

# Teachers' Strategies: Their Impact on Learners' Reading Comprehension Level

**Theresa Manga Oriel**

Annunciation College of Bacon Sorsogon Unit, Inc.

Email: [theresa.oriel@deped.gov.ph](mailto:theresa.oriel@deped.gov.ph)

**Abstract**— The study examined the influence of reading strategies used by teachers on the reading comprehension of learners in two public elementary schools in Sorsogon City, Philippines (Bitan-O Elementary School and Sorsogon Pilot Elementary School, Academic Year 2025–2026). Data were collected from 20 teacher-respondents using survey questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, employing a descriptive research design. Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, and weighted mean) were used to analyze quantitative data, while thematic analysis was used for qualitative responses. Teachers frequently implemented guided reading, read-aloud with discussion, independent reading, shared reading, context clues, and graphic organizers. Context clues and vocabulary pre-teaching were the most effective strategies, whereas guided reading, although most frequently used, received the lowest effectiveness rating. Implementation approaches included differentiated instruction, scaffolding, multimodal and bilingual resources, ongoing assessment, and technology-enhanced features. The primary barriers were low learner motivation, limited parental support, poor vocabulary and decoding skills, insufficient instructional time, and large class sizes. These findings led to the proposal of a Learning Action Cell (LAC)-based professional development program to enhance evidence-based reading instruction.

**Keywords**— reading comprehension, reading strategies, teachers, elementary education, professional development, Philippines.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is the foundation of academic achievement and lifelong learning. It allows learners to make sense of and think critically about written text, underpinning success across all subject areas. Reading comprehension involves more than decoding words; it is an active cognitive process in which students connect new information with background knowledge, draw inferences, and construct meaning from context.

Despite its critical importance, international and national data consistently reveal glaring gaps in reading comprehension among Filipino students. According to the World Bank (2022), at least 90% of Filipino children by age 10 cannot read or understand simple text.

This is reflected in the 2022 PISA results, where the Philippines ranked among the lowest in reading proficiency, with 15-year-old learners scoring a mean of 347 points—well below the OECD average of 476 (Macahilig, 2022).

In the Bicol region, 76,000 learners were identified with reading disabilities based on the Philippine Reading Inventory (PHIL-IRI) in 2020. DepEd launched programs such as Brigada Pagbasa and Project 6B to address foundational literacy gaps.

At the school-division level, the Schools Division of Sorsogon City prioritized literacy interventions through the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program and Literacy Remediation Program (LRP), using diagnostic tools such as the CRLA and Phil-IRI.

Despite these efforts, many learners continue to fall behind. Research consistently shows that teachers who employ evidence-based strategies such as guided reading, vocabulary pre-teaching, graphic organizers, and explicit strategy instruction are more likely to support deeper comprehension and greater learner engagement (Duke & Pearson, 2022; Afflerbach et al., 2018).

The present study therefore explored the influence of teachers' reading strategies on learners' reading comprehension in two Sorsogon City public elementary schools, with the goal of proposing a LAC-based professional development program to strengthen reading instruction.

## II. METHODOLOGY

### A. Research Design

The study employed a descriptive research design, suitable for describing existing conditions without variable manipulation (Creswell, 2014). This design enabled systematic documentation of teachers' reading strategies, their implementation, perceived effectiveness, and challenges encountered in comprehension instruction.

### B. Research Setting and Participants

The study was conducted in two public elementary schools in Sorsogon City, Philippines: Bitan-O Elementary School (BES) and Sorsogon Pilot Elementary School (SPES) for school year 2025–2026. A total of 20 teachers participated (8 from BES, 12 from SPES), selected through total enumeration and purposive sampling, respectively.

### C. Research Instruments

A survey questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were used. The questionnaire collected data on

strategies used, frequency, perceived effectiveness (five-point Likert scale), and implementation challenges. Interviews (15–20 minutes each) gathered qualitative insights on implementation. Both instruments were expert-validated and pilot-tested.

### D. Data Analysis

Frequency counts, percentages, and weighted means were computed for quantitative data. Effectiveness scores were interpreted using the scale: 4.60–5.00 (Very Effective), 3.60–4.59 (Effective), 2.60–3.59 (Moderately Effective), 1.60–2.59 (Less Effective), and 1.00–1.59 (Not Effective). Qualitative data were analyzed thematically, coded, and clustered into key themes.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Reading Strategies Implemented by Teachers

Table 1 presents the reading strategies used by teacher-respondents. Guided Reading was the most commonly reported ( $f = 19, 95\%$ ), reflecting near-universal use of small-group, scaffolded instruction. Read-Aloud with Discussion followed ( $f = 16, 80\%$ ), then Independent Reading ( $f = 15, 75\%$ ), Shared Reading and Context Clues Strategy ( $f = 14, 70\%$ ), Story Mapping/Graphic Organizers and Vocabulary Pre-Teaching ( $f = 13, 65\%$ ), Explicit Strategy Instruction ( $f = 12, 60\%$ ), and Think-Pair-Share with Paired/Partner Reading as the least used ( $f = 11, 55\%$ ).

