Language Learning Strategy Employed for Improving Reading Skills Among Form 5 Suburban Secondary School Students

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Abstract
Reading is a productive skill, and it is one of the essential skills in the English Language subject. Therefore, language learning strategies are fundamental to assist learners towards the learning goals. However, students in suburban secondary schools could face difficulties choosing which reading strategy suits them. Thus, this study is employed among Form 5 students from a suburban secondary school to investigate the learning strategy used to improve their reading skills. This quantitative research collects data from a questionnaire done with 30 Form 5 students. The questionnaire consists of 20 questions adapted from Language Strategy Survey focusing on reading strategy. Descriptive analysis of data consists of frequency and percentage of each item. The results showed that the most preferred reading strategy chosen by the students is using a dictionary to look for meanings and the least preferred reading strategy is summarising while reading. As for the literal comprehension, students preferred reviewing to find gist while finding supporting examples is the least favoured strategy for them. The findings are able to assist teachers to develop a reading environment for their students to become efficient readers with goals and strategies suitable and preferable for them.
Keywords: Reading Skill, Language Learning Strategies, Suburban Secondary School, Reading Strategy, English Language.

Introduction
The ever-growing globalisation and rapid advancement in modes of communication have caused people to use English for communication (Rao, 2019). It is known worldwide that competency in the language and being able to converse in the language is an asset in the present day. In the Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013-2025), one of the education policies is the Common European Framework (CEFR), which outlines the importance of being proficient in the English Language to an international standard (Enaliza, 2019). The status of English Language for most students, especially in Sabah and Sarawak, is the third language after their native language and Bahasa Melayu. Reading is one of the productive skills, and

writing skills are fundamental in acquiring the targeted language.

The Ministry of Education (MOE) has provided a roadmap for English Language education to boost proficiency among teachers and students. The education minister explained that the reforms would ensure that English Language education becomes more systematic and meets global standards (Rahim et al., 2023). According to the Roadmap 2015-2025, the Common European Framework (CEFR) descriptors are divided according to the skills and competencies, as the end product is the students' outcomes. There are also issues regarding the absence of curriculum specifications in KBSM in the CEFR descriptors and vice versa. Our English education reforms are currently in the 3rd phase: Scaling up Structural Change (2021-2025). The pedagogy includes differentiated learning, deemed appropriate and beneficial for reading lessons.

Based on the English Language Education Reform 2015-2025 document, the CEFR-aligned assessments incorporate speaking into the exams and give equal weight to listening, speaking, reading, and writing. According to the aspirational 2025 targets, students should achieve B1 or B2 by Form 5 and an estimated 40% of the students' population will reach or exceed the target. Teachers should be knowledgeable about the current curriculum to ensure that the curriculum is appropriately suited to the student's interests and skills (Brophy, 2004, as cited in Wentzel, 2020).

The reading strategy involves mental processes in which students' participation stimulates the creation of meaning (El-Dali, 2021). Reading involves more than just reading the words; it also involves the interaction of the student's prior knowledge, language skills, comprehension of the true meaning, and information encoded in the text. If the students do not practise reading, they will not be able to understand the text's substance and organisation (Ismael, 2021).

There are various reading proficiency levels among students in secondary schools. Most secondary school students could not read at the B2 and C1 levels of proficiency according to the CEFR framework. According to El-Dali (2021), the teachers' methods may be to blame for the student's lack of interest in learning to read. The students would become bored and quickly lose motivation as a result. Since reading involves the act of decoding words in order to derive meaning, it is one of the most crucial abilities to be tested while learning English as a second language. Hence, there is a need for a study to identify strategies used by secondary school students to improve their reading skills.
This study is designed to answer the following questions:
1. What is the most preferred reading strategy to improve students' reading skills?
2. What is the least preferred reading strategy to improve students' reading skills?

Literature Review
Language Learning Strategies
The acquisition of another language aids the development of the brain's cognitive processes, which also facilitates learning more broadly (Farhan, 2019). Those who have proficiency in another language usually have better thinking skills and memory abilities. In addition to that, possessing proficiency in other languages is a crucial ability that allows one to interact in a more immediate and meaningful manner with the world while at the same time enhancing

