

Reading to Understand, Reading to Form: Comprehension Strategies and Academic Performance in Catholic Secondary Education

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Article History <i>Received: 31-03-2026</i> <i>Accepted: 18-06-2026</i> <i>Publish: 30-06-2026</i> Keywords: <i>Reading Comprehension; Metacognitive Strategies; Academic Performance; Socio- Religious Literacy; Faith- Based Education; Systems Thinking</i>	Abstract: The Philippines ranked 76th in reading literacy with an average score of 347 in the 2022 PISA assessment, significantly below the OECD average of 476, highlighting a persistent literacy gap. This action research examines the relationship between three explicitly taught reading comprehension strategies, predicting, summarizing, and questioning, and the academic performance of 10th-grade students in a Catholic secondary school. Employing a quantitative one-group design with 50 convenience-sampled students, the study found that questioning was rated the most effective strategy by 82% of respondents, followed by summarizing and predicting, all contributing to increased student confidence and classroom engagement. Interpreted through Vygotskian, Freirean, and Bronfenbrenner theoretical lenses, the teaching of these strategies is understood as a nested socio-religious literacy ecology that reinforces faith-based community learning practices. Nevertheless, given the small sample size, reliance on self-reported data, and absence of a control group.
Kata Kunci: <i>Pemahaman Membaca; Strategi Metakognitif; Prestasi Akademik; Literasi Sosio-Agama; Pendidikan Berbasis Iman; Pemikiran Sistem</i>	Abstrak: Filipina menempati peringkat ke-76 dengan skor rata-rata membaca 347 dalam PISA 2022, jauh di bawah rata-rata OECD 476, menandakan kesenjangan literasi yang signifikan. Penelitian aksi ini mengkaji hubungan antara tiga strategi pemahaman membaca prediksi, merangkum, dan mempertanyakan dengan prestasi akademik siswa kelas 10 di sekolah menengah Katolik. Melalui pendekatan kuantitatif satu kelompok dengan 50 responden, ditemukan bahwa strategi mempertanyakan dinilai paling efektif (82%), diikuti merangkum dan memprediksi, yang membantu meningkatkan kepercayaan diri dan keterlibatan siswa. Dengan kerangka konseptual dari perspektif Vygotsky, Freire, dan Bronfenbrenner, pengajaran strategi ini dipahami sebagai ekosistem sosial-agama yang memperkuat praktik pembelajaran berbasis komunitas iman.



INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is widely regarded as the foundation of formal education, since virtually every academic task presupposes the ability to construct meaning from text (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). Yet in many systems a substantial share of secondary-school learners cannot reliably understand grade-level material, and the Philippines is a stark case in point. National coverage of the 2022 PISA results reported that Filipino learners again ranked among the lowest globally in reading, mathematics, and science, with only a minority reaching baseline proficiency ([The Philippine Star, 2023](#)); ([Philippine Daily Inquirer, 2023](#)).

The country recorded a mean reading score of 347 roughly 120 points, or several years of schooling, behind the international average and education officials described the outcome as evidence that learners were five to six years behind expected competencies ([OneNews.PH, 2023](#)); ([GMA News Online, 2023](#)). Commentators framed the results as an “uncomfortable truth” that should “jolt” stakeholders into coordinated action ([Manila Bulletin, 2023](#)); ([Rappler, 2023](#)). It is against this national backdrop that pre-service teachers at a faith-based college undertook the present inquiry.

The philosopher-statesman Edmund Burke’s aphorism that “reading without reflecting is like eating without digesting” captures the study’s premise: decoding words is not the same as comprehending meaning. Comprehension is not automatic; it must be actively constructed by readers who deploy appropriate strategies to interrogate a text ([Freire, 2005](#)). Skilled readers are metacognitively aware they monitor their understanding, notice breakdowns, and repair them whereas struggling readers often attend to words rather than sense ([Pressley, 2002](#)). Reading-comprehension strategies are the deliberate, teachable procedures through which this invisible work is made visible and actionable; as Serravallo (2015) argues, strategies break an as-yet-unautomatic process into repeatable, step-by-step moves ([Serravallo, 2015](#)).

