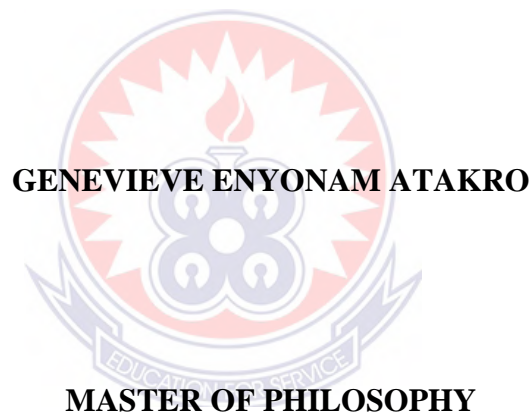


UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**EXAMINING STRATEGIES IN TEACHING ENGLISH READING IN
SELECTED JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE GA-WEST MUNICIPALITY**



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GENEVIEVE ENYONAM ATAKRO
(8230060009)



**A thesis in the Department of English Education,
Faculty of Foreign Languages Education, submitted to the School of
Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
(English Education)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

NOVEMBER, 2025

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

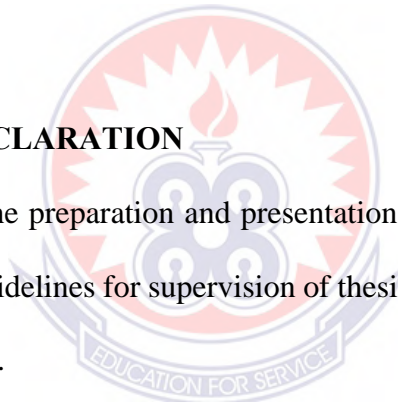
I, **Genevieve Enyonam Atakro**, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

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 thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.



Supervisor's Name: Dr. Amma Abrafi Adjei

Signature:.....

Date:.....

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God bless you.



DEDICATION

To my husband (Theodore Mensah-Boateng) and kids (Kyra, Lord and Bryan).



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Content	Page
DECLARATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
DEDICATION	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
ABSTRACT	x
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.1.1 Reading as a Contributor Factor to English Language Proficiency	2
1.1.2 Factors that Contribute to Low Reading Proficiency	4
1.1.3 Strategies and Practices to Improve English Reading Skills	6
1.2 Statement of the Problem	7
1.3 Purpose of the Study	8
1.4 Research Objectives	9
1.5 Research Questions	9
1.6 Significance of the Study	9
1.7 Delimitation of the Study	11
1.8 Definition of Terms	11
1.9 Organization of the Study	12
1.10 Chapter Summary	12
2.2 Concept of Reading	16
2.2.1 Cognitive Perspectives on Reading	16
2.2.2 Sociocultural Perspectives on Reading	18

2.2.3 The Role of Metacognition in Reading	19
2.2.4 The Importance of Reading in Modern Society	20
2.2.5 Reasons Reading Should Be Taught	21
2.3 Teachers' Strategies and Practices to Improve English Reading Skills	23
2.3.1 Graphic Organizers	24
2.3.2 Collaborative Strategic Reading	26
2.3.3 Peer-Assisted Learning Strategy	30
2.3.4 Story-mapping	34
2.3.5 Self-questioning	37
2.4 Effectiveness of the Identified Strategies in Enhancing Students' English Reading Proficiency	40
2.4.1 Phonics-Based Instruction	40
2.4.2 Interactive Reading Practices	41
2.4.3 Vocabulary Development	42
2.4.4 Differentiated Instruction	44
2.4.5 Teacher Professional Development	45
2.5 Challenges and Factors Affecting Low English Reading Proficiency	46
2.6 Reasons why Identified Strategies are Employed in Enhancing English Reading Proficiency	47
2.7 Recommendations for Implementing Effective Strategies to Improve English Reading	50
2.7.1 Phonics-Based Instruction	51
2.7.2 Interactive Reading Practices	52
2.7.3 Promoting Extensive Reading	52
2.7.4 Metacognitive Strategy Instruction	53



2.7.5 Vocabulary Development	54
2.8 Previous Studies on Strategies Employed by Teachers in Teaching English	
Reading Skills	54
2.9 Chapter Summary	60
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	61
3.0 Introduction	61
3.1 Research Approach	61
3.2 Research Design	62
3.3 Setting	62
3.4 Population	63
3.5 Sample and Sampling Technique	64
3.6 Data Collection Instrument	65
3.7 Managing and recording data	65
3.8 Data Collection Procedures	66
3.9 Method of Data Analysis	66
3.10 Ethical Considerations	68
3.11 Chapter Summary	68
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	70
4.0 Introduction	70
4.1 Demographic Data of Participants	70
4.1.1 Results of demographic data of participants	70
4.2 Thematic Analysis of Data	71
4.3 Discussion of Results	92

4.3.1 Existing strategies and practices employed by teachers to teach English reading skills	92
4.3.2 What reasons account for the employment of the identified strategies employed in enhancing English proficiency among junior high school students in the Ga West Municipality?	93
4.3.3 Research Question 3: How effective are the identified strategies of the English Language teachers of the selected junior high schools in enhancing students' English reading proficiency?	95
4.3.4 Link to the Reading Rope Model by Hollis Scarborough (2001)	96
4.4 Chapter Summary	98
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	99
5.0 Introduction	99
5.1 Summary of Findings	99
5.2 Limitations	101
5.3 Conclusions	101
5.4 Recommendations	102
5.5 Implications of the findings for Teaching Reading	103
5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies	104
5.7 Chapter Summary	104
REFERENCES	106
APPENDIX	117



ABSTRACT

Despite the pivotal role of reading in education, many junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality continue to struggle with English reading skills according to the GES exams report (2018). This study explored strategies for enhancing English reading skills among junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality and provided recommendations for effective implementation. The research was grounded in the Reading Rope Model by Hollis Scarborough (2001). Adopting an interpretivist research paradigm and qualitative approach, the study utilized a case study design. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with eleven junior high school teachers in the Ga-West Municipality. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data, with ethical considerations maintained throughout the research process. The study revealed various strategies used by teachers to teach English reading, including interactive reading sessions, multimedia resources, and phonics-based instruction. Interactive reading sessions, enhanced by group discussions and role rotation, improve student participation and comprehension. Multimedia resources cater to diverse learning styles, while phonics-based instruction, supported by workshops and differentiated methods, addresses specific student needs. The effectiveness of these strategies varies, with interactive sessions and multimedia resources significantly boosting engagement, and phonics-based instruction proving most effective when tailored to individual needs. Peer tutoring and expanded comprehension exercises also show promise. The recommendations include implementing a framework for sharing best practices, conducting regular workshops, and establishing mechanisms for ongoing evaluation and feedback to enhance the effectiveness of reading strategies. The findings of this research contribute to teacher professional development programmes. Teachers can benefit from insights into effective strategies for English reading instruction. Also, policymakers can allocate resources more effectively based on the identified challenges and needs. The study contributes to the broader field of educational theory by shedding light on the effectiveness of specific strategies in improving English reading proficiency.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the study's background, problem statement, purpose, research questions, significance and delimitations, and how the rest of the study is organised.

1.1 Background to the Study

The use of English in the classroom is crucial and promotes general learning. English language proficiency is crucial for a nation's economic, educational, and overall development (Hall, 2017). The importance of English Language as a school subject derives mainly from its utilitarian value to the larger Ghanaian society. English is the official language for administration and commerce in Ghana. English plays an important role in teaching all subjects in schools. Thus, the importance of the use of English language in improving communication among the various ethnic groups in Ghana cannot be overemphasized (Pennycook, 2017). In their study on students' perceptions on using different listening assessment methods, Sulaiman, et al (2021) stress on the need to adopt varied methods including audio-visuals in teaching young children since they yield high recall rates. It is therefore necessary to highlight the need to improve the quality of spoken and written English among school children in Ghana.

Strong language development is a major component for the development of all societies (Temple et al., 2018; Verplaetse and Migliacci (2017). Reducing barriers to language acquisition disparities locally, nationally, and worldwide is a developing priority, with a focus on vulnerable groups (Fantini, 2018; Su et al., 2017). The survival of rural civilisations is negatively impacted by the estimated fourteen (14) local languages that are lost to foreign one's year throughout the world. In Ghana, the basic school level is

a very crucial one. At this stage too, English language, apart from being the medium of instruction, has its importance as one of the “core” subjects. The implication is that the lack of proficiency in this language might hinder pupils' ability to perform effectively in other subjects.

1.1.1 Reading as a Contributor Factor to English Language Proficiency

English Language proficiency is a fundamental skill that lays the foundation for academic success and personal development. In the context of Ghana, English serves as a medium of instruction in schools and is essential for effective communication, comprehension of subject matter, and participation in the global knowledge economy (Bosher & Smalkoski, 2002). Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2012) assert that, the ability to read proficiently in English is of particular importance, as it is intricately linked to the acquisition of knowledge, critical thinking, and overall educational achievement. English Language proficiency is undeniably crucial for academic success and socio-economic advancement in today's globalized world. For students in Ghana, particularly those in junior high schools, the ability to read and comprehend English texts is not only a fundamental skill but also a gateway to accessing knowledge and opportunities.

Hafner (2008) asserted that reading is regarded as the most vital skill for students; consequently, it is believed that the more one reads, the more one learns. Alan (2011) believes that reading is the most important skill a child can develop, learning to read is an important skill every child must develop to be successful while in school. Scholars have concurred that reading comprehension is a fundamental ability that facilitates knowledge acquisition and serves as the foundation for any quality education. The purpose of reading is not achieved if readers read without understanding. Reading has been a major element or skill in our study of language and other disciplines in the

academic field. Without reading, ideas and facts stored up in printed materials and electronic sources cannot be tapped. Reading is indispensable in education. Students' achievement in schools largely depends on their ability to read and understand text well.

Duttel (2006) states that, a child with limited interest in reading and understanding is a danger to himself and the society. It is for this reason that formally, one of the aims of education is learning to read. According to Hafner (2008), reading is the act of examining written language and symbols, translating them into spoken symbols, and then modifying them to make sense of the author's intended ideas, both explicit and implicit. Reading in English Language plays a very vital role in the teaching and learning of all subjects since it is a receptive skill thus assisting learners to learn new ideas and concepts. Reading is an essential ability that is closely linked to academic performance (Scott & Saaiman, 2016). Thus, reading plays an essential role in both the instructor and the learner's lives owing to the fact that both of them are able to transform their thought and understanding about learning through reading a written material.

It is impossible to overstate the value of a strong reading culture. It offers ability, information, and the proper attitude; it relieves monotony; it advances societal progress; it fosters international understanding; and it benefits individuals. According to Harmer (2008), reading is beneficial for language learning in addition to careers, education, and leisure. He adds that reading shows how to create sentences, paragraphs, and entire texts, offers opportunity to learn vocabulary, syntax, and punctuation, and serves as a suitable model for writing in English. Because reading is essential to learning, reading scholars agree that reading is the foundation of all academic study and is essential to academic achievement (Grabe & Stoller 2011). The Ga-West Municipality, located in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana, is characterized by its diverse population and a

growing demand for quality education. Like many other Municipalities in Ghana, the Ga-West Municipality grapples with issues related to English reading proficiency among junior high school students. Achieving proficiency in English reading is not only a local educational concern but also a national imperative given Ghana's commitment to providing quality education for all.

Despite the recognition of English reading proficiency's significance, there is a growing concern regarding the challenges faced by junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality. Empirical evidence suggests that a significant number of students struggle to attain the expected reading standards, impacting their educational progress and limiting their future opportunities (GES, 2019, Education Sector Performance Report). Efforts to address this challenge require a comprehensive understanding of the unique factors that contribute to low English reading proficiency within the context of the Ga-West Municipality.

1.1.2 Factors that Contribute to Low Reading Proficiency

In Ghana, the instructional approaches to teaching reading have evolved over time. Traditional methods have often relied on rote memorization and repetition, focusing on phonics and basic comprehension skills. However, contemporary pedagogical practices are increasingly incorporating more interactive and student-centered approaches. These include guided reading sessions, shared reading, and the use of leveled readers to match students' reading abilities (Okyere, 2020). The government and educational stakeholders have made concerted efforts to improve reading instruction through teacher training programmes and the provision of reading materials. For instance, the Ministry of Education's National Literacy Acceleration Programme (NALAP) has

been instrumental in providing structured support to enhance reading proficiency among students (Ministry of Education, 2019).

The relationship between reading proficiency and academic performance is well-documented. Students who develop strong reading skills early in their academic careers tend to perform better across all subjects (Kendeou et al., 2009). In the Ghanaian context, reading proficiency in English is particularly important, as English is the medium of instruction for most subjects. Consequently, students' ability to comprehend and engage with English texts directly impacts their performance in subjects such as science, social studies, and mathematics (Amoah, 2018). Despite the recognized importance of reading, many students in Ghana continue to struggle with reading proficiency. This difficulty is frequently ascribed to elements like socioeconomic difficulties, poor teaching strategies, and restricted access to reading resources (Adika, 2017). Addressing these challenges are crucial for improving students' academic outcomes and overall educational quality.

Effective strategies for teaching reading are essential for enhancing students' literacy skills. Research has identified several evidence-based practices that can be implemented in the classroom, including phonics instruction, guided reading, interactive read-aloud, vocabulary development, and the use of technology. Phonics instruction involves teaching students the relationship between letters and sounds to improve decoding skills, which is crucial for reading development (Ehri, 2015). Through small-group teaching and guided reading, teachers may offer students individualised help according to their reading levels, improving their understanding and interaction with texts (Fountas & Pinnell, 2012). Interactive read-aloud engage students in discussions about texts to enhance comprehension and critical thinking skills,

stimulating interest and encouraging active participation for deeper understanding and retention (Fisher et al., 2010). Vocabulary development, through explicit teaching of vocabulary, is essential for improving language comprehension and usage, enabling students to understand and express complex ideas (Beck et al., 2013). Additionally, incorporating digital tools and resources provides interactive and differentiated reading experiences, catering to different learning styles and enhancing motivation (Hutchison et al., 2012).

1.1.3 Strategies and Practices to Improve English Reading Skills

Teachers have a pivotal role in enhancing English reading proficiency through various strategies and practices. These instructional methods present a diverse toolbox for teachers to elevate their students' English reading skills. Reading comprehension strategies encompass a range of methods tailored to help students derive meaning from written texts (Schunk, 2003).

These strategies encompass approaches like graphic organizers, cooperative learning, story-mapping, self-questioning, peer-assisted learning, and the six strategies outlined by the National Reading Panel (2000). While multiple comprehension strategies are available, it is crucial to clearly teach these approaches to students.

Explicit instruction on how to employ comprehension strategies before, during, and after reading significantly enhances students' reading comprehension abilities (Baker et al., 2001; Liang et al., 2005). Teachers' concerted efforts to impart these reading comprehension strategies to their students substantially improve their reading understanding (Mahdavi & Tensfeldt, 2013). It is advised that students be explicitly taught reading comprehension techniques using a number of instructional approaches, such as the National Reading Panel (2002) model, Ellis's (1994) integrated strategies

model, and Harris and Graham's (1992, 1996) self-regulated strategy development model.

For instance, according to Harris & Graham's (1992; 1996) self-regulated strategy development guideline, instructing students to implement a specific reading strategy involves steps such as explicitly explaining the strategy, activating prior knowledge, providing corrective feedback, modeling the strategy, cooperative practice, independent practice, and generalization (Harris & Graham, 1992; 1996). The next sections will provide thorough descriptions of research-backed reading practices that improve pupils' reading comprehension. The efficacy of the chosen five tactics in enhancing reading comprehension abilities is regularly mentioned by studies.

In the Ga-West Municipality, the implementation of these strategies varies across schools, with some schools having more resources and trained personnel than others. This study aims to examine the current practices in teaching English reading in selected junior high schools within the municipality, identifying effective strategies and areas for improvement. This study seeks to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by conducting a comprehensive examination of the strategies related to English reading improvement among junior high school students within the distinct educational landscape of the Ga-West Municipality. By doing so, it aims to provide localized insights and recommendations that can be instrumental in addressing the specific needs of students in this region.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Reading proficiency is a critical component of academic success and personal development, serving as the foundation for learning across all subjects. Despite the

pivotal role of reading in education, many junior high school students are unable to read and comprehend, leading to students' inability to speak English fluently (.

The Ga-West Municipality like many other municipalities, faces challenges in the teaching of English reading in the junior high schools in the municipality (GES exams report (2018); Ga West Municipal Education Directorate Report (2024). This deficiency in reading proficiency hampers students' academic performance, limiting their ability to comprehend and engage with the curriculum effectively. The persistent challenges in reading not only affect students' educational outcomes but also their future opportunities and overall well-being (Grabe & Stoller, 2011; Willias, 2008).

Given the importance of English reading skills for academic success and societal integration this study examines the existing strategies employed by teachers in selected junior high schools in the Ga-West Municipality by exploring existing strategies employed by teachers to teach English reading skills among junior high schools, finding out the efficiency of the identified strategies in enhancing learners' English reading proficiency among junior high schools and examining why the identified strategies are employed in enhancing English proficiency among junior high school students.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the is study to examine strategies for improving English reading among junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality and provide recommendations for implementing effective strategies to improve English reading in junior high schools.

1.4 Research Objectives

The research objectives are to:

1. explore existing strategies employed by teachers to teach English reading skills among junior high schools in the Ga-West Municipality.
2. examine why the identified strategies are employed in enhancing English proficiency among junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality.
3. find out the effectiveness of the identified strategies used by English Language teachers of the selected junior high schools in the Ga-West Municipality in enhancing students' English reading proficiency.

