for them to make use of the input from reading to produce writing. In order to teach reading, teachers have to know what reading processes are.

Students of Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School have problems with reading comprehension. Most of the students cannot identify and bring out the information in a written text because they do not understand the text. Though this has been a problem for a long time, research carried out in the school have not been able to address this challenge. This problem continues to affect students' performance in the school .one may want to know how this poor understanding of text came about. Pupils and students fail to pay attention to what they at the initial stages. Teachers of English are also part of the problem. Many teachers are not trained to teach English language. For the fact that a teacher wants a school or vacancy, he or she will accept any subject given him or her including English. As to whether he or she can teach the subject is another matter and.in the end, it is the poor student who suffers. When it happens this way, the student will not be able to perform well in the English Language and that will affect students' performance in many subjects.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The current study was guided by the following research objectives:

1. To identify challenges students of Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School encounter in reading comprehension.
2. Identify effects of challenges on performance of students.
3. To adopt effective comprehension strategies to overcome challenges students encounter in reading comprehension.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

The following questions were formulated to guide data collection to achieve the objectives of the study.

1. What challenges do students of Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School encounter in reading comprehension?
2. What are the effects of challenges on students' performance?
3. What strategies can best be adopted to improve performance in reading comprehension?

### **1.5 Limitations**

The study has two limitations: limitation of time and limitation of resources. The research could not be carried on the entire school population as a result of the fact that the researcher did not have enough time. A larger group of people would have yielded more valid and reliable findings than using the reduced number of participants. Due to the small number of participants and lack of diversity, this study was not generalizable to the entire population of Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School.

Another limitation of this study is lack of resources to engage the entire district population instead of using only one school in the district for the study. Owing to resource limitation, the research was carried out in one school and that does not allow generalization of the study.

### **1.6 Delimitation**

Out of the many aspects of English Language such as grammar, Oral Language, Writing Literature and Reading Comprehension studied, at the Junior High School, the researcher limited himself to teaching of reading comprehension. Also, there are numerous Junior High Schools in the Sekyere South District; however, the researcher only targeted students of only Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School. The result would have been more appropriate if the research was carried out in all the schools in the district where the problem persists.

### **1.7 Organization of the Study**

This study is divided into chapters; Chapter one deals with the introduction of the study, the background, statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, significance of the study, research questions, delimitation, limitation as well as organization of the study. Chapter two reviews the related literature on enhancing reading comprehension while Chapter three discusses the methodology used in the study, population, sample and sampling procedure, research design, instrumentation, and data analysis. The fourth chapter discusses the analysis of data obtained from the study as well as discussions. Finally, chapter five discusses the summary, conclusion as well as recommendation for future research.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews current literature related to this study. The chapter looks at reading comprehension and effective strategies that can be adopted for effective reading comprehension. The chapter also reviews literature on challenges that students face in reading and comprehension as well as effects of challenges on performance in reading and comprehension.

#### **2.2. Challenges Encountered by Students during Reading and Comprehension**

##### **2.2.1 Medical Condition or Difficulty**

Poor reading comprehension skills may be related to medical condition that does not get addressed until the child is older. This involves attention deficit disorder (ADD), speech problem and hearing impairment. Hollowell (2013) finds that medical problems are challenges that affect the learners' reading comprehension.

##### **2.2.2 Decoding or Word Recognition**

Decoding or word recognition has an impact on learners' reading comprehension. Readers who have problems in decoding and recognizing words find it difficult to understand the meaning of passages faster than those who should guess the meaning of unfamiliar words according to the clues of context. Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) indicate that decoding or word recognition pose challenges to students during reading and comprehension.

##### **2.2.3 Anxiety**

Anxiety is also a challenge that affects the learner reading comprehension. Assignment, examinations; class work situations may put pressure on the learners'

reading and comprehension. Learners react differently towards examinations, as some react positively while others are overwhelmed by the pressure to perform a reading activity (Downing & Lock, 2006).

One of the most common reading problems teachers encounter, is students who are struggling with phonological dyslexia. If an individual has a hard time hearing sounds come together to make up words, they will inevitably struggle to sound out a word's written, or spell it correctly in writing.

Poor Comprehension, there is a lot going on in reading from letter and word recognition to understanding meaning at the phrase, sentence and paragraph level. When a beginner reader encounters vocabulary, they do not know or do not recognize due to inaccurate decoding they are likely to skip ahead. The more blanks a line of text, the harder it is to make meaning and the more cognitively challenging frustrating the reading and task becomes. That is why poor comprehension can result when a limited vocabulary or attempts to read a text that is too high or above the level of the learner. For example, giving a basic one pupil a text meant for JHS one.

However, reading also requires being able to pay attention to narrative. Students need to identify gist, main ideas, and specific details and even make references about what they are reading. If a student has problems staying focused as a result of attention difficulties, it can affect comprehension speed, the more students read, the more they encounter unfamiliar terms. Quite often the context in which these new words are found gives children all of the clues they need to guess at the meaning. As students expand their vocabulary, they recognize more words by sight and reading speeds up. Students who continue to decode may benefit overlearning sight words. Sight words are common words that pupils recognize instantly without sounding them out. Recognizing words by sight helps pupils to become faster, and more fluent readers. Students today are faced

with ever increasing demands to read and read well. McNamara and Kendeou (2011) stress the importance of reading as a process and that strategy instruction has been found to impact student appreciation of reading as a process, the goal of which is to understand what is being read. But the ultimate objective of comprehension instruction should be student ownership of the strategies and how to address the problem and repair the breakdown. Teaching students to use a repertoire of comprehension strategies and skills can set them securely on the path to becoming lifelong readers. Many opportunities to read independently allow students to begin to coordinate the strategies they have learned; to adjust modify or change strategies and skills until they are able to make sense of text.

The higher order thinking of strategic readers also enhances their reading experience and responses to literature and informational text. And once students take it one step further-they take what they know, apply it to the unknown, and become creative thinkers who are able to assess problems from the comfortable position of knowing they have the skills and can acquire the knowledge they need to solve any comprehension problem they encounter when they are reading. Some challenges students encounter in reading comprehension is; limited vocabulary knowledge, unfamiliar content, limited knowledge of L2 Language structures. Cultural and social elements related to language might also be a challenge in reading comprehension because values, experiences, beliefs, and concepts can vary across cultures. Different studies suggest that L2 readers may benefit from working with culturally familiar context (Asikhia, 2010) because reading comprehension is enhanced in children and adult readers when they are in culturally familiar environment.

#### **2.2.4 Summarizing**

The process of summarizing requires the reader to determine what is important when reading and to condense the information in the reader's own words (Adler, 2001). During the Summarizing process, the students will be able to distinguish the main ideas from the supporting ideas. Summarizing is a strategy which helps the students to organize the ideas even in the long reading passages which are usually perceived as threat for the student

Readers can use the questioning before, during and after reading. The questioning process requires readers to ask questions of themselves to construct meaning, enhance understanding, find answers, solve problems, find information and discover new information (Harvey, & Goudvis, 2000). In this strategy, the students refer to the text throughout the reading process to find the answers to the questions asked by the teacher before, during and after the reading. By this strategy, students practice to distinguish between questions that are factual, inferred, or based on the reader's prior knowledge. By using the students generated questioning strategy, text segments are integrated and thereby improve reading comprehension (Nisbet, 2010).

#### **2.2.5 Inferring**

Inferring refers to reading between the Lines. Students need to use their own knowledge along with information from the text to draw their own conclusions (Serafini, 2004). Through inferring, students will be able to draw conclusions, make predictions, identify underlying themes, use information to create meaning from text and use pictures to create meaning (Harvey & Goudvis, 2000). Students can be given techniques to use illustrations & graphs, pictures, data dates related Vocabulary and titles from the text to make inferences. Making inferences is sometimes referred to as a



strategy and sometimes as a skill. The National Reading Panel (2000) panel did not find research sufficient to consider it as a strategy.

A more recent literature review by Kispal (2008) also supports making inferences as a critical comprehension skill, one that is done automatically while reading. Regardless of whether inferencing is called a strategy or a skill, making inferences plays a key role in reading comprehension (McNamara and Kendeou, 2011), making inferences involves creating a meaning that is not explicitly stated by the writer. Readers use clues in the text in addition to their own personal insights and experiences to make meaning of the text making inferences is hallmark of good readers. Writers do not always provide complete and explicit descriptions of information about a topic a character, a thing, or an event. They do however, provide clues or suggestions that readers can use to read between the lines thus allowing the reader to infer based on the information in the text and the reader's own background knowledge. The ability to make inferences from given information in a text and from background information has been described as the heart of the reading process (Anderson & Pearson, 1984).