This study deliberately situates comprehension within a socio-religious framing rather than treating it as a purely intra-individual cognitive skill. Two complementary traditions support this move. First, the New Literacy Studies argue for an “ideological” model in which literacy is a social practice embedded in cultural and value-laden contexts, not a neutral, autonomous skill set ([Street, 1984](#)); ([Gee, 2015](#)).

Reading is always reading of something, by someone, for purposes that a community recognizes as meaningful. Second, a substantial body of scholarship documents how faith communities have historically been engines of literacy, cultivating distinctive reading identities and practices in their schools ([Rosowsky, 2013](#)). In a Catholic institution such as Holy Rosary College Foundation, reading is entangled with formation the cultivation of character, reflection, and moral imagination so that comprehension serves not only examinations but also the broader ends of values education ([Lickona, 1991](#)).

Read this way, a strategy such as questioning is more than a cognitive routine: it is a disposition of inquiry that a formative community can nurture. Freire’s insistence that

reading the word is inseparable from reading the world implies that comprehension is simultaneously intellectual and ethical, an act through which learners position themselves in relation to knowledge and to one another (Freire, 2005). The socio-religious lens therefore does not distort the data; it clarifies why perceived gains in confidence, vocabulary, imagination, and willingness to participate reported below matter beyond test scores.

The three focal strategies predicting, summarizing, and questioning are core components of reciprocal teaching, the dialogic method introduced by Palincsar and Brown, in which teacher and students take turns leading conversation around a text using comprehension-fostering moves (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). Predicting invites learners to use textual clues and prior knowledge to anticipate what follows, and to confirm or revise those expectations as the text unfolds; it keeps readers thinking ahead. Summarizing requires readers to recall main ideas, sequence them, paraphrase in their own words, and select the most important points, yielding a more concise grasp of the whole. Questioning trains readers to generate and pursue their own questions, clarifying meaning and monitoring comprehension as they read. Decades of evidence, including the National Reading Panel synthesis, identify these strategies as effective and generalizable (National Reading Panel, 2000), and recent studies continue to confirm positive effects on comprehension for diverse learners (Juhkam et al., 2023); (O'Hare et al., 2023); (Khan et al., 2025).

A parallel literature on metacognitive reading strategies links strategy awareness and use to reading-comprehension achievement and, more broadly, to academic performance (Khurram, 2023); (Köse & Güneş, 2021); (Kim & Anderson, 2023). In the Philippine context specifically, recent quantitative and mixed-methods studies report significant comprehension gains and affective benefits confidence, engagement, and self-efficacy when metacognitive strategies are taught explicitly (Batac, 2024); (Jugas, 2024); (Daniswara et al., 2025). These affective outcomes connect strategy instruction to the well-established reading-engagement model, in which self-efficacy and motivation drive engaged reading, which in turn predicts achievement (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000); (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997); (Toste et al., 2020).

Three interlocking theories anchor the study's interpretation of its data. The first is Vygotsky's sociocultural account of learning, in which higher mental functions develop first between people and only later within the individual; the zone of proximal development names the distance between what a learner can do alone and what the same learner can accomplish with guidance from a more capable other (Vygotsky, 1978). On this view, comprehension strategies are not private tricks but socially transmitted tools that are appropriated through dialogue and scaffolded practice precisely the mechanism that reciprocal teaching operationalizes through its gradual release of responsibility (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). The second is Freire's critical-literacy tradition, which insists that reading the word and reading the world are inseparable, and that genuine literacy is dialogic, question-driven, and oriented toward the learner's active positioning in relation to knowledge rather than the passive reception of it (Freire, 2005). Together these

traditions reframe strategy instruction as a fundamentally relational and value-laden activity rather than a mechanical skill-drill.