*Table 1. Reading Strategies Implemented by Teachers*

Strategies	Frequency	Percentage
Guided Reading	19	95
Read Aloud with Discussion	16	80
Independent Reading	15	75
Shared Reading	14	70
Context Clues Strategy	14	70
Story Map (Graphic Organizers)	13	65
Vocabulary Pre-Teaching	13	65
Explicit Strategy Instruction	12	60
Think-Pair-Share	11	55
Paired/Partner Reading	11	55

This aligns with Duke and Pearson's (2009) framework emphasizing balanced instruction beginning with teacher modeling and guided practice. The lower adoption of collaborative strategies may

reflect structural constraints including large class sizes and limited instructional time (Rice, 2024).

## B. How Teachers Implement Reading Strategies

Thematic analysis revealed five key implementation themes: (1) differentiated and assessment-driven instruction, (2) modeling and scaffolding for strategic reading, (3) multimodal and bilingual resources, (4) ongoing monitoring and remediation, and (5) integration of digital tools with home-school connection.

Teachers began by conducting diagnostic assessments to identify learners' reading levels, then adapted their approaches accordingly. Modeling and scaffolding through think-alouds and guided practice were also essential, promoting metacognitive awareness (Fleury et al., 2024). Multimodal and bilingual resources including pictures, realia, video, and parallel Filipino-English texts that supported comprehension

across language transitions (Vega, 2025). Continuous monitoring through running records and oral reading assessments drove responsive remediation (Ramsa, 2021; Hudson et al., 2023), while digital tools and take-home materials extended learning beyond the classroom.

## C. Level of Effectiveness of Reading Strategies

Table 2 presents weighted mean scores for perceived effectiveness. All ten strategies fell within the "Effective" range (3.60–4.59). Context Clues Strategy (M = 4.56), Vocabulary Pre-Teaching (M = 4.55), and Story Mapping/Graphic Organizers (M = 4.53) received the highest ratings, indicating teacher confidence in vocabulary-focused and text-structure strategies.

**Table 2. Level of Effectiveness of Reading Strategies**

Strategies	Mean	Description
Context Clues Strategy	4.56	Effective
Vocabulary Pre-Teaching	4.55	Effective
Story Map / Graphic Organizers	4.53	Effective
Explicit Strategy Instruction	4.47	Effective
Independent Reading	4.33	Effective
Read-Aloud with Discussion	4.31	Effective
Paired/Partner Reading	4.19	Effective
Think-Pair-Share	4.06	Effective
Shared Reading	4.00	Effective
Guided Reading	3.94	Effective

Guided Reading, the most frequently used strategy, received the lowest mean (3.94), indicating a gap between frequency and implementation quality consistent with Shanahan's (2024) concern that guided reading loses impact when applied mechanically.

Higher effectiveness ratings for vocabulary-focused strategies align with meta-analytic evidence that explicit vocabulary instruction yields strong comprehension gains (Cervetti et al., 2023; Brooks, 2024).

## D. Gaps and Issues in Implementing Reading Strategies

Table 3 presents the challenges encountered. Lack of parental support and low learner motivation tied for first (f = 16, Rank 1.5), followed by low vocabulary and decoding skills (f = 15, Rank 3), insufficient instructional time (f = 13, Rank 4), and lack of age-appropriate materials (f = 11, Rank 5).

Large class size ranked sixth (f = 10), while limited teacher training, poor access to digital tools, and regional dialect interference tied at eighth (f = 6 each).

**Table 3.** Gaps and Issues Encountered by Teachers in Using Reading Strategies

Gaps and Issues	Frequency	Rank
Learners' lack of motivation to read	16	1.5
Limited parental support	16	1.5
Low vocabulary and decoding skills	15	3
Lack of time to implement strategies	13	4
Insufficient age-appropriate reading materials	11	5
Large class size	10	6
Limited teacher training on reading instruction	6	8
Poor access to digital reading tools	6	8
Regional dialect interference in comprehension	6	8

These results underscore that challenges span learner disposition, home environment, and systemic conditions. The emphasis on motivation and parental involvement supports Hall's (2023) meta-analytic review showing that home literacy practices significantly impact reading growth. The prevalence of foundational skill deficits is consistent with the Matthew Effect (Stanovich, 1986), while structural barriers such as inadequate time, limited materials, and large classes reflect well-documented limitations in Philippine public schools (Rice, 2024; David et al., 2019).

### ***E. Developed Learning Action Cell (LAC) Session Guides as Professional Development for Improving Learners' Comprehension***

This study's collective findings indicate a clear necessity for an organized and school-based professional development program that addresses both the instructional barriers and the contextual barriers identified within this study. A Learning Action Cell (LAC)-structured program with five session guides outlining structured sessions were created to enhance teacher knowledge by demonstrating practical classroom strategies to provide opportunities for collaborative planning to achieve long-term instructional change while aligning with research identified as significant contributors to effective literacy professional development (i.e., incremental skill acquisition, assessment-strategy alignment, local feasibility solutions to resource and schedule limitations) (Hudson et al., 2023; Rice et al., 2024). The session guides are intended to support five goals: enhancing teachers' conceptual understanding of

reading comprehension; enhancing teachers' ability to apply modeled instructional practices into their own instruction using adaptations based on grade level; increasing teachers' capacity to create aligned formative and summative assessments; developing collaborative inquiry and co-create solutions to address issues including but not limited to, large class sizes, lack of resources/materials, and decreased student motivation; and establishing district-wide monitoring routines to ensure sustainable practice.