1.5 Research Questions

The research questions are:

1. What strategies do teachers employ to teach English reading skills among junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality?
2. What reasons account for the employment of the identified strategies employed in enhancing English proficiency among junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality?
3. How effective are the identified strategies of the English Language teachers of the selected junior high schools in enhancing students' English reading proficiency?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of this research extends beyond the immediate context of the Ga-West Municipality. It has practical implications for improving English reading skills, policy implications for curriculum development and resource allocation, and theoretical implications for the broader field of education.

The study's primary practical significance lies in its potential to enhance English reading skills among junior high school learners in the Ga-West Municipality. By identifying the challenges and effective strategies for improving reading proficiency, educators can implement evidence-based practices to address the specific needs of students struggling with English reading. The findings of this research can contribute to teacher professional development programmes. Teachers can benefit from insights into effective strategies for English reading instruction. This knowledge can empower educators with the tools and techniques needed to create more engaging and effective reading lessons. Understanding the factors contributing to low English reading proficiency allows for tailored instruction. Teachers can adapt their teaching methods to address the unique challenges faced by students in the Ga-West Municipality, leading to more targeted and impactful instruction.

Policymakers can allocate resources more effectively based on the identified challenges and needs. This may involve providing additional support, materials, or training to schools and educators in the Ga-West Municipality to improve English reading instruction.

The study contributes to the broader field of educational theory by shedding light on the effectiveness of specific strategies in improving English reading proficiency. This empirical evidence can enrich the theoretical understanding of language acquisition and reading comprehension, potentially influencing future educational theories and models. The research validates or challenges existing theories and assumptions about English reading instruction. It provides real-world data that can be used to refine or expand current theories in the field of education, contributing to a more robust theoretical framework.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

This study focuses exclusively on junior high school students within the Ga-West Municipality. It does not extend to other regions or municipalities within Ghana. As a result, the conclusions and suggestions might not apply to other regions of the world.

The study specifically targets public junior high school teachers. It does not include teachers from primary or senior high school levels as well teachers from the private schools. Thus, the findings are limited to the public junior high school context. The research concentrates solely on English reading proficiency as its primary focus.

1.8 Definition of Terms

Effectiveness: The degree to which the identified strategies produce desirable and impactful results in enhancing students' English reading proficiency, typically measured through measurable improvements in reading skills and comprehension.

Enhance: To improve, elevate, or strengthen the quality, level, or state of students' English reading proficiency through the implementation of specific strategies or interventions.

Implementing: The act of putting into action, executing, or applying the recommended strategies and interventions to enhance English reading proficiency within the junior high school context.

Effective Strategies: Approaches, methods, or techniques that have demonstrated positive results and potential for improving English reading proficiency among junior high school students, based on empirical evidence and best practices.

Recommendations: Concrete and informed suggestions, advice, or guidance provided based on the research findings and insights, aiming to propose effective approaches that can be implemented to improve English reading in junior high schools.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This study was organized into five chapters. The chapter one focused on the introduction of the study. This involves the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions and hypotheses. The remainder of chapter one is devoted to the study's importance, delimitation, terminology definitions, and organisation. The review of relevant literature is included in Chapter 2 of the research. The chapter also provides the study's conceptual framework, empirical reviews, and theoretical underpinnings. Chapter three focuses on the methodology for the study. It describes the research philosophy, research approach, study design, the population, the sample, the sampling techniques, and the tools and processes utilised for data collecting and analysis as well as the research ethics. Chapter Four reports the study's findings and presents and discusses them. The information is analysed and evaluated in light of the literature review. Chapter five concludes with a discussion of the study's summary, results, and suggestions.

1.10 Chapter Summary

Chapter one provides a comprehensive foundation for the study by outlining the background, problem statement, purpose, research questions, significance, delimitations, and organization of the study. The study focuses on examining strategies to improve English reading skills among junior high school students within the Ga-West Municipality. It emphasizes the importance of identifying effective strategies to address challenges in English reading and aims to offer practical recommendations for

their implementation. This chapter establishes the relevance and scope of the study while guiding subsequent discussions and analyses.



CHAPTER TWOError! Bookmark not defined.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

Reading Comprehension have caught the attention of many, including academics, educationists, researchers, professionals and scholars. It is in this direction that this part of the work reviewed what researchers and scholars have written based on challenges and factors that contribute to low English reading proficiency, strategies and practices employed by teachers to improve English reading skills, effectiveness of the identified strategies in enhancing students' English reading proficiency, and recommendations for implementing effective strategies to improve English reading in junior high schools. To grasp the essence of the present research, this section discusses a review of relevant literature and the following headings.

2.1 Scarborough's Reading Rope Model

This study is grounded in Scarborough's Reading Rope Model (2001), a contemporary and widely recognized theory in reading research. The model, developed by Hollis Scarborough, provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the complexities of skilled reading. It emphasizes the interplay of two primary strands: word recognition and language comprehension, both of which are critical for developing proficient reading abilities. The word recognition strand focuses on foundational skills, including phonological awareness (the ability to identify and manipulate the sounds of spoken words), decoding (understanding the association between letters and their corresponding sounds to read words), and sight recognition (the ability to instantly recognize familiar words without conscious decoding). These skills ensure readers can accurately and fluently decode text.

The language comprehension strand, on the other hand, emphasizes cognitive and linguistic abilities necessary for deriving meaning from text. It includes components such as background knowledge (general understanding of the world that aids interpretation), vocabulary (knowledge of word meanings and their nuances), language structures (proficiency in syntax, semantics, and grammar), verbal reasoning (skills such as inference and prediction), and literacy knowledge (familiarity with genres, text organization, and narrative structures). Scarborough conceptualized these strands as being interwoven like the threads of a rope. The strands become closely linked as pupils gain proficiency in both word recognition and language understanding over time, leading to proficient and fluid reading.

This model is highly relevant to the study as it provides an evidence-based and structured approach for analyzing the strategies used in teaching English reading skills. Its focus on the integration of decoding and comprehension skills aligns with the study's objectives to identify effective methods for improving reading proficiency. First, the model helps evaluate whether current teaching strategies adequately address both the foundational and higher-order skills necessary for reading. Second, it offers a clear framework for assessing the effectiveness of these strategies in supporting holistic reading development. Moreover, it guides the formulation of recommendations for balanced reading instruction, emphasizing practices such as systematic phonics for word recognition and scaffolding techniques for comprehension.

Scarborough's Reading Rope Model also addresses gaps in existing research by highlighting the interconnectedness of reading sub-skills. Previous studies often focus on isolated components, such as phonics or vocabulary, without considering their integration. This study contributes to research by investigating whether the strategies

employed in junior high school's target both strands of the model effectively. It also identifies specific sub-skills that may require greater attention and provides evidence-based recommendations to improve reading instruction. Through the use of this model, this study ensures a nuanced understanding of reading development and offers practical solutions for enhancing English reading proficiency among junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality.

2.2 Concept of Reading

Reading is a complex, multifaceted process that goes far beyond the simple act of decoding written symbols. It is a cognitive and psychological activity that involves constructing meaning from text, integrating background knowledge, and making sense of new information. The concept of reading can be understood from multiple perspectives, each contributing to the broader understanding of how reading functions and why it is essential for personal, academic, and social development.

2.2.1 Cognitive Perspectives on Reading

At its core, reading is a cognitive process that requires the reader to engage in various mental activities. The foundational step in reading is the ability to decode words or letters and link them to their respective meanings. However, as Snow (2002) highlights, reading is not a mere process of translating written symbols into sounds but involves the "process of constructing meaning from written texts." This definition emphasizes that understanding a text requires much more than decoding, it demands comprehension and integration of knowledge from different sources.

A prominent theory that explains the cognitive processes of reading is the interactive model, first proposed by Goodman (1967). According to Goodman, reading is a "psycholinguistic guessing game", where readers use their knowledge of language, the

context of the text, and prior experiences to make educated guesses about the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences. In this view, reading is not simply a passive activity where the reader extracts information from the text but an active process that involves prediction, hypothesis testing, and context interpretation. This process allows readers to fill in gaps in the text, especially when they encounter unfamiliar words or complex sentence structures. Thus, reading is seen as a dynamic interaction between the reader's cognitive resources and the written language.

Goodman's model was further developed by Stanovich (1980), who proposed a more comprehensive framework of reading through the interactive-compensatory model. Stanovich's theory integrates cognitive skills, including phonological, syntactic, and semantic knowledge, into a unified process. This model suggests that reading involves a compensatory relationship between various cognitive processes, where weaknesses in one area (e.g., phonological awareness) can be offset by strengths in others (e.g., contextual knowledge or syntactic cues). In essence, reading is not dependent on a single cognitive skill, but rather on an interplay of multiple processes that support one another to enhance comprehension. The interactive-compensatory model underscores the complexity of reading as it involves a balance between bottom-up processes (like letter recognition and phoneme decoding) and top-down processes (like predicting meaning based on context).

One of the most significant contributions of Stanovich's work was to challenge the assumption that reading is purely a process of decoding text. Instead, his research showed that skilled reading requires a combination of knowledge and cognitive strategies that go beyond phonics and decoding. This perspective has shaped contemporary views on reading instruction, emphasizing the need for a holistic

approach that fosters both decoding skills and the development of higher-order cognitive processes, such as comprehension and critical thinking.

2.2.2 Sociocultural Perspectives on Reading

While cognitive models of reading focus primarily on individual processes, sociocultural theories emphasize the social and cultural dimensions of reading. According to Barton and Hamilton (2000), reading is not just an individual cognitive skill but a social practice that is shaped by the contexts in which it is used. This perspective views reading as a tool for participating in social activities and highlights the roles that culture, society, and context play in shaping how and why individuals read.

Barton and Hamilton's (2000) stresses that reading cannot be understood in isolation from the social contexts in which it occurs. For instance, reading practices differ across cultures and social groups, as the purposes of reading (e.g., academic, professional, or recreational) influence how individuals approach texts. In some contexts, reading may be used primarily for gaining knowledge, while in others, it may serve more social or cultural functions, such as communicating with others or participating in community practices. This sociocultural view broadens the definition of reading by recognizing that it is shaped by the needs, values, and expectations of different social groups.

Furthermore, sociocultural theories recognize that reading is a practice that is learned through social interaction and engagement with various texts. As individuals encounter different texts in different contexts, they develop particular reading strategies that align with the social expectations and purposes of reading in that context. This view challenges the more individualistic models of reading, emphasizing the role of socialization in shaping literacy practices.

Sociocultural theories also highlight the importance of the broader literacy environment in fostering reading development. Schools, communities, and families all play a significant role in shaping the reading habits and abilities of individuals. For example, children's exposure to reading materials and the encouragement they receive to read in the home can have a profound impact on their literacy development. Moreover, the availability of resources such as libraries, reading programs, and community-based reading activities can support individuals in becoming more competent and confident readers.

2.2.3 The Role of Metacognition in Reading

In addition to cognitive and sociocultural perspectives, the concept of metacognition is crucial in understanding the reading process. Metacognition refers to the ability to monitor, regulate, and reflect on one's thinking processes while reading. Skilled readers are not only able to decode and comprehend texts but are also able to evaluate their understanding as they read and adjust their strategies accordingly. According to Flavell (1979), metacognitive awareness involves two main components: knowledge about one's cognitive processes and the ability to regulate those processes during reading.

Metacognitive strategies are particularly important when reading complex or challenging texts, where readers may need to employ various strategies such as rereading, summarizing, or making inferences to better understand the material. Skilled readers often employ metacognitive strategies to identify areas of confusion, seek clarification, and ensure that they are fully comprehending the text conversely, less proficient readers could find it difficult to adequately check their comprehension and might not be aware of any gaps in their knowledge.

According to research, training pupils metacognitive techniques can greatly improve their reading comprehension. For instance, strategies such as think-alouds, self-questioning, and summarization have been found to improve reading comprehension and foster a deeper understanding of texts (Baker, 2005). By developing metacognitive awareness, readers can become more autonomous and effective in their reading practices, particularly when dealing with complex or unfamiliar texts.

2.2.4 The Importance of Reading in Modern Society

In today's world, reading is more than just an academic skill; it is a fundamental tool for navigating and participating in society. As Barton and Hamilton (2000) note, reading is a social practice that is deeply intertwined with communication, cultural participation, and knowledge acquisition. With the rise of digital technologies, the demands of literacy have expanded beyond traditional print-based reading to include digital literacy, where individuals must be able to navigate online texts, interpret multimedia content, and critically evaluate information from a variety of sources.

The rapid expansion of the internet and digital media has further emphasized the importance of reading. Digital literacy requires individuals to be able to understand and critically engage with various forms of media, including text, images, and video. The ability to read and interpret digital texts has become essential for success in many areas of life, from education and employment to civic participation and personal development. In this sense, reading is no longer limited to printed books but encompasses a wide range of media that individuals must be able to navigate in order to fully participate in society.

Moreover, the ability to read critically has become increasingly important in an era of information overload, where individuals are bombarded with vast amounts of

information from various sources. In order to make informed decisions and participate meaningfully in societal debates, individuals must be able to evaluate the credibility of sources, distinguish between fact and opinion, and synthesize information from different texts. This emphasizes the need for critical literacy, which goes beyond basic comprehension and encourages readers to engage with texts in a reflective and evaluative manner.

Reading is a complex, interactive process that involves a range of cognitive, social, and metacognitive skills. From the cognitive models proposed by Goodman (1967) and Stanovich (1991) to the sociocultural perspectives of Barton and Hamilton (2000), reading can be understood as a dynamic process that involves the integration of knowledge, prediction, and interpretation. The development of reading skills is not only essential for academic success but also for personal and societal participation. In modern society, the ability to read critically and navigate a variety of texts; both print and digital has become indispensable for active engagement in the world. Consequently, understanding the multifaceted nature of reading is crucial for developing effective reading instruction and fostering literacy in diverse contexts.

2.2.5 Reasons Reading Should Be Taught

Reading instruction is essential as it serves as the basis for learning in all other subject areas. Early and effective reading instruction ensures that students can decode and comprehend texts, which is necessary for understanding textbooks, assignments, and other materials. Juel and Juel (1994) emphasizes that reading is fundamental to success in school, as students need to be able to read to understand content in every subject. Furthermore, reading instruction supports cognitive and language development. Early reading exposure aids in the development of important abilities in kids, including

speaking, writing, and listening, all of which are vital for their general cognitive development (National Reading Panel, 2000). Without proper reading instruction, children may face difficulties in mastering other academic skills, leading to long-term educational challenges. Additionally, teaching reading is crucial for closing literacy gaps, especially among children from disadvantaged backgrounds who may not have access to books or reading materials at home. Schools play a key role in providing these children with the opportunity to develop their literacy skills, ensuring they can succeed academically (Snow, 2002). Another reason reading should be taught is that it enables students to become independent learners. By acquiring reading skills, students gain the ability to access information on their own, fostering autonomy and boosting their confidence as learners (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). Effective reading instruction also helps prevent academic failure. Early identification and intervention for reading difficulties can prevent students from falling behind in school, ensuring they stay on track with their academic progress (Snow, 2002).

Furthermore, reading instruction contributes to emotional and social growth. By exposing children to literature, stories, and narratives, reading helps develop their emotional intelligence, empathy, and social understanding. These qualities are important not only for academic success but also for participating in society as informed and compassionate individuals (Mar et al., 2009). Additionally, reading empowers individuals to become critical thinkers and informed citizens who can engage with societal issues such as politics, health, and social justice (Barton & Hamilton, 2000). In today's world, the ability to read critically and effectively is essential for participating in informed debates and decision-making processes.

In conclusion, the teaching of reading is fundamental for personal, academic, and social development. It lays the groundwork for other forms of learning, enhances cognitive and language skills, and prepares individuals to navigate the complexities of the modern world. Making sure that reading instruction is effective in schools is essential to giving all kids, regardless of background, the tools they need to thrive.

2.3 Teachers' Strategies and Practices to Improve English Reading Skills

Teachers have a pivotal role in enhancing English reading proficiency through various strategies and practices. These instructional methods present a diverse toolbox for teachers to elevate their students' English reading skills. Reading comprehension strategies encompass a range of methods tailored to help students derive meaning from written texts (Schunk, 2003).

These strategies encompass approaches like graphic organizers, cooperative learning, story-mapping, self-questioning, peer-assisted learning, and the six strategies outlined by the National Reading Panel (2000). While multiple comprehension strategies are available, it is crucial to clearly teach these approaches to students.

Explicit instruction on how to employ comprehension strategies before, during, and after reading significantly enhances students' reading comprehension abilities (Baker et al., 2001; Liang et al., 2005). Teachers' concerted efforts to impart these reading comprehension strategies to their students substantially improve their reading understanding (Mahdavi & Tensfeldt, 2013). It is advised that students be explicitly taught reading comprehension techniques using a number of instructional approaches, such as the National Reading Panel (2002) model, Ellis's (1994) integrated strategies model, and Harris and Graham's (1992, 1996) self-regulated strategy development model.

For instance, according to Harris & Graham's (1992; 1996) self-regulated strategy development guideline, instructing students to implement a specific reading strategy involves steps such as explicitly explaining the strategy, activating prior knowledge, providing corrective feedback, modeling the strategy, cooperative practice, independent practice, and generalization (Harris & Graham, 1992; 1996). The next sections will provide thorough descriptions of research-backed reading practices that improve pupils' reading comprehension. The efficacy of the chosen five tactics in enhancing reading comprehension abilities is regularly mentioned by studies.