### **2.3. Effects of Reading Comprehension Challenges on Students' Performance**

Numerous studies documented in scholarly literature have corroborated the argument that difficulties in reading comprehension exert a variety of effects on students' academic performance. For instance, a study done by Akbaşlı, Şahin and Yaykiran (2016) on the effect of reading comprehension on the performance in science and mathematics within the context of Turkey concludes that inadequate proficiency in reading may slightly interfere with students' acquisition of arithmetic skills. The finding by Akbaşlı, Şahin, and Yaykiran (2016) implies that within the context of Turkey, a deficiency in reading comprehension can have a noticeable, albeit possibly minor,

impact on students' ability to acquire arithmetic skills. There is interconnectedness between reading comprehension and arithmetic skills, suggesting that proficiency in one can affect the acquisition of the other. Students who struggle with reading comprehension may find it challenging to understand mathematical problems, especially those presented in word problem format, potentially impacting their overall performance in mathematics. The finding underscores the role of language proficiency in learning and performing well in mathematics, a subject often not primarily associated with reading skills. Given that this study is contextual to Turkey, the generalizability of the findings to other educational contexts and systems might be limited, and similar studies in diverse settings would be beneficial.

According to Eastern Washington University (2022), reading comprehension is the foundation for all other academic skills. Students who struggle with reading comprehension may have difficulty learning other subjects. This suggests that the ability to understand written text, or reading comprehension, is fundamental to learning in all academic areas. The assertion further implies that having strong reading comprehension skills is essential for mastering not just reading but also other subjects, given that reading is a primary means by which information is conveyed in educational settings. Also, the challenges with reading comprehension are not isolated to reading or language arts; they can affect performance in subjects like science, mathematics, and social studies, where understanding written text is crucial. Hence, given that reading comprehension is foundational, students who struggle with it may need early intervention to prevent future academic difficulties in various subjects.

A similar study was conducted in Kenya by Karanja (2010) to determine the extent to which reading difficulties affect academic performance of secondary school students. The study objective was to establish comprehension errors that affect

students' academic performance. The study findings demonstrated that students who had more problems with word substitution, omission, mispronunciation and addition scored performed low academically in the end of the term on exam. The study also uncovered that student ignoring or misinterpreting punctuations while reading was another common problem experienced by majority of the teachers who participated in the study. The study concluded that poor readers have lower academic achievement and increased anxiety, including reading anxiety, which may perpetuate lower academic achievement.

In Ghana, Ampofo (2019) conducted a study that examined the impact of reading comprehension challenges on students' performance. The study identified two specific effects of these challenges on students' academic performance. As posited by Ampofo (2019), a notable effect of reading comprehension on students' academic achievement is the manifestation of difficulty understanding the material presented in class. Ampofo reported that students who face difficulties in reading comprehension struggled to understand the content presented in their textbooks or other reading materials. This phenomenon potentially impedes their ability to comprehend fundamental concepts and information, thereby resulting in lower academic performance in examinations and assignments. Another adverse effect is the diminished ability to retain information. According to Ampofo's (2019) research, students who encounter challenges in reading written material may experience difficulties in retaining the information for future utilization. This condition can potentially impede their ability to retrieve crucial information during examinations or when undertaking academic tasks, thereby leading to lower academic performance.

In a similar vein, Sumaila (2022) argued that pupils who demonstrate challenges in reading possess limited capacity for critical thinking. According to Sumaila, the

presence of difficulties in reading comprehension can impede pupils' capacity to analyze and evaluate information. Sumaila further expounded that such pupils may encounter difficulties in establishing links between different ideas or in drawing logical inferences from text in reading and comprehension. Consequently, the restricted development of their critical thinking abilities can have a detrimental effect on their ability to effectively engage in activities that necessitate higher-level thinking leading to poor academic performance.

In addition, Agbofa (2023) conducted a study aimed at assessing the impact of reading difficulties on the academic achievement of students in the New Juaben North Municipal of Ghana. This research was prompted by concerns regarding the declining academic performance of students in the New Juaben North Municipality. The study revealed significant negative correlations between various types of reading errors (such as Substitution: Substituting a word in the text with another word, e.g., reading "house" as "horse." Omission: Skipping or not recognizing a word in a sentence. Addition: Adding extra words or sounds that are not present in the text, and Consonant Reversal: Mixing up the order of consonants within a word, e.g., reading "was" as "saw") and students' comprehension, as these errors distorted the intended meanings of the text. The aforementioned incident was deduced to have resulted in a subsequent misinterpretation of the requirements demanded by examination questions, ultimately leading to poor academic performance among the students in the Municipality. Furthermore, the study uncovered that the lack of attention to punctuation presents a significant barrier to achieving the objectives of comprehension lessons.

By addressing these errors through targeted interventions, teachers can effectively facilitate the development of learners' reading proficiency. The selection of an appropriate intervention will be dependent on the specific characteristics and

underlying factors contributing to the reading errors. For instance, the rectification of phonetic errors might be achieved through the implementation of phonics instruction, whereas the resolution of comprehension errors may necessitate explicit instruction in comprehension strategies and the provision of regular opportunities for guided practice. Therefore, in order to effectively address reading comprehension challenges, it is imperative to teach reading comprehension skills and establish objectives that assist students in concentrating on the essential aspects of the text and retaining the necessary information. Teachers and parents can also employ various strategies in order to foster literacy and enhance reading comprehension. These may include the identification of specific areas in need of improvement within reading skills, followed by the implementation of targeted teaching or therapy to boost those specific skills.

#### **2.4 Strategies for Teaching Reading Comprehension**

According to National Reading Panel (2000), to be successful readers, L2 readers need to know approximately 98% of the vocabularies that are in the materials they read. This means that L2 readers need to have and use their knowledge of L2 vocabulary in order to function in a second language successfully.

Vocabulary development is aided by extensive reading in the L2 (Alderson, 2000; Constantino, Lee, Kyung-Sook & Stephen, 1997; Hinkel, 2006; Lervag & Aukrust 2010; Nisbet, 2010) because extensive reading offers learners exposure to new and old vocabulary. However, the process is gradual and may only become evident after a certain level of L2 proficiency, is achieved (Alderson, 2000). Consequently, for less proficient language learners, graded or simplified texts with controlled vocabulary may be preferable to support decoding (National Reading Panel, 2000), but they would offer few opportunities to learn new vocabulary. L2 readers may benefit from using cognates by drawing prior knowledge in their L1 when encountering new words in second

language (Tindall & Nisbet, 2010). However, the transfer of cognates requires a certain degree of awareness on the part of reader, as not all words look or sound alike are cognates. False cognates may be a source of misunderstanding and confusion for L2 readers.

In addition, the transfer of L1 to L2 vocabulary does not occur when the writing systems of the two are different (Asikhia, 2010; Hinkel, 2006) such as Chinese and Hebrew. In a study that looked at depth of L2 vocabulary knowledge, Njoroge (2000) used think aloud protocols to identify the degree and types of strategies used by the readers to derive word meaning from context. The study found out there was significant relationship between depth of vocabulary knowledge, strategy use and success. L2 readers who had stronger vocabulary knowledge utilize certain strategies, such as inferencing, more frequently compared to readers who had weaker vocabulary knowledge, and depth of vocabulary had a significant contribution to success.

In addition to predicting the use of strategies and facilitating reading comprehension, vocabulary knowledge has been found to be strongly related to learner ability to read and acquire new information from texts in both L1 and L2 (Nagy, 1997, Parry, 1997; Roit, 2005; Wesche & Paribakht, 1999). For example Pulid ,(2003) found that vocabulary knowledge was correlated with incidental vocabulary gains from reading. Other studies related to L2 reading vocabulary found that vocabulary makes a greater contribution to L2 reading comprehension than grammar (Asikhia, 2010; Brisbois, 1995). The fact that reading in a second language is a difficult task for most second language learners had been well established. This skill is generally considered to be of a highly individual nature; that is, no two readers approach or process a written text in exactly the same way. Nevertheless, there are general factors that have an impact on reading comprehension. Much work has been done to increase our understanding of

the influences of factors such as strategy choices and background knowledge on second language reading comprehension (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016).

The present study or my work aims to establish challenges students encounter in reading comprehension and to adopt effective comprehension strategies to overcome the challenges. Davis (1968), cited in Alderson (2000), defines eight sub skills. They are recalling word meanings, drawing inferences about the meaning of a word in context, finding answers to questions answered explicitly or in paraphrase, weaving together ideas in the content, drawing inferences from the content, recognizing a writer's purpose, attitude, tone, and mood, identifying a writer's technique, following the structure of a passage. According to Morrison (2004), readers who make predictions and inferences before, during and after they read are actively engaged in the meaning-making process. Darus (2017) proposes the following six component elements in the fluent reading process. They are automatic recognition skills, vocabulary and structural knowledge, formal discourse structure knowledge and skills monitoring. Morrison (2004) on the other hand, distinguishes many reading micro skills, the most relevant micro skills are; deducing the meaning and use of unfamiliar lexical items, understanding information when not explicitly stated, understanding the communicative value of sentences, distinguishing the main idea from supporting details, using basic reference skills, skimming and scanning to locate specifically required information.