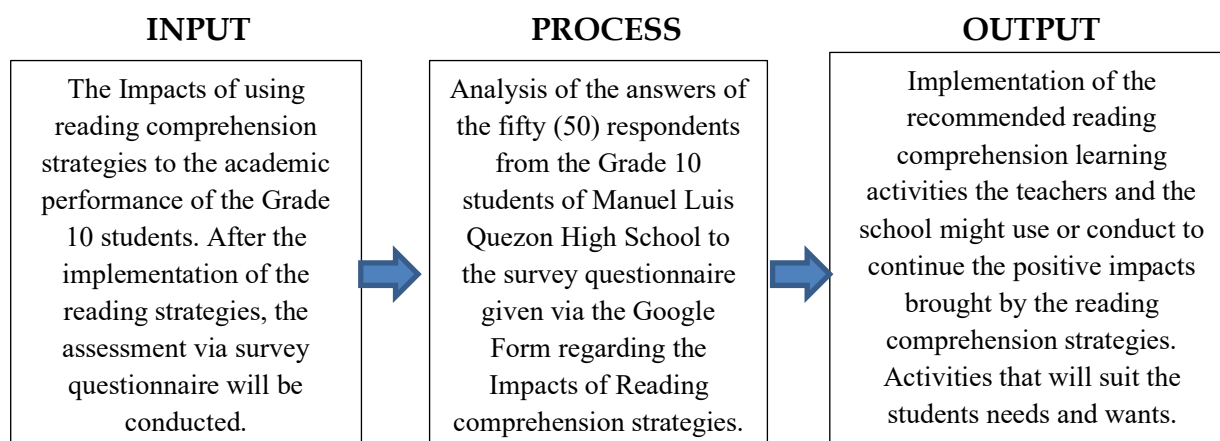
The third theory Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems model supplies the study's organizing architecture and its novelty. It locates human development within nested contexts ranging from the immediate microsystem of face-to-face interaction, through the mesosystem of relationships among settings, to the exosystem of institutional structures and the macrosystem of cultural values, all unfolding across a chronosystem of time (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Recent methodological reviews confirm the model's continuing utility for analyzing layered educational phenomena across cultures and disciplines (Tong & An, 2024); (Nolan & Owen, 2024). Read alongside the reading-engagement model in which motivation and self-efficacy fuel engaged reading that predicts comprehension and achievement (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000); (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997) this ecological lens allows the study to treat learners' affective and cognitive reports not as a scatter of separate effects but as coupled elements of a single developmental system.

The purpose of this action research was to evaluate how the three reading-comprehension strategies observed and used during the researchers' internship related to the academic performance of Grade 10 learners, and to derive practical, evidence-informed recommendations for teachers and the school. Specifically, the study addressed three questions: (1) Which strategy do learners perceive as most effective, and do they find the strategies useful and convenient for understanding and analyzing reading selections? (2) What are the perceived impacts of the strategies on students' academic performance? (3) What reading-comprehension learning activities might teachers and the school adopt to sustain any positive impacts? By answering these questions within a faith-based setting, the study also asks a conceptual question: how might comprehension strategies be understood as part of a wider socio-religious literacy ecology rather than as isolated classroom techniques?

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative, single-group, descriptive action-research design conducted at Manuel Luis Quezon High School in North Caloocan City during School Year 2023–2024. Action research was appropriate because the researchers were pre-service teachers investigating their own practice in situ during a 300-hour internship, seeking usable knowledge to improve reading instruction rather than to establish causal generalization. The design is descriptive in that it characterizes learners' perceptions of strategy effectiveness and impact using summary statistics, and single-group in that all participants experienced the same strategy-rich instruction without a comparison condition. Ethical access was secured by first obtaining permission from cooperating teachers to implement the strategies in regular class discussion, after which the survey instrument was administered anonymously to protect objectivity and privacy.

Fifty (50) Grade 10 students served as participants. They were selected through convenience sampling: the researchers recruited the learners in the classes to which they were assigned during the internship, a pragmatic choice dictated by placement and access. This non-probability approach bounds the study's external validity, and results are therefore interpreted as formative and context-specific rather than representative of the school or the wider Grade 10 population. No identifying information was collected, and participation was voluntary; anonymity was preserved throughout data handling.