one's competitiveness and chances for success in the global economy. However, learning a language is a difficult process that involves more than attending lectures and reading textbooks. It challenges the mind and requires persistent and regular practice. Learners may experience demotivation when they are facing difficulties while learning a language. For example, learners may feel discouraged if they are unable to communicate effectively or if they are having difficulties with writing or reading comprehension. After exerting a great deal of effort, some learners inevitably become very frustrated when they do not appear to be progressing. The amount of work required to develop their skills further may cause them to feel overwhelmed and erode their enthusiasm for learning. In a study conducted by Setiawati and Budiash (2022), students were found to need help with reading as they struggled to understand the material, and instructions from the teacher, formulate ideas and lack vocabulary. It was also stated by Gulo (2020) that students would be able to comprehend difficult words better if they were to apply skimming techniques. However, it was found that students also have not mastered the skimming technique properly, leading to difficulties in reading skills. These problems lead to learners feeling discouraged. Therefore, language learning strategy is necessary for a learner to achieve effective learning. Language learning strategies (LLSs) are considered essential elements for success in language acquisition (Habók et al., 2021). Chamot (2004) states that learning strategies are the intentional thoughts and actions utilised by students to accomplish a learning goal. Adan and Hashim (2021) defined LLS as the mental processes used to learn, comprehend, and make sense of a new language. There are several types of LLS that students could utilise. Oxford (1990) splits strategies into two major categories. The first one is "direct strategies," which consists of cognitive, memory, and compensatory strategies. The second one is "indirect strategies," consisting of affective, metacognitive, and social strategies. The first set of strategies "demands mental processing of the language," but the second set "provides indirect support for language learning through concentrating, planning, evaluating, seeking opportunities, and reducing fear, increasing cooperation and empathy, and other means."

Every student uses specific methods and strategies (Wahyudin & Rido, 2020) to achieve their desired language learning outcomes (Ayu, 2018). Mandasari and Oktaviani (2018) explored the utilisation of English LLS by university students in Indonesia. There were 70 students who were enrolled in the English for Business (EFB) course majoring in management and engineering participated in the study. The results demonstrated that students from both study programs, management, and engineering, utilised a variety of English LLS. These strategies include affective, memory, social, metacognitive, cognitive, and compensation language learning strategies. Moreover, another study conducted by Lestari and Wahyudin (2020) investigated the employment of LLS by 76 EFL students at the undergraduate level in Indonesia. The findings showed that students employed a variety of LLS, including metacognitive, social, compensatory, cognitive, memory, and effective strategies. Metacognitive methods are reportedly the ones that students employ the most frequently. This is supported by Hashim et al. (2018), stating that the findings of their study showed that students use different categories of language learning strategies depending on different skills. In Turkey, Oflaz (2019) investigated 110 students and found a significantly positive relationship between the utilisation of LLS by students and their academic progress. Oflaz further stated that the greater the utilisation of LLS by students, the better their academic achievement. Another study by Gustanti and Ayu (2021) found a positive correlation between English proficiency scores and cognitive reading strategies. This study shows that effective cognitive strategies contribute to successful classroom learning.

Not only are LLS crucial to become a successful language learner, but so are students' passion and perseverance. According to Alamer (2021), grit is comprised of two fundamental dimensions. The first one is consistency of interest (CI) which is an individual's ability to maintain interest in a task, and the second one is perseverance of effort (PE) which is the tenacity in activities that require over a few months to complete. To achieve language learning goals, learners need grit to boost their LLS. This statement is in agreement with a study conducted by Teimouri et al (2020) to examine the connection between the concept of grit and motivational actions and language performance. The study involved 191 Persian students studying English Translation at a private university. The findings indicated positive connections between students' grit and language achievement measures. Teimouri et al (2020) remarked that students with greater perseverance are more successful language learners than those with less perseverance.

Reading Skills

Proficiency in English as a Second Language (ESL) comprises a variety of linguistic skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English. Developing these skills is essential for non-native English speakers to communicate effectively in academic, professional, and social settings. Reading is necessary for ESL learners because it is a skill that can be practised independently. Unlike speaking and listening, which require a partner, reading can be done individually and at a comfortable pace for the learner. According to Gatcho and Hajan (2019), reading can be conceptualised as both a cognitive process and an end product. It was also noted by Gatcho and Hajan that as a process, reading entails the deciphering of symbols and characters, as well as the establishment of connections with prior knowledge or experiences, to facilitate comprehension. By reading extensively, ESL learners can build their confidence in their language abilities and improve their overall proficiency in English. Jerrim and Moss (2019) also state that reading proficiency is essential to functioning optimally in various parts of life, including societal and occupational domains.

Although many language learning strategies can improve reading skills, research indicates that metacognitive strategies are particularly effective. According to Cao and Lin (2020), metacognitive strategies include the ability to consciously use metacognitive knowledge to plan, organise, monitor, regulate, and evaluate the learning process and learning situation and respond appropriately. Muhid et al (2020) conducted a study on eleventh-grade students in Senior High School to determine whether the use of metacognitive strategies resulted in a significant difference in reading comprehension achievement. The result showed that metacognitive strategies had a notable impact on students' reading comprehension achievement. It also revealed that the strategies promoted both their reading performance and their ability to optimise their reading skills. This finding proves the positive influence of metacognitive strategies on students' reading achievement. Earlier research conducted by Gatcho and Hajan (2019) studied how explicit teaching of metacognitive strategies affected the reading skills of 40 grade 11 ESL students from a Chinese-Filipino school in Manila. This study found that teaching metacognitive strategies significantly improved the comprehension skills and vocabulary size of the senior secondary students in the intervention group. This showed that when students are systematically taught how to think about their thinking while reading, it can have positive effects on their understanding of the written text, which is the primary purpose of reading.

