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Language Learning Strategies Used by ESL Learners in Primary Schools in Sarawak to Enhance Reading Skill

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Abstract

Language learning strategies are a crucial part of the learning process. Pupils used a variety of learning strategies to enhance their language acquisition and take an active role in their learning. Learning the English language requires pupils to learn and master the four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing to become fluent in it. Reading is a skill that allows pupils to receive information and discover new things. Different strategies ought to be used by the pupils to master the five elements of reading, which are phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, reading comprehension and fluency. This research aims to investigate the learning strategies used by ESL learners in primary schools to enhance their reading skills. The respondent comprises 40 Year 5 pupils from two sub-urban primary schools in Sarawak. A quantitative research method was used in this research by conducting a survey. A set of questionnaires which was adapted from Andrew D. Cohen and Rebecca L. Oxford, was used to identify the most practised language learning strategies among Year 5 ESL primary school learners in Sarawak in enhancing their reading skills. The data was collected and analysed using descriptive analysis using percentage and frequency. The results revealed that the most practised language learning strategies were affective and cognitive strategies while memorization strategies and compensation strategies were the least practised. It is hoped that this research could guide teachers to develop lessons that will help pupils enhance their reading skills by using various strategies that will best suit their preferences.

Keywords: Language Learning Strategies (LLS), Reading Skills, Reading Strategies, Sub-Urban Primary School, Language Acquisition

Introduction

As a result of globalisation, the importance of the English language, commonly known as the "international trading language," has become clearly prominent. Understanding and mastering English is critical for those who want to thrive in the global marketplace in today's Information and Internet Age, as it is undoubtedly the most widely spoken language on the Internet. English language proficiency has become essential for global citizens to prosper and live in the 21st century due to the digital age revolution and globalisation (Dawi &

Hashim, 2022). Since English has been used and spoken extensively in Malaysia for a long time, it has inevitably become the country's secondary language. In Malaysia, mastering the English language has always been the top priority of the Ministry of Education. As a result, the government established a Roadmap for English Language Education in Malaysia spanning the years from 2015 to 2025, acknowledging the need for significant efforts to transform English into a strength rather than a weakness in the country. It focuses on basic and structural changes that will boost the country's English proficiency. According to Zuraidah and Mardziah (2019), the adoption of the CEFR, the global benchmark for describing and assessing language proficiency at each educational stage, is the most significant shift brought about by the plan.

However, even with these impressive efforts, it is still undoubtedly a daunting task, particularly for those non-native speakers or second language learners. It has always been challenging for them to learn English due to the complexity of its rules and regulations. Due to their lack of grammatical rules, second language learners often make mistakes at any point, and the grammatical category of nouns is riddled with these errors or problems (Karam, 2020). Reading is one of the most fundamental skills for English learners to master. According to Magasvaran et al (2022), reading is a crucial skill in English studies since it provides a bridge to other skills that will assist pupils in improving their writing and speaking abilities. Learners' ability to read significantly affects their ability to retain new knowledge. The ability of pupils to read and interpret literature aids in the development of their communication abilities as well as their vocabulary by bringing new terms into their lexicon. Hence, it matters so much for teachers to promote a love of reading in their pupils. As educators, we ought to explore various techniques and approaches to discover the most effective one for our pupils. We shouldn't rely solely on one method and anticipate that every pupil will profit equally.

This is where language learning strategies come into play, assisting pupils by boosting their motivation to learn and utilizing their learning potential in order to improve their academic performance. Learning strategies, according to Oxford (1990), are specific actions that students take to make learning simpler, quicker, more pleasurable, more self-directed, more efficient, and more transferable to a new setting. Amir (2018) also claims that Language Learning Strategies aid pupils in understanding and picking up new material. As strategies are instruments for active, self-directed involvement, which is crucial for establishing communicative competence, they are particularly significant for language learning. One of the areas of research in Language Learning Strategies is on Good Language Learners. Good Language Learner studies focused only on what a good language learner did and which Language Learning Strategies they chose in their language learning (Amir, 2018). Most students applied language acquisition strategies, such as affective, memory, social, metacognitive, cognitive, and compensatory, according to the study by (Mandasari and Oktaviani, 2018). The amount of research on specific language skills is lacking, despite the fact that learning strategies have been studied extensively. There is a gap in the literature on reading strategies among Malaysian Primary ESL learners.