2.3.1 Graphic Organizers

According to Sam and Rajan (2013), "a picture is worth a thousand words," which makes graphic organisers helpful. Textual material has been rearranged, categorised, and organised using this visual approach in a straightforward manner that facilitates comprehension and memory. The "use of lines, arrows, and a spatial arrangement that describe text content, structure, and key conceptual relationship" (Darch & Eaves, 1986, p. 310) might help achieve such organisation. Semantic maps, idea maps, flowcharts, Venn diagrams, webs, framed outlines, and narrative mapping are some of the several ways that information can be represented using a visual organiser (Dexter & Hughes, 2011; Kim et al., 2004). Despite the fact that graphic organisers can take many various shapes, they always aim to help students grasp material by helping them see it.

Both pupils with learning impairments and those with average development can benefit from using graphic organisers as a reading method. Students gain from them in a number of ways. In order to aid in comprehension, graphic organisers first assist students in connecting the new material with what they already know (Sam & Rajan,

2013). Secondly, they give pupils a visual aid that makes the connection between concepts and ideas clear and understandable. Third, they provide pupils a structure that helps them think clearly so they can retain material and prevent any perceptual mistakes that can occur throughout the reading process (Boon et al., 2006; Sam & Rajan, 2013).

Fourth, by allowing students to make predictions about the text, draw conclusions, evaluate their comprehension while reading, and retain key information from the author, graph organisers aid students in better comprehending textual content (Kim et al., 2004; Pang, 2013; Sam & Rajan, 2013). Students can also better understand difficult language with the use of graphic organisers (Sam & Rajan, 2013). Lastly, according to Sam and Rajan (2013), graphic organisers can be utilised at any point during the reading process. Chang et al. (2002) posit that “among the numerous reading strategies, graphic strategies are one of the few approaches that can be applied at the preview stage before reading, during the reading process itself, and at the stage after reading” (p. 5).

Few studies have been done to investigate the efficacy of utilising graphic organisers with students who have learning difficulties; much of the research on graphic organisers is on individuals without learning disabilities. For instance, by clearly illustrating the relationship between key concepts, pertinent details, and vocabulary from a textual information, graphic organisers were found to be an effective learning tool that enhanced the comprehension achievement of both high school students (Darch & Eaves, 1986; Darch & Cersten, 1986) and students with learning disabilities in grades 4 through 6 (Darch & Carnine, 1986; Griffin et al., 1991).

The usefulness of graphic organisers for middle school children with learning difficulties was investigated in a research by DiCecco and Gleason (2002). In this

study, the students' factual understanding of a social studies topic was assessed using certain graphic organisers as an after-reading exercise. Both written essays and multiple-choice tests were used to gauge the pupils' understanding. According to the results, students allocated to the intervention group outperformed those put in the regular instruction condition in relationship topic understanding. Additionally, they provided evidence that graphic organisers are a useful tool for enhancing students' understanding as they enable them to visualise the relational information found in expository textbooks.

An extensive meta-analysis of the twenty-one intervention trials that evaluated the impact of graphic organisers on reading comprehension for children with learning difficulties was conducted by Kim et al. (2004). A total of 848 students with learning difficulties participated in these studies. Their review's findings showed that, while being an extremely challenging task, graphic organisers might be used to improve reading comprehension. When combined, these findings indicate that students' comprehension of all academic disciplines and grade levels may be enhanced by use graphic organisers as a reading method.

2.3.2 Collaborative Strategic Reading

Another popular method for raising pupils' reading comprehension is collaborative strategic reading. Thus, by working in small, diverse cooperative groups and participating in peer-to-peer activities, Klingner, Vaughn, Boardman, and Swanson (2012) believe that it promotes students' reading activities to expand their own learning and improve the learning of their peers. Its primary goal is to help students build strategic methods for text comprehension and "teach them four specific comprehension

strategies they can use with all informational and expository texts they read" (Liang & Dole, 2006, p. 7).

The four cognitive methods that students use as a cooperative group before, during, and after reading a material make up the collaborative strategic reading approach. The first tactic is called "preview." In this stage, before beginning the reading process, students must draw on their prior knowledge, formulate a hypothesis, and generate ideas about the assigned subject. The second tactic is "click and clunk," which is a self-monitoring reading exercise. Students have the chance to control their comprehension during this phase by noting any words, sentences, or phrases that are new to them or that are challenging for them to grasp (clunk).

Additionally, they note down common and readily understandable words, concepts, phrases, and sentences (click). Following their identification of "click and clunk," students will reread each clunk as a group and attempt to deduce its meaning from the context. Students can discuss and attempt to solve all of the detected clunks in that group exercise, giving them the chance to learn from one another. "Getting the gist" is the third tactic. During this phase, students read and participate in a specific exercise where they summarise the primary concept of each paragraph and analyse and synthesise its key content. This fourth tactic is called "wrapping-up." Students begin to formulate questions on the material after finishing the reading assignment. When working in a cooperative group, students have the chance to both ask and answer questions. By sharing important concepts and details from the book, the students wrap up their group discussion (Boardman et al., 2016; Klingner, 2012).

While collaborative strategic reading can help all students become better readers (Klingner et al., 2004; Vaughn et al., 2011), it was first created to address three

educational problems. The first concern is the pressing requirement to meet various learners' educational demands. Students with learning difficulties, English language learners, and struggling learners are its main targets. The second problem is that in order for pupils to comprehend textual content more fully, instructional strategies and approaches that enhance reading comprehension must be developed.

The third problem is that in order to benefit from peer-assist education, students must be placed in a cooperative learning setting (Klinger et al., 2001). Only a small number of research have looked at the impact of cooperative strategic reading on children with learning difficulties, despite the fact that it was created to help them with their reading comprehension. For example, a research by Klingner and Vaughn (1996) looked at how well students' reading comprehension was affected by cooperative strategic reading. Twenty-six middle school pupils with learning challenges who were English language learners participated. The results of this study showed that after using cooperative strategic reading, the students' reading comprehension levels increased. Additionally, kids' reading comprehension improved even when teachers offered them little assistance.

In a more recent study, Klingner et al. (2016) investigated how well collaborative strategic reading affected the reading comprehension of primary school pupils with learning difficulties. The research was carried out at fourteen primary schools. The sixty instructors who were teaching in the general education classrooms were the participants. Teachers in the intervention group were mandated to teach their students through the implementation of a collaborative strategic reading intervention, while teachers in the control group were asked to teach their students using their traditional instructional method without any collaborative strategic reading intervention.

A one-day or joint strategic reading intervention professional development was attended by teachers allocated to the intervention group. They learnt the strategy's justification, how to teach it, and how to assist students in putting it into practice throughout that professional development program. Additionally, participants were given the chance to put the method into practice and get constructive criticism from academics. When teaching reading to their pupils, teachers in the intervention group were instructed to utilise the method two or three times a week for around fifty minutes. This study lasted for around fourteen weeks of teaching. The Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test's reading comprehension subtest was used to evaluate the students' reading comprehension proficiency (MacGinitie et al., 1989). According to the study's findings, students who received training using collaborative strategic reading had much higher reading comprehension than those who received traditional teaching. An experimental research by Kim et al. (2006) examined the impact of implementing a collaborative strategic reading intervention to enhance reading comprehension in middle school children with learning impairments and found similar findings.

Additionally, a number of studies have demonstrated that some elements of cooperative strategic reading improve students' reading comprehension (Kim et al., 2006). Working in a cooperative group is the first element. Cooperative strategic reading offers students a cooperative learning environment where they collaborate as a small group to support one another, assess one another's comprehension of the material, and share their ideas with one another. To put it another way, cooperative strategic reading encourages students to be helpful, which enhances their reading comprehension. (Klingner & Vaughn, 2000; Baker et al., 2001). Additionally, Swanson and Hoskyn (1998) discovered that students with learning difficulties performed better academically when they worked in cooperative groups. Students' engagement by asking questions about

what they read makes up the second element. Students can participate in a reciprocal and cooperative teaching activity by creating and responding to questions on the textual content. This enables them to share ideas, validate their comprehension, and get a deeper grasp of the material. Students are able to reflect on what they are reading, recall tale elements with ease, and retain material for extended periods of time through group discussions (Baker et al., 2001).

2.3.3 Peer-Assisted Learning Strategy

Peer-assisted learning strategy is another evidence-based strategy that is beneficial for increasing reading comprehension for all students, including those who have learning disabilities. It is a commonly known instructional method used to enhance students' reading comprehension through engaging in a peer-tutoring activity. In this method, teachers pair a skilled reader with an unskilled reader and allow them to cooperatively engage in different reading activities that are designed to improve reading comprehension. When implementing this strategy, teachers assign each student with a specific role to play, either tutor or tutee, while engaging in pre-structured reading tasks and activities. Students in each group have an opportunity to exchange the roles while working together on the reading activity. By allowing students to exchange roles, both tutor and tutee have an opportunity to practice the same responsibility that their partner will learn and practice the required skills to effectively perform the pre-structured reading activity. Before being matched with different classmates, each pair collaborates for a minimum of four weeks (Fuchs et al., 2001; Fuchs et al., 2007; Rafdal et al., 2011; Topping, 2001).

Through three reading exercises—paragraph shrinkage, prediction, and pair reading with brief retelling—the peer-assisted learning approach enhances students' reading

comprehension. Before switching roles, each student in the duo must read aloud for around five minutes during the first phase, which is the paired reading exercise. A proficient reader in each pair begins the reading by reading to the less proficient reader. The unskilled reader must read the identical chapter again after the proficient reader has finished. The other students listen intently as one student reads, trying to spot any reading faults and, if any have happened, offering remedial criticism. The unskilled reader can get more comfortable with the text and grow familiar with it before reading it later if the good reader reads first. The recounting phase, which lasts for around two minutes, begins after each student has taken a turn with their oral reading. The novice reader begins by sharing with the expert reader what they have discovered in the text. The proficient reader acts as a tutor, offering remedial comments if the inexperienced reader is unable to retain the information from the book. Giving the pupils the chance to talk about and validate their comprehension of the reading content is the primary goal of the recounting phase.

The proficient reader acting as a tutor begins the second part, the paragraph shortening exercise, by reading aloud each paragraph. As the reader completes each paragraph, the proficient reader pauses to assess the unskilled reader's reading comprehension by posing questions that call for summarising and identifying the paragraph's primary themes. In this exercise, the novice reader must summarise each paragraph in no more than ten words. The proficient reader will request that the reader condense the paragraph if the inexperienced reader summarises it in more than 10 words. The proficient reader should, however, reread the text and summarise it if the inexperienced reader gives an inaccurate or unhelpful summary or includes unrelated material. Before the kids switch positions, this exercise lasts for around five minutes.

By accurately summarising each paragraph and pinpointing the core concept, the paragraph shortening exercise aims to improve reading comprehension. The final reading exercise that students do while using the peer-assisted learning approach is prediction delay. The skilled reader begins this stage by formulating a hypothesis on the book's content, reading it aloud, verifying or refuting the hypothesis, and then summarising the text. As the competent reader reads, the inexperienced reader keeps an eye on the reading process to see any potential errors, assess if the reader is correctly summarising the material, and ascertain whether the reader is making a plausible forecast. Five minutes later, the pupils take turns (Fuchs et al., 2001).

To help all kids get better at reading, Doug Fuchs, Lynn Fuchs, and Debbie Simmons collaborated with a number of Tennessee public school districts to create a peer-assisted learning technique (Fuchs et al., 1997; Sáenz et al., 2005). By giving students with disabilities access to the general curriculum, matching students with varying skill levels, enabling peer tutoring so that students can participate in multiple reading activities, and enabling teachers to meet each student's unique educational needs, the peer-assisted learning strategy enhances student learning (Fuchs et al., 2001).

Peer-assisted learning strategy has been demonstrated as an effective instructional method by the U.S. Department of Education's Program Effectiveness Panel (McMaster et al., 2006; Fuchs et al., 2007). Numerous studies have also demonstrated that it is a successful method for improving reading comprehension and fluency in all kids, from kindergarten through high school, including those with low and high achievement levels (Calhoon, 2007; Saenz et al., 2005).

By enabling students to use a variety of cognitive techniques, including prediction, prediction confirmation, questioning, summarising, and major concept identification, it

improves their reading comprehension (Fuchs et al., 2001; Fuchs et al., 1997; Hughes & Frederick, 2006; Palinscar and Brown, 1984). Calhoon (2007) specifically looked at how well a peer-assisted learning approach affected the phonological and reading comprehension abilities of 38 middle school children in self-contained classes who had learning difficulties. Two groups of pupils were formed. The first group received instruction using the conventional entire class technique, whereas the second group received instruction using a peer-assisted learning approach. Using the Woodcock-Johnson Test of Achievement-III, the results showed that students who were assigned in the peer-assisted learning approach condition significantly improved their word attack, word identification, and passage comprehension. The findings of this study were consistent with those of a number of earlier investigations (Fuchs et al., 2002; Fuchs, 2002; Fuchs & Fuchs, 2001; Mathes, 1998).

In a similar vein, Rafdal, McMaster, McConnell, Fuchs, and Fuchs (2011) investigated how kindergarten pupils with impairments read in relation to peer-assisted learning strategies. Eighty-nine students with individualised education plans who were enrolled in regular classes participated. Four times a week, they received instruction using a peer-assisted approach. The duration of each class was around twenty to thirty minutes. The duration of the intervention was eighteen weeks. According to the study's findings, students' basic alphabet and decoding abilities, including word attack, spelling, and oral reading, may be effectively enhanced by using a peer-assisted learning approach. The study's findings are in line with those of earlier research (Calhoon, 2005; Fuchs et al., 2002, Fuchs et al., 1997).

2.3.4 Story-mapping

Another popular evidence-based reading technique for improving kids' reading comprehension is story mapping. In order to see, organise, and comprehend textual material from a tale, students must fill out a pre-structured template containing story grammar components as headers. As students read and write on the given template, the template serves as a framework to help them focus on identifying the story grammar parts (Boon et al., 1994; Stetter & Hughes, 2010; Stagliano & Boon, 2009; Zahoor & Janjua, 2013).

To help students organise, record, and understand information about a story, story-mapping should include basic story grammar elements like the title, characters, time, setting, conflict, major events, solution, conclusion, and moral of the story. This is true even though story-mapping can take many different forms, like a diagram or graphic organiser (Grünke, Wilbert, Jürgen, & Kim, 2013; Daqi, 2007; Stagliano & Boon, 2009; Wade et al., 2010). Enhancing the students' capacity to recognise each of these story elements is essential for helping them draw connections between the tale's significant events, which can improve their comprehension of the book.

One reading technique that may be applied before, during, and after the reading process for various objectives to help students understand a book is story mapping. For instance, employing the technique prior to reading enables students to organise their conversation, compose some textual parts, and draw on prior knowledge of the subject. During the reading process, narrative mapping can assist students in focussing their attention and continuing to find and record pertinent details about the text. Lastly, students can examine and validate their comprehension of the material by employing story-mapping after reading (Boulineau et al., 2004; Kirylo & Millet, 2000). For the

best effects, narrative mapping should be taught and modelled for children, even though it may be utilised as a reading intervention at any point in the reading process. When teaching their pupils how to properly use story-mapping to enhance their reading comprehension, teachers need take into account a number of factors. To identify which story-grammar aspects are most suited to teach children, teachers should, for instance, assess their students' reading strengths and weaknesses prior to teaching story-mapping. In order to construct and complete the story map, teachers need also choose the words and phrases they will employ. Lastly, educators should decide whether to let students make their own narrative maps or give them a pre-made one.

Teachers are urged to proceed to the teaching phase after completing the preparation phase. During this phase, they begin by demonstrating to the students how to locate the necessary narrative components and record them into the story map while thinking aloud. To keep students' interest and assist them in effectively implementing the plan phases, teachers could also employ various self-instruction phrases throughout the modelling phase. Teachers provide students the chance to put the strategy stages into practice during the guided practice phase while giving them prompt, constructive criticism. To assist students in using the approach on their own, teachers should progressively stop using story-mapping and visual representation, as well as lessen the frequency of corrective feedback given during autonomous and mastery sessions (Grünke et al., 2013).

Students in elementary school (Boulineau et al., 2004; Stagliano & Boon, 2009; Paris, 2007), middle school (Onachukwu Boon, Fore, & Bender, 2007), and secondary school (Dimino, Gersten, Carnine, & Blake, 1990; Gurney, Gersten, Dimino, & Carnine, 1990) have all found that story mapping is an effective intervention for improving their

reading comprehension. More precisely, using story-mapping has improved students' reading comprehension skills by helping them to correctly identify story-grammar elements like setting, conflict, and characters (Boulineau et al., 2004; DiCecco & Gleason, 2002), order the story information in the right order (Gardill and Jitendra, 1999), create a connection that clearly shows the relationship between the story components (Pearson, 1982), recognise and recall important information from a text (Idol, 1987; Idol & Croll, 1997; Stetter & Hughes, 2010), improve overall comprehension of a narrative story (Paris, 2007), and accurately respond to comprehension questions about an expository text (Onachukwu et al., 2007; Stagliano & Boon, 2009).

For instance, using a descriptive ABC design, Boulineau et al. (2004) investigated the impact of narrative mapping on students' reading comprehension. Six learning-disabled primary school pupils participated in this study. Because they struggled with reading, they were in a resource room getting special education assistance. The study was conducted in the resource room, where children typically get reading instruction. Teachers assessed participants' performance on story-grammatical aspects, but under the baseline condition, no teaching technique was offered.