In terms of reading comprehension, Riadil (2020) suggested that dictionaries and contextual clues are very helpful in enhancing the students' understanding of complex or

unfamiliar words. Moreover, the utilisation of authentic English materials is highly advisable as those provide real-life experience, and contextual learning takes place. Consequently, the students get to relate what they read with their own experience, and it strengthens their reading skills better. Cognitive strategies such as predicting are widely used in reading comprehension questions. It is proven in a study that learning processes are more directed when these skills are used in the reading lesson (Semtin & Maniam, 2015, as cited in Ali and Razali, 2019). When it comes to choosing the reading materials on their own, the students are prone to choose something that sparks their interest. A study done by Bayoung et al (2019) mentioned that students choose materials to read if it is relatable or understandable for them. Students tend to choose something based on their level of ability to read and their understanding of the resources they read. According to the study by Ozak and Civelek (2006), as cited in Par (2020), highly proficient learners do better in pre-reading strategies, such as using pictures or illustrations and skimming, than low proficient readers. The reality today showed that many students are too idle to read a book as they need more time, it is uninteresting, and so on. However, students must understand that reading serves various purposes; not only do we read to learn new things, but we also read to organise our thoughts (Mujahidah and Ramli, 2019).

However, there are studies about which strategies the students need to be more to their liking. An example of a strategy; summarising. Behtash et al (2019) implied that summarising technique is one of the least utilised strategies for reading skills. It is common among learners to need help to summarise the text after reading lengthy paragraphs. Besides that, predicting strategy is also an unfavourable task for some because it involves higher-order thinking skills. Ruhul (2019) said that students with little guidance on how to use their experiences to generate ideas and knowledge find it a challenging job to answer questions about prediction. Another study by Aritonang et al (2019) suggested that there are more preferred methods than the skimming strategy when it comes to reading. Students often need help to identify the main idea when they skim through the text. A study by Magasvaran et al (2022) supported this claim also because students think it is too tedious for them. Some need helps to differentiate the main idea from the supporting details. On the other hand, even if there is a study claims that a dictionary is very helpful for non-native speakers to look for the meaning of new, unfamiliar terms (Nugroho et al., 2022), there is also a study by Prihatini (2020) stated using a dictionary is not that much preferred for students whose native language is not English. In this case, they thought the words were too difficult because they were not bothered to know the meaning of the words.

Undeniably, teachers and students must understand and be aware of the reading strategies that could be applied to reading. Findings from a study conducted by Sieo et al (2022) also stated that teachers employed various reading comprehension strategies in the classroom. It was found that most of the students applied the reading comprehension strategies. However, teachers should ensure that the formative assessment, teaching methods, and preferred reading comprehension strategies are identified and accompanied by the reading strategies to ensure their effectiveness in helping them improve their reading. The teachers and students also often overlook the reading strategies, especially the new ones. Hence, the teacher plays a role in understanding the effective strategies students use and trying new strategies to aid the reading process. Students also need to evaluate their preferences. This is also supported by Oyetunde (2015), cited in Akubo (2019), that students

must understand the material and the purpose of reading. In Nelson (2019), it was stated that signposts bring great significance to students while reading. The signposts help the students to identify ideas or concepts in fiction and non-fiction reading. Banditvilai (2020) further explained the weight of skimming, scanning, making predictions, and questioning strategies to aid reading comprehension. These strategies would bring great advantages to both teachers and students in improving their reading. In the teaching and learning process, it is vital that teachers provide proper training in reading strategies to help students understand how to use them efficiently. A study conducted by Tamin and Buyukahiska (2020) on 25 10th-grade students in Turkey has proven that students' willingness to read increases as they understand how to apply the reading strategies properly after enough practice and explanation given by the teacher. Therefore, long-term instruction should be provided to aid students in using metacognitive reading strategies more strategically.

Methodology
The research design employed in this study was a survey research design. This study aims to investigate the language learning strategies practised by Form 5 students in one of the suburban secondary schools in Sabah. This study involved a total of 30 Form 5 students of various races. The researchers employed purposive sampling whereby only a class of students was selected to participate in this survey questionnaire. A survey questionnaire adapted from the Language Strategy Use Survey by Cohen et al (2002a); Sieo et al (2022) was used to assess the language learning strategies the Form 5 students employed to improve their reading. The survey questionnaire was administered using two languages, English and Malay Language, to ease the students' understanding of the questions. The questionnaire has two sections. The first part, consisting of four items, was designed to elicit students' background information and whether they apply language learning strategies during reading. The second section consists of 20 items designed to draw out information regarding the language learning strategies employed for improving their reading skills. 11 items were adapted from the Language Strategy Use Survey by Cohen et al (2002a), while another 10 items were adapted from (Sieo et al., 2022). All the items focus on language learning strategies, specifically on reading skills. Descriptive analysis has been employed. The data was collected and generated into Microsoft Excel. Every item in the questionnaire employed the 4-point Likert scale ranging from 'I think this strategy is not suitable for me', 'I have applied this strategy and would try it again', 'I apply this strategy and I like it', and 'I have never applied this strategy, but I am interested in trying it'. The 4-point Likert scales are shown in Table 1. The data collected in Microsoft Excel were analysed descriptively. Data were tabulated using frequency counts.