Therefore, a study is required to determine the strategies utilised by pupils in primary schools to enhance their English language proficiency, particularly in reading. Thus, this study is designed to identify the most practised and the least practised language learning strategies employed by Year 5 pupils in sub-urban primary schools in Sarawak to improve their reading skills. Additionally, this study will help other researchers determine which language learning strategies should be taught to their pupils in order to maximise the

learning process. Further, by better understanding their learning strategies, pupils can employ them and make the necessary plans or actions to enhance their language learning process. The following are the main research questions to be answered in this study:

RQ1: What is the most practised Language Learning Strategy (LLS) employed by Year 5 pupils in sub urban primary schools in Sarawak for improving their reading skills?

RQ2: What is the least practised Language Learning Strategy (LLS) employed by Year 5 pupils in sub urban primary schools in Sarawak for improving their reading skills?

Literature Review

Language Learning Strategies (LLS)

The term LLS refers to "specific actions consciously employed by the learner for the purpose of learning language" (Griffiths, 2007). Oxford (1990), on the other hand, describes learning strategies as "specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations." Language Learning Strategies do not only aid language learning but also the learning of other subjects such as maths. In other words, learners have the potential to respond to particular learning situations and control their learning effectively as soon as they begin to learn something. As a result, language learners can use a variety of ways to accomplish tasks involving reading. Due to the prevalence of an effective language learning technique, language learners will succeed in performing the tasks (Richard, 1994). A shift from knowledge-based rote learning to self-access learning that promotes independence and perpetual learning led to the development of critical thinking and other 21st-century learning skills, attitudes, and perceptions that facilitate affective learning.

As stated by Wenden (1987a), language learning behaviours, such as mastering and controlling the meaning of a second or foreign language, cognitive theory, such as learners' strategic knowledge of language learning, and affective view, such as learners' motivation, attitude, and outcomes of their own learning, can all be used to categorise language learning strategies. According to the results of Kavaliauskien's (2009) study, all pupils require assistance from their native language in order to improve their English language abilities.

Oxford (2003) classified reading learning strategies as being direct or indirect. The different types of direct strategies include memory strategies, where pupils use their memories to retain the information they have learned, and cognitive strategies, which concentrate on pupils who use their knowledge to learn by repeating, analysing, and summarising. Learners utilise compensation strategies when their knowledge is insufficient, such as when they conjecture the meaning of a word. Also classified as metacognitive, affective, and social strategies are indirect strategies. Pupils use metacognitive strategies to acquire the target language by organising their learning plans and assessing their progress. Cognitive techniques include resourcing, translation, grouping, note-taking, deduction, recombination, imagery, auditory representation, keywords, contextualization, elaboration, transfer, and inference. Inquiring for clarification, working with others, reducing fear, and motivating yourself are examples of social/affective methods. Incorporating both general and particular categories is a benefit of this classification.

Good Language Learners

Learning a second language is certainly not easy, especially among ESL learners. The characteristics of the pupils and their differences, such as gender, age, and aptitude, have a

major influence on the success of language learning. Aptitude, motivation, and opportunity are the three key factors that influence a learner's performance, according to (Rubin, 1975). The strategies used may vary among individuals as each person has different ways in acquiring language. According to the research made by Cohen (1998; 2007); Macaro (2007); Griffiths (2008), a 'successful language learner' possesses a diverse and sufficiently individualised repertoire of these strategies.