But in the intervention condition, teachers used the narrative map technique to give students direct teaching, guidance, and feedback on story-grammar aspects. The children received the intervention in the final thirty minutes of their daily reading period. The teacher stopped providing teaching and support throughout the maintenance phase. After participants read each tale and filled out a template, the proportion of right answers on each story-map (template) was calculated to gauge the students' performance. The percentage of accurate story elements for every student

improved significantly between the baseline and intervention conditions, according to the study's findings. Story-mapping has been demonstrated to be a successful intervention for enhancing students' reading comprehension of narrative texts. Additionally, throughout the maintenance period, the same beneficial effects were observed for every student. Other investigations also showed similar results (Stagliano & Boon, 2009).

2.3.5 Self-questioning

An affective metacognitive reading technique called self-questioning was created to help all students, learning-disabled or not, improve their reading comprehension across grade levels. In order to track their own understanding and meaning-making of the text, students must actively participate in the reading process by pausing regularly and asking themselves many questions about what they are reading.

Students are given the chance to reflect on their reading, become active and independent readers, and think critically about what they are reading when they are asked questions during the reading process (Mahdavi & Tensfeldt, 2013; National Reading Panel, 2000; Rouse et al., 2014). Self-questioning can take many different forms, but it has been shown to increase reading comprehension for all children.

When using the self-questioning technique to improve students' reading comprehension, there are two ways to come up with questions: teacher-generated questions and student-generated questions. In general, students who use the self-questioning technique must formulate their own queries both during and after the reading process. Students are better able to track their understanding, find key information, comprehend the material more fully, and remember the knowledge they have learnt when they are required to create their own questions and responses to them.

However, certain students' limited reading skills—such as those of at-risk and learning-disabled kids—may make it difficult for them to come up with original questions when reading. In order to guide and support their reading comprehension, teachers may choose to provide students a list of questions to utilise both during and after the reading. In general, students without disabilities are more likely to utilise the student-generated question approach, whereas students with disabilities are more likely to use the teacher-generated question method (Rouse et al., 2014). Whatever shape self-questioning may take, teachers should choose the best one for their students' learning styles and make sure they understand it.

When it comes to reading comprehension, students should be specifically instructed on how to employ self-questioning for various objectives. (Hagaman et al., 2010), combining self-questioning with story-grammatical elements (Graham et al., 1997), summarising and recounting textual information (Dunn, 2010; Mason et al., 2006), and verifying comprehension of information (Hagaman et al., 2010; Mason et al., & Kedem, 2006) are some of these goals. Teachers use an explicit teaching approach to teach the strategy, regardless of the goals beyond employing self-questioning.

When employing this tactic, educators should adhere to a clear method when instructing students on how to formulate reading-related questions in order to enhance their reading comprehension. These instructional strategies include individual practice, guided practice, and modelling. During the modelling phase, teachers demonstrate how to create questions that are pertinent to the text, when to stop reading, and how to think aloud to provide answers to the questions both during and after the reading process. Students are given the chance to practise asking questions, answering them, and receiving corrective feedback from professors during the guided practices phase.

Students are given the chance to independently practice the method during the independent practices (Mahdavi & Tensfeldt, 2013).

The impact of self-questioning on reading comprehension in individuals with learning impairments has been the subject of several research. For example, a research by Crabtree et al. (2010) looked at how self-questioning affected high school students with learning impairments' reading comprehension. Five pre-structured questions on various aspects of the tale (characters, events, time, place, and conflict) were given to the participants. To ask and respond to the given questions, the students had to pause their reading at three pre-established stops. They had to fill out the self-questioning form with their answers. The findings showed that after teaching students to use self-questioning, their reading comprehension of narrative texts and retelling improved dramatically. Additionally, the results demonstrate that all participants were able to sustain their reading comprehension scores following the strategy's deployment.

In particular, after deleting several suggestions, individuals were able to execute the method and identify their stopping spots. Several more investigations revealed similar findings. Additionally, self-questioning has been shown to enhance students' reading comprehension by enabling them to actively interact with the textual content and formulate their own questions (Sawyer et al., 2014; Walker et al., 2002) as well as by improving their capacity to respond to inferential questions (Taylor et al., 2002).

All things considered, even though a number of tactics have been shown to be successful interventions for raising students' reading comprehension, teachers shouldn't depend just on one while instructing their pupils. This is because every student has different comprehension issues, thus one particular method may work for one kid but not for another. Teachers should also be mindful that even the use of evidence-based

practices, if used inappropriately or in a highly modified form, might have a detrimental impact on students' reading comprehension (Kim et al., 2012; Watson et al., 2012).

2.4 Effectiveness of the Identified Strategies in Enhancing Students' English Reading Proficiency

Reading proficiency is a critical skill for academic success and lifelong learning. The strategies identified for improving English reading, including phonics-based instruction, interactive reading practices, vocabulary development, and differentiated instruction, have been shown to be highly effective in enhancing students' reading proficiency. This section reviews the effectiveness of these strategies based on recent empirical research, highlighting how each approach contributes to the improvement of students' English reading skills.

2.4.1 Phonics-Based Instruction

Phonics-based instruction is widely recognized as one of the most effective strategies for early literacy development. Phonics involves teaching students the relationships between letters and sounds, which helps them decode unfamiliar words and build foundational reading skills (Snow, 2002). Research consistently supports the effectiveness of phonics in improving students' reading abilities, especially in the early stages of learning to read.

The National Reading Panel (2000) conducted a comprehensive review of research on reading instruction and found that phonics instruction is highly effective in improving word recognition, spelling, and reading comprehension in young children. Specifically, explicit and systematic phonics instruction significantly enhances students' ability to decode words, leading to better fluency and comprehension. Ehri (2004) also emphasizes the importance of phonics in helping students become fluent readers, noting

that phonics instruction strengthens their word recognition skills, making it easier for them to focus on understanding the text rather than decoding words.

Furthermore, a study by Torgesen et al. (2006) demonstrated that phonics-based interventions can effectively prevent reading difficulties in at-risk students. These findings suggest that phonics instruction not only helps children acquire basic reading skills but also provides critical support to struggling readers, improving their chances of success in later academic endeavors. When combined with other literacy strategies, phonics instruction contributes significantly to overall reading proficiency by helping students build a strong foundation of word recognition skills.

2.4.2 Interactive Reading Practices

Interactive reading practices, such as guided reading, think-alouds, and collaborative reading, have proven to be highly effective in enhancing reading comprehension and engagement. These strategies encourage active participation from students and promote a deeper understanding of texts by integrating cognitive, metacognitive, and social processes.

Guided reading is particularly effective in supporting students at various reading levels. In this approach, teachers provide targeted support to small groups of students, helping them navigate texts that are slightly above their current reading level. According to Pinnell and Fountas (2006), guided reading fosters comprehension by helping students develop strategies for decoding, understanding, and analyzing texts. Research by Allington (2013) indicates that students who engage in guided reading sessions demonstrate significant improvements in reading fluency, comprehension, and critical thinking skills. By engaging with texts at the right level of difficulty and receiving

appropriate scaffolding, students gain confidence in their ability to comprehend complex material.

Think-alouds, in which the teacher verbalizes their cognitive processes while reading, have been shown to enhance students' metacognitive awareness and comprehension. A study by Duffy (2009) found that think-aloud strategies help students monitor their understanding of texts, making it easier for them to identify gaps in their comprehension and adjust their reading strategies accordingly. This approach not only helps students develop critical thinking skills but also encourages them to approach reading with a more analytical mindset.

Collaborative reading practices, such as peer discussions and group reading activities, also foster engagement and comprehension. By discussing texts with peers, students are able to share interpretations, clarify misunderstandings, and deepen their understanding of the material. Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory underscores the importance of social interaction in cognitive development, suggesting that collaborative reading practices promote higher-order thinking and collective meaning-making. When students engage in these types of interactions, they gain valuable insights from their peers, which enhances their overall reading proficiency.

2.4.3 Vocabulary Development

Vocabulary development is a key factor in improving reading comprehension, as it directly influences students' ability to understand the words and concepts presented in a text. Extensive research supports the idea that a rich vocabulary enhances students' ability to decode and comprehend written material (Snow, 2002).

Beck et al. (2002) suggest that vocabulary instruction should be both explicit and contextual. Explicit vocabulary instruction involves teaching students the meanings of specific words, as well as strategies for learning new words, such as using context clues or analyzing word parts. Studies have shown that students who receive explicit vocabulary instruction demonstrate greater improvement in comprehension than those who are not taught these strategies (Beck et al., 2002). Furthermore, vocabulary instruction should also focus on teaching students how words function in different contexts. By learning how words are used in various contexts, students can develop a deeper understanding of their meanings and applications, which ultimately enhances reading comprehension.

Krashen (2004) emphasizes the importance of extensive reading for vocabulary development. According to the Input Hypothesis, students acquire vocabulary more effectively when they are exposed to large amounts of comprehensible input in the form of reading. Research supports the idea that extensive reading leads to incidental vocabulary acquisition, where students learn new words by encountering them repeatedly in context. Studies by Elley (2001) have shown that students who engage in extensive reading demonstrate significant improvements in vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension. By exposing students to a wide range of texts and encouraging them to read for pleasure, teachers can foster both vocabulary development and reading fluency.

Additionally, integrating vocabulary instruction with other literacy practices, such as reading comprehension strategies and phonics instruction, can further enhance students' reading proficiency. When students encounter new words while reading, they can apply their vocabulary knowledge to understand the text more fully. Thus,

vocabulary development plays a central role in supporting all aspects of reading comprehension.

2.4.4 Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated instruction is a teaching approach that tailors instruction to meet the diverse needs of students. This strategy is particularly effective in reading instruction, as it allows teachers to address the varied learning styles, readiness levels, and interests of students. Research supports the effectiveness of differentiated instruction in promoting reading proficiency among students of all abilities (Tomlinson, 2001).

A study by Hall (2002) found that differentiated reading instruction leads to improved reading outcomes, particularly for struggling readers. By providing students with different levels of text complexity, pacing, and support, differentiated instruction ensures that all students are able to engage with texts at their own level. For example, some students may need additional support with decoding words, while others may require more advanced reading comprehension strategies. By tailoring instruction to meet the specific needs of students, teachers can help them progress at their own pace and build confidence in their reading abilities.

Moreover, differentiated instruction fosters student engagement by offering a variety of learning opportunities, such as individual reading assignments, group discussions, and project-based activities. When students are given choices in how they learn, they are more likely to feel motivated and invested in the reading process (Tomlinson, 2001). This approach not only improves reading proficiency but also supports the development of critical thinking and collaborative skills.

2.4.5 Teacher Professional Development

Teacher professional development is a critical component in improving reading instruction. Teachers who are well-trained in evidence-based reading strategies are better equipped to support students in developing their reading proficiency. Research has shown that ongoing professional development positively impacts teachers' instructional practices and, in turn, students' reading outcomes (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006).

A study by Garet et al. (2001) found that teachers who participated in high-quality professional development programs focused on reading instruction demonstrated improved instructional practices and better student outcomes. Professional development programs that provide teachers with knowledge of current research on reading strategies, as well as opportunities for collaborative learning and reflection, are particularly effective in improving reading proficiency. Teachers who are supported in their professional growth are more likely to implement evidence-based practices, such as phonics instruction, guided reading, and metacognitive strategies, which are known to enhance students' reading abilities.

Moreover, professional development should focus on helping teachers use data to inform instruction. By analyzing student progress through assessments, teachers can identify areas where students need additional support and adjust their teaching strategies accordingly (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006). This data-driven approach enables teachers to provide targeted interventions that address the specific needs of students, leading to improved reading proficiency.

The effectiveness of the strategies identified for improving English reading proficiency is well-supported by research. Phonics-based instruction, interactive reading practices,

vocabulary development, differentiated instruction, and teacher professional development all play crucial roles in enhancing students' reading abilities. When implemented thoughtfully and consistently, these strategies help students build foundational reading skills, develop higher-order thinking, and foster a love of reading. As such, these strategies are essential for improving English reading proficiency and ensuring that all students have the literacy skills necessary for academic success and lifelong learning.

2.5 Challenges and Factors Affecting Low English Reading Proficiency

English reading proficiency is a crucial skill influencing academic success and overall cognitive development in students. Identifying and understanding these challenges and factors that contribute to low English reading proficiency is essential in developing effective strategies to enhance reading skills among students. This review examines the myriad challenges and contributing factors that significantly impact low English reading proficiency among learners.

Socioeconomic status (SES) has been extensively linked to reading proficiency (Smith, 2017). Children from lower-income families often lack access to reading materials, limiting their exposure to print-rich environments. According to Logan et al. (2011), limited access to books and educational resources in economically disadvantaged households contributes to a significant disparity in reading proficiency levels. Challenges within the educational system play a pivotal role in reading proficiency. Overcrowded classrooms and untrained teachers often hinder effective reading instruction. Additionally, the absence of focused reading programs and a lack of emphasis on literacy in the curriculum impact students' reading capabilities (Hiebert & Reutzel, 2010).

Gottardo et al. (2018) assert that students for whom English is a second language encounter language barriers affecting reading proficiency. The complexity of English vocabulary and syntax may impede comprehension, particularly for non-native English speakers (August & Shanahan, 2007). Learning difficulties, such as dyslexia or attention deficits, pose significant challenges in reading acquisition. Students with such challenges require tailored instructional strategies and interventions to support their reading development (Vaughn & Linan-Thompson, 2007).

A lack of interest and motivation in reading negatively impacts proficiency (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). When students do not find reading engaging or purposeful, it diminishes their willingness to practice and develop their skills (Gambrell, 2011). Cultural differences and societal attitudes towards reading significantly influence reading habits (Bourdieu, 1986). Communities where reading is not emphasized may result in students not prioritizing or developing strong reading habits (Baker, 2012). A supportive home environment and parental involvement in literacy activities significantly contribute to reading proficiency. Families that prioritize reading and provide access to books tend to foster better reading skills in children. The pervasive influence of technology and digital distractions affects reading habits among students (Pew Research Center, 2020). Excessive screen time and reduced focus on printed materials can hinder reading engagement and proficiency.

2.6 Reasons why Identified Strategies are Employed in Enhancing English Reading Proficiency

The use of diverse instructional strategies in teaching English reading proficiency is grounded in both cognitive and pedagogical theories of reading development. Research has consistently shown that effective reading instruction integrates multiple approaches

to address students' varying needs, learning styles, and literacy development stages (Snow, 2020). The reasons for employing these strategies include promoting student engagement, catering to diverse learning styles, strengthening foundational reading skills, encouraging collaboration, fostering critical thinking, and cultivating a culture of reading. Engagement is a crucial factor in literacy development, as students who are actively involved in reading tasks demonstrate higher levels of comprehension and retention (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2019). Strategies such as interactive read-alouds, guided reading, and digital literacy tools create an immersive learning environment that stimulates curiosity and motivation. According to Pardo and Boudett (2022), structured reading sessions with clear goals, role rotation, and immediate feedback enhance student participation, making reading a more dynamic and enjoyable process. Additionally, multimodal strategies, such as using visual aids, audiobooks, and digital storytelling, help sustain attention and improve comprehension (Donnelly & Roe, 2021).

Students have varying cognitive and learning preferences, necessitating differentiated instruction to meet their needs effectively (Tomlinson, 2017). The Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic (VAK) model suggests that learners benefit from multimodal instructional strategies that align with their preferred modes of learning. For instance, visual learners benefit from graphic organizers and picture books, auditory learners from read-aloud sessions and discussions, and kinesthetic learners from hands-on activities like word-matching games (Fisher, Frey, & Hattie, 2016). Integrating multimedia resources in reading instruction ensures that students with different learning preferences remain engaged and develop essential literacy skills (Clark & Mayer, 2016).

Phonemic awareness, decoding skills, and vocabulary acquisition are essential components of reading proficiency (National Reading Panel, 2000). Phonics-based instruction, which involves explicit teaching of letter-sound relationships, is widely employed to enhance early reading development (Torgerson et al., 2018). Studies show that systematic phonics instruction significantly improves word recognition and fluency, particularly when combined with practical phonics kits and differentiated teaching methods (Ehri et al., 2019). However, Castles, Rastle, and Nation (2018) argue that phonics should be part of a balanced literacy approach that also includes exposure to whole texts, sight word recognition, and comprehension strategies to ensure holistic reading development.

Collaborative learning approaches, like peer tutoring and group study activities, are employed to promote active engagement and shared learning experiences (Slavin, 2019). Research by Gunn et al. (2020) highlights that peer-assisted reading interventions lead to improved reading fluency and comprehension, provided that sessions are well-structured and include trained peer tutors. Additionally, According to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which highlights the importance of social interaction in cognitive development, students learn best when they work together with more experienced classmates (Vygotsky, 1978). However, Duran and Topping (2017) caution that peer tutoring programs require sustained training and monitoring to maintain effectiveness.

Reading comprehension extends beyond word recognition to include critical thinking skills such as inferencing, summarization, and text analysis (Duke & Pearson, 2002). Teachers employ questioning strategies, comprehension exercises, and discussion-based learning to help students develop deeper understanding. Kucan and Beck (1997)

argue that exposure to diverse reading comprehension activities enhances students' ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate texts. Additionally, Pressley (2006) emphasizes that comprehension instruction must be tailored to students' cognitive levels and continuously assessed for effectiveness.

Creating a reading-friendly environment is essential for sustained literacy development. Studies show that when schools and teachers prioritize reading incentives, access to diverse reading materials, and independent reading time, students develop lifelong reading habits (Gambrell, 2015). According to Krashen's Input Hypothesis (2004), students acquire language more effectively when they are exposed to comprehensible input in meaningful contexts. This underscores the importance of providing students with engaging, age-appropriate reading materials that align with their interests. The literature confirms that a combination of interactive, differentiated, and structured reading strategies enhances students' English reading proficiency. These strategies are employed to ensure active engagement, address diverse learning needs, build foundational skills, promote peer collaboration, strengthen comprehension, and foster a lasting reading culture. By integrating these approaches, educators create an inclusive and effective literacy environment that supports students at various reading levels.