Anderson (2000) pointed out the importance of learners' ability to identify the main idea as one of the most important reading skills that a learner can develop. Its importance stems from the fact that this skill is needed and can be applied to the majority of reading contexts. Equally important is the fact that by identifying the main idea comprehension can be facilitated, that is where the L2 reader can organize the

information presented and distinguish main ideas from supporting ideas and details

What is reading comprehension? Reading comprehension is the process through which readers engage a text and extract meaning from it. Tindall and Nisbet (2010) call reading comprehension the focus of all reading engagement because readers need to be able to apply strategies when reading. Some limitations to L2 reading comprehension are limited vocabulary knowledge, unfamiliar content and limited knowledge of L2 limited knowledge of L2 language structures. Reading comprehension is the most complex behaviour in which we engage. These comprehension skills are important for the entire subject, sometimes students are unable to decide that it may only be useful for literature subject. A typical JHS Student is unable to deeply comprehend what he reads. Most students have few if any intellectual tools that would enable them to read deeply, and then come out with the meaning of the text.

Reading comprehension is the process application of a skill that evolved for other purpose (listening or oral comprehension) to a new form of (text) unlike listening comprehension, reading comprehension is not something for which our brains have evolved. Whereas oral comprehension seems to develop naturally with minimal deliberate intention. Humans have accomplished oral comprehension for 100,000 years or more (Downing & Lock, 2006) and virtually all humans do it, reading comprehension has only been practiced for 5000 years, and humans for most of that time the majority of humans did not do it (Ellis, 1995). It should not be surprising that reading comprehension poses challenge to many students of our time. The application of comprehension to text amplifies our mental capacities. It is fundamental to full participation in society, now and foreseeable future. Reading is a lifelong skill to be used both at school and throughout life. According to Anderson (1999), cornerstone for



a child's success in school and throughout life. Without the ability to read well, opportunities for personal development will be lost.

Despite its importance, reading is one of the most challenging areas of literacy in the education system. Students' attitudes regarding the purposes for reading also influence their ability to read. If students want to get the most out of the materials they are assigned, they must learn to read critically and analytically. The idea is that when we read something, the purpose is to try and understand what the author's intention is. When dealing with reading, we encounter two layers of reality, one that we can see one we cannot see. Therefore, the purpose of reading is to make the invisible layer, the underlying meaning, visible and clear. Klingner and Vaughn (1996) asserts that the goal of all readers should be to understand what they read. Research shows good readers are actively involved with the text, and they are aware of the processes they use to understand what they read. Teachers can help improve student comprehension through instruction of reading strategies. Predicting, using prior knowledge, identifying the main idea and summarization, questioning, making inferences, visualizing story maps, retelling are strategies shown by research to improve reading comprehension (Asikhia, 2010). It is important to teach the strategies by naming the strategy and how it should be used, modeling through the think aloud process, group practice, partner practice and independent use of the strategy (Duffy, 2002).

Results from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) places Mexico at the lower end of a list of 32 countries in the evaluation of students' reading ability. Research suggests that students' reading comprehension can be improved by the direct teaching of reading strategies. Previous studies analysing the effectiveness of strategy training have demonstrated that comprehension can be

enhanced by making students aware of their thinking while reading, and by teaching them to monitor their understanding (Villanueva, 2014).



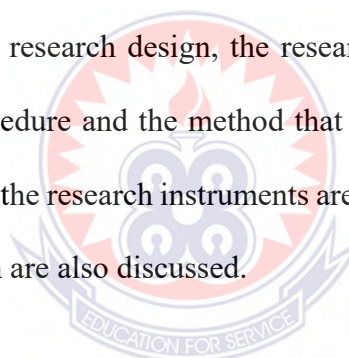
## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the methodology employed in the collection, transcription, coding and analysis of the data that formed the basis for discussing effective strategies of teaching reading comprehension at the Junior High School in chapter four.

The methodology also describes the nature of the data and what methods and procedures were used to collect and process them to arrive at the conclusion of this study. The researcher adopts qualitative research as a tool for data collection. This chapter also outlines the research design, the research method, the population under study, the sampling procedure and the method that was used to collect the data. The reliability and validity of the research instruments are addressed. Ethical considerations pertaining to the research are also discussed.



#### **3.1 Research Design**

Research design refers to the way information is gathered from subjects. It can also be described as the overall plan for collecting data in order to answer the research questions. It is also the specific data analysis techniques or method that the research intends to use in the study of Asamoah-Gyimah and Duodu (2007). Burns and Grove (2003) define a research design as a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control over factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings. In this study, the researcher employed descriptive approach. Descriptive method is the phase or steps that choose to answer the problem of the research based on honest facts on the square

of research populations. A qualitative descriptive method is considered inappropriate to identify the particular nature in the problem of the research (Doyle, 2019).

Parahoo (1997) describes a research design as a plan that describe how, when and where data are to be collected and analyzed. A research design could be defined as the researcher's overall for answering the research question or testing the research hypothesis. Research is the process of planning and structuring the format of the research to elicit valid and reliable information. It involves the arrangement. The situation in which the practices are carried out. It is most rational empowering which undertaking by participants collaboratively sometimes in cooperation with outsiders, (Kemmis, 1985).

Looking at the various definitions, the researcher adopted definitions by Kemmis as a working definition because it is obvious that qualitative research is simply a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and integrity of their own practices and to improve the situations in which the practices are carried out.

Qualitative research is appropriate for this research as it focuses on participants who recognize the existence of shortcomings and who like to adopt some initial stands as regards to the problem, formulate a plan carry out an intervention, evaluates the outcomes and develop further strategies in an interactive fashion (Hopkins, 1985).

The evolution of an Action Research agenda with education has been influenced by Hopekins (1985) and others. Action Research has been the primary intent of providing a framework for qualitative investigations by teachers and researchers in complex. It also represents a growing field of educational research whose identifying characteristics is the recognition of pragmatic requirements of educational practitioners for organized reflective enquires into classroom instructions. It is designed to empower

all participants in the educational system such as students, instructors and other parties with the means to improve the practices conducted with the educational experience (Hopkins 1985).

Action research is a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social (including educational) situations in order to improve rationality and Justice of:

- a. Their own social or educational practices
- b. Their understanding of these practices and others.

### **3.2. Research Site**

Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School was established in 1994 by the Elders of the community and the District Assembly. It was absorbed by the Ghana Education Service in the same year. There are eleven teachers in the school comprising six males and five females. The student population is one hundred and forty- seven students. This is made up of eighty (80) males sixty-seven (67) females. Their ages range from twelve to sixteen year's. The total population of the school, teachers and students is 158. Population refers to a group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common and an interest to the researcher (Best & Kahn, 2006). This involves the total of all object or members that conform to a set of specification. The data was collected from Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School. The school has a population of hundred and forty-seven (147) students and eleven teachers eighty males and sixty-seven females, six male teachers and five female teachers

### **3.3 Data Collection Protocol**

The researcher wrote a letter to the headmaster of Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School to seek permission to use the school as his research site.

### **3.4 Population**

Population refers to “a group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common and an interest to the researcher” (Best & Kahn, 2006, p.13). This involves the totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conform to a set of specification. The data was collected from Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School. The total population of the school is one hundred and fifty -eight. There are eleven teachers in the school with six males and five females. The student population is one hundred and forty-seven, with sixty-seven females and eighty males. Their ages range from twelve to sixteen years.

### **3.6 Sample and Sampling Procedure**

The process of selecting a portion of the population to represent the entire population is referred to as sampling (LoBiondo-Wood & Haber, 2006). The sample is made up of thirty-six (36) students drawn from one hundred and forty-seven students. These students are made up of twenty males and sixteen female students. Their ages ranges from fourteen years are form two students. The sampling technique used in this study is purposive sampling. It is a group of non-probability sampling technique in which units are selected because they have characteristics that need in your sample. In other words, the units are selected on purpose.

### **3.5 Research Instrument**

According to Parahoo (1997), a research instrument is a tool used to collect data. An instrument is a tool designed to measure knowledge attitude and skills. It is a purposely designed through compilation of questions to elicit responses from respondents with the aim of collecting data. The researcher used observation, interviews and test to gather information.

### **3.5.1 Observation**

In order to provide accurate information needed for any study, one of the most common forms of research is direct observation (Harmer, 2001). The main advantage of direct observation is that only the researcher and the participants are involved, this allows the researcher to focus on participants' performance and learning routines while having in mind a clear objective for the observation.

In relation to the above, this researcher observed both the tutors of English Language as well as students during reading comprehension lessons. This was the activity that went through the project from pre – intervention stage to post intervention stage. The purpose was to determine the extent of the problems students faced regarding reading comprehension, and as a result, both intervention and post – intervention observation were used.

### **3.5.2 Interview**

Interviews are important strategies for data collection. It facilitates the gathering of essential information on past and present experiences relevant to the research problem. For the purposes of this study most of the information gathered was through structured face-to-face open-ended type for a better understanding of participants' needs, wants and a thicker body of structured face - to - face interview is its flexibility which avoids the rigid nature of questionnaires. On the other hand, the main disadvantage of open-ended interviews could be the difficulty that entails to table a large corpus of information. According to Weinstein, McDermott and Rediger (2010), the main advantages of doing structured interviews are:

### 3.5.3 Tests

Both reading as well as written drills of pre – test were given to the students as problem-solving test. The purpose was to find out the students’ potentials in terms of strong points and weak points. Their class works as well as assignment given by their teachers on reading comprehension were measured to enable the researcher come out with authentic results for the study.