Aptitude is one of the key factors of a successful language learner. It is evident from the findings that language aptitude, over the long term, is probably the single best predictor of success in a second language (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1992). Learners that have a higher cognitive ability have the advantage of learning a second language faster. They are able to notice grammar patterns in a language and remember bombastic vocabulary more quickly. They would attend to meaning, not just the grammar aspect of the language. Good language learners also possess the ability to deduce meanings from the hints provided in the sentences or phrases they hear. Lightbrown and Spada (2006) stated that these abilities are believed to be vital for effective and successful language learning. Motivation is also a significant factor in determining the success of learning a second language. According to Cohen and Dörnyei (2002), motivation is often seen as the most important learning variable, and little would happen without it. Good language learners are highly motivated and always give their best in the learning process. They are confident in using the language and not afraid of making mistakes. They are willing to take risks and learn from the mistakes that they have made.

Good language learners also often create opportunities for themselves to learn and acquire the second language more efficiently. One of the characteristics of a good language learner is that they take advantage of opportunities and plan strategies for implementing the language both within and outside of the classroom (Rubin and Thompson, 1983). Nowadays, technology plays an integral part in the learning process. Good language learners will use technology as an opportunity to learn the second language by listening to radio and songs, watching videos and movies, reading online news, doing online tests to check their level of proficiency, and even playing games in the target language. They will also seize the opportunities to practice the language, usually in a school environment where they can communicate using the targeted language with their peers and teachers.

In short, good language learners are attentive, particularly in the grammar aspect, attend to meaning, are highly motivated and seize any opportunities for them to learn the second language. However, Nazri et al (2016) specified that the strategies used changes depending on a variety of factors including the task's difficulty, age, environment, learning styles, family socioeconomic situation, and cultural differences. This leads to the conclusion that the learners' cognitive ability to comprehend the language's structure and meaning, their learning attitudes, and the strategies they employ to understand the complexity of language all play a role in how successfully they acquire a language.

Importance of Reading

In Malaysian schools, teaching English is one of the obligatory subjects. The country's educational and historical background has something to do with its selection to make the course mandatory. Then, throughout primary school, English is taught as an obligatory subject, and pupils in grades 7 through 12 are expected to have a solid understanding of the fundamentals of the English language. For pupils to succeed academically and socially, teachers must play a key role in ensuring they have a solid command of the language. In order to be a bilingual and multilingual country, Malaysia definitely emphasises the usage of English

because it is a global language and gives Malaysian students and graduates a competitive edge (Salleh et al., 2020). Teachers play a crucial role in assisting students to excel in every skill. To encourage pupils to truly engage in studying the English language, teachers will need to take into account each pupil's interests and learning preferences. The four essential skills that the pupils need to have a good grasp of the English language are listening skills, speaking skills, reading skills and writing skills. These skills are measured using the scale of CEFR to let the teachers monitor the pupils' progress in a progressive manner.

English is often used as the primary language in the press and media since it is the language that most speakers use globally. English is the primary language used for printing by the top publications in the world, and it is also the primary language used for television news broadcasts (Rao, 2019). This statement highlights the need for pupils to have great achievements in effectively using English. The sole purpose of learning is to absorb as much information and gather knowledge as to ensure the sustainability to further participate in the outside world. Depth of prior knowledge has a considerable impact on a child's ability to read texts in a variety of genres when they are in middle to late primary school (Smith et al., 2021). In order to get pupils to be interested and continuously invested in reading, teachers have to be prepared with various methods that will promote the love for getting the pupils to read comfortably in English. This also means that the methods will then let the pupils have a sense of accountability in learning the language independently.

Even though research on reading interest among Malaysian students is still very limited, teachers generally concur that students do not understand the value of reading or how it can be used to learn new information (Mohammad et al., 2020). This shows that the students in Malaysia mostly are still very much unaware of the importance of reading and how to read effectively to get information that will help them further progress academically and prepare them to work according to the global demands. In regards to that, reading materials from other countries can be used as good exposing material for Malaysian pupils to get more information about other people from the other side of the world. This is corroborated by a study conducted by Simantujak and Barus (2020), which elaborates on the creation and evaluation of educational materials. Simantujak and Barus found that Oxford-Cambridge Bookable, a series of foreign-published literary works, was used to create teaching materials for reading.