Over the internship, the three focal reciprocal-teaching strategies predicting, summarizing, and questioning were embedded in routine English lessons through modelled demonstration, guided practice, and individual and group activities, consistent with the gradual-release logic of reciprocal teaching (Palincsar & Brown, 1984).

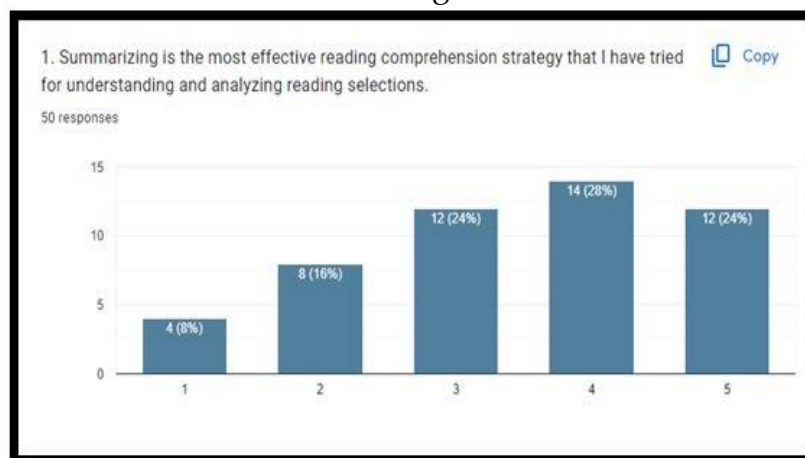
Items were grouped to address the three research questions: perceived effectiveness, usefulness, and convenience of the strategies (Q1–Q5); perceived impact on academic performance and its correlates such as motivation, confidence, vocabulary, and imagination (Q6–Q10); and preferred reading-comprehension learning activities (Q11–Q15). The instrument was reviewed and approved by the researchers' supervising instructor prior to administration; because it was locally developed, its psychometric properties were not formally validated, which is acknowledged as a limitation.

The questionnaire was delivered online through Google Forms, which learners accessed on their own devices; anonymous administration was intended to reduce social-desirability pressure. Responses were tabulated by item, converted to frequencies and percentages, and summarized using the weighted mean, computed as the sum of the products of each response frequency and its assigned scale point divided by the total number of respondents (Brophy, 1981). Weighted means were mapped to verbal interpretations on the Likert continuum (e.g., "Agree," "Neutral") to characterize the central tendency of perceptions for each item. Because the design is descriptive, no inferential hypothesis tests were conducted; the analysis reports patterns of agreement rather than statistical effects, and comparisons among strategies are made on the basis of aggregated agreement and item-level weighted means.

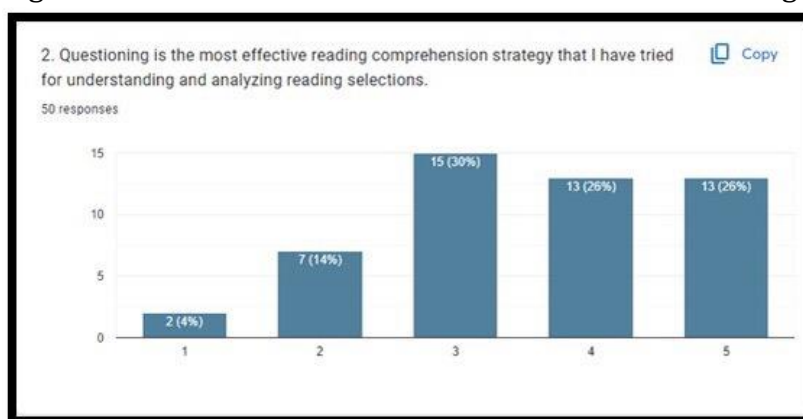
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Perceived effectiveness, usefulness, and convenience