Table 1. 4
Point Likert Scale

Scale	Interpretation
1	I think this strategy is not suitable for me.
2	I have applied this strategy and would try it again.
3	I apply this strategy and I like it.
4	I have never applied this strategy but I am interested to try it.

Findings and Discussion
A total of Form 5 students from a suburban secondary school took part in this survey questionnaire. The demographic profile of the respondents includes their gender, race, and whether they apply language learning strategies during reading lessons. The respondents' demographic profile is presented in Table 2.0:

Table 2
Demographic profile of the respondents

Variables	Category		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male		13	43
	Female		17	57
Race	Malay		1	3
	Indian		0	0
	Chinese		0	0
	Others:	Bajau	22	73
		Suluk	5	17
		Tidung	1	3
		Bugis	1	3
Applied language learning strategies during reading lesson	Yes		29	97
	No		1	3

Table 2 shows the demographic profile of the respondents at the suburban secondary school. All the respondents were selected using purposive sampling. There is a slight difference in the gender differences among the respondents. 43% (13 students) were male students, while 57% (17 students) were female students.
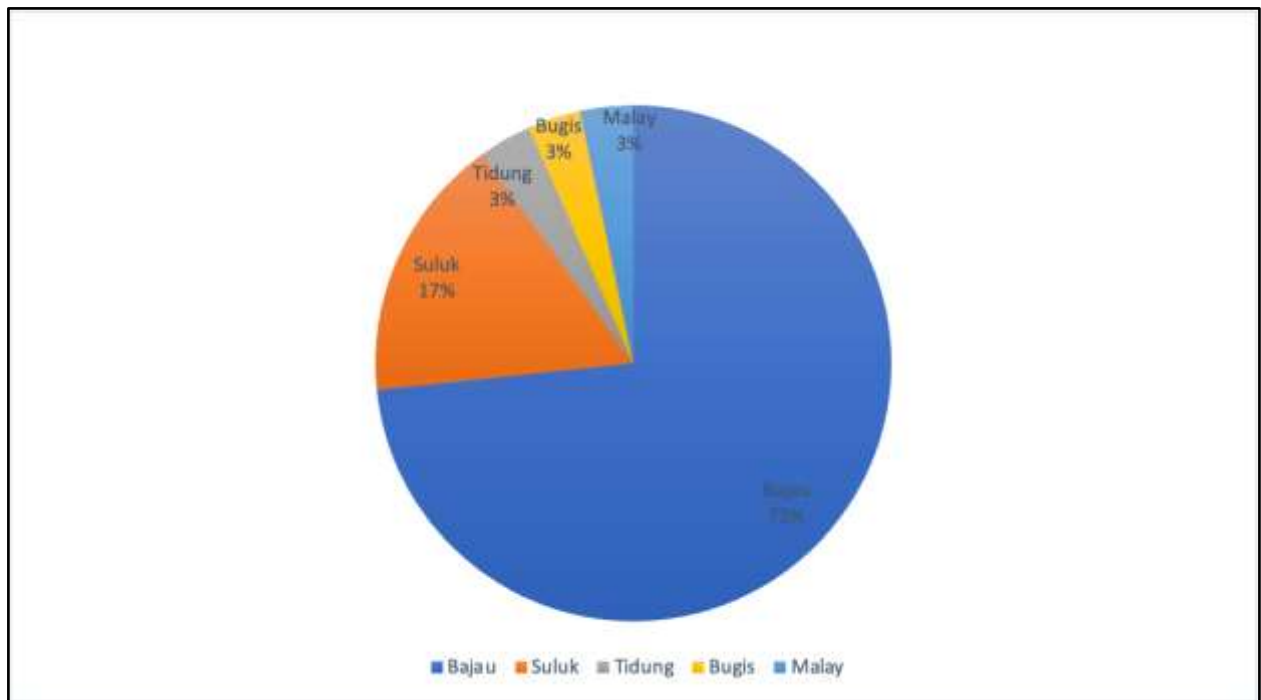
Figure 1. Race percentage

Most of the respondents are Bajau (73%), followed by Suluk (17%), Malay (3%), Tidung (3%) and Bugis (3%), as shown in Figure 1. The respondents were selected using purposive sampling. Hence, they are all of the same age. They are currently in Form 5 and will sit for their Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) this year. 97% of the respondents said they had applied language learning strategies during a reading lesson.

This study investigated the language learning strategies employed by Form 5 students for reading skills. Table 3 and Table 4 showed the frequency and the percentage of each language learning strategy employed by the respondents. The 4-Likert scale was used in this survey questionnaire to indicate the students' usage of reading strategies to improve their reading skills ranging from I think this strategy is not suitable for me, I have applied this strategy and would try it again, I apply this strategy and I like it, and I have never applied this strategy but I am interested to try it.