Giving the pupils the appropriate reading materials will allow them to be involved at their own level of understanding, subsequently allowing them to choose more English reading materials that they will enjoy. Here is where autonomous learning occurs independently. Reading motivation is crucial since it can encourage students to read more frequently and thus improve their reading skills (Chon et al., 2019). It may be more important to encourage pupils to read in situations where English is present because language acquisition is frequently confined to academic settings. If the appropriate reading techniques are used, pupils can gain a deeper grasp of the material and make better use of the English language in their learning. According to a study by Yulian (2021), when students use a reading approach that incorporates skimming and scanning, their critical thinking skills improve. In addition, it inspires students to finish their assignments by emphasising informational reading.

The yearning to read English literature is generally higher among learners who have experience doing so than it is among those who have not (Tisa et al., 2021). They go on to say that this is because of their familiarity with grammar and vocabulary, which enables pupils to comprehend more difficult English-language content. It can be argued that pupils who enjoy reading uncomplicated English literature frequently lack reading proficiency in the language.

In order to make sure pupils accelerate their reading in ESL classrooms or to instill self-learning, the strategies for reading need to be chosen wisely.

Methodology

A survey research design utilising quantitative techniques was used in this study. This study attempts to look into the reading strategies used by Sarawakian primary school students. The study took place in two different primary schools which consisted of two sub-urban National Schools from two different districts of Sarawak, Malaysia, which are Bekenu and Limbang. The samples in this study were chosen by using purposive sampling which included a total of 40 pupils from two classes of Year 5. Their proficiency levels ranged from low to average. Every one of the samples received a questionnaire that was divided into three portions, each of which focused on their reading skills in the English language. Section A is on 'What I do to read more', Section B is on 'What I do to understand what I read' and lastly for Section C, is on 'What I do when I don't understand what I read'. The questionnaire was adapted from the Young Learners' Language Strategy Use Survey (Cohen & Oxford, 2002). Simple sentences are used to organise the questions so that they can be addressed by a variety of responses with varying levels of proficiency. The information gathered was analysed using a descriptive approach. The preferred language learning technique was determined by interpreting the frequency and percentage results which were shown in the tables.

Findings and Discussion

The results of this study are concentrated on the language learning strategies used by pupils to advance their reading abilities. The findings cover the 3 sections from the questionnaire, which are on 'What I do to read more', 'What I do to understand what I read' and lastly is on 'What I do when I don't understand what I read'

Table 1

What I do to read more

No.	Item	Participant's responses		
		Really describes me	Somewhat describes me	Does not describe me
1	I read a lot in the language.	16 (40%)	4 (10%)	20 (50%)
2	I read for fun in the language.	18 (45%)	7 (17.5%)	15 (37.5%)
3	I find things to read that interest me.	15 (37.5%)	17 (42.5%)	8 (20%)
4	I look for things to read that are not too hard.	27 (67.5%)	9 (22.5%)	4 (10%)

Table 1 illustrates pupils' responses regarding what they would do to read more. There are four statements in this section. According to the data, 27 respondents responded to Statement 4, where they look for things to read that are not too hard for them, which carries the majority of 67.5%. Only four respondents opted to choose that the statement does not describe them. This was followed by Statement 2, with 18 respondents admitting to read for fun in the language (45%). A total of 15 respondents (37.5%) claim that reading for fun does not describe them, while the other 7 responded to somewhat describes them. In statement 3, the majority of the respondents (42.5%) claimed that finding things to read that interest them somewhat describes them. 15 respondents (37.5%) agreed that finding interesting things to read really describes them and only 8 respondents claimed that the statement does not describe them at all.

The data shown in Table 1 implies that most respondents choose to engage in fun-based experiences to read more in the language they are learning. Furthermore, data also show that they prefer reading texts that are not too difficult for them. This demonstrates that they are aware of the strategy that should be used to assist them in reading more in the language and applying it into practice in their daily lives, which makes them a good language learner. This

is supported by Rubin and Thompson (1983), which stated that individuals that make their own opportunities and find strategies to practise using the language is one of the characteristics of a good language learner.