2.7 Recommendations for Implementing Effective Strategies to Improve English Reading

Improving English reading skills is a fundamental aspect of literacy development, both for academic success and for participation in broader societal contexts. In light of the growing recognition of reading as a complex, multifaceted process that involves decoding, comprehension, metacognition, and social engagement (Goodman, 1967; Snow, 2002), various strategies have been proposed to enhance students' reading

abilities. These strategies must be carefully designed, implemented, and supported by educators, parents, and policymakers to ensure sustainable progress in reading development. This section outlines several evidence-based recommendations for implementing effective strategies to improve English reading, based on current research in the field.

2.7.1 Phonics-Based Instruction

Teaching phonics with an emphasis on the correspondence between letters and sounds, has long been recognized as an essential strategy for developing foundational reading skills, particularly for early learners (Snow, 2002). Phonics instruction emphasizes decoding skills, which are crucial for children to recognize words and understand their meanings. According to Ehri (2004), explicit and systematic phonics instruction helps students develop word recognition skills, which in turn enhances reading fluency and comprehension. Students that get phonics-based teaching outperform those who do not in terms of word recognition and general reading performance, according to research (National Reading Panel, 2000). Thus, integrating phonics into early reading instruction can lay the foundation for effective reading skills, especially in the early stages of literacy development.

Additionally, phonics instruction should be integrated with other literacy practices. For instance, combining phonics with reading comprehension strategies (such as questioning, summarizing, and predicting) can help students connect their decoding skills to a deeper understanding of the text (Snow, 2002). Teachers can scaffold this by providing opportunities for students to apply phonics in context, using both decodable texts and authentic reading materials.

2.7.2 Interactive Reading Practices

Building on the psycholinguistic theories of reading proposed by Goodman (1967), interactive reading practices encourage students to actively engage with the text. This can be achieved through strategies such as guided reading, think-alouds, and collaborative reading sessions. In guided reading, teachers work with small groups of students at similar reading levels, providing tailored instruction that helps students develop strategies for decoding words, understanding text structure, and making meaning of what they read. The teacher's role is to guide students in applying metacognitive strategies to monitor their comprehension as they read (Baker, 2005).

Think-aloud strategies, in which the teacher verbalizes their thought process while reading a text, allow students to see how skilled readers approach reading and overcome challenges. This strategy encourages students to predict, question, and clarify their understanding as they read, providing them with tools to handle difficult texts independently (Baker, 2005). Furthermore, interactive reading practices can be enhanced by using technology, such as digital books, audio support, and interactive software, which engage students in multisensory learning experiences.

2.7.3 Promoting Extensive Reading

Extensive reading, which involves reading large quantities of text for pleasure or general understanding, is an effective strategy to develop reading fluency and increase vocabulary (Krashen, 2004). According to Krashen's Input Hypothesis, when learners are exposed to large amounts of comprehensible input, they develop language skills naturally and effectively. The emphasis in extensive reading is on volume rather than difficulty, allowing students to read texts that are well below their maximum level of comprehension in order to build reading fluency.

Teachers can encourage extensive reading by creating a rich reading environment that includes diverse reading materials, such as fiction, non-fiction, and digital texts. Classroom libraries, online reading platforms, and home-school partnerships can all contribute to expanding students' access to reading materials. Moreover, students should be allowed to choose texts based on their interests, as this enhances motivation and engagement with reading (Elley, 2001). By fostering an environment that promotes a love for reading and regular reading habits, students are more likely to develop long-term reading proficiency.

2.7.4 Metacognitive Strategy Instruction

Teaching students to be metacognitive readers, those who are aware of their thinking and comprehension processes can have a significant impact on their reading ability. As highlighted by Flavell (1979), metacognition involves monitoring and regulating one's cognitive processes. Effective readers use metacognitive strategies such as predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing to monitor their comprehension and adjust their reading strategies as necessary. These skills help students become more independent and self-directed readers, allowing them to comprehend and analyze increasingly complex texts.

Teachers can implement metacognitive strategies by modeling the thought processes involved in reading through think-alouds, encouraging students to reflect on their understanding, and providing opportunities for students to practice these strategies in different contexts. For example, teachers might guide students to stop at key points during reading to ask themselves questions like, "What did I understand from this section?" or "What might happen next?" These reflective practices can deepen comprehension and encourage students to take responsibility for their learning (Baker,

2005). As students practice metacognitive strategies, they become better equipped to understand texts independently.

2.7.5 Vocabulary Development

Vocabulary is a critical component of reading comprehension, as students need to understand the words they encounter in texts in order to fully grasp the meaning of the material (Snow, 2002). Research has shown that vocabulary knowledge is closely linked to reading comprehension, and students with larger vocabularies tend to perform better on reading tasks (Beck et al., 2002). Vocabulary instruction should be explicit, with a focus on teaching both the meaning of individual words and strategies for learning new words in context.

Effective vocabulary instruction involves multiple strategies, including direct instruction, word analysis, and context-based learning. Teachers can use techniques such as word maps, semantic gradients, and vocabulary journals to help students deepen their understanding of words and how they function within sentences. Additionally, encouraging students to read widely and engage in conversations about what they read can also foster vocabulary development. By promoting a rich vocabulary environment, teachers can enhance students' ability to understand complex texts and improve their overall reading comprehension.

2.8 Studies on Strategies Employed by Teachers in Teaching English Reading Skills

This empirical review discusses key studies related to strategies employed by teachers in teaching English reading. Each review highlights the purpose of the study, theoretical foundation, methodology, key findings, and the research gaps identified.

Numerous studies have explored the strategies used by teachers in developing reading skills among learners. Studies like Pretorius and Spaull (2016) examined the reading comprehension instructional practices of primary school teachers in South Africa. The study, based on the Simple View of Reading and Sociocultural Theory, adopted a qualitative case study design involving classroom observations and teacher interviews. The study revealed that teachers frequently used choral reading, repeated reading, and vocabulary drilling. However, there was a noticeable lack of comprehension-focused strategies such as inferencing and summarization. The gap identified was the limited teacher training on explicit comprehension instruction, especially in low-performing schools.

Similarly, Afflerbac et al., (2018), through a conceptual review grounded in the Metacognitive Theory of Reading, identified core strategies such as predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing as essential tools for reading development. Although their review synthesized strategies from prior empirical studies, they noted that actual classroom implementation of these strategies was inconsistent, depending on teachers' familiarity and confidence levels. The gap highlighted here was the lack of practical in-class studies that monitor strategy usage over time.

In a study in Kenya, Okwara et al., (2009) investigated how English reading is taught in secondary schools. Using a descriptive survey design and anchored in the Constructivist Learning Theory, the researchers employed questionnaires, lesson observations, and document analysis. They found that many teachers focused on oral reading, pronunciation correction, and vocabulary teaching. Little emphasis was placed on learner-centered strategies such as cooperative reading, use of graphic organizers, or summarization. The study exposed a gap in the alignment between pedagogical

practices and communicative language teaching principles recommended by the national curriculum.

A similar study by Nathanson et al., (2021) in the United States investigated the strategies elementary teachers use for teaching English reading. Using mixed methods underpinned by Schema Theory, the study used interviews and classroom video analyses. Teachers frequently used text-to-self connections, questioning, visual aids, and shared reading. However, the findings showed that while most teachers knew about a variety of strategies, their use was often constrained by time, standardized testing, and curricular pressures. This highlights a gap in professional development that bridges theoretical strategy knowledge and actual classroom use.

Although numerous studies have explored various reading instructional strategies, there remains a significant gap in context-specific documentation of strategies used in multilingual and resource-constrained classrooms, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. Many studies (e.g., Pretorius & Spaul, 2016; Okwara et al., 2009) report on commonly used strategies such as oral reading, vocabulary drills, and guided reading, but do not adequately reflect localised classroom realities, such as limited teaching materials and teacher training levels. Furthermore, there is insufficient evidence on how teachers select and adapt strategies in relation to learners' linguistic diversity and curriculum requirements. This creates a gap in understanding the nuanced decision-making processes teachers use to implement reading strategies effectively in such settings.

Also, with studies on effectiveness of reading strategies employed in teaching reading, numerous studies have assessed the effectiveness of specific reading strategies in improving learner proficiency. Mudzielwana (2014) conducted a mixed-methods study in South Africa to evaluate the impact of reading strategies on learner performance. The

study was guided by Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which emphasizes scaffolding during reading instruction. Using pre-tests, post-tests, observations, and teacher interviews, the study found that students who were taught through peer-assisted reading, guided oral reading, and phonemic awareness strategies showed significantly improved reading fluency and comprehension. However, the study pointed out a gap in longitudinal data to assess the sustainability of such improvements over time.

In another study, Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) explored the relationship between metacognitive reading strategy instruction and reading proficiency among ESL students in the United States. Drawing on the Metacognitive Awareness Theory, the researchers used questionnaires and comprehension tests in a quasi-experimental design. The findings showed that learners who received explicit instruction in metacognitive strategies (such as planning, monitoring, and evaluating) performed significantly better on comprehension tasks than those who did not. The study filled a gap in literature related to strategy instruction for older ESL learners, but also called for replication in non-Western settings for broader validation.

Furthermore, Pressley and Allington (2023) investigated the effect of strategy-based instruction in U.S. elementary schools. Based on the Cognitive Load Theory, they conducted a longitudinal observational study across five districts, employing video observations and standardized reading scores. Effective strategies included reciprocal teaching, think-aloud protocols, and interactive read-alouds. The researchers found that students in classrooms with consistent and varied strategy use achieved higher reading comprehension scores. The gap identified was that struggling readers benefited less unless the strategies were differentiated and reinforced regularly.

Although these studies have demonstrated the potential effectiveness of strategies such as metacognitive instruction, phonics, and peer-assisted learning, these findings are often derived from short-term interventions and controlled experimental conditions. As such, there is a gap in the assessment of how effective these strategies are when consistently applied in real-life classroom environments, particularly in public basic schools with large class sizes and minimal instructional support.

Moreover, there are also studies who have investigated teachers' rationale for employing identified strategies in enhancing English reading proficiency. In most cases teachers' decisions to use certain reading strategies are often influenced by various contextual and pedagogical factors. For example, in Nigeria, Oyetunde and Muodumogu (1999) explored why primary school teachers select particular reading strategies. Grounded in Constructivist Learning Theory, the study used interviews and lesson observations. It was found that teachers often chose strategies based on personal experience, availability of instructional materials, and learner engagement. Teachers emphasized vocabulary development and oral reading primarily because they aligned with exam demands and learners' linguistic backgrounds. The gap identified was the disconnect between curriculum expectations and teachers' understanding of evidence-based strategies.

In a more recent study, Taboada Barber et al. (2021) explored the motivational factors behind strategy selection by middle school reading teachers in the U.S. Using a qualitative multiple case study and Self-Determination Theory as a framework, they conducted interviews and classroom observations. Teachers indicated that they employed interactive strategies such as literature circles, peer discussions, and journaling to boost student autonomy and engagement. The findings highlight that

teacher strategy choice is not only pedagogical but also motivational. However, the study noted a gap in empirical validation of whether motivationally chosen strategies always lead to improved reading proficiency.

In Ghana, Osseo-Asare (2020) investigated teachers' rationale for using code-switching as a strategy in English reading instruction in multilingual classrooms. Drawing from Sociolinguistic Theory, the study used classroom observations and teacher interviews. The findings showed that teachers code-switched to explain complex English texts and vocabulary in local languages to aid comprehension. The rationale was to bridge the linguistic gap learners face in predominantly non-English-speaking regions. The study addressed a contextual gap in understanding how language diversity shapes reading strategy implementation.

Another study by Gunning (2013), based on Reader-Response Theory, emphasized that teachers choose strategies that resonate with learners' experiences. Through surveys and classroom diaries, the study found that strategies like story mapping, retelling, and using culturally relevant texts were widely used because they connected with students' backgrounds and improved engagement. The gap here was the lack of follow-up studies on how culturally relevant strategy selection affects long-term comprehension growth. While some studies have explored the rationale behind teachers' strategy choices (e.g., Taboada Barber et al., 2021; Asare & Nti, 2020), they tend to focus more on general teaching motivations rather than specifically linking teacher rationales to English reading instruction practices. There is a limited understanding of the pedagogical, contextual, and motivational factors influencing teachers' decisions to employ certain strategies over others, especially in environments where English is not the first

language. This gap is crucial, as understanding the ‘why’ behind strategy use can inform more targeted teacher training and policy decisions in literacy education.

2.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed relevant literature to provide a theoretical and empirical basis for the study. It explored existing strategies used by teachers to teach English reading skills in junior high schools, examining their application and impact on students’ reading proficiency. Key instructional methods, including phonics, shared reading, guided reading, and independent reading, were discussed. The chapter also evaluated studies on the effectiveness of these strategies in enhancing English reading proficiency, highlighting their strengths and limitations. Furthermore, it examined best practices for implementing effective strategies in different educational contexts.

The review identified critical gaps in the literature. First, there is limited research specifically addressing the contextual factors influencing the choice of teaching strategies in junior high schools within Ghana, particularly in the Ga-West Municipality. Second, while several studies have assessed the effectiveness of strategies in general terms, few have explored their specific impact on students’ reading proficiency levels or differentiated their applicability for various learner groups. Lastly, there is a lack of actionable recommendations tailored to junior high schools for improving English reading proficiency. These gaps justify the objectives of this study, which aim to explore existing strategies, evaluate their effectiveness, and provide practical recommendations to address challenges in teaching English reading skills.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research philosophy, research approach, research design, settings, population, sample and sampling technique, the research instruments for data collection, pre-testing of instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis method, and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Approach

The qualitative research approach was employed to understand strategies for improving reading among junior high school students. According to Levitt et al. (2018), qualitative research is inherently inductive, focusing on exploring meanings and insights within a specific context. It involves observing real-life situations and interpreting them to uncover the significance individuals attribute to their experiences in their everyday lives (Walia, 2015). Qualitative research provided a narrative investigation and description of the quality of relationships, situations, events, materials and conditions as observed in the natural setting such as the school and classroom.

Given the study's objectives of examining strategies in teaching reading, delving into personal viewpoints, and offering recommendations tailored to the unique setting of junior high schools, the qualitative approach is well-suited and pertinent. Also, this approach was selected to facilitate a thorough and profound understanding of the viewpoints and perceptions held by teachers and students concerning English reading strategies. Creswell (2017) states that qualitative research has become more accepted as a legitimate mode of inquiry in the social behavioural sciences. This qualitative inquiry seeks to elicit, collect, organize, synthesize and analyze information about

strategies for improving reading from a triad of data sources including, interviews of teachers and learners. Qualitative research is ideally suited to capture the depth and intricacies of participants' perspectives, ensuring that the data collected is both rich and contextualized.

3.2 Research Design

A case study was adopted as the design for this study, to examine strategies for improving English reading among junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality. A case study design is a qualitative approach that involves an in-depth, contextual analysis of a specific situation or phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 2018).

The case study design was appropriate for this study since it focused on the unique context of selected junior high schools in the Ga-West Municipality, aiming to uncover the strategies employed by teachers to enhance English reading proficiency. Also, this approach allowed for gathering detailed and comprehensive data through various sources, including interviews, observations, and document analysis. By examining multiple cases within the same municipality, the study identified common patterns and unique variations in teaching strategies, providing a diversified understanding of the effectiveness and challenges of these practices.

3.3 Setting

The study was conducted in the Ga-West Municipality, located within the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Ga-West Municipality is one of the twenty-nine districts in this region. It was originally part of the larger Ga District until 1988, when the eastern portion was separated to form the Ga East District in 2004, resulting in the redefined Ga West District. The Ga West Municipality encompasses a diverse educational

landscape with both private and public institutions. According to the Population and Housing Census (2021), the municipality hosts a substantial number of schools, including two-hundred-and-twenty-nine private and seventy-eight public junior high schools (JHS), alongside five private and three public senior high schools (SHS). This substantial presence of educational institutions provides a varied and rich context for examining the effectiveness of reading instruction strategies.

The choice of Ga-West Municipality for the study is particularly pertinent due to its blend of private and public schools, which allows for a comprehensive evaluation of teaching strategies across different types of institutions. By focusing on the Ga-West Municipality, the study addresses a municipality with a significant concentration of schools, thus providing a representative sample for examining the challenges and strategies related to improving English reading proficiency. The findings of this study are expected to offer valuable insights into the effectiveness of reading strategies and contribute to enhancing educational practices within the municipality. Improved reading strategies could lead to better literacy rates, positively impacting students' academic performance and overall well-being.

3.4 Population

According to Agyedu et al., (2011), population in research is the complete set of individuals (subjects), objects or events with common observable features for which a researcher is interested in studying. It is also regarded as the larger group from which individuals are selected to participate in a study. A population is also defined as a group of individuals or people with the same characteristics and in whom the researcher is interested. Kusi (2012, p. 80) defines target population as “a group of individuals that a researcher generalizes his/her findings”. The population of this study is English

Language teachers. English Language teachers were chosen as the population because they are professionals who are trained and are responsible for developing students' English Language proficiency through teaching reading. However, the target population of the study included all public junior high school English Language teachers in the Ga-West Municipality.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample consisted of eleven (11) junior high school English Language teachers from four (4) selected schools in the Amasaman circuit in the Ga-West Municipality. The sampled schools and teachers were chosen out of the many schools in the municipality due to the following reasons: First, the public schools in the municipality are scattered and wider apart from each other, therefore making the data collection process a difficult task to carry. This brought about the issue of proximity and cost, where the study had to be conducted in the Amasaman circuit where four of the schools were located in the circuit, and were a bit closer to each other and it made data collection less stressful. Additionally, the sample was chosen because the circuit is where I have lived and taught for about ten years, and also where the problem of the study was identified.