Table 3
Strategies to improve my reading

		Frequency / Percentage (%)			
		1	2	3	4
No.	Statement	I think this strategy is not suitable for me.	I have applied this strategy and would try it again.	I apply this strategy and I like it.	I have never applied this strategy but I am interested to try it.

1	I read English materials as much as I can.	5 (17%)	10 (33%)	5 (17%)	10 (33%)
2	I look for English materials to read for enjoyment.	5 (17%)	6 (20%)	10 (33%)	9 (30%)
3	I look for English reading materials based on my level.	0 (0%)	13 (43%)	13 (43%)	4 (13%)
4	I prepare ahead ways to read the text, observe my development and investigate my understanding.	2 (7%)	6 (20%)	12 (40%)	10 (33%)
5	I skim a reading text for the main idea and reread it again more carefully.	2 (7%)	8 (27%)	14 (47%)	6 (20%)
6	I read dialogues and short stories a few times until I fully understood it.	5 (17%)	8 (27%)	13 (43%)	4 (13%)
7	I focus on how the text is organised, specifically the headings and subheadings.	4 (13%)	9 (30%)	7 (23%)	10 (33%)
8	I continue to summarise while I read.	14 (47%)	5 (17%)	3 (10%)	8 (27%)

9	I predict what is going to happen next.	9 (30%)	11 (37%)	5 (17%)	5 (17%)
10	I use clues from the context of the reading material to predict the meaning of words or sentences.	3 (10%)	7 (23%)	15 (50%)	5 (17%)
11	I am able to use a dictionary to find the meaning of the words.	1 (3%)	5 (17%)	19 (63%)	5 (17%)

This study investigates the most preferred reading strategy to improve reading skills among suburban secondary school students in the English Language in a suburban area. The data from the respondents were tabulated and further analysed to determine the most preferred reading strategy by the respondents. The findings of this research will be discussed under two subsections, namely 'Strategies to improve my reading ability' (Figure 2) and 'Literal comprehension strategies used by students' (Figure 3).

Table 3 records the students' responses about strategies to improve their reading ability. There are 12 statements in the first subsection. From Table 3, it can be concluded that "able to use a dictionary to find the meaning of the words" is the most preferable reading strategy with 19 respondents (63%), followed by "use clues from the context of the reading material to predict the meaning of words and sentences" strategy with 15 respondents (50%). These findings are in line with the study conducted by Rojalai et al (2021) that the suburban students in Selangor also enjoy guessing the meaning of unknown words. As for the finding of the second highest preferred strategy, it is also in line with the study conducted by Hashim et al (2018), which showed similar results that the students also prefer using clues from the text to find the meaning of individual words. These two strategies that record the highest percentage also aligned with a study done by Riadil (2020) stated that dictionaries and using contextual clues when reading was primarily utilised in reading comprehension because it helps to guess the word, and a dictionary is always a valuable tool to aid comprehension of difficult words. The third highest-rated strategy is "skimming for the main idea and rereading again", with 14 respondents (47%) choosing this strategy. This finding aligns with the research done by Gulo (2020), saying that skimming is another excellent way to help understand the meaning of words. Besides, it is also aligned with the studies conducted in both Suburban schools in Malaysia by Rojalai et al (2021); Yee et al (2021), which found that the students in their studies also prefer to reread the text to aid their reading comprehension. In addition, the "look for English materials based on the student's level" and "rereading a text a few times until fully understood" strategies shared the same percentage (43%) with 13 respondents. Wahyudin and Rido (2020) mentioned that learners use different strategies to direct their learning goals. The learners could choose which reading strategy fits their comprehension level.

The other two strategies, namely "prepare ahead to read a text, observe my development and investigate my understanding", came in 5th place with 12 respondents

(40%) followed by "look for English materials to read for enjoyment" strategy at 33% which is equivalent to 10 respondents. This is aligned with the claim that the pre-reading stage might be difficult for low-proficient readers compared to high-proficient readers who can understand pictures or illustrations (Ozek & Civelek, 2006, as cited in Par, 2020). Students thought the sole purpose of reading was to add new knowledge, but it also works to ease the mind if you enjoy reading. For some students, reading is boring, and thus, they become too lazy to read books (Mujahidah & Ramli, 2019). The strategies with less than 10 respondents chose the strategies: 7 respondents chose the "focus on how the text is organised, specifically the headings and subheadings" strategy (23%) and interestingly, two strategies shared the same percentage, which "read as much English materials" and predict what is going to happen next" strategy with only 5 respondents (17%). The least utilised strategy goes to "I continue to summarise as I read" with only 3 respondents (10%), and surprisingly, it is also the highest-rated strategy, with 14 respondents (47%) agreeing the strategy does not suit them. This is supported by research done by Behtash et al (2019) that summarising was one of the least frequently used strategies for reading. This finding corroborated previous research by Wahyudin and Rido (2020), which mentioned that students employ distinct methods and strategies according to their needs.