On the contrary, the lowest percentage that really describes the respondent to read more is on Statement 3. Only 15 of them find things to read that interest them. The finding also shows the least practised strategy by the respondents on what they do to read more is on Statement 1. 20 of them agree that practising reading a lot in the language does not describe them. This is likely due to the lack of choices in reading materials that can cater to their interest. This is also linked with what Nazri et al (2016) has stated in which the strategies employed shift depending on a range of variables including the complexity of the activity, age, the environment, learning preferences, family social and economic condition, and cultural distinctions.

Table 2

What I do to understand what I read

No.	Questions	Participant's responses		
		Really describes me	Somewhat describes me	Does not describe me
1	I skim over a reading to get the main idea.	15 (37.5%)	20 (50%)	5 (12.5%)
2	I look for important facts.	19 (47.5%)	13 (32.5%)	8 (20%)
3	I read things more than once.	9 (22.5%)	24 (60%)	7 (17.5%)
4	I look at the pictures and what is under the pictures.	34 (85%)	4 (10%)	2 (5%)

5	I look at the headings.	35 (87.5%)	3 (7.5%)	2 (5%)
6	I predict what will happen next in the text.	28 (70%)	8 (20%)	4 (10%)
7	I underline parts that seem important.	33 (82.5%)	4 (10%)	3 (7.5)
8	I mark the reading in different colours to help me understand.	13 (32.5%)	4 (10%)	23 (57.5%)

Table 2 shows the strategies the pupils take to understand the reading text they read. The highest response received from the respondents is on Statement 5, which shows that they employ the strategy of looking at the headings of the reading text. 35 of them, which carries a percentage of 87.5%, responded to this statement that really describes them on what they do to understand what they read. Only 2 respondents (5%) claim it does not describe them. Most respondents will get the gist of the text they are reading by looking at the headings and this can help to understand the flow of the text easier. According to Ghenaïet (2022), headings are helpful for readers as they make the dense text easier to read through by telling the reader what each section is about. In the meantime, the highest percentage for statements that somewhat describe them is on Statement 3. 60% of them (24 respondents) somewhat agreed that they read things more than once to help them understand what they read. On top of that, Statement 8 gets the highest percentage for statements that do not describe them at all. A total of 23 respondents (57.5%) responded that they do not mark the reading in different colours to help them understand the reading text.

On the other hand, the lowest percentage that really describes them pointed to Statement 3. Only 22.5% (9 respondents) claim they read things more than once to understand the text. In addition, the statement that somewhat describes those that get the lowest percentage is Statement 5. Only 3 of them, which equals 7.5%, look at the headings as a strategy to aid them in understanding the text. Interestingly, statements 4 and 5 both get 5% (2 respondents) for the least percentage that does not describe the respondents. These respondents agreed that looking at the pictures and what is under the pictures and the headings do not fit them at all.

Table 3

What I do when I don't understand what I read

No.	Item	Participant's responses		
		Really describes me	Somewhat describes me	Does not describe me
1	I use hints from the reading text to guess the meaning of words.	19 (47.5%)	8 (20%)	13 (32.5%)
2	I use a dictionary to search for the meaning of the words.	31 (77.5%)	5 (12.5%)	4 (10%)
3	I understand the word in my first language with the help of a dictionary.	34 (85%)	4 (10%)	2 (5%)

Table 3 Table 3 records the responses by the pupils on what they do when they don't understand what they read. Statement 3 has the highest response of 34 respondents (85%) in which it really describes that they understand the word in their first language with the help of a dictionary. According to the results of Kavaliauskien's (2009) study, all pupils require assistance from their native language in order to improve their English language abilities. Statement 1 however, best defines them in terms of the largest proportion. In order to determine the meaning of words, 8 of the respondents (20%) said they use cues from the reading text. Interestingly, Statement 1 is where there are the most claims that do not clarify them. 13 respondents (32.5%) in total say they employ this strategy to their advantage.

However, the lowest percentage falls on Statement 1 too, since only 19 respondents are carrying a percentage of 47.5% for statements that really describe them. Moreover, statements that somewhat describe them get the lowest percentage is Statement 3. The data collected indicates that only 4 of them (10%) understand the word in their first language with the help of a dictionary. Similarly, statement 3 also gets the lowest percentage, in which only 2 of them (5%) think this does not describe them.