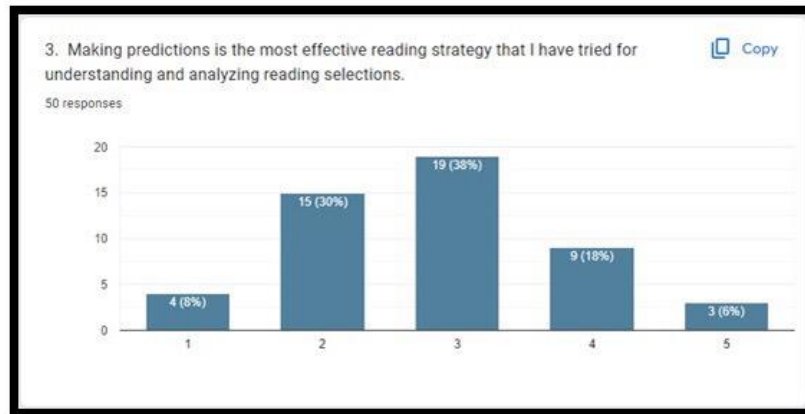
Graph 1: Effectivity, Usefulness, and Convenience of using reading comprehension strategies



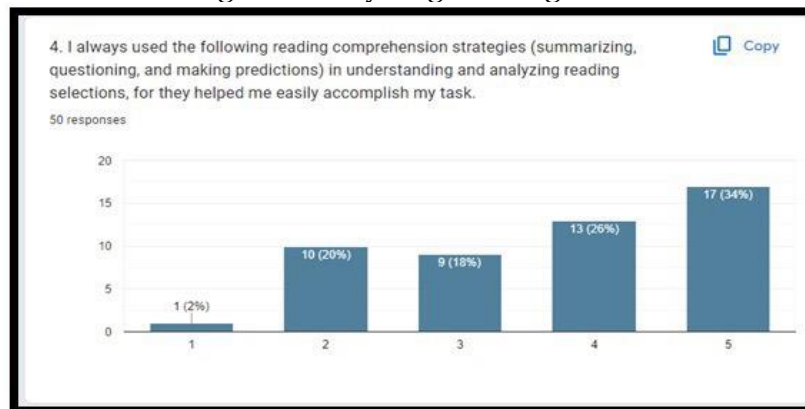
Learners rated all three strategies positively for understanding and analyzing reading selections. Aggregating the top three agreement categories, questioning emerged as the most effective strategy, endorsed by 41 of 50 respondents (82%), followed by summarizing (approximately 76%) and predicting (approximately 62%). A clear majority also affirmed that they habitually used the strategies to complete tasks and clarify texts, and that the strategies were, on balance, useful and convenient to apply in class. Item-level weighted means for this cluster ranged from neutral to agree (Graph 1), with the strongest endorsement for statements about routine use and general usefulness.



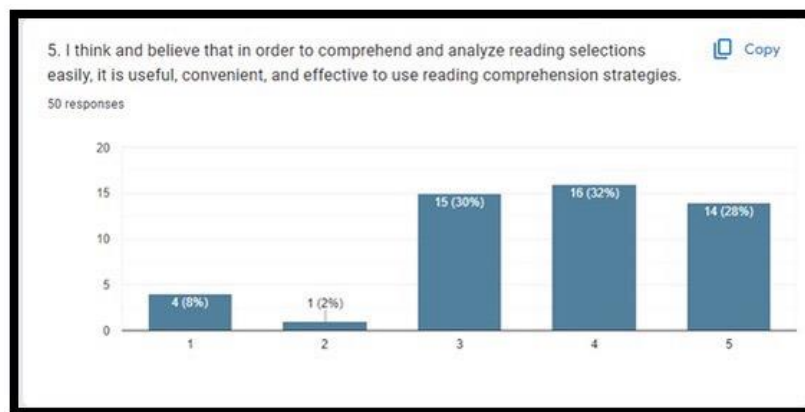
Graph 2 shows that 26% of the respondents, which is equivalent to 13 students out of 50 answers, very strongly agree, while 26% of the respondents, which is equivalent to 13 students, strongly agree, 30% of the respondents, which is equivalent to 15 students, agree, 14% of the respondents, which is equivalent to 7 students, moderately agree, and lastly, 4% of the respondents, which is equivalent to 2 students, least agree, and this data shows that the reading comprehension strategy, which is questioning, is effective for understanding and analyzing reading selections.