The study's participants were selected using the convenience sampling technique. Convenience sampling, is a technique where participants are selected based on ease of access and availability. The sample of eleven (11) junior high school English Language teachers from the four (4) selected schools in the Amasaman circuit in the Ga-West Municipality were purposively sampled based on proximity and their status as English Language teachers within the setting of the study. Also, their direct involvement and experience in reading instruction, which was crucial for understanding the effectiveness of different teaching strategies informed the sampling. This deliberate selection process

allowed for the inclusion of participants who could offer informed perspectives on the challenges and successes associated with teaching reading in the Ga-West Municipality.

3.6 Data Collection Instrument

The instrument for data collection was semi-structured interview guide. This interview guide was used for gathering qualitative data from the teachers of English in the selected schools for this study. The kind of interview conducted was the face-to-face interview. Interview as a method of collecting data involves presentation of oral or verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral-verbal responses (Amoah and Eshun, 2014).

3.7 Managing and recording data

A semi-structured and open-ended interview were conducted, where notes were taken and the interviews were also audio-recorded for transcription (to complement the notes taken). During these procedures, the necessary interview protocols were strictly followed as outlined by Creswell, (2014, p.244) that interview protocols during data collection need to include the following components:

- a. A heading (date, place, interviewer, interviewee),
- b. Instructions for the interviewer to follow so that standard procedures are used from one interview to another.
- c. The questions (typically an ice-breaker question at the beginning followed by four to five questions that are often the sub-questions in a qualitative research plan, followed by some concluding statement or a question, such as, “Who should I visit with to learn more about my questions?”
- d. Probes for the four to five questions, to follow up and ask individuals to explain their ideas in more detail, or to elaborate on what they have said

- e. Spaces between the questions to record responses
- f. A final thank-you statement to acknowledge the time the interviewee spent during the interview.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

An introductory letter from the Department of English Education was sent to the Ga-West Municipal Educational Directorate to introduce myself. Based on the research questions, I had a basic interviewing plan, but that didn't stop me from asking follow-up questions as the interview went on. To put it another way, the topic of flexibility as a strength of the interviewing technique was examined, keeping in mind that my objective is to assist respondents in expressing their opinions on a phenomenon according to their own terms. I obtained previous agreement from the participants to record the interviews. My evaluation and analysis of the research findings were made easier in part by the audio recording.

Data was collected within a period of six weeks. During this period, each school in the sample was visited twice in every week, where teachers were observed teaching reading in their English Language lessons. Additionally, they were interviewed to gather data on their knowledge in teaching reading, the existing strategies, new strategies, how they employ them in their lessons. The interview guide helped in this process, while the teachers were also allowed to contribute their ideas and experiences about some strategies that would help promote learners' reading fluency when incorporated in teaching of English reading.

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected for this study were analysed using thematic analysis, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2017). This approach involves identifying, analysing, and reporting

patterns (themes) within qualitative data. Given the study's focus on examining strategies in teaching English reading, thematic analysis was appropriate for systematically categorising participants' responses. Themes were derived inductively based on patterns emerging from participants' responses, guided by the research questions, and the interviews. To begin the analysis, a descriptive language transcript of the recorded interviews was created (Glesne, 2016). The settings in which events took place are depicted through descriptive language. By repeatedly listening to the interviews, important topics regarding the study were found in the analysis. In order to make interpretations, the interview transcriptions were also reviewed multiple times. I looked beyond the facts to determine what could be inferred from them. I discovered new problems as a result of this method. These emerging issues served as themes for the analysis. The themes for the analysis included; strategies employed for teaching English reading skills, effectiveness of the identified strategies in enhancing reading proficiency, and recommendations for implementing effective strategies to improve reading proficiency. From these themes, sub-themes were developed from the interview responses for analysis.

Also, the thematic analysis was informed by empirical literature and guided by the Scarborough's Reading Rope Model (2001) which provides a theoretical framework for understanding the complexities of skilled reading. This model was useful for interpreting the strategies used in teaching English reading skills and also provided an evidence-based and structured approach for the analysis.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

According to Halai (2006), there are established rules and regulations for carrying out research in an ethically sound way, and researchers must get consent from both participants and gatekeepers. Questions of right and wrong are referred to as ethics. When doing a study or looking into a certain subject, a researcher must consider whether it is right or wrong. In conducting research, ethical considerations are crucial. I followed all research guidelines in this study, which includes obtaining approval from the appropriate offices and officers and upholding confidentiality, integrity, transparency, and accountability. This allowed me to gain the trust of the field participants while preventing needless suffering, anxiety, and injury among the responses.

To maintain the ethics of secrecy during the field data collection, I ensured that all identifying personal information collected from study participants was removed from the final report. Furthermore, when participant audio recordings were made, the audio files were stored on my laptop as password-protected files to keep outsiders from reading or altering the data transcription. In order to protect their anonymity, the informants who were questioned were also coded. Secondary data from books, journals, newspapers, and online theses that provided important literature on the subject were appropriately cited to prevent plagiarism.

3.11 Chapter Summary

Chapter three outlined the qualitative methodology employed in the study to examine strategies for improving English reading among junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality. The research adopted a case study design, focusing on understanding the lived experiences and perspectives of teachers and students regarding

the teaching and learning of English reading skills. The chapter described the research design, target population, sampling techniques, data collection methods (interviews, focus groups, and classroom observations), and data analysis procedures. Ethical considerations, including informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation, were also discussed to ensure the integrity of the research process. The methodology was designed to provide in-depth insights into the strategies currently employed, their perceived effectiveness, and areas for improvement.



CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

The study's findings are presented and discussed in this chapter. The findings are examined in light of pertinent literature. This study seeks to examine strategies for improving English reading among junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality. The results are presented and analyzed in two sections namely Section A and Section B. Section A deals with the demographic data while the section B concerns the main data.

4.1 Demographic Data of Participants

This section shows the socio-demographic data on respondents' gender, age bracket, highest academic qualification, and years of teaching experience.

4.1.1 Results of demographic data of participants

The results of demographic data of participants indicated that most seven (63.6%) of the respondents were males, while the remaining four (36.4%) were females. It suggests that majority of the respondents who participated in the study were male teachers. Given the gender disparity among teachers, with a predominance of males, it is important to promote gender-inclusive strategies. This can include professional development that addresses gender biases in teaching practices and encourages the use of reading materials that are inclusive and representative of both genders.

The results showed that two (18.2%) of the respondents were below thirty years, seven (63.6%) were within the age range of thirty-one to forty years while the remaining two (18.2%) of them were within forty-one to fifty years. Since the majority of respondents

are in the thirty-one to forty age range, strategies should be designed to target this demographic, who are likely to be more adaptable and open to new teaching methods. Tailored workshops and continuous professional development can help these teachers stay updated with modern pedagogical techniques in reading instruction.

The results on the academic qualification of respondent revealed that three (27.3%) of them were diploma holders, six (54.5%) of the respondents were degree holders, and the remaining two (18.2%) were master's degree holders. This means that the academic qualification of majority of the respondents was degree. The high level of academic qualifications among teachers suggests they have a solid foundation in both content and pedagogy. Strategies to improve reading should therefore include advanced training in literacy instruction and the latest educational technologies to leverage their existing knowledge.

Result on years of teaching experience of the respondents indicated that two (18.2%) of them had below six years teaching experience, three (27.3%) had 6-10 years teaching experience and six (54.5%) of them had eleven to twenty years of teaching experience. The means that, majority of the respondents had six to ten years of teaching experience. With the majority of teachers having significant teaching experience (six to twenty years), strategies should focus on utilizing their expertise to mentor less experienced teachers. Professional development programmes can be tailored to encourage experienced teachers to share best practices in reading instruction.

4.2 Thematic Analysis of Data

This section provides the views of respondents regarding strategies they employed in teaching English reading. The purpose of the interview results was to give the research participants' voices and guarantee a comprehensive evaluation of the methods used to

help junior high school pupils in the Ga-West Municipality improve their English reading skills. The participants' stories are intermingled throughout the presentation with pertinent quotes to elaborate on their individual opinions to the degree that they relate to their actions. It is important to emphasise that only essential replies are included in the analysis, and all participant names are pseudonyms (ET1, for example, stands for English Teacher 1; ET2, for example, for English Teacher 2) rather than their true names. The data had been analyzed based on themes (thematic analysis). The analysis was based on the research questions for the study. What characterizes the data is the widespread agreement of the respondents on the issues. There was absolute unanimity in the responses to several of the questions or items, and this degree of unanimity gave much power to the results. The views of participants on the three research questions were classified into for major themes. These themes included:

1. Strategies employed for teaching English reading skills
2. Effectiveness of the identified strategies in enhancing reading proficiency
3. Recommendations for implementing effective strategies to improve reading proficiency

Research Question 1: What strategies do teachers employ to teach English reading skills among the selected junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality?

This research question sought to examine the existing strategies and practices to teach English reading skills among junior high school students. To address this research question, the analysis focuses on the various strategies and practices currently utilized by teachers to enhance English reading skills among junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality. The responses from participants reveal a range of approaches, each contributing to the overall effectiveness of reading instruction. This analysis is

organized into sub-themes that illustrate how teachers implement these strategies in their classrooms.

Theme 1: Existing Strategies employed for teaching English reading skills

This theme explores the current strategies used by teachers to enhance English reading skills among junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality. The insights and methods shared by the participants are crucial for understanding the effectiveness of these strategies and identifying areas for improvement. The existing strategies for teaching English reading skills among junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality include interactive reading sessions, the use of multimedia resources, phonics-based instruction, peer tutoring, reading comprehension exercises, and extracurricular activities like reading clubs and competitions. The extracts below provide evidence to support the use of these strategies by teachers in enhancing reading proficiency among junior high school Students.

Sub-theme 1: Interactive Reading Sessions

Many respondents emphasized the importance of interactive reading sessions as a means to engage students and improve their reading skills. These sessions involve activities where students read aloud in turns, followed by group discussions to analyze and interpret the text. ET1, noted:

Engaging students in interactive reading sessions where they read aloud and discuss the content helps improve their reading fluency and comprehension. It also encourages participation and boosts their confidence in reading. [ET1]

During interactive sessions, students feel more involved and motivated. It helps them to express their thoughts and ask questions, which deepens their understanding of the text. [ET2]

“We sometimes split the class into small groups for reading sessions. This allows each student to have more opportunities

to read and interact, making the learning process more personalized. [ET3]

....group them to communicate among themselves, that is one, we also have project work that we give to the students for them to be versatile in the literacy, digital literacy, so we give them work to go and research on the internet to bring their results to the class. [ET4]

A participant ([ET3]) shared a success story:

...for instance, if you look at the phonetic method and the Syllabic method, if the teacher is willing to do, you can do it. When you do, you put them in groups, depending on their reading abilities. Some of them actually can read very well. Some of them they cannot read, so....you put the class into group based on their abilities....There are even cases where even the learners themselves can be resource persons to the others, they can be a peer teacher, they can also help others. After I took a student through, she was now confident that in class, she would tell them, oh no, no, you don't pronounce it this way, you have to take it this way, break the word into this way, then you will be able to pronounce. So, we see that Mary pronounced another person who will lead a particular group when it comes to teaching them how to read. So, I think putting them in groups will be a way we can enforce this.

The responses emphasize the significant role of interactive reading sessions in enhancing students' reading skills and overall engagement. ET1's observation that such sessions improve reading fluency and comprehension while boosting student confidence underscores the dual benefits of this approach. ET2 adds that interactive sessions make students feel more involved and motivated, highlighting the sessions' capacity to transform students into active participants in their learning process. Furthermore, ET3's mention of small group readings reflects a personalized approach, indicating that tailoring these sessions to smaller groups can enhance individual attention and participation. These responses collectively suggest that interactive reading sessions are a dynamic and effective strategy, making reading an engaging activity that develops both skills and confidence among students.

Subtheme 2: Use of Multimedia Resources

The integration of multimedia resources was highlighted as an effective strategy for making reading more engaging and accessible. Teachers use videos, and phones to complement traditional reading materials.

Using videos, and phones captures students' interest and makes reading more engaging and enjoyable. These resources cater to different learning styles and help students visualize and understand the content better. [ET4]

Students are more motivated to read when we incorporate multimedia elements. It breaks the monotony of traditional reading and makes the learning experience more dynamic. [ET5]

Multimedia resources are particularly useful for students with reading difficulties. Audiobooks, for instance, allow them to follow along with the text and improve their listening skills. [ET6]

The integration of multimedia resources in teaching is another highlighted strategy, recognized for making reading more engaging and accessible. ET4 points out that using videos, and phones captures students' interest and appeals to different sensory modalities, thereby making the learning process more engaging. ET5's remark on breaking the monotony of traditional reading underscores the importance of variety in maintaining student interest and motivation. Additionally, ET6 noted that multimedia resources are particularly beneficial for students with reading difficulties, emphasizing their inclusive potential by providing support where it's most needed. Collectively, these responses indicate that multimedia resources are an essential element in modern teaching strategies, enriching the reading experience and supporting diverse learners.

Sub-theme 3: Phonics-Based Instruction

Phonics-based instruction is employed to help students develop a strong foundation in reading by understanding the relationship between letters and sounds. This method is particularly useful for young readers and those struggling with reading difficulties. The participants had these to say:

...As usual, I use the phonetic. So, we break the words into syllables for them to pronounce. That's the basic thing. Some of them don't actually know the sounds. So, we treat the sounds with them in order for them to be able to pronounce words. We break the words into syllables and then...[ET1]

When it comes to sound teaching, like for the English, you rather use audio materials, like to play the sounds for your children to listen to it, to produce it after you. So, these are some of the techniques that I do use in the class. [ET2]

So those who can read, I make them read in class Mostly. But those who are struggling to read, I have identified them and I have a special time that I meet them. Mostly erm during free periods then I take them through the sounds of how they can put those sounds, or how they can put those sounds together, or they can identify them in words and be able to pronounce them. So, I give them homework to get words that contain those sounds. And gradually make them to identify the words..... [ET3]

Teaching phonics helps students understand the relationship between letters and sounds, which is essential for reading new words and improving pronunciation. We use flashcards, songs, and phonics games to make learning fun and interactive. [ET5]

Phonics-based instruction is crucial for early readers. It builds their confidence as they can decode words more easily and start reading independently. [ET7]

We have seen significant improvements in students' reading abilities since implementing a phonics-based approach. It provides them with the tools they need to tackle unfamiliar words. [ET8]

ET8 shared a success story:

I teach this girl in form 1 called...who couldn't even pronounce two letter words. But when I took her through the Syllabic and the Phonic method, three weeks' time, this girl was able to read

two paragraphs, two, three sentences, and was able to also simple sentences. So, it is an indication that she has improved by taking her through the phonic and the syllabic methods.

As evident from the responses, phonics-based instruction is identified as a foundational strategy for helping students develop essential reading skills by understanding the relationship between letters and sounds. ET5 highlighted the benefits of phonics in improving pronunciation and word decoding, illustrating the foundational advantages of this method. ET7 emphasizes that phonics instruction builds confidence in early readers, fostering independent reading skills. ET8's observation of significant improvements since implementing phonics instruction indicates its practical effectiveness. The widespread use and positive feedback on phonics-based instruction among respondents suggest it is a cornerstone of reading education, especially for younger students and those struggling with reading.

Sub-theme 4. Peer Tutoring

Peer tutoring involves pairing students so that stronger readers can help their peers who may be struggling. This strategy fosters collaborative learning and allows students to learn from each other in a supportive environment. Some participants remarked:

Pairing students for peer tutoring sessions encourages collaborative learning and allows stronger readers to support their peers. It creates a sense of responsibility and builds a community of learners who are willing to help each other succeed. [ET4]

Peer tutoring has been effective in boosting the confidence of both the tutor and the tutee. The tutees benefit from one-on-one attention, while the tutors reinforce their own knowledge by teaching others. [ET1]

We have structured peer tutoring sessions where students work on specific reading tasks together. This method has led to noticeable improvements in reading comprehension and fluency. [ET3]

This participant ([ET3]) shared a success story on the use of peer tutoring strategy:

...there is this boy in my class who is older and I didn't know that he could not read until that was when he was in form 1 or basic 7, so I gave him junior graphics to read then I realized that no he was struggling pronouncing each word, even three letter words. So, I decided to gather others who cannot read like him. And then we started the journey.

And today he's in Form 3, he can read very well. It's better. He's able to confidently raise his hand in class, read and answer questions. And that is very amazing. I'm so thrilled to see the way he has progressed from a basic 7 through to a basic 9 and he's able to read and even speak the English language.

From the responses, peer tutoring is recognized for fostering a collaborative learning environment where students support each other, promoting mutual learning and shared responsibility. ET6's comment highlighted the social and academic benefits of peer tutoring, noting that it encourages collaborative learning and builds a community of learners willing to help each other succeed. ET1 points out that peer tutoring boosts the confidence of both the tutor and the tutee, with tutees benefiting from one-on-one attention and tutors reinforcing their own knowledge by teaching others. ET3 mentions structured peer tutoring sessions focused on specific reading tasks, which have led to noticeable improvements in reading comprehension and fluency. These responses suggest that peer tutoring is an effective strategy for enhancing reading skills, fostering a supportive learning environment, and encouraging student collaboration.

Sub-theme 5: Reading Comprehension Exercises

Focused reading comprehension exercises are designed to enhance students' understanding of the text. These exercises include activities such as answering questions, summarizing passages, and discussing themes and characters.