Based on these findings, both research questions for this study are discussed.

RQ1: What is the most practised Language Learning Strategy (LLS) employed by Year 5 pupils in sub urban primary schools in Sarawak for improving their reading skills?

The most practised LLS for Table 1 for “What I do to read more” is to “look for things to read that are not too hard.” It carries a percentage of 67.5%, which is a total of 27 respondents. This indicates that most of them are inclined towards indirect strategies, which are affective strategies, in order to improve their reading skills. According to Oxford, R. L. (1990), affective strategies are methods for assisting pupils in controlling their emotions, attitudes, motives, and values. These tactics significantly impact language learning because they allow pupils to manage their emotions. This strategy allows pupils to lower their anxiety about learning the language and encourage themselves more in taking control of their own learning. Learning English can be quite intimidating since it is a foreign language to them, so minimising their anxiety about learning this language by choosing less difficult reading materials is crucial for developing reading habits. Meanwhile, for Table 2, the most preferred LLS for “What I do to understand what I read” is “looking at the headings” of the reading text, with a total of 35 respondents, or 87.5%. This demonstrates that pupils attempt to grasp the gist of the main ideas and supporting ideas before beginning with their reading process. Ghenaiet (2022) stated that headings are beneficial to readers since they make the dense content easier to read by indicating what each section is about. Subsequently, as for Table 3 which is for “What I do when I don’t understand what I read”, the most practised LLS by the pupils is by “understanding the word in their first language with the help of a dictionary”. 85% or 34 of them claimed that they employ this strategy to help them understand the text read. According to Kavaliauskien's (2009) study, all students require assistance from their native language in order to develop their English language skills. To conclude, all of these findings show that pupils’ most preferred and practised LLS to improve their reading skills are more towards affective strategies and cognitive strategies. Cognitive strategies include actions such as clarifying and verifying, guessing or undertaking inductive investigating, deductive reasoning, practising, memorising to recall, and monitoring (Suyitno et al., 2017). It implies that pupils are more confident in using the dictionary to find meaning rather than creating their own conclusions. They also choose methods that help them learn more effectively by employing safer, easier and more comfortable strategies. This will encourage pupils to learn and comprehend the text more thoroughly.

RQ2: What is the least practised Language Learning Strategy (LLS) employed by Year 5 pupils in sub urban primary schools in Sarawak for improving their reading skills?

The least practised LLS for Table 1 for “What I do to read more” is “I read a lot in the language.” It consists of a total of 20 respondents with 50% of the percentage. This indicates that most of them are not keen to read books or other materials in English. This is most likely due to the fact that they find it easier to read and comprehend reading materials written in their native language than reading materials written in English. Pupils also tend to lose motivation and interest in reading because they find it hard to understand text written in English. Cohen and Dörnyei (2002) stated that motivation is often seen as the key learner variable and nothing much happens without it. On the other hand, the least practised LLS for Table 2 for “What I do to understand what I read” is “I mark the reading in different colours to help me understand.” A total of 23 respondents, with a percentage of 57%, responded to this statement. This showed that most of them were unwilling to make the extra effort to mark the reading in different colours to help them further understand the text they are reading. This strategy might seem tedious for them, especially if they wanted to make some correction to the text since it is marked using colours. Gardner (1985) proposes that effort,

desire to achieve a goal and altitude are the equation that can be used to represent the components of motivation. Those individuals' motivation levels will be low if there are no efforts. Thus, it is hard for learners to achieve their desired goal in their learning process. As for Table 3, the least practised LLS for "What I do when I don't understand what I read" is "I use hints from the reading text to guess the meaning of words." The total number of respondents for this statement is 13, with a percentage of 32.5%. Pupils that struggle with reading and understanding a text will have difficulty finding hints in the text. They prefer to use a dictionary to understand the word in their first language. This can be seen from the data in Table 3, where Statement 3 (I understand the word in my first language with the help of a dictionary) is the most practised language strategy that they use to understand what they read. Kavaliauskienė et al (2010) stated that the use of the native language in the classroom settings can be an aid to language learning. To sum it up, the overall results in the findings indicate that the least preferred and practised LLS to improve their reading skills lean more towards compensation strategies and memorization strategies. Results also show that pupils have a lack of interest in reading materials in the language. According to Souriyavongsa (2013), learners have a lack of interest in foreign languages, especially the English language and feel a burden to learn it. This can affect their learning progress in acquiring the language successfully.