Graph 3 shows that 6% of the respondents, which is equivalent to 3 students out of 50 answers, very strongly agree, 18% of the respondents, which is equivalent to 9 students, strongly agree, 38% of the respondents, which is equivalent to 19 students, agree, 30% of the respondents, which is equivalent to 15 students, moderately agree, and lastly, 8% of the respondents, which is equivalent to 4 students, least agree, and this data shows that making predictions, which is a reading comprehension strategy, is effective for understanding and analyzing reading selection.



Graph 4 shows that 34% of the respondents, which is equivalent to 17 students out of 50, answered Very Strongly Agree, while 26% of the respondents, which is equivalent to 13 students, answered Strongly Agree, and 19% of the respondents, which is equivalent to 9 students, answer Agree and 2% of the respondents, which is equivalent to 1 student answering Least Agree, which means and shows that respondents of the study, who are also the students who are part of the implementation of the strategies, always used the reading comprehension strategies, which are summarizing, questioning, and making predictions, because it helps them to easily finish their task and to understand clearly the reading selections given at hand.



Graph 5 shows that 28% of the respondents, which is equivalent to 14 students out of 50, answer Very Strongly Agree, while 32% of the respondents, which is equivalent to 16 students, answer Strongly Agree, 30% of the respondents, which is equivalent to 15 students, answer Agree, 2% of the respondents, which is equivalent to 1 student, answer Moderately Agree, and 8% of the respondents, which is equivalent to 4 students, answer Least Agree. This data shows that most of the respondents believe that it is useful, convenient, and effective to use reading comprehension strategies (summarizing, questioning, and making predictions) to easily comprehend and analyze reading selections.

These perceptions align with the wider evidence base. Questioning's prominence is consistent with reciprocal-teaching research, in which self-questioning is among the most powerful comprehension-monitoring moves because it compels readers to interrogate the text and track their own understanding (Palincsar & Brown, 1984); (Juhkam et al., 2023). That learners rated predicting somewhat lower is unsurprising: prediction is generative and tolerates uncertainty, and novice readers sometimes find open-ended anticipation less immediately "useful" than the closure offered by summarizing. Read through the socio-religious lens, the salience of questioning is notable, since a formative community that prizes inquiry and reflection provides fertile ground for a questioning disposition to take root (Freire, 2005); (Rosowsky, 2013).

The comparatively even endorsement of usefulness and convenience across the three strategies is itself instructive: it suggests that, once modelled and practised, the strategies imposed little perceived burden and could be absorbed into learners' ordinary routines a precondition for the durable, habitual use that comprehension research identifies as the goal of strategy instruction (Pressley, 2002); (Köse & Güneş, 2021) (Kim & Anderson, 2023).

Perceived impact on academic performance

On the second cluster of items, most learners reported that teacher-taught strategies improved their reading comprehension and that this improvement supported their academic work. A majority indicated feeling more motivated to participate in discussion because they knew how to deploy the strategies, and more confident in answering questions about reading materials. Learners also linked strategy use to

enhanced vocabulary attributing better handling of unfamiliar words to their reading routines and to a strengthened capacity to imagine the stories and selections they read, which they associated with greater creativity in producing outputs. The highest weighted mean in the study (4.2, "Agree") fell within this cluster, underscoring the perceived academic value of the strategies.

These self-reports are coherent with theory and evidence connecting strategy use, engagement, and achievement. The reading-engagement model holds that self-efficacy and motivation fuel engaged reading, which predicts comprehension and downstream achievement (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000); (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997), and meta-analytic work confirms a reliable motivation–achievement link in reading (Toste et al., 2020). Confidence gains map onto self-efficacy, a well-documented driver of persistence and cognitive engagement (Bandura & Schunk, 1981); (Greene et al., 2004), while the reported willingness to participate reflects the relational dimension of engagement, in which supportive teacher–student relationships raise classroom involvement (Furrer & Skinner, 2003). Philippine and international studies of metacognitive strategy instruction similarly report paired cognitive and affective benefits (Batac, 2024); (Khurram, 2023); (Daniswara et al., 2025).