### 3.6 Intervention

Instruction in specific strategies can help enhance students’ reading comprehension. Since reading is a strategic process, readers need to learn how to read strategically. It is when students internalize the strategies that they will be more likely to utilize them in other literacy activities. In an attempt to help solve reading comprehension. Based on the interactive approaches to second language reading, Carnine, Silbert and Kameenul (1990) mention three interventions to assist reading problems in students.

These are A. The top -down approach

B. The bottom -up approach

C. The interactive approach

The ability to read the written language at a reasonable rate with good comprehension has long recognized to be as important as oral skills, if not more important (Eskey, 1988), psycholinguistic model of reading (or top -down or concept driven model) showed that the reader is active, makes predictions process information and construct a message encoded by a writer. This was viewed as a substitute for the bottom-up perspective, but the schema theory makes clear, efficient and effective reading (in L1 and L2) and requires both top down and bottom-up strategies operating interactively, thus interactive model (Rumelhart, 1977). Both the top -down and



bottom-up processes, functioning, necessary to an adequate understanding of L2 reading and reading comprehension (Alderson, 2000).

#### A. Top-down Approach Concept Driven

The top-down approach include searching for meaning, selectively reacting to print, confirming or rejecting predictions made and emphasizes readers bringing meaning to text based on their prior knowledge (whole language). Top refers to higher order mental concept such as the knowledge and expectation of the reader.

#### B. The Bottom-UP (Serial) Approach

The bottom -up approach operates on the principle that the written text is hierarchically organized (that is on the graphophonic, phonemic, syllabic, morphemic, word and sentence levels) and that the first processes the smallest linguistic input (for example gradually compiling the smallest units to decipher and comprehend higher units such sentence syntax. The emphasis in this approach is on text processing. It stipulates that the meaning of any text must be decoded by the reader and that students are reading when they can sound out words on a page (phonics). It ignores helping emerging readers to recognize what they, as readers, bring to the information on the page. This model starts with the printed stimuli and works its way to the higher level stages the sequence of processing proceeds from the in -coming data to higher level encodings.

#### C. The interactive approach

The interactive approach essentially emphasizes parallel processing of the print it is amalgamation of the two processes (top-down and bottom-up). Interactive model (Rumelhart, 1977) stresses both what is on the written page and what a reader brings to it using both top -down and bottom -up skills.

### **3.7 Post-Intervention**

The strategies used during the post-interventions include testing, observation of students' performance in classroom as well as face-to-face interviews. The purpose is to find out the extent to which the interventions impacted in enhancing comprehension skills of the students of Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School. Thirty-six students were used to conduct the post intervention test. It was revealed that the strategies implemented had a good bearing on students' performance in the reading comprehension.

### **3.8 Data Analysis Plan**

The purpose for the data analysis was to make the interpretation very coherent and simple so that the problems could be understood by all stakeholders: students, teachers, parents as well as educational authorities. There was a critical examination of all responses to the instruments used in the study for the reason of objectivity.

Researchers have found that teaching reading strategies is important to developing increased student. Comprehension at the same time, they have found many teachers lack a solid foundation for teaching these reading comprehension strategies, (National Reading Panel, 2000). Therefore, teachers need to be prepared, through professional development or how to design effective comprehension strategies and how to teach these strategies to their students. Improving reading skills is a top priority for all educators, (McKown & Barnett, 2004). Regarding the problems and the requirements of comprehension, consequently, English teachers particularly the reading teachers need to provide appropriate teaching and learning process of expository texts by selecting and adapting appropriate teaching strategy that meet the requirements of comprehension and is attractive in solving problems in reading expository materials.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and associated discussions in two parts. The initial part of this chapter provides a description of the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The second part entails the presentation of research findings, which are organized into three distinct sections in alignment with the research questions. The analysis was conducted with reference to the study research questions listed below.

1. What challenges do students of Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School encounter in reading comprehension?
2. What strategies best improve performance in reading comprehension?
3. What are the effects of challenges on students' performance?

#### 4.1 Analysis of Demographic Data of Respondents

The data analysed in this section pertains to the demographic profile of the respondents who took part in the study. The study included a total of 36 participants (pupils) in basic 8 (JHS 2) at Rashadiyya Islamic JHS. All of the pupils participated in the interview as well as the pre-test and post-test. Demographic characteristics such as age and gender of pupils are presented.

## Demographic Data of Pupils

**Table 4.1: Gender Distribution of the Pupils**

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	20	55.6
Female	16	44.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field survey (2023)

Table 4.1 above shows that, out of the 36 pupil respondents, 20 representing 55.6% were males and 16 respondents representing 44.4% were females.

**Table 4.2: Age Range Distribution of the Pupils**

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
14 years and below	12	33.3
15 years	18	50.0
16 years and above	6	16.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field survey (2023)

The age distribution of the pupils as presented in Table 4.2 indicates that 18(50%) were 15 years of age. This was the age group with the highest pupil respondents. It is followed by 14 years and below, which accounted for 12 pupils representing 33.3% out of the 36 pupils used for the study. Age ranges 16 years and above registered 6 pupils representing 16.7%. This is an indication that most of the pupils who participated in the study were 15 years.

## 4.2 Presentation of Findings

### 4.2.1 Presentation of Pupils Pre-test Results

A table showing results of students in pretest, posttest I and posttest II

### 4.3: Pre-test

**Table 4.3: Pupils Pre-Test and their Scripts were Scored**

No.	Student Initials	Pre-Test
1	YS	28
2	MA	40
3	AS	60
4	AB	76
5	RT	40

**Table 4.3 continued**

No.	Student Initials	Pre-Test
6	SS	76
7	MIA	40
8	ZN	44
9	MH	52
10	BM	20
11	AST	68
12	FM	92
13	BK	40
14	IAR	84
15	RG	29
16	RF	48

17	IK	38
18	KK	48
19	RI	72
20	OY	36
21	KA	72
22	ZN	34
23	FK	40
24	OPK	16
25	JK	44
26	AA	32
27	SD	40
28	DK	28

**Table 4.3 continued**

29	CD	16
30	DI	32
31	PL	52
32	YG	50
33	SS	33
34	BA	30
35	KA	32
36	NO	60

Source: Field survey (2023)

Name = ASI Reading Comprehension.  
School = Jamasi Kacha digg - Islamic JHS 2  
Date = 14 - January - 2022

20%  $\frac{2}{10}$

Pre - Test JHS 2

Q1 What are children referred to today?  
Ans ~~Future leaders~~

Q2 What happens to children each day?  
Ans ~~Sexual abuse~~

Q3 What is the estimate of abused children?  
Ans Sexual abuse ~~X~~

Q4 What are some of things these molesters say to children?  
Ans If they ~~Thanks~~ they will die ~~X~~

Q5 What should you do when you are sexually abused?  
Ans If you stay with your parent ~~X~~

Q6 Mention some people who have been found to be molesters?  
Ans Nephew and ~~uncle~~

Rashaddiyya Islamic Joh. S. 2.

Reading Comprehension.

M. I. A

12-January  
2023

3/10

30%

1) What are children referred to today

Ans ~~For~~ ~~Features~~ Features ~~leaders~~ ✓

2) What happens to children each day?

Ans Sexual abuse ✓

3) What is the estimate of abused children?

Ans Sex ✓

4) What are some of things those molesters say to children?

Ans 'if you tell you will die' ✓

5) What should you do when you are sexually abused?

Ans you have to tell ✓

6) Mention some people who have been found to be molesters?