Figure 2. Strategies to improve reading

Following behind as the strategy respondents found not suitable for them is "I predict what is going to happen next" with 9 respondents (30%). The students find predicting difficult because it involves utilising their experiences and knowledge to generate ideas (Ruhul, 2019). Interestingly, 3 statements came in as the third highest rated (17%) strategies respondents found not suitable for them, which are "I read English materials as much as I can", "I look for English materials to read for enjoyment." and "I read dialogues and short stories a few times until I fully understood it." Rao (2019) suggested in his study that the students think the English reading materials seemed monotonous and declined the students' interest. Therefore, authentic materials are examples of good resources for English classes because learners get to real-life or out-of-classroom contexts. A strategy that came in fourth place is

"focus on how the text is organised, specifically the headings and subheadings" with only 4 respondents (13%).

Furthermore, the statement in fourth place (10%) which is "use clues from the context of the reading material to predict the meaning of words or sentences.". Two statements came in 5th place, sharing the same percentage (7%), which are "prepare ahead ways to read the text, observe my development and investigate my understanding" and "skim a reading text for the main idea and reread it again more carefully." When the students skim a text, they have the potential to bog down and may need help to recognise the main idea as they are focusing too intently on the details (Aritonang et al., 2019). The second least strategy the students find unsuitable is the "I am able to use a dictionary to find the meaning of the words" strategy, with only 1 respondent (3%) choosing this item. A dictionary helps know the meaning of difficult words as English is not their mother tongue (Nugroho et al., 2022). This respondent might think that looking for new words in the dictionary is a hassle and much work to be done. None of the students thought that Item 3 in Part A, "I look for English reading materials based on my level, " was not suitable for them. Therefore, it can be concluded that all the respondents thought this specific strategy was relevant.

On the other hand, "I look for English reading materials based on my level." came first, with 13 respondents agreeing (43%) as the strategy they have tried and would love to try again. This is because the appropriate resources tend to be understandable and relatable, stimulating learners' interest (Bayoung et al., 2019). The "I predict what is going to happen next" is the second most rated strategy (37%), followed by "reading English materials as much as I can" as the third most rated strategy (33%) the respondents would love to try again. These cognitive strategies direct learning by establishing a reading goal, predicting, assessing self-understanding, and directing attention (Semtin and Maniam, 2015, as cited in Ali and Razali, 2019). Apart from engaging their cognitive skills, the "focus on how the text is organised. Specifically, the headings and subheadings" strategy came fourth, with 30% of the respondents choosing the item. The following most rated strategies shared the same percentage of 27%, with 8 respondents selecting "I read dialogues and short stories a few times" and "I skim a reading text for the main idea and reread it again more carefully." These strategies are not favoured enough by the students probably because this process might be too tedious for them (Magasvaran et al., 2022).

The "skim for main idea and reread again" strategy has quite a low percentage and is proven by a discovery from Aritonang et al (2019) that some might find reading quickly through to find the main idea and content of the text difficult for them. Next, (23%) of the respondents prefer "using clues from the context of the reading material to predict the meaning." Semtin and Maniam (2015), as cited in Ali and Razali (2019), mentioned that this retrieval strategy helped ascertain the word's meaning. The other four strategies, which are "reading English materials for enjoyment", "preparing ahead when reading a text", "summarising while reading", and "able to use a dictionary", each receive the lowest percentage (20%, 20%, 17% and 17%) respectively. Two strategies that denote the lowest percentage of 17% are supported by Prihatini (2020) claims that some students have difficulties in vocabulary due to no desire to know the meaning of the words, especially in cases where one word can have multiple meanings. This discovery is a spark for teachers to develop other strategies to pique their interest and offer the students more solid reasons to read.

Finally, for the strategies "I have never applied but I am interested in trying it", three strategies share the highest percentage (33%), which are Items 1, 4 and 7. In the second place,

30% of the respondents chose the "Look for English materials to read for enjoyment" strategy, followed by summarising while reading with 27%. Next up is skim for the main idea strategy and reread with 20%. Following behind are three strategies namely predicting, using context clues and a dictionary with the same percentage, which are (17%) of the respondents. Finally, two strategies that share the lowest percentage belong to "looking for material based on my level" and "read dialogues a few times until I understood" (13%).