The prominence of “imagination” in learners’ accounts is especially resonant with a faith-based reading tradition, where imaginative engagement with text is valued as a pathway to meaning and formation (Rosowsky, 2013); (Gee, 2015). The vocabulary gains learners reported are equally coherent with the wider evidence base, since strategy-rich reading exposes learners to more words in more meaningful contexts and, reciprocally, richer vocabulary deepens comprehension a mutually reinforcing relationship that motivation for reading is known to strengthen (Baker & Wigfield, 1999). Taken together, the affective and cognitive gains learners attributed to the strategies form a recognizable constellation comprehension, confidence, motivation, vocabulary, and participation that the engagement literature treats not as independent outcomes but as reciprocally supportive facets of the same engaged-reading process, a reading that the study’s framework makes explicit.

Preferred learning activities to sustain impact

For the third cluster, learners endorsed several mechanisms for sustaining gains: weekly assessment of reading-comprehension skills through activity sheets; daily application of the strategies inside the classroom; teacher use of the strategies during discussion to model and encourage participation; willingness to join a school reading program; and continuous assessment and feedback on strategy use to improve performance over time. The continuous-feedback item drew strong agreement, indicating that learners themselves intuit the value of iterative, formative cycles rather than one-off instruction.

This endorsement of sustained, feedback-rich practice is well supported. Strategy development is gradual and depends on repeated, scaffolded practice across contexts rather than single-shot teaching, consistent with Vygotsky’s account of learning within

the zone of proximal development, where competence built with support is progressively internalized (Vygotsky, 1978); (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). Reciprocal teaching itself operationalizes this principle through gradual release of responsibility, and dialogic, picture-supported variants have been shown to raise learning motivation (Chen et al., 2023). Learners' appetite for continuous feedback also aligns with self-regulated-learning research linking feedback and monitoring to achievement (Ha et al., 2023). Institutionally, embedding weekly activities and a whole-school reading program locates strategy use in the school's exosystem a point developed in the framework below.

Learners' stated willingness to join a school reading program and to have teachers model strategies during discussion is significant beyond its practical value: it signals that they perceive reading improvement as a shared, communal project rather than a solitary burden, which is precisely the relational orientation that supportive classroom climates and caring teacher–student relationships are known to foster (Furrer & Skinner, 2003); (Brophy, 1981). In a faith-based setting this communal framing carries additional weight, aligning the mechanics of comprehension instruction with the institution's formative mission of cultivating character, responsibility, and shared purpose (Lickona, 1991). The learners' own prescriptions thus converge with the study's central claim that sustainable reading improvement is an ecological achievement, distributed across classroom, relationship, program, and community rather than lodged in any single lesson.

**Table 1. Item-level weighted means and verbal interpretation
(five-point Likert scale; n = 50).**

Item	Weighted mean	Interpretation
Q1	3.44	Agree
Q2	3.46	Agree
Q3	2.84	Neutral
Q4	3.70	Agree
Q5	3.70	Agree
Q6	3.90	Agree
Q7	3.38	Neutral
Q8	3.36	Neutral
Q9	3.68	Agree
Q10	4.20	Agree
Q11	3.42	Agree
Q12	3.56	Agree
Q13	3.42	Agree
Q14	2.82	Neutral
Q15	3.74	Agree

Interpretation bands follow the study's Likert continuum. The overall pattern is one of consistent agreement, with three neutral items (Q3, Q7–Q8, Q14) concentrated on the more demanding or open-ended prompts.

Table 2. Comparative analysis of the three reading-comprehension strategies.