Reading Comprehension M.H. Rashadiyya Islamic School  
30% J.H.S  
3/10 Pre-Test JH.S 14-01-2023

1) What are Children referred to today?  
Ans: Future Leaders

2) What happens to Children each day?  
Ans: X

3) What is the estimate of abused Children?  
Ans: Sexual abused X

4) What are some of things these molesters say to Children?  
Ans: If they <sup>tell</sup> tang they will die

5) What should you do when you are sexually abused?  
Ans: <sup>should</sup> you stay with your parents X

6) Mention some people who have been found to be molesters?  
X

7) What are some societal reasons why molested Children keep silent?  
X

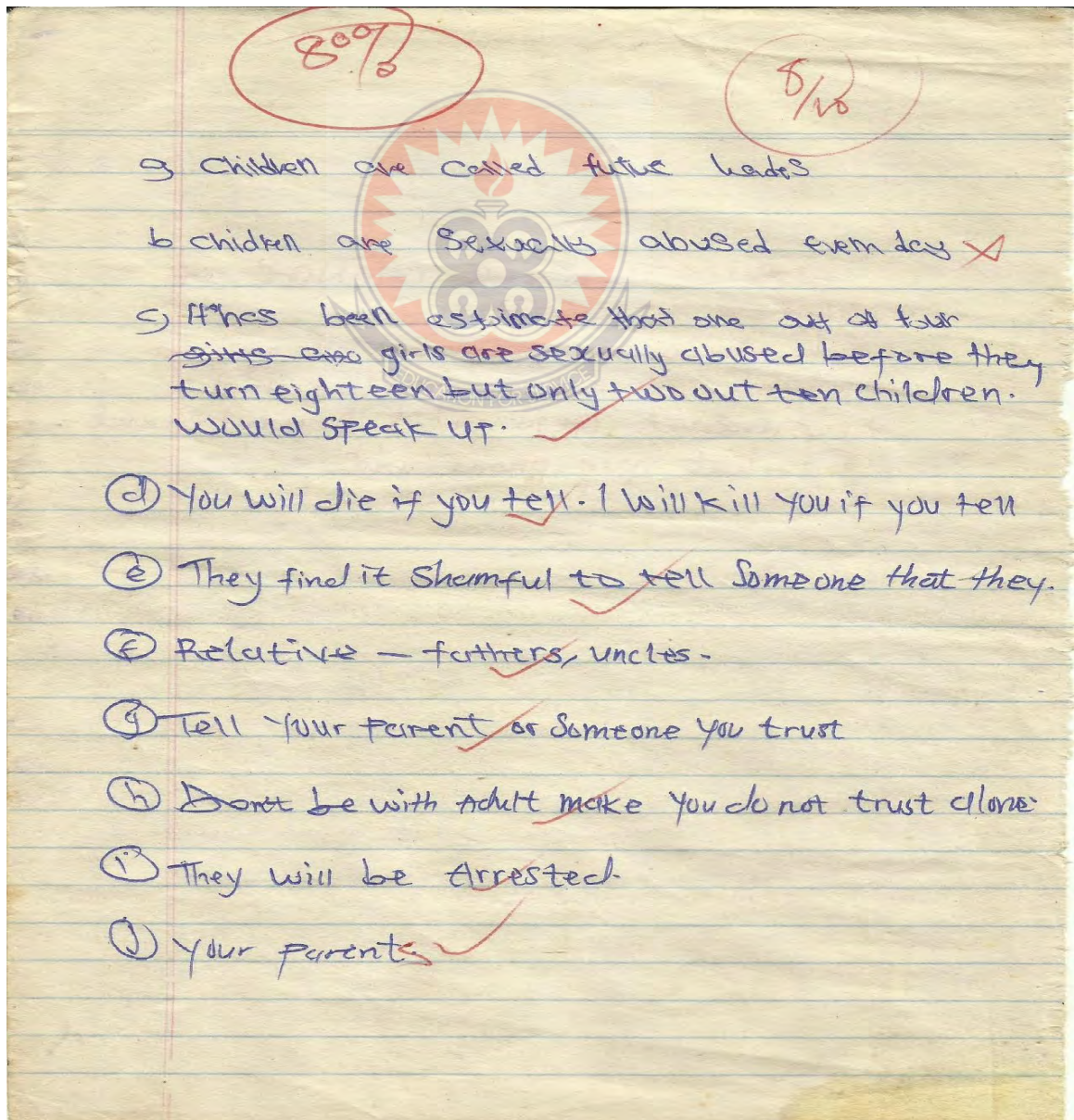
**Table 4.4: Pupils Post-test and their Scripts were Scored**

No.	Student Initials	Post-Test
1	YS	64
2	MA	56
3	AS	72
4	AB	78
5	RT	60
6	SS	76
7	MIA	64
8	ZN	56
9	MH	57
10	BM	84
11	AST	96
12	FM	76
13	BK	88
14	IAR	60
15	RG	66
16	RF	73
17	IK	76
18	KK	48
19	RI	49
20	OY	72
21	KA	76
22	ZN	36
23	FK	64
24	OPK	52
25	JK	56
26	AA	48
27	SD	80
28	DK	78
29	CD	60
30	DI	76

Table 4.4 Continued

No.	Student Initials	Post-Test
31	PL	60
32	YG	70
33	SS	80
34	BA	48
35	KA	58
36	NO	60

Source: Field survey (2023)



NAME: Munirat Badaru

90%

9/10

Post Test 1

- Q1) What are children referred to today?  
2) Children are called future leaders.
- Q2) What happens to children each day?  
2) Children are sexually abused everyday.
- Q3) What is the estimate of abused children?  
2) It has been estimated that one out of four girls are sexually abused before they turn eighteen but only two out of ten children would speak up.
- Q4) What are some of the things these molesters say to children?  
2) You will die if you tell - I will kill you if you tell.
- Q5) What are some societal reasons why molested children keep silence?  
2) They find it shameful to tell someone that they have been molested.
- Q6) Mention some people who have been found to be molesters.  
2) Relatives - fathers, uncles

ASmawu - Jakub

post-test II

15/16

100%  
19/11/2023

(A) What are children referred to today?

Ans Children are the future leaders

(B) What happens to children each day?

Ans Children are sexually abused every day.

(C) ~~It has~~ What is the estimate of abused children? It has been estimated that one out of four girls are sexually abused before they turn eighteen but only two out of children speak up.

(d) What are some of the things these molesters say to children

Ans You will die if you tell. I will kill you if you tell.

(E) What are some societal reasons why molested children keep silent?

Ans They find it shameful to tell someone that they have been molested.

(F) Mention some people who have been found to be molesters.

Ans ~~Relatives~~, fathers, uncles.

(g) What should you do when you are sexually molested?

### 4.3 Discussion of Results by Research Questions

The data gathered through the interviews underwent analysis and categorised into themes and sub-themes utilising the thematic analysis approach.

#### **Research Question1: What challenges do students of Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School encounter in reading comprehension?**

Research question one was addressed through the identification of specific difficulties faced by students at Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School, which have had an adverse impact on their reading and comprehension skills. Some of these difficulties identified include; mispronunciation and substitution of words, skipping and omitting words, limited understanding of sounds of the English alphabet, and inadequate vocabulary, difficult level of text (text above the level of students) among other difficulties.

The findings of research question one identified specific difficulties faced by students at Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School that negatively impact their reading and comprehension skills. These difficulties include:

**Mispronunciation and Substitution of Words:** Mispronunciation and word substitution can be indicative of phonological and phonemic awareness issues. This suggests that students may not have a solid grasp of the sounds and phonetic rules of the English language. Correcting pronunciation and encouraging phonemic awareness activities can be helpful in addressing this challenge.

**Skipping and Omitting Words:** Skipping and omitting words while reading can indicate difficulties with tracking and maintaining focus during reading. It may be related to issues such as attention span or decoding difficulties. Strategies to improve attention and decoding skills should be considered. Students should not be given tasks which will exhaust their attention span. The reason is that, it can let them lose focus.

**Limited Understanding of Sounds of English and Alphabet:** Limited understanding of English phonetics can hinder a student's ability to decode words and read fluently. Phonics instruction can be beneficial in improving their understanding of the sounds associated with letters and letter combinations.

**Inadequate Vocabulary:** A limited vocabulary can significantly hinder comprehension, as students may not understand the words they encounter in texts. Vocabulary-building exercises, exposure to more diverse texts, and explicit vocabulary instruction can help address this issue.

**Difficulty with Text Complexity:** Reading material that is above a student's comprehension level can be frustrating and counterproductive. This problem was identified in different texts that were given to students. It's important to ensure that texts are appropriately leveled for the students' abilities. Adjusting reading materials to match their proficiency can boost confidence and skill development.

These identified challenges hold significant importance for educators and policymakers in their endeavor to develop interventions and methods aimed at enhancing reading and comprehension abilities among pupils at Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School. An integrated approach encompassing phonics instruction, vocabulary building, comprehension strategies, and matching text complexity to students' abilities can help address these difficulties and augment the overall quality of education. Additionally, the provision of individualized assistance and continuous assessment can prove to be advantageous in tracking progress and customizing teaching methods to cater for the unique needs of each student.

The findings affirmed the study of Ankrah et al. (2017) and Spear-Swerling (2015) who found that skipping and omitting words, difficulties with higher-level language skills, including inferring and comprehension self-monitoring lead to

problems with reading comprehension. Other factors discovered by Spear-Swerling (2015) that can contribute to reading difficulties include learning disabilities such as dyslexia, difficulty with vision, hearing, or speech, and lack of interest in the content being read. Students are happy with contents that are culturally familiar.

This facilitated the researcher's understanding of the students' circumstances and facilitated the implementation of the intervention process which includes all the 36 students. The researcher conducted a pre-test to validate these revelations.