Table 4
Literal comprehension strategies used by students

No.	Statement	Frequency / Percentage (%)			
		1	2	3	4
		I think this strategy is not suitable for me.	I have applied this strategy and would try it again.	I apply this strategy and I like it.	I have never apply this strategy but I am interested to try it.
12	I read the questions prior to reading the passage.	3 (10%)	5 (17%)	14 (47%)	8 (27%)
13	I am able to recognise the keywords from the questions.	3 (10%)	11 (37%)	8 (27%)	8 (27%)
14	I find the topic sentence when I read a text.	5 (17%)	11 (37%)	10 (33%)	4 (13%)
15	I am able to recognise the keywords from the passage.	6 (20%)	9 (30%)	7 (23%)	8 (27%)

16	I can detect the supporting examples from the keywords..	8 (27%)	9 (30%)	5 (17%)	8 (27%)
17	I am able to distinguish between important and unimportant supporting examples.	5 (17%)	10 (33%)	9 (30%)	6 (20%)
18	I review the text carefully to identify the gist.	3 (10%)	6 (20%)	15 (50%)	6 (20%)
19	I read the signpost questions to think more deeply and understand the meaning of the text.	4 (13%)	10 (33%)	12 (40%)	4 (13%)
20	I can detect the responses to the signpost questions from the evident details in the text.	6 (20%)	11 (37%)	4 (13%)	9 (30%)

Table 4 and shows the findings of respondents' reading strategy used for literal comprehension questions. The respondents practised different strategies when answering literal comprehension questions. Respondents "review the text carefully to identify the gist" when answering literal comprehension questions. The finding shows that 15 respondents (50%) have tried this strategy during reading and liked the strategy. Setiawati and Budiash (2022) asserted that quick skimming helps readers find the gist of the text. Reviewing the text allows readers to find the goal or message in the reading. This finding is consistent with Gulo (2020) that skimming is a proper technique that benefits the respondents by getting the main idea in the text without reading the whole text. The second reading strategy used mainly by the respondents for literal reading comprehension is "I read the questions prior to reading the passage", with 14 respondents (47%) stating that they have tried this strategy and liked it. The finding compromises the result of the research conducted by Sieo et al. (2022), as this strategy is known as the most frequently used reading strategy in literal reading comprehension. To attain effective reading, it is essential to possess a purpose as it gives the reason for reading a given material. The reader may need help understanding the material, and the information may not last in the schemata if there is no specific purpose for reading

(Oyetunde, 2015, cited in Akubo, 2019). "I read the signpost questions to think more deeply and understand the meaning of the text" was another reading strategy (40%) used by the respondents in literal reading comprehension. The respondents in (Beers & Probst, 2012, as cited in Nelson, 2019) stated that a signpost is crucial as it is an idea that allows the reader to pause and make a note of essential concepts in the reading material. The signpost questions will lead to more critical thinking and making sense of the meaning in the text. Hence, students need to be aware of the significance of the signpost questions, which may aid them in making meaning of the text.
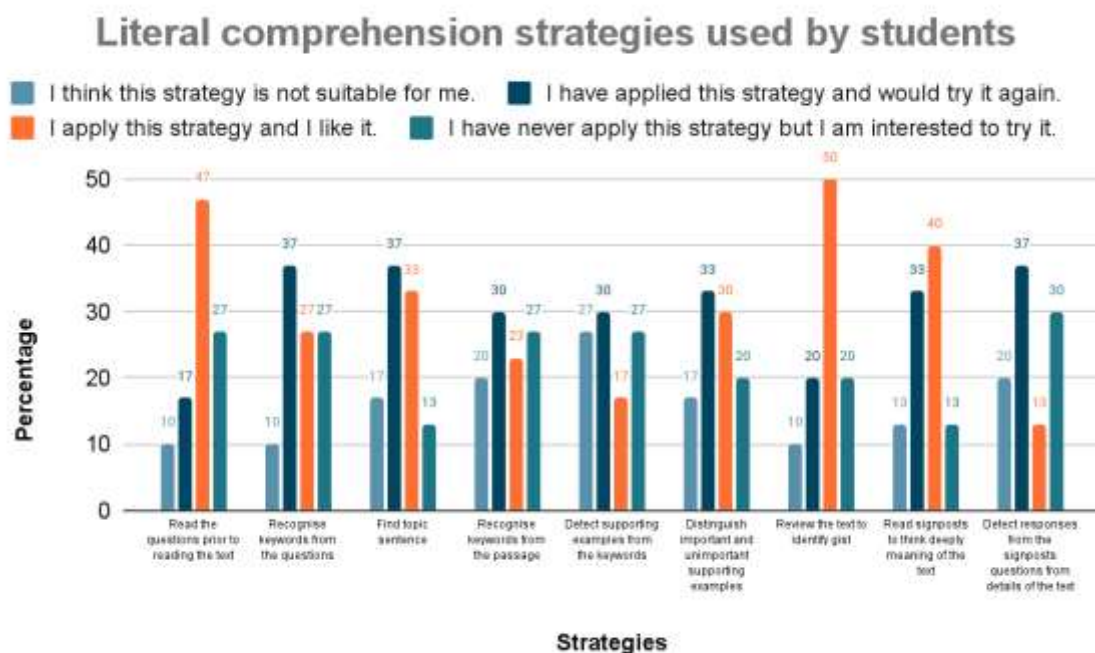