### **IV. CONCLUSION**

The study examined the effects of reading strategies used by teachers on learners' reading comprehension in two Sorsogon City public elementary schools. Findings showed teachers using diverse evidence-based practices, with guided reading, read-aloud with discussion, and independent reading most widely used. Teachers implemented differentiated instruction, scaffolding, multimodal resources, bilingual support, and ongoing assessment—practices congruent with constructivist and metacognitive perspectives on comprehension.

All strategies were rated effective, with vocabulary-based strategies scoring highest. Despite near-universal use, guided reading received the lowest rating, revealing a gap between frequency of use and implementation quality that professional development can address. Key barriers included learner motivation, parental support, foundational literacy gaps, time constraints, limited materials, and large class sizes.

A LAC-based professional development program of five structured sessions guides was proposed to deepen teachers' understanding of comprehension strategies, build practical instructional skills through modeling and collaborative inquiry, and develop school-level action plans. Future research should validate these session guides through implementation studies and investigate long-term effects on reading comprehension outcomes.

### REFERENCES

- [1] Abdelhalim, S. M. (2017). Developing EFL students' reading comprehension and reading engagement: Effects of a proposed instructional strategy. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 7(1), 37–48.
- [2] Afflerbach, P., Pearson, P. D., & Paris, S. G. (2018). Clarifying differences between reading skills and reading strategies. *The Reading Teacher*, 61(5), 364–373.
- [3] Banditvilai, C. (2020). The effectiveness of reading strategies on reading comprehension. *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity*, 10(2), 46–50.
- [4] Brooks, G. (2024). What works for children and young people with literacy difficulties (6th ed.). Dyslexia SpLD Trust.
- [5] Cabanilla, R., & Bernardo, A. (2019). Explicit instruction in reading comprehension strategies in multilingual classrooms. *Philippine Journal of Language Education*, 5(1), 45–58.
- [6] Cervetti, G. N., Fitzgerald, M. S., Hiebert, E. H., & Hebert, M. (2023). Vocabulary instruction and reading comprehension: A meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 93(4), 573–616.
- [7] Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- [8] David, M., Garcia, L., & Santos, P. (2019). Teacher preparedness in reading instruction and its impact on learner outcomes. *Asia Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 47(3), 299–312.
- [9] Department of Education (DepEd). (2025). Implementing guidelines of the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program (DepEd Order No. 018, s. 2025). Schools Division of Sorsogon City.
- [10] Duke, N. K., & Pearson, P. D. (2009). Effective practices for developing reading comprehension. *Journal of Education*, 189(1–2), 107–122.
- [11] Duke, N. K., & Pearson, P. D. (2022). Effective practices for developing reading comprehension. In A. E. Farstrup & S. J. Samuels (Eds.), *What research has to say about reading instruction* (3rd ed., pp. 205–242). International Reading Association.
- [12] Fleury, V. P., Dennis, M. S., & Williams, R. (2024). The impact of teacher-led vocabulary instruction on reading comprehension. *Educational Research Review*, 42(1), 102–119.
- [13] Gibbs, A., et al. (2025). Dialogic reading and comprehension development: A systematic review. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 53(1), 45–61.
- [14] Hall, J. (2023). Parental involvement and literacy outcomes: A meta-analytic review. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 64(1), 1–15.
- [15] Hudson, A., Laird, M., & Spencer, K. (2023). Sustaining teacher professional learning through collaborative coaching. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 127(1), 104–115.
- [16] Macahilig, H. (2022). Philippines PISA 2022 results analysis. *Philippine Educational Research Forum*.
- [17] Paris, S. G., & Winograd, P. (1990). How metacognition can promote academic learning and instruction. In B. F. Jones & L. Idol (Eds.), *Dimensions of thinking and cognitive instruction* (pp. 15–51). Erlbaum.
- [18] Ramsa, A. (2021). Guided reading in practice: A systematic review of effectiveness and implementation fidelity. *Literacy*, 55(3), 165–175.
- [19] Rice, M. (2024). Systemic constraints on reading strategy implementation in elementary schools. *Journal of Educational Research*, 117(2), 78–91.
- [20] Rice, M., Lambright, K., & Wijekumar, K. (2024). Practice-based professional development in reading: A collaborative coaching model. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 59(1), 44–63.
- [21] Shanahan, T. (2024). The limitations of guided reading: A practitioner perspective. *The Reading Teacher*, 77(1), 5–12.
- [22] Stanovich, K. E. (1986). Matthew effects in reading: Some consequences of individual differences in the acquisition of literacy. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 21(4), 360–407.
- [23] Vega, C. (2025). Bilingual scaffolding and reading comprehension: Evidence from multilingual classrooms in Southeast Asia. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 28(2), 201–218.
- [24] World Bank. (2022). *Learning poverty data update 2022*. World Bank Group.