#### 4.3.1 Summary of Pupils Pre-Test Results

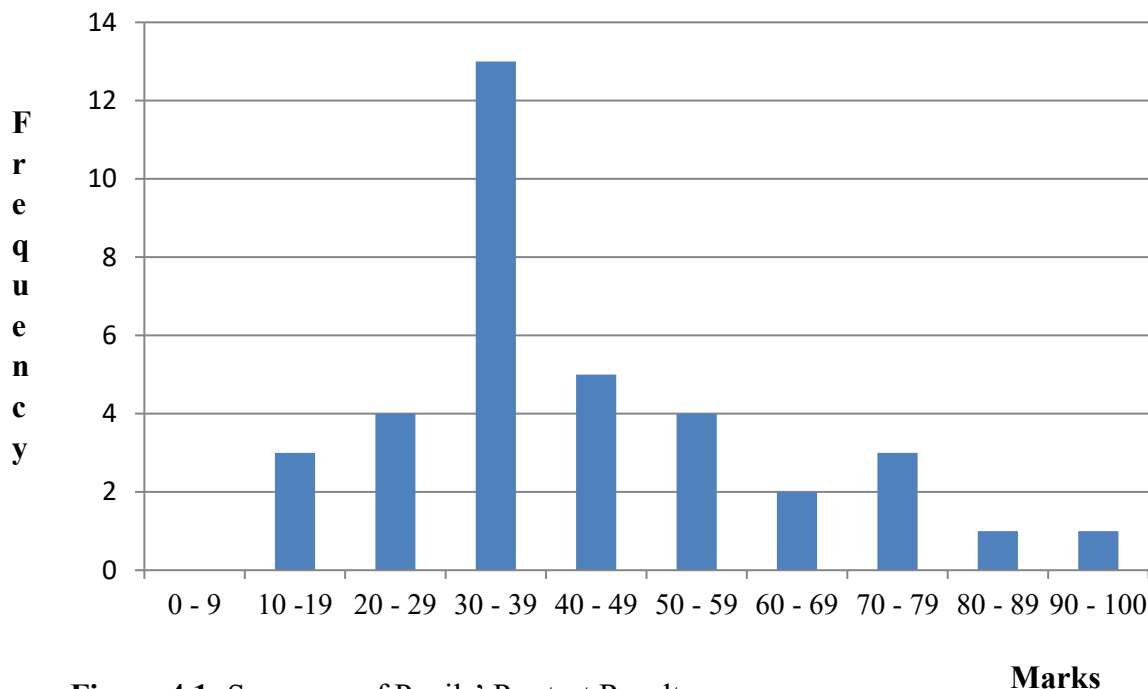
The summary of pre-test results of the pupils is presented in Table 4.5 and Figure 4.1.

**Table 4.5: Summary of Pupils' Pre-test Results**

Marks	Frequency	Percentage (%)
0 – 9	0	0.0
10 – 19	3	8.3
20 – 29	4	11.1
30 – 39	13	36.1
40 – 49	5	13.9
50 – 59	4	11.1
60 – 69	2	5.6
70 – 79	3	8.3
80 – 89	1	2.8
90 – 100	1	2.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023





**Figure 4.1:** Summary of Pupils' Pre-test Results

**Source:** Field Survey, 2023

Based on the data presented in the Table 4.5 and Figure 4.1, the minimum score required to pass the test was 50 marks. It can be observed that out of a total of 36 pupils, only 11 of them, representing 30.6% ( $11.1 + 5.6 + 8.3 + 2.8 + 2.8$ ) of the sample pupils, achieved a passing score of 50 or above. Whereas, the majority of the pupils, 25 representing 69.4% of the sample pupils failed pre-test. This performance served as evidence that there was necessity to provide assistance to the pupils in order to enhance their performance.

### **Research Question 2: What strategies best improve performance in reading comprehension?**

The researcher adopts the following effective comprehension strategies with the aim of aiding students to overcome difficulties they faced during the process of reading comprehension.

The researcher used phonic method strategy of teaching reading comprehension to assist the pupils improves upon their performance in reading comprehension. This

was done so that the students could easily progress to the next level after they had mastered reading and comprehension. The researcher utilized the phonic method strategy of teaching reading comprehension to assist pupils in improving their performance in reading comprehension. The study examined various phonics steps/aspects such as systematic synthetic phonics, phonics instruction, and analogy phonics. The researcher created a reading and comprehension lesson plan utilizing the phonic technique and followed a step-by-step procedure of teaching students to read using phonics method to get the required results. A post-test was conducted in order to obtain information on the effect of interventional process on their reading and comprehension skills.

The finding highlighted the use of the phonic method strategy for teaching reading comprehension and its impact on improving students' performance in this skill. The study employs the phonic method as a teaching strategy for reading comprehension. The phonic method, also known as phonics, is an approach that emphasizes the relationship between sounds and the written symbols (letters) in language. It involves teaching students to decode words by recognizing the sounds associated with individual letters or letter combinations.

The primary goal of using the phonic method in this research is to enhance students' reading comprehension. Reading comprehension is the ability to understand and interpret the meaning of written text, which is a crucial skill for academic success. Besides, the study suggests that by mastering reading and comprehension through the phonic method, students can more easily progress to the next level of their education. This implies that a strong foundation in reading comprehension can serve as a building block for future learning.

The researcher creates a reading and comprehension lesson plan based on the phonic technique. This lesson plan likely outlines the specific activities and instructional methods that will be used to teach reading comprehension using phonics. Further, the study examines various aspects of phonics instruction, including systematic synthetic phonics, phonics instruction, and analogy phonics. These are different approaches within the broader phonic method, each with its own specific focus and techniques.

Finally, the researcher follows a step-by-step procedure for teaching students to read using the phonics method. This systematic approach is designed to ensure that students receive a comprehensive and structured education in phonics, which is essential for its effectiveness.

In general, this finding suggests that the use of the phonic method for teaching reading comprehension can be an effective strategy to enhance students' skills and prepare them for future educational progress. The findings support the study of Ankra, Nyantat and Opoku (2017) and Nursyafitri. (2020)., who discovered that systematic phonics instruction results in better growth in children's ability to comprehend what they read than non-systematic or no phonics instruction. The "science of reading" approach relies on helping students decode the words on the page by understanding the sounds that make up words (Paris, 2019)

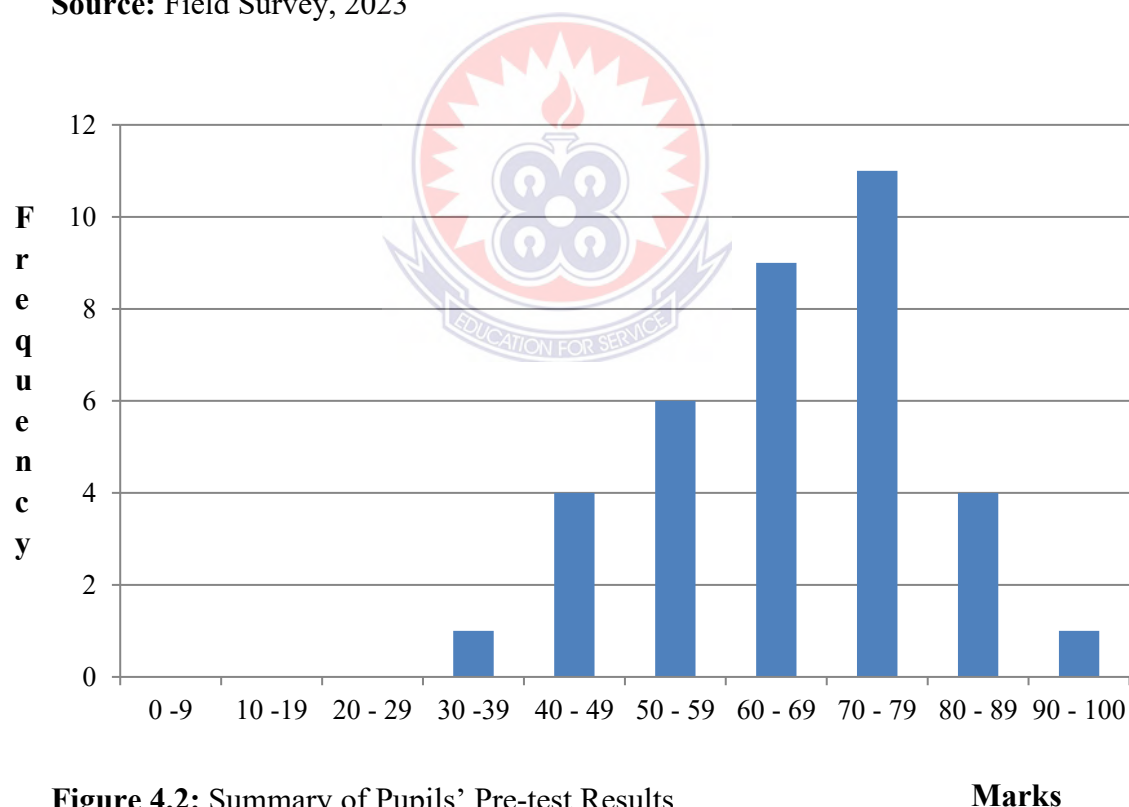
#### **4.3.2 Summary of Pupils Post-test Results**

The summary of post-test results of the pupils is presented in Table 4.6 and Figure 4.2.