Summarizing passages helps students identify key points and main ideas, which is crucial for comprehension. We also discuss themes and characters to deepen their understanding. [ET2]

We regularly conduct comprehension exercises where students answer questions based on the passages they read, helping them to think critically about the text. This practice improves their analytical skills and encourages them to engage deeply with the material.

...I make them read in class Mostly. But those who are struggling to read, I have identified them and I have a special time that I meet them. Mostly erm during free periods then I take them through the sounds of how they can put those sounds, or how they can put those sounds together, or they can identify them in words and be able to pronounce them. So, I give them homework to get words that contain those sounds. And gradually make them to identify the words...

We use a variety of comprehension questions that range from literal to inferential and evaluative. This approach ensures that students are able to understand the text at multiple levels. [ET4]

These comments suggest that the use of focused reading comprehension exercises is another strategy aimed at enhancing students' understanding of texts. ET3 discusses how regular comprehension exercises, which involve answering questions based on passages read, help students think critically about the text and improve their analytical skills. ET2 highlighted that summarizing passages helps students identify key points and main ideas, which is crucial for comprehension. ET4 adds that using a variety of comprehension questions ensures students understand the text at multiple levels, from literal to inferential and evaluative. These responses indicate that reading comprehension exercises are vital for deepening students' engagement with texts and developing critical reading skills.

Sub-theme 6. Reading Clubs and Competitions

Extracurricular activities like reading clubs and competitions are organized to motivate students and promote a love for reading. These activities provide opportunities for students to explore diverse genres and authors, and to showcase their reading skills.

The views of the participants are shared in the excerpts below:

Reading clubs provide a platform for students to discuss books and share their thoughts. It fosters a community of readers who support and encourage each other. [ET5]

Organizing reading clubs and inter-school reading competitions motivates students to read more and develop a love for literature. These activities create a positive and competitive environment that inspires students to improve their reading skills and broaden their literary horizons. [ET7]

Competitions bring an element of fun and challenge to reading. Students are excited to participate, and it drives them to read more and improve their skills. [ET8]

Extracurricular as evidence in the responses include activities such as reading clubs and competitions are recognized for motivating students and promoting a love for reading. ET7 shares that organizing reading clubs and inter-school reading competitions motivates students to read more and develop a love for literature, creating a positive and competitive environment. ET5 mentions that reading clubs provide a platform for students to discuss books and share their thoughts, fostering a community of readers who support and encourage each other. ET8 adds that competitions bring an element of fun and challenge to reading, driving students to read more and improve their skills. These responses collectively suggest that extracurricular activities are effective in inspiring students to enhance their reading skills and broaden their literary horizons.

Research Question 2: What recommendations can be provided for implementing effective strategies to improve English reading in junior high schools?

This research question examines practical methods for implementing identified strategies to enhance English reading proficiency among junior high school students. The participants share practical methods for implementing the identified strategies aimed at enhancing English reading proficiency among junior high school students. The analysis is structured around five key themes, each detailing specific implementation approaches based on participant feedback.

Sub-Theme 1: Integrating Interactive Reading Sessions

Interactive reading sessions are a dynamic approach to engaging students in reading. This theme focuses on strategies for incorporating interactive elements into reading instruction to foster greater student participation and comprehension. Implementing interactive reading sessions involves several key strategies. Teachers can form structured reading groups, where students alternate reading aloud and discussing the material. This method promotes both fluency and comprehension by encouraging peer interaction and engagement. Creating thematic reading units, which explore various genres and topics through interactive sessions, makes the material more relevant and interesting to students. Additionally, guided reading sessions can be utilized, providing targeted support tailored to individual reading levels and needs, addressing specific challenges students may face. The participants had these to say:

Interactive reading sessions can be significantly improved by structuring them around specific themes or genres that captivate the students' interests. For example, a unit on adventure stories could include activities like group readings, character analysis, and thematic discussions that engage students more deeply. [ET1]

Incorporating group discussions and peer reviews within interactive reading sessions is crucial. When students discuss

what they've read and provide feedback to each other, it not only enhances their comprehension but also builds critical thinking and communication skills. [ET2]

To ensure that all students are actively involved, it's important to regularly rotate roles within reading groups. This way, every student has the chance to lead a discussion, read aloud, and engage in different aspects of the group activity, which helps in maintaining their interest and participation. [ET3]

Setting clear goals for each interactive reading session and providing immediate feedback can greatly boost the effectiveness of the sessions. For instance, if the goal is to identify the main ideas of a passage, immediate feedback on students' interpretations helps clarify any misunderstandings and reinforces learning. [ET6]

Participants suggest that interactive reading sessions should be well-structured around engaging themes, involve regular role rotation, and include clear goal-setting with immediate feedback. These elements are essential for maintaining student interest and maximizing the benefits of interactive reading.

Sub-theme 2: Leveraging Multimedia Resources

Multimedia resources offer a variety of ways to present reading materials and engage students. This theme explores how digital tools and multimedia can be integrated into reading instruction to make learning more engaging and accessible. To effectively leverage multimedia resources, schools should develop and maintain curated digital libraries that include videos and photos catering to different learning styles. Integrating these multimedia elements into lesson plans can complement traditional reading materials, making lessons more engaging and dynamic. Additionally, using interactive educational platforms that offer exercises and games provides students with varied practice opportunities. Regular updates to multimedia resources and incorporating student feedback help keep these tools relevant and effective. Some participants shared their views:

By using libraries, we ensure that students have access to a diverse range of multimedia resources. For example, having access to phones and videos on the same topic as their reading materials can cater to different learning preferences and reinforce their understanding. [ET4]

Integrating multimedia resources into our daily lessons, such as using interactive e-books and educational videos, can make reading more engaging. When students see the material presented in different formats, it helps them connect with the content on a deeper level. [ET5]

Interactive platforms that offer games and exercises related to reading can be very effective. For instance, vocabulary-building games or comprehension quizzes that are interactive can make learning more enjoyable and help reinforce reading skills. [ET6]

Regularly updating our multimedia resources and seeking feedback from students about what works best can ensure that these tools remain relevant. For example, if students prefer certain types of interactive content, incorporating more of that can help maintain their interest and enhance learning. [ET8]

Participants highlight the importance of maintaining diverse digital resources and integrating them into lessons. Regular updates and incorporating student feedback are crucial for keeping multimedia tools effective and engaging.

Sub-theme 3: Enhancing Phonics-Based Instruction

Enhancing phonics-based instruction involves several strategic approaches. Organizing phonics workshops for teachers can refresh and enhance their instructional techniques, ensuring they use the most effective methods. Providing phonics kits with materials such as letter cards and sound charts supports classroom instruction by offering practical tools. Differentiating phonics instruction based on individual student assessments allows for targeted support, addressing specific needs. Regular assessment of students' phonics skills and adjusting instruction accordingly ensures that teaching

methods remain responsive and effective. The following are excerpts from the interview session with the participants. They said:

Regular assessments and adjustments to our phonics instruction are vital. For example, if we notice that students are struggling with certain sounds, we can focus more on those areas to help them improve. [ET1]

Phonics workshops are an excellent way to refresh our techniques. For instance, learning about new phonics strategies or revisiting foundational concepts helps us deliver more effective instruction. [ET5]

Providing phonics kits with practical tools like letter cards and sound charts makes phonics instruction more hands-on. These materials can help students visualize and practice phonics concepts more effectively. [ET6]

Differentiating phonics instruction based on student assessments is crucial. By identifying specific areas where each student struggles, we can tailor our instruction to address those needs and improve their phonics skills. [ET7]

Participants emphasize the need for workshops, practical resources, and personalized approaches in phonics instruction. Continuous assessment and tailored support are essential for effectively addressing students' phonics needs.

Sub-theme 4: Implementing Peer Tutoring Programmes

Peer tutoring is a collaborative learning approach that can enhance reading skills through student-led support. This theme focuses on how to effectively implement peer tutoring programmes to benefit both tutors and tutees. Successful peer tutoring programmes require several key elements. Structured tutoring sessions should be designed with clear objectives and guidelines to ensure effective interactions between tutors and tutees. Training for student tutors equips them with the necessary skills to support their peers effectively. Additionally, establishing systems for monitoring tutoring sessions and providing feedback helps maintain high standards and improves

performance. Encouraging a culture of collaboration through peer tutoring fosters a supportive learning environment and enhances reading skills. The participants said:

Training student tutors is essential. When tutors are well-prepared and understand their roles, they can provide more effective support. This preparation includes teaching them how to explain concepts clearly and offer constructive feedback. [ET1]

Regularly monitoring peer tutoring sessions and providing feedback is important. For instance, observing sessions and offering suggestions for improvement helps ensure that the tutoring is effective and that both tutors and tutees are benefiting. [ET3]

Encouraging a collaborative environment through peer tutoring can greatly enhance learning. When students work together, they often learn more and develop a stronger understanding of reading material. [ET4]

Structured peer tutoring sessions with clear goals help ensure that both tutors and tutees benefit. For example, if the goal is to improve comprehension, having specific tasks and objectives helps focus the sessions and make them more productive. [ET6]

Participants suggest that effective peer tutoring involves structured sessions, well-trained tutors, and regular monitoring. Fostering a collaborative environment is key to maximizing the benefits of peer tutoring for all participants.

Sub-theme 5: Expanding Reading Comprehension Exercises

Reading comprehension exercises are critical for developing students' ability to understand and analyze texts. This theme explores various methods to enhance comprehension skills through diverse and consistent practices. Expanding reading comprehension exercises involves using a variety of activities to address different reading aspects. Incorporating activities like summarization and critical analysis helps students engage with texts on multiple levels. Conducting workshops for teachers to share best practices and strategies can improve how comprehension exercises are

delivered. Regular assessments are essential for evaluating students' comprehension skills and adjusting exercises based on their needs, ensuring that these practices remain effective and relevant.

Incorporating a variety of comprehension activities, such as summarizing texts and analyzing characters, helps students engage with texts more deeply. This variety addresses different aspects of comprehension and keeps students interested. [ET3]

Reading comprehension workshops for teachers can be very beneficial. They offer new strategies and ideas for delivering comprehension exercises, which can enhance how we teach and support students. [ET2]

Regular assessments of comprehension skills help us identify where students need additional support. Adjusting exercises based on these assessments ensures that we are meeting students' specific needs and helping them improve. [ET4]

Consistent practice with diverse comprehension exercises leads to noticeable improvements. By regularly incorporating different types of activities, we can help students build stronger reading skills over time. [ET8]

Participants emphasize the value of diverse comprehension activities, teacher workshops, and regular assessments. These strategies are crucial for effectively enhancing students' reading comprehension skills and ensuring continuous improvement.

Implementing strategies to improve English reading in junior high schools involves integrating interactive reading sessions, leveraging multimedia resources, enhancing phonics instruction, implementing peer tutoring, and expanding comprehension exercises. Participants' feedback indicates that these practical methods can significantly enhance reading proficiency by making learning engaging, supportive, and tailored to students' needs.

Research Question 3: How effective are the identified strategies of the English Language teachers of the selected junior high schools in enhancing students' English reading proficiency?

Research question 3 explored the effectiveness of the identified strategies the English Language teachers of the selected junior high schools use in enhancing students' English reading proficiency. This analysis provides insight into how well these strategies achieve their intended outcomes and impact students' reading skills.

Theme 1: Effectiveness of the identified strategies in enhancing reading proficiency

This theme examined the effectiveness of various strategies employed by teachers to improve English reading proficiency among junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality. The analysis of the participants' feedback uncovers insights into how well these strategies achieve their goals and contribute to students' reading development. The analysis is organized around five sub-themes, each representing an indicator of effectiveness based on participants' feedback. Below, each sub-theme is introduced, followed by quotations from participants and a commentary summarizing their effectiveness.

Sub-Theme 1: Increased Student Engagement

Student engagement is a crucial indicator of the effectiveness of reading strategies. Engagement refers to how actively students participate and show interest in reading activities.

Interactive reading sessions have really made a difference. Students not only practice reading aloud but also engage in discussions that improve their comprehension. [ET1]

When students are actively involved in reading activities, they become more motivated and confident in their abilities. [ET2]

Incorporating multimedia breaks the monotony of traditional reading methods and keeps students interested in the material. [ET5]

The interactive sessions create a lively learning environment, and students are more eager to participate and learn. [ET6]

The responses indicate that increased student engagement is a significant outcome of the strategies employed. ET1 and ET2 emphasize how interactive sessions and active participation boost motivation and confidence. ET5 noted that multimedia resources also play a key role in maintaining interest. ET6 further supports this by highlighting the engaging nature of interactive sessions. Collectively, these insights suggest that the strategies effectively enhance student engagement, which is crucial for improving reading proficiency.

Sub-Theme 2: Enhanced Reading Comprehension

Enhanced reading comprehension refers to the improvement in students' ability to understand and interpret texts. Effective strategies should help students grasp main ideas, details, and nuances of reading material.

Summarizing passages helps students identify key points and main ideas, enhancing their overall comprehension. [ET2]

Regular comprehension exercises help students develop critical thinking and analytical skills, which are crucial for understanding texts. [ET3]

Using a variety of comprehension questions ensures that students engage with texts at different levels, improving their reading abilities. [ET4]

The consistent use of comprehension exercises has led to better reading outcomes as students become more skilled in analyzing and interpreting texts. [ET8]

The effectiveness of strategies in enhancing reading comprehension is evident from participants' feedback. ET3 and ET2 highlight the role of comprehension exercises in

developing critical thinking and identifying key points. ET4 emphasizes the importance of varied questions for deeper engagement, while ET8 noted the overall improvements in reading outcomes. These responses collectively suggest that comprehension exercises are highly effective in improving students' ability to understand and interpret texts.

Sub-Theme 3: Improved Reading Fluency

Reading fluency refers to the ease and speed with which students can read aloud or silently. Strategies that improve fluency help students read smoothly and accurately.

Interactive reading sessions have really made a difference. Students not only practice reading aloud but also engage in discussions that improve their comprehension. [ET1]

Small group readings allow me to give more personalized attention to each student, which helps in addressing their specific reading challenges. [ET3]

Phonics instruction helps students understand the relationship between letters and sounds, which is crucial for decoding words. [ET5]

Since implementing phonics, I've noticed a significant improvement in students' ability to read and understand new words. [ET8]

Improved reading fluency is a notable outcome of the strategies discussed. ET1 and ET3 emphasize how interactive sessions and small group readings contribute to better fluency through practice and personalized attention. ET8 and ET5 highlight the role of phonics-based instruction in enhancing students' ability to read and decode words. Collectively, these responses suggest that the strategies are effective in improving reading fluency, which is essential for overall reading proficiency.

Sub-Theme 4: Support for Diverse Learning Needs

Support for diverse learning needs involves strategies that accommodate various learning styles and abilities, ensuring that all students receive appropriate support to improve their reading skills. The participants had these to say:

Students who tutor their peers reinforce their own knowledge while providing valuable assistance to others, which benefits both parties. [ET1]

Multimedia resources like videos and audiobooks make reading more engaging and accessible to students with different learning styles. [ET4]

For students who struggle with reading, multimedia tools provide additional support and help them better understand the content. [ET6]

By focusing on phonics, we build students' confidence and help them become independent readers. [ET7]

Participants' feedback indicates that support for diverse learning needs is a crucial effectiveness indicator. ET4 and ET6 emphasize how multimedia resources address various learning styles and provide additional support. ET1 and ET7 highlight how peer tutoring and phonics instruction cater to different needs and build confidence. These insights collectively suggest that the strategies are effective in providing tailored support to meet diverse learning requirements, thereby enhancing reading proficiency for all students.

Sub-Theme 5: Building Student Confidence

Building student confidence refers to strategies that help students feel more capable and self-assured in their reading abilities. Increased confidence often leads to improved reading performance. The participants shared their views in the excerpts below:

Interactive reading sessions have really made a difference. Students not only practice reading aloud but also engage in discussions that improve their comprehension. [ET1]

Phonics instruction helps students understand the relationship between letters and sounds, which is crucial for decoding words. [ET5]

Peer tutoring creates a supportive environment where students help each other, which can significantly boost their reading skills. [ET6]

By focusing on phonics, we build students' confidence and help them become independent readers. [ET7]

The feedback underscores the importance of building student confidence as an effectiveness indicator. ET7 and ET6 emphasize how phonics and peer tutoring contribute to increased confidence and independence. ET1 reinforces this by noting improvements in comprehension and confidence through interactive sessions. ET5 supports the idea that phonics instruction enhances confidence by improving decoding skills. These responses collectively highlight that building confidence is a significant outcome of the strategies employed, leading to enhanced reading proficiency.

Generally, the thematic analysis reveals that the effectiveness of the strategies—interactive reading sessions, multimedia resources, phonics-based instruction, peer tutoring, and reading comprehension exercises is demonstrated through increased student engagement, enhanced reading comprehension, improved reading fluency, support for diverse learning needs, and building student confidence. Participants' feedback highlighted how each of these indicators contributes to overall improvements in reading proficiency.

4.3 Discussion of Results

4.3.1 What strategies do teachers employ to teach English reading skills among junior high school students in the Ga West Municipality?

This research question sought to explore the reasons why teachers adopt particular strategies in teaching English reading among junior high school students in the Ga West Municipality. Understanding these reasons provides insight into the pedagogical decisions teachers make and the contextual factors influencing their instructional practices. The analysis of participants' responses revealed four key themes: addressing students' learning needs, curriculum and examination requirements, teachers' experience and training, and availability of teaching and learning resources.