Implications and Conclusion

The results indicated that the majority of the pupils used affective strategies and cognitive strategies in reading skills. The application of methods after learning them has also been linked to a number of factors. For instance, it is asserted that motivation, or the desire to read, is closely related to the employment of strategies. In general, it is implied that learners use the strategies more frequently when their motivation is higher and their goals are more significant. Since pupils are more into affective strategies to improve their reading skills, teachers need to create a safe environment for them so that they can feel comfortable and confident in learning the language. One of the methods is to prepare a variety of reading materials appropriate for the level of the pupils. The majority of pupils choose to read materials that are not too difficult for them to read more in the language they have learnt. Simply doing so reduces their anxiety about learning the language. They will be able to control their emotions and encourage themselves to read more in the language once they feel safer and more at ease. Next, teachers should employ visual displays around the class. Based on the survey, pupils prefer to look at the pictures to understand what they read. This is because it helps them understand the text better without feeling too much pressure by solely focusing on the text alone. Moreover, with the aid of visualisation, it motivates them to read further as they are being hooked. Pupils may be drawn in by creative and imaginative depictions of books or their contents too (Lee, 2020). Instead of relying on their teachers, pupils should read independently. Reading may become more enjoyable, entertaining, and appealing for learners when teachers allow them to guide their own learning. During reading activities, teachers should solicit recommendations and interests from their pupils. Not only do pupils have more autonomy in selecting more appropriate materials for themselves, but it also encourages a safe and comfortable learning atmosphere. As a result, it will be easier to instil a reading culture among pupils, which will undoubtedly help them enhance their reading skills and build a passion for the English language.

Besides that, teachers need to plan activities that encourage pupils to use cognitive strategies in reading since it is also one of the most practiced learning strategies they often

use alongside affective strategies. For instance, teachers can prepare text with headings since pupils prefer to look at the headings to understand what they read. This means that headings are important as they convey the key concept or the main ideas of the writing. According to Ghenaiet (2022), headings benefit readers since they make complex text easier to comprehend by expressing what each part is about. Thus, selecting engaging titles is just as crucial as selecting the reading material. Next, teachers should encourage the use of dictionaries to help pupils with their understanding of unfamiliar words in a text. Results showed that most pupils choose to use a dictionary to understand the meaning of the word in their first language. Pupils understanding words or phrases in their first language can massively help them to improve their reading skills if it is used adequately. This is when teachers play an important role in monitoring pupils so they will not overuse their first language to understand every word in the text. Besides that, teachers can train pupils to use Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) based on the text they read. In order to promote HOTS among the pupils, teachers can use Wh-Questions to see whether pupils understand the content of the text. For lower achiever pupils, teachers can use closed-ended questions to check their understanding. It is important to make sure that lower achiever pupils are also participating in the lesson so that they will feel included. This can motivate them to try answering more difficult questions with the teacher's guidance.

In other words, it is evident that it is critical for teachers to recognise their pupils' learning strategies, as this will affect their learning process. Great teachers must recognise that each pupil has a distinct learning style and a range of abilities in their learning. Considering these allows them to prepare the teaching and learning process better since they will understand how to plan and implement appropriate LLS for their pupils. As a result, pupils will undoubtedly benefit from this because it could assist them to improve and grasp the English language, particularly in reading skills.

Students from various communities, such as urban and rural schools, may be included in future studies by researchers. Additionally, the strategies for acquiring a language can be applied to other language abilities like speaking, listening, and writing. This will guide teachers to plan their lessons considering the language learning strategies their pupils use the most.

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