**Table 4.6: Summary of Pupils Post-test Results**

Marks	Frequency	Percentage (%)
0 – 9	0	0.0
10 – 19	0	0.0
20 – 29	0	0.0
30 – 39	1	2.8
40 – 49	4	11.1
50 – 59	6	16.6
60 – 69	9	25
70 – 79	11	30.6
80 – 89	4	11.1
90 – 100	1	2.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2023

**Figure 4.2: Summary of Pupils' Post-test Results**

Source: Field Survey, 2023

According to the data presented in Table 4.6 and Figure 4.2, it is evident that when considering a pass mark of 50, the results indicate that out of the 36 pupils who

participated in the post-test, 31 pupils, accounting for 86.1%, achieved a passed score, while 5 pupils, representing 13.9%, did not meet the pass mark. Based on the results, it is evident that 5 pupils did most achieve a passing mark on the post-test. This finding suggests that the performance of the pupils in the post-test is increased as 86.1% pass the post-test compared to their previous performance in the pre-test.

### **Research Question 3: What are the effects of challenges on students' performance?**

The results of the interview conducted with the pupils indicated that reading comprehension difficulties can have a significant impact on their academic performance. All the pupils mentioned that reading difficulties led to poor performance and eventually low academic achievement. One of them that:

*“I usually scored low marks in subjects such as English Language, Science, Social Studies and Religious and Moral Education because I cannot read and understand most of the examination questions”.*

Again, almost 70% of the pupils mentioned that poor reading and comprehension led them to have difficulty understanding important concepts of text they read. Another said that ;

*“I struggle with reading because of that I have difficulty understanding important concepts and making inferences from text-based materials”.*

The findings of the interview conducted with the pupils highlight the critical issue of reading comprehension difficulties and their impact on academic performance. Several key points emerge from the interview:

**Negative Impact on Academic Achievement:** The interview results reveal that reading comprehension difficulties have a significant negative impact on academic performance. All of the pupils interviewed mentioned that these difficulties led to lower

academic achievement. This finding underscores the importance of addressing reading comprehension issues early to prevent them from hindering overall academic progress. The findings reveal that reading comprehension difficulties have a significant negative impact on academic performance. This finding is in line with the study of Francisco. (2020) study who established that lower academic achievement can have long-term consequences, affecting students' opportunities for higher education and future career prospects. This underscores the importance of early intervention and support to ensure that students do not fall behind. Studies have shown that early intervention can improve cognitive ability and academic achievement (Dramani & Yussif, 2017; Yesil-Dagli, 2011).

**Subject-Specific Challenges:** The pupils noted that their reading difficulties specifically affected subjects such as English Language, Science, Social Studies, and Religious and Moral Education. This highlights that reading comprehension is not limited to language arts subjects but has repercussions across the curriculum. As a result, it is clear that addressing these issues is crucial for a well-rounded education. According to the findings of the study reading difficulties affect a wide range of subjects beyond just language arts. This means that students struggling with reading comprehension may face challenges in areas like Science, Social Studies, and Religious and Moral Education. This finding support the study of Hulme & Snowling (2016), who documented that students with reading disorders may have other learning disabilities, too, including problems with writing or numbers. This point out the necessity of adopting a comprehensive approach to addressing reading difficulties that considers their impact across the curriculum (Hulme & Snowling, 2016).

**Difficulty Understanding Exam Questions:** One pupil's comment stands out as it emphasizes how reading difficulties make it challenging to understand examination

questions. This is a critical issue because exams are a fundamental component of academic assessment. If students struggle to comprehend the questions, it can significantly hinder their ability to perform well on tests and assessments. This finding suggests that the difficulty students faced in understanding examination questions is a critical issue because exams are a fundamental component of academic assessment. If students cannot grasp what is being asked of them due to reading comprehension issues, it can significantly hinder their performance on tests and assessments, potentially leading to unfair grading and inaccurate assessments of their knowledge and abilities. Mohammed (2018) asserted that if students cannot grasp what is being asked of them due to reading comprehension issues, it can significantly hinder their performance on tests and assessments, potentially leading to unfair grading and inaccurate assessments of their knowledge and abilities.

**Conceptual Understanding and Inferences:** Nearly 70% of the pupils mentioned that poor reading and comprehension skills made it difficult for them to understand important concepts and make inferences from text-based materials. This suggests that the impact of reading difficulties extends beyond surface-level understanding and affects their ability to grasp deeper concepts and draw conclusions from what they read. This could be particularly problematic in subjects that require critical thinking and analysis. This finding indicated that reading difficulties not only impact surface-level understanding but also hinder a student's ability to grasp deeper concepts and make inferences from text-based materials. This can be particularly problematic in subjects that require critical thinking and analysis, as students may struggle to draw meaningful conclusions from the information presented to them (Hulme & Snowling, 2016).

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter entails the summary of the results of the study. It draws conclusions from the results and offer recommendations.

#### 5.1 Summary

##### 5.1.1 Summary of the Research Process

The main objective for conducting the study was to assist Basic 8 (JHS) pupils at Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School to improve upon their reading comprehension skills. Other objectives include: to identify challenges students of Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School encounter in reading comprehension; to adopt effective comprehension strategies to overcome challenges students encounter in reading comprehension and identify effects of challenges on performance of students. The questions covered in this study were broadly classified into three, which are as follows:

1. What challenges do students of Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School encounter in reading comprehension?
2. What strategies best improve performance in reading comprehension?
3. What are the effects of challenges on students' performance?

Action research design with a combination of qualitative research approach was used to explore the problem. Pupils of Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School form the population of the study. The study sample comprised 36 pupils. Three data collection instruments were utilised in the study-Observation, interview and test (pre-test and post-test). The pre-test and post-test scores were analyzed using Microsoft Excel as an



analysis tool. The analyzed results were presented using frequency table, percentages and bar charts. Also, the interview data collected were analyzed using thematic analysis and the results were presented in prose form.

### 5.1.2 Summary of Key Findings

1. The findings of the study showed that students face various levels of difficulties in learning reading comprehension. These difficulties encompass issues such as mispronunciation and word substitution; skipping and omitting words while reading, a limited grasp of English alphabet sounds, and a lack of sufficient vocabulary.
2. The study further found that 69.4% of pupils did not reach the minimal passed score of 50 in the pre-test. On the other hand, 86.1% passed the post-test, compared to only 30.6% who passed in the pre-test.
3. The study also discovered that the phonic technique, which is commonly used for teaching reading at all levels, is the greatest strategy for teaching students to enhance their reading comprehension.
4. The study's findings further demonstrated that challenges with reading comprehension had a substantial impact on academic performance, struggling to comprehend exam questions, and poor Conceptual Understanding and Inferences.

### 5.2 Conclusions

In conclusion, the findings of this study shed light on several important aspects related to reading comprehension among students:

**Diverse Learning Difficulties:** The research revealed that students encounter various levels of difficulties in learning reading comprehension. These difficulties range from issues like mispronunciation and word substitution to skipping and omitting

words while reading, limited understanding of English alphabet sounds, and insufficient vocabulary. These challenges collectively hinder their reading comprehension skills.

**Efficacy of Phonics:** The study identified that the phonic technique, a common method used for teaching reading at all educational levels, is the most effective strategy for enhancing students' reading comprehension. This underscores the importance of using evidence-based teaching methods to improve reading skills.

**Academic Impact:** The research findings underscored the significant impact of reading comprehension challenges on academic performance. Students struggling with reading comprehension reported difficulty in understanding exam questions, which has direct implications for their exam scores. Additionally, these difficulties extended to poor conceptual understanding and inference-making from text-based materials, affecting their ability to grasp deeper concepts.

**Pre-Test Performance:** The initial assessment, as indicated by Table 4.5 and Figure 4.1, showed that a substantial majority of the pupils, 69.4% of the sample, failed to achieve the minimum passing score of 50 marks. This underscored the necessity for providing assistance to these pupils to enhance their academic performance.

**Post-Test Improvement:** After the intervention, as reflected in Table 4.6 and Figure 4.2, a significant improvement in performance was observed. Out of the 36 pupils who participated in the post-test, 86.1% achieved a passing score, compared to only 30.6% in the pre-test. This indicates a substantial increase in the number of students who met or exceeded the pass mark after receiving the intervention.

**Efficacy of Intervention:** The data strongly suggests that the intervention implemented between the pre-test and post-test had a positive impact on students' performance. The increase in the proportion of students passing the post-test

demonstrates the effectiveness of the assistance provided in improving their academic achievement.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

The recommendations are presented as follows:

1. For the teacher of English language, reading comprehension is one of the crucial issues of reading. It can be achieved by applying some strategies in reading. Hence, the teacher should facilitate the students with the most suitable and feasible strategy of reading. It can be used to help the students thinking, while reading.
2. Teachers at Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School as role models should develop a positive attitude to the teaching and learning of English language especially phonics in the junior high schools so that pupils will emulate them.
3. Teachers at Rashadiyya Islamic Junior High School should always bear the pain and anxieties of attending to each pupil and give him or her the needed assistance when appropriate so that they can all benefit from lessons
4. This study was quite limited. To make the study more generalizable, the study would recommend utilizing this study on a large group of students. This study could be completed with a different age group by modifying the Self-Questioning strategy. A recommendation for further study is to refine the Self-Questioning strategy for larger articles. During the practice portion of the study, the students read longer articles and it appeared too repetitive and broke up. It is my believe that fewer interruptions during larger articles would make the reading and comprehension go more smoothly.
5. Another recommendation for further study is to identify a different strategy to use while reading to measure the difference in results.