The findings of this study are well-supported by recent literature, which highlighted the effectiveness of interactive reading sessions, multimedia resources, and phonics-based instruction. Recent research by Pardo and Boudett (2022) confirms that interactive read-alouds and group discussions significantly enhance comprehension and engagement. Their study found that these interactive elements, such as guided discussions and collaborative activities, improve students' abilities to analyze and interpret texts, aligning with the study's observation that engaging themes and group discussions enhance participation and comprehension.

Similarly, Donnelly and Roe (2021) provide evidence supporting the integration of multimedia resources into reading instruction. Their research shows that digital tools and interactive platforms can boost reading comprehension and motivation by offering diverse learning opportunities that cater to different student needs and learning styles. This supports the study's finding that multimedia resources complement traditional materials and enhance student engagement.

Phonics-based instruction is further validated by the work of Ehri et al. (2019), who emphasize its continued importance in effective reading programmes. Their meta-analysis confirms that systematic phonics instruction, particularly when supplemented with practical tools and differentiated methods, significantly improves early reading skills. This finding aligns with the study's conclusion that phonics instruction, enhanced through workshops and practical kits, effectively addresses specific phonics needs.

Additionally, research by Gunn et al. (2020) underscores the benefits of differentiated instruction. Their study highlighted that tailoring reading instruction to meet individual phonics skills and reading levels can significantly enhance reading outcomes. This supports the study's finding that differentiated teaching methods and hands-on support are crucial for effective reading instruction.

4.3.2 What reasons account for the employment of the identified strategies employed in enhancing English proficiency among junior high school students in the Ga West Municipality?

Research question 2 examined recommendations from teachers for implementing effective strategies to improve English reading. The findings revealed recommendations including structuring interactive reading sessions around engaging themes with clear goals, role rotation, and immediate feedback is well-supported by existing literature. Pardo and Boudett (2022) found that interactive read-aloud and guided discussions significantly improve student comprehension and engagement. These sessions encourage active participation and allow for immediate feedback, which helps students internalize and reflect on what they read. This aligns with the study's findings that such structured sessions boost comprehension and participation. However,

some studies, like those by Jensen (2019), suggest that the effectiveness of interactive sessions can vary depending on the teacher's skill in facilitating discussions and maintaining student interest, highlighting the need for ongoing teacher training.

Integrating multimedia resources into lesson plans, focusing on updated and relevant content, is supported by Donnelly and Roe (2021). Their research indicates that digital tools and interactive platforms make reading more engaging and accessible, catering to various learning styles. Multimedia resources provide visual and auditory stimuli that can enhance understanding and retention. However, Clark and Mayer (2016) caution that the effectiveness of multimedia resources can be diminished if not carefully selected and integrated, pointing to the necessity of alignment with curriculum goals and student interests to maximize their impact.

The teachers recommend improving phonics-based instruction through teacher workshops, practical phonics kits, and differentiated teaching based on regular assessments. This recommendation is strongly supported by Torgerson et al. (2018) who emphasize that systematic phonics instruction, when tailored to individual needs, significantly enhances early reading skills. Practical tools and continuous assessment help address specific phonics challenges. Ehri et al. (2019) further support this by showing that teacher training in phonics improves instructional quality and student outcomes. However, Castles, Rastle, and Nation (2018) argue that while phonics is crucial, it should be part of a balanced literacy approach that includes other strategies like whole language learning to address all aspects of reading.

Peer tutoring programmes with structured sessions, trained tutors, and ongoing monitoring are recommended for improving reading skills. Gunn et al. (2020) support this, showing that peer tutoring can be highly effective in reinforcing reading skills,

provided the sessions are well-organized and actively supervised. The study's recommendation aligns with findings that peer tutoring fosters collaborative learning and allows students to benefit from peer interactions. However, Duran and Topping (2017) highlight potential challenges, such as variability in tutor quality and the need for sustained training and support for peer tutors to ensure consistent effectiveness.

Expanding reading comprehension exercises by incorporating diverse activities, conducting teacher workshops, and regularly assessing students is supported by Kucan and Beck (1997), who emphasize the importance of varied comprehension activities in developing deeper text understanding. Consistent practice with diverse activities helps students build and reinforce their reading skills. Duke and Pearson (2002) also support this by demonstrating that comprehension instruction that includes multiple strategies is more effective. However, Pressley (2006) noted that while diverse comprehension exercises are beneficial, they need to be carefully tailored to individual student needs to be truly effective, suggesting the necessity for regular assessment and adaptation.

4.3.3 Research Question 3: How effective are the identified strategies of the English Language teachers of the selected junior high schools in enhancing students' English reading proficiency?

Research question 3 investigated the effectiveness of the identified strategies in enhancing students' English reading proficiency. The use of multimedia resources in reading instruction is supported by Donnelly and Roe (2021), who found that digital tools and interactive platforms make reading more engaging and accessible. Their research highlighted that multimedia resources, when regularly updated and relevant to students' interests, cater to diverse learning styles and enhance student motivation.

This aligns with the study's finding that multimedia resources effectively complement traditional materials and improve student engagement.

The effectiveness of phonics-based instruction, especially when tailored to individual needs and supplemented with practical tools, is confirmed by Ehri et al. (2019). Their meta-analysis shows that systematic phonics instruction significantly improves early reading skills, particularly when combined with hands-on support and continuous assessment. This supports the study's conclusion that phonics-based instruction is highly effective in addressing specific phonics needs and enhancing reading proficiency.

The potential of peer tutoring programmes to enhance reading skills through collaborative learning is supported by Gunn et al. (2020). Their study demonstrates that well-structured and monitored peer tutoring sessions can effectively reinforce reading skills. This is consistent with the study's finding that peer tutoring shows promise in improving reading skills when sessions are well-organized and actively supervised.

The effectiveness of incorporating diverse comprehension exercises and maintaining consistent practice is supported by Kucan and Beck (1997). Their research indicates that varied comprehension activities help students develop a deeper understanding of texts. This aligns with the study's observation that expanding comprehension exercises through diverse activities is effective in improving students' reading abilities.

4.3.4 Link to the Reading Rope Model by Hollis Scarborough (2001)

The findings of this study on strategies for improving English reading in junior high schools can be directly linked to the Reading Rope Model by Hollis Scarborough (2001). This model emphasizes two critical strands: word recognition and language

comprehension, which are essential for proficient reading. The findings from the study reveal that teachers employ strategies that influence both strands of the model.

The study found that teachers primarily used phonics instruction and guided reading to help students improve their ability to decode words. These strategies directly contribute to the word recognition strand of the Reading Rope Model. Phonics instruction aids students in breaking down words into sounds, which is essential for improving reading fluency and word recognition. Guided reading also plays a significant role in providing students with the opportunity to practice reading and apply their decoding skills in context, which strengthens their word recognition abilities.

In terms of language comprehension, the study highlighted strategies such as vocabulary development, questioning techniques, and summarization. These strategies support the language comprehension strand of the Reading Rope Model. Vocabulary development enhances students' understanding of word meanings, which is crucial for building strong language comprehension. Questioning techniques encourage active engagement with the text, helping students infer meaning and improve their ability to comprehend written material. Summarization further strengthens comprehension by helping students identify key ideas and details in a text, enabling them to process and retain the information more effectively.

The study's findings suggest that while these strategies are valuable, there is a need for a more integrated approach that addresses both word recognition and language comprehension simultaneously, as recommended by the Reading Rope Model. For instance, teachers should not only focus on decoding skills (word recognition) but also emphasize the development of students' vocabulary and comprehension strategies (language comprehension) to ensure a balanced and holistic approach to reading

instruction. Ultimately, the findings support the application of Scarborough's Reading Rope Model by highlighting the interconnectedness of word recognition and language comprehension.

4.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented and discussed the findings of the study, focusing on strategies for improving English reading skills among junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality. The results were organized according to the study's objectives, exploring existing strategies employed by teachers, evaluating their effectiveness in enhancing students' reading proficiency, and identifying recommendations for improvement. Key findings revealed various strategies, such as phonics instruction, group reading, and individualized support, with mixed levels of effectiveness. While some strategies demonstrated positive impacts on reading fluency and comprehension, challenges like limited resources, large class sizes, and inadequate teacher training hindered their consistent application. The discussion connected the findings to existing literature, highlighting similarities, differences, and unique contextual factors specific to the Ga-West Municipality. The chapter emphasized the importance of tailored interventions, teacher professional development, and resource allocation to address the identified gaps. It concluded by underscoring the need for systematic implementation of effective strategies to enhance English reading skills and improve overall academic outcomes in junior high schools.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter consists of the summary of the study, findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

5.1 Summary of Findings

This study examined strategies for improving English reading among junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality. Specifically, the study explored the existing strategies and practices employed by teachers to teach English reading skills, find out the effectiveness of the identified strategies in enhancing students' English reading proficiency, and provide recommendations for implementing effective strategies to improve English reading in junior high schools. The data analysis revealed the following findings:

1. The study reveals that teachers utilize a range of existing strategies and practices to teach English reading skills. Key approaches include integrating interactive reading sessions, leveraging multimedia resources, and applying phonics-based instruction. Teachers report that interactive reading sessions, structured around engaging themes and supported by group discussions and role rotation, enhance student participation and comprehension. Multimedia resources, such as digital libraries and interactive platforms, are employed to complement traditional materials and cater to various learning styles. Phonics-based instruction is enhanced through workshops, practical kits, and differentiated teaching methods, targeting specific phonics needs and providing hands-on support.

2. The effectiveness of the identified strategies in improving students' English reading proficiency varies. Interactive reading sessions are reported to significantly boost comprehension and engagement, with structured goals and immediate feedback contributing to their success. Multimedia resources are effective in making reading more engaging and accessible, though their impact is heightened by regular updates and relevance to student interests. Phonics-based instruction is highly effective when tailored to individual needs and supplemented by practical tools and continuous assessment. Peer tutoring programmes show promise in enhancing reading skills through collaborative learning, provided that sessions are well-structured and monitored. Expanding comprehension exercises, through diverse activities and consistent practice, is also effective in improving students' reading abilities.
3. To effectively implement strategies for improving English reading, several approaches are recommended. Interactive reading sessions should be structured around engaging themes with clear goals, role rotation, and immediate feedback. Multimedia resources should be integrated into lesson plans, with a focus on maintaining updated and relevant content. Phonics-based instruction can be improved through teacher workshops, practical phonics kits, and differentiated teaching based on regular assessments. Peer tutoring programmes should include structured sessions, trained tutors, and ongoing monitoring to ensure effectiveness. Expanding reading comprehension exercises involves incorporating diverse activities, conducting teacher workshops for best practices, and regularly assessing students to tailor exercises to their needs.

5.2 Limitations

The study's insights are based on a limited sample of teachers from junior high schools in the Ga-West Municipality, which may not represent practices across other regions or educational settings. As a result, the findings may not be generalizable. Additionally, the study lacks longitudinal data, making it difficult to assess the long-term impact of the strategies on students' reading proficiency and their sustained effectiveness over time. Ultimately, a more significant limitation such as the use of interview rather than both interviews with observations is a limitation to the study.

5.3 Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, several conclusions can be drawn:

1. Teachers in the Ga West Municipality apply diverse methods such as phonics, shared reading, and group discussions to support reading development. This reflects their adaptability and awareness of learners' varied reading needs.
2. The effectiveness of reading instruction is hindered by factors such as inadequate teaching and learning materials, large class sizes, and limited instructional time. These challenges affect the quality of reading lessons and learners' outcomes.
3. Teachers' reasons for employing particular strategies are shaped by students' learning difficulties, curriculum expectations, professional training, and resource availability. These factors demonstrate that instructional practices are context-driven rather than uniform.
4. Teachers recognize the importance of continuous professional training and institutional support to enhance reading instruction. Without such interventions, effective reading pedagogy may remain inconsistent across schools.

5. The study concludes that improving reading proficiency among junior high school students requires a collective effort involving teachers, school administrators, parents, and policymakers.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. The Ghana Education Service (GES) should organize regular workshops, seminars, and in-service training programs to update teachers on effective reading instructional strategies and contemporary literacy practices.
2. Government and school administrators should ensure the availability of reading materials such as textbooks, storybooks, phonics charts, and digital resources in all junior high schools to support reading instruction.
3. Schools should introduce reading clubs, storytelling competitions, and literacy weeks to cultivate students' interest in reading and create an enjoyable reading culture.
4. School leaders should provide time and space for reading lessons, while parents should be encouraged to support their children's reading activities at home by providing books and engaging them in reading discussions.
5. Education authorities should consider strategies to reduce overcrowded classrooms and strengthen supervision to ensure that reading instruction is effectively delivered.

5.5 Implications of the findings for Teaching Reading

The findings of this study offer significant implications for the field of teaching reading, highlighting how current practices can be enhanced to improve student reading proficiency. The key implications are:

The effectiveness of reading strategies, such as interactive sessions and multimedia resources, underscores the need for ongoing professional development. Teachers must be equipped with up-to-date skills and knowledge to implement these strategies effectively. Professional development programmes should focus on modern pedagogical techniques and provide practical training on integrating technology and interactive methods into reading instruction.

The use of multimedia resources and interactive reading sessions demonstrates the benefit of incorporating diverse materials into reading instruction. Teachers should be encouraged to utilize a range of resources, including digital tools, audiobooks, and interactive platforms, to cater for various learning styles and engage students more effectively. This approach not only makes reading instruction more dynamic but also supports differentiated learning.

Findings on phonics-based instruction and peer tutoring highlight the importance of tailoring instructional approaches to meet individual students' needs. Differentiated instruction, supported by regular assessments and targeted interventions, ensures that all students receive the appropriate level of support to improve their reading skills. Schools should implement systems for monitoring student progress and adjusting instruction accordingly.

The positive impact of peer tutoring and interactive reading sessions suggests that collaborative learning environments can enhance reading instruction. Schools should

promote collaborative practices, such as peer tutoring programmes and group reading activities, to foster a supportive learning community. Encouraging students to work together and share their insights can improve engagement and comprehension.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies

The following suggestions are made for further studies:

Conduct longitudinal studies to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of various reading strategies on students' reading proficiency. This will provide a clearer understanding of how these strategies influence reading development over time and help identify which approaches yield sustained improvements.

Also, future research should be expanded to include a diverse range of schools across different regions and educational settings. This will help in assessing the generalizability of the findings and understanding how context-specific factors influence the effectiveness of reading strategies.

Additionally, a comparative study should be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of different reading strategies and practices. This could involve comparing traditional methods with innovative approaches, such as digital literacy tools and interactive platforms, to determine which strategies are most effective in various settings.

5.7 Chapter Summary

Chapter Five provided the conclusions, recommendations, and implications of the study, addressing strategies for improving English reading skills among Junior High School students in the Ga-West Municipality. The chapter began by summarizing the key findings related to the research objectives: the existing strategies employed by teachers, their effectiveness, and recommendations for implementing more effective

strategies. Based on the findings, the study concluded that while some teaching strategies, such as phonics and guided reading, were effective, their implementation was inconsistent due to challenges like inadequate teacher training, lack of resources, and large class sizes. The chapter emphasized the critical role of teacher professional development, adequate provision of teaching materials, and smaller class sizes in improving reading outcomes. Practical recommendations were provided, including targeted training for teachers, adoption of evidence-based teaching approaches, and stakeholder collaboration to address resource constraints. Finally, the implications for practice, policy, and future research were discussed, offering insights for enhancing English reading instruction in similar educational contexts.



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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

This study sought to examine strategies in teaching English reading among junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality. Your valuable input will contribute to a deeper understanding of the challenges, successes, and opportunities associated with improving English reading in this specific educational context. Your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw at any time or decline to answer any questions you are uncomfortable with. Your responses will be kept confidential and anonymized in the final research report.

Thank you in anticipation of your cooperation.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. What is your gender _____
2. Age Group: 20 – 30 years [] 31-40 years [] 41-50 years [] Above 50 years []
3. What is your highest academic qualification? _____
4. How long have you been teaching _____

SECTION B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Research Question 1: What strategies do teachers employ to teach English reading skills among junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality?

Describe some of the strategies and practices you currently use to help improve English reading skills among junior high school students?

1. How do you select or adapt these strategies to suit the diverse learning needs and abilities of your students?
2. Provide examples of specific activities or exercises you implement to enhance students' English reading proficiency?
3. What role do instructional materials, such as textbooks, supplementary readers, or technology, play in your efforts to improve English reading skills?
4. How do you incorporate collaborative learning or peer interaction into your teaching to support English reading development?
5. In what ways do you assess students' progress in English reading, and how do you use assessment data to inform your instructional decisions?

Research Question 2: What are the effectiveness of the identified strategies in enhancing students' English reading proficiency in junior high schools in the Ga-West Municipality?

How successful have the strategies and practices been in improving students' English reading proficiency in junior high schools?

1. Share any specific instances or success stories where students have shown significant improvement in their English reading skills due to these strategies?
2. What feedback, if any, have you received from students, parents, or colleagues regarding the effectiveness of the strategies used to enhance English reading proficiency?

3. Are there any particular factors or conditions that contribute to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of these strategies in improving English reading skills?
4. Have you encountered any challenges in implementing these strategies, and how have you addressed them?
5. What additional strategies or approaches do you think could be beneficial in further enhancing English reading proficiency among junior high school students?

Research Question 3: What reasons account for the employment of the identified strategies employed in enhancing English proficiency among junior high school students in the Ga-West Municipality?

What are the key reasons for employing specific strategies in teaching English reading?

1. How do the selected strategies address students' diverse learning needs?
2. How do these strategies contribute to improving reading comprehension and fluency?
3. Why are collaborative approaches, such as peer tutoring and group reading sessions, employed?
4. What role do technology and multimedia resources play in enhancing English reading proficiency?

Thank you