Figure 3. Literal comprehension strategies

The results also show the reading strategy used for literal reading comprehension, such as "I find the topic sentence when I read a text" and "I am able to distinguish between important and unimportant supporting examples". These two strategies were less frequently used; however, they were still practised by the respondents. Ten respondents (33%) used the "I find the topic sentence when I read a text" reading strategy, while only 9 (30%) of the respondents applied the latter strategy and liked it. Banditvilai (2020) stated that readers usually would read the first sentence of the paragraph. The topic sentence can usually be found as the first sentence of the paragraph. The topic sentence assists the reader in understanding the main idea of the text, whereas the supporting details provide details to the main ideas. A few factors that lead to difficulty in reading comprehension include insufficient instruction from the teachers, pupils' lack of interest and not accustomed to reading and poor grasp of vocabulary (Prihatini, 2020). The teachers sometimes would give lengthy explanations, which confuses the students to grasp the essential ideas in the text. Teachers also did not discuss the critical points in the text, leading to difficulty in understanding the text. Prihatini (2020) highlighted that students lack the interest, not accustomed to reading and vocabulary needed to understand the text better. Alamer (2021) emphasised that the motivational construct of consistency of interest (CI) can be distinct and significant, as it conceptually evaluates the lasting commitment of the interest in acquiring a second language. As students are not accustomed to reading the text, they cannot distinguish the important

and unimportant details in the text. This is worsened as students lack the vocabulary to understand the supporting details provided. The students did not have the effort to use the dictionary to find the meaning of the unknown words.

The findings also found that the students have used a few reading strategies and would love to try them again. The top-rated reading strategies (37%) that students have used and would love to try again are "I am able to recognise the keywords from the questions.", "I find the topic sentence when I read a text.", and "I can detect the responses to the signpost questions from the evident details in the text." The second reading strategies (33%) that students have tried and would love to try again are "I am able to distinguish between important and unimportant supporting examples." and "I read the signpost questions to think more deeply and understand the meaning of the text." followed by "I am able to recognise the keywords from the passage." and "I can detect the supporting examples from the keywords." which 30% of the students have chosen as the reading strategies that they have tried and would retry again. These strategies students would like to try again may have been effective and helpful during their reading. Most of the strategies have been found useful; some were selected as strategies they have tried and liked. The more effective the reading strategies in reading comprehension, the better the students perform in the English teaching and learning process. As explained by Gustanti and Ayu (2021), the student's performance or test scores improve with the use of reading strategies.

Among the least used strategies was "I can detect the responses to the signpost questions from the evident details in the text." Only 4 respondents (13%) used this strategy and liked it. 9 respondents (30%) stated that they have never used the strategy but are interested in trying it. A few other less frequently used strategies were "I read the questions prior to reading the passage", "I am able to recognise the keywords from the questions", "I am able to recognise the keywords from the passage." and "I can detect the supporting examples from the keywords". A total of 8 respondents chose these strategies as reading strategies they have never used before but are interested in trying. Muhid et al. (2020) mentioned the importance of having good reading strategies so that students will not waste their time rereading the text repeatedly to find the answers. This could also lead to a better comprehension of the text and, eventually, better outcomes in the examination. Therefore, teachers must convey these reading strategies to the students so that they are aware of them, which could bring tons of benefits in reading.

Based on the findings, the least favoured reading strategy was "I can detect the supporting examples from the keywords." in which 8 respondents (27%) stated that they think the strategy is not suitable for them, while the reading strategy "I am able to recognise the keywords from the passage." and "I can detect the responses to the signpost questions from the evident details in the text." had 6 respondents (20%) stated that they think the strategy is not suitable for them. Some respondents might be unaware of the reading strategies or do not know how to use them effectively. Teachers play a role in educating the students on reading strategies that may be employed during reading comprehension. As asserted by Tamin and Buyukahiska (2020), long-lasting strategies training for reading comprehension strategies is especially helpful in helping readers to find solutions to their reading comprehension problems. The findings also stated that students are more willing to read after trying the strategies. Proper modelling and explanation from the teachers help the students employ the right reading strategies to ease their reading comprehension provided they have had sufficient practice.

Implication and Conclusion

According to the findings in this study, most students prefer using dictionaries as a reading approach to decipher new words or their unknown meanings. A dictionary is often helpful for understanding words that are difficult to comprehend. Most of them concurred that this strategy would help them become better readers. Nonetheless, it is possible that the students would prefer to avoid repeating this strategy. This is presumably because the students needed help understanding the terminology since one word can have several meanings when using a dictionary. For literal comprehension questions the study has found that students prefer to examine the text attentively to find the gist when answering literal comprehension questions. Readers can determine the purpose or message of the text by rereading it without reading the whole passage. To ensure that students know these reading strategies, which could significantly impact their reading, teachers must explain them to the class.

Students use a variety of learning strategies, particularly when learning a second language. Most learning strategies do not occur overtly in the classroom. Hence, they are not noticeable there. Therefore, teachers must accommodate their students' preferences for reading strategies. These can make it easier for students to learn, retain, use, or access the new language. Learning strategies assist students in studying with or without a teacher in a way that they find enjoyable because teachers cannot impart all knowledge to students unless they genuinely want to learn.

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