## 5.4 Conclusion

In the literature review, it was determined that students who used reading strategies while reading demonstrated strong reading comprehension skills. Also, students with strong reading comprehension skills often performed better on comprehension tests, getting high comprehension scores. In this study, the results mirrored this statement. After completing a comprehension pretest, the students were given a strategy to practice and used while taking the post test.

Chapter one deals with the introduction and presents a brief idea about the research topic: covering the background of the study, the objectives of the study and the purpose of the study, the significance of the study and the purpose of the study, limitation, delimitation or future enhancement of the study.



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APPENDIX

Name = AST Reading Comprehension.  
School = Jamasi Kachadigi - Islamic JHS 2  
Date = 14 - January - 2022

20%  $\frac{2}{10}$

Pre - Test JHS 2

1) What are children referred to today?  
Ans ~~Future leaders~~

2) What happens to children each day?  
Ans ~~Sexual abuse~~

3) What is the estimate of abused children?  
Ans Sexual abuse

4) What are some of things these molesters say to children?  
Ans If they ~~Thank~~ they will die

5) What should you do when you are sexually abused?  
Ans If you stay with you parent

6) Mention some people who have been found to be molesters?  
Ans nephew and uncle

Rashaddiyya Islamic Joh. S. 2.

Reading Comprehension.

3/10

30%

M. I. A

12-January  
2023

1) What are children referred to today

Ans ~~Too~~ ~~Features~~ Features ~~leaders~~ ✓

2) What happens to children each day?

Ans Sexual abuse ✓

3) What is the estimate of abused children?

Ans ~~Sex~~ ✓

4) What are some of things those molesters say to children?

Ans if you tell you will die. ✓

5) What should you do when you are sexually abused?

Ans you have to tell ✓

6) Mention some people who have been found to be molesters?

Reading comprehension M.H. Rashadiyya Islamic School  
J.H.S  
30%  
Pre-Test JH.S2 14-01-2023  
3/10

1) What are Children referred to today?  
Ans: Future leaders

2) What happens to Children each day?  
Ans:

3) What is the estimate of abused children?  
Ans: Sexual abused

4) What are some of things these molesters say to children?  
Ans: If they <sup>tell</sup> they will die

5) What should you do when you are sexually abused?  
Ans: you <sup>should</sup> stay with your parents

6) Mention some people who have been found to be molesters?

7) What are some societal reasons why molested children keep silent?

4/06 40% Z.M  
Reading Comprehension  
Pre-Test - JHS 2

1) What are children referred to today?  
= Future Leaders ✓

2) What happens to children each day?  
= sexual abuse ✓

3) What is the estimate of abused children?  
~~= sexual abuse~~  
sex ✓

4) What are some of things these molesters say to children?  
= If you tell you will die ✓

5) What should you do when you are sexually abused?  
= you have to tell your parents or any one you know

6) ~~At~~ mention some people who have been forced to be molested ✓

IAB Reading comprehension. Rashadiyya Islamic JHS  
Pre-Test Breaks The Silence  $\frac{1}{10}$  JHS  $\frac{2}{100}$

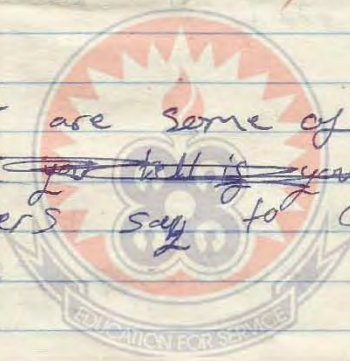
1) What are children referred to today?  
future loaders

2) What happens to children each day?

3) What is the estimate of abused children?  
Sexual abuse

4) What are some of things these mobsters say for children?

5) What should you do when you are sexually abused?



ASMAWU - JAKUB

post-test II

15/16

100%  
19/01/2023

(A) What are children referred to today?

Ans Children are the future leaders

(B) What happens to children each day?

Ans Children are sexually abused every day.

(C) ~~It has~~ What is the estimate of abused children? It has been estimated that one out of four girls are sexually abused before they turn eighteen but only two out of children speak up.

(d) What are some of the things these molesters say to children

Ans You will die if you tell. I will kill you if you tell.

(E) What are some societal reasons why molested children keep silent?

Ans They find it shameful to tell someone that they have been molested.

(F) Mention some people who have been found to be molesters.

Ans ~~Relatives~~, Fathers, uncles.

(G) What should you do when you are sexually molested?

NAME: Munirat Badaru

90%

9/10

Post Test 1

- Q1) What are children referred to today?
  - 1) Children are called future leaders.
- Q2) What happens to children each day?
  - 1) Children are sexually abused everyday.
- Q3) What is the estimate of abused children?
  - 1) It has been estimated that one out of four girls are sexually abused before they turn eighteen but only two out of ten children would speak up.
- Q4) What are some of the things these molesters say to children?
  - 1) You will die if tell - I will kill you if you tell
- Q5) What are some societal reasons why molested children keep silence?
  - 1) They find it shameful to tell someone that they have been molested.
- Q6) Mention some people who have been found to be molesters.
  - 1) Relatives - fathers, uncles



S.M.A

100%

Exercise

Post Test 1

a) Children are called future leaders.

b) Children are sexually abused every

c) It has been estimated that one out of four girls are sexually abused before they turn eighteen but only two out of ten children would speak up

16/10

d) You will die if you tell. I will kill you if you tell

e) They find it shameful to tell someone that they have been molested.

f) Relative - father, uncle

g) Tell your parents or someone you trust

h) Don't be with adult males you do not trust

i) They will be arrested

j) Your parents

Post Test II

100%

10/16

- a) What are children referred to today?  
Children are called as future leaders
- b) What happens to children each day?  
Children are sexually abused every day
- c) What is the estimate of abuse children? It has been estimated that one out of four girls are sexually abused before they turn eighteen but only two out of ten children would speak up
- d) What are some of the things these molesters say to children? You will die if you tell I will kill you if you tell.
- e) What are some societal reasons why molested children keep silence? They find it shameful to tell someone that they have been molested
- f) Mention some people who have been found to be molesters? Relatives - fathers, uncles
- g) What should you do when you are sexually molested? Tell your parents or someone you trust

80%

5/10

3 children are called future leaders

6 children are sexually abused every day ✓

It has been estimated that one out of four ~~girls~~ girls are sexually abused before they turn eighteen but only two out of ten children would speak up. ✓

- ① You will die if you tell. I will kill you if you tell ✓
- ② They find it shameful to tell someone that they. ✓
- ③ Relative - fathers, uncles. ✓
- ④ Tell your parent or someone you trust ✓
- ⑤ Don't be with adult make you do not trust alone ✓
- ⑥ They will be arrested. ✓
- ⑦ Your parents ✓

A M H

7/16

70%

Rashidiyya Islamic JHS

Reading comprehension

Pre-Test JHS 2

① What are referred to today? feature leaders

② What happens to children each day?  
Sexual abuse.

③ What is the estimate of abused children?  
Sexual abuse Sex

④ What are some of things these molesters say to children? If you tell you will die.

⑤ What should you do when you are sexually abused? you have to tell your parents

⑥ Mention some people who have been found to be molesters? Thousand

⑦ What are some societal reasons why molested children keep silent?  
They are afraid to die.

✓ Reading comprehension

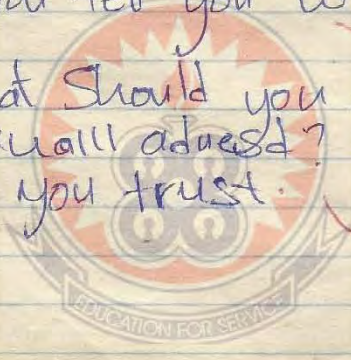
Pre-Test

400%

4/10

Rashadiyya Islamic  
J. HS-2

- 1) What are Children referred to as today?  
future leaders ✓
- 2) What happens to children each day?  
Sexual abuse
- 3) What is the estimate of abused children?  
~~They are sexually abused~~  
Six
- 4) What are some of things these molesters say to children?  
If you tell you will die ✓
- 5) What should you do when you are sexually abused?  
You should tell one you trust. ✓
- 6)



Rashadiyya F. M. <sup>7%</sup> J. H. S  
Pre-test 1 12-01-2023  
Reading Comprehension

① What are children referred to today?  
→ Future leaders. ✓

② What happens to children each each day?  
→ Sexually Abuse

③ What is the estimate of abuse children.  
→ 5000 ✓

④ What are some of things molesters say to children?  
→ If you tell you die ✓

⑤ What should you do when you are sexually abused?  
→ You must tell an adult or parents ✓

⑥ Mention some people who have been found to be molesters?  
→ Thousands ✓