Strategy	Core (meta)cognitive process	Learner-reported benefit	Perceived effectiveness	Socio-religious literacy function
Questioning	Generating questions; monitoring comprehension	Confidence; active participation	Highest (≈82%)	Cultivates a disposition of inquiry and reflection
Summarizing	Selecting main ideas; paraphrasing; sequencing	Concise understanding; vocabulary	High (≈76%)	Trains discernment of what is essential
Predicting	Anticipating; activating prior knowledge; revising	Imagination; forward thinking	Moderate (≈62%)	Nurtures moral and narrative imagination

Perceived-effectiveness percentages aggregate the top three agreement categories reported in the survey and should be read as learner perceptions, not objective effect sizes.

Table 3. Present findings compared with convergent evidence in the literature.

Dimension	Present study (MLQ HS, n = 50)	Convergent literature
Comprehension gains	Learners perceive improved comprehension and text analysis	Reciprocal teaching improves comprehension
Most effective move	Questioning rated highest by learners	Self-questioning central to monitoring
Affective benefits	Confidence, motivation, participation reported	Self-efficacy and engagement predict achievement
Sustainability	Learners want weekly practice and feedback	Gradual, scaffolded practice within the ZPD

Several limitations qualify these findings. The small convenience sample from a single school precludes generalization; the outcomes are perceptions collected by self-report rather than objective comprehension or grade data; the locally constructed instrument was not formally validated; and the single-group design without a control condition cannot isolate the strategies' causal contribution. Social-desirability and novelty effects may also inflate positive ratings. These constraints are consistent with the study's action-research purpose improving local practice but they mean the results are best treated as hypotheses for larger, controlled, and mixed-methods investigations.

The study's principal conceptual contribution is to re-read comprehension-strategy instruction as a nested socio-religious literacy ecology rather than as a set of standalone techniques. Integrating Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory with the logic of systems thinking, the framework in Figure 1 positions the Grade 10 reader at the center of concentric contexts that jointly shape strategy use (Bronfenbrenner, 1979); (Tong & An, 2024); (Nolan & Owen, 2024). In the microsystem sit the three strategies themselves predicting, summarizing, questioning. The mesosystem comprises teacher–peer dialogue and scaffolded practice; the exosystem encompasses school reading programs, interactive learning activity sheets, and weekly assessment; and the macrosystem carries the faith-based values, reading culture, and formative aims of the institution. A chronosystem of continuous feedback over time cuts across all layers.

The framework's systems-thinking component makes explicit a reinforcing feedback loop: comprehension builds confidence and vocabulary, which raise engagement and motivation, which lift academic performance, which in turn strengthens reading identity and habit feeding back into still deeper comprehension (Meadows, 2008). This loop reframes the survey's scattered affective findings as coupled elements of one self-amplifying process rather than as separate effects. The novelty is thus twofold: substantively, it links classroom strategy, school structure, and religious formation in a single model; and methodologically, it offers educators a diagnostic map for locating where a reading intervention may stall at the level of the individual reader, the classroom relationship, the school program, or the community's values and where feedback should be inserted to sustain gains.

Operationally, the framework functions as a diagnostic and design tool rather than a merely descriptive picture. Read as a diagnostic, it invites educators to ask, when a reading intervention underperforms, at which layer the breakdown lies: whether learners lack the microsystem-level strategies themselves, whether the mesosystem of teacher–peer dialogue offers too little scaffolding, whether the exosystem provides no structured time or assessment for reading, or whether the macrosystem's culture and values fail to signal that reading matters.

Read as a design tool, it identifies the leverage points at which feedback should be inserted to keep the reinforcing loop turning modelling and guided practice in the classroom, dialogic questioning between peers, weekly low-stakes assessment at the program level, and an explicit whole-school reading culture that ties comprehension to formation. In this study the learners' own recommendations weekly practice, teacher modelling, a school reading program, and continuous feedback map cleanly onto these successive layers, which is itself modest evidence that the framework captures the structure of the phenomenon it aims to describe. By making the layers and their couplings explicit, the model offers faith-based and public schools alike a shared language for coordinating reading improvement across the many settings in which learning actually occurs (Tong & An, 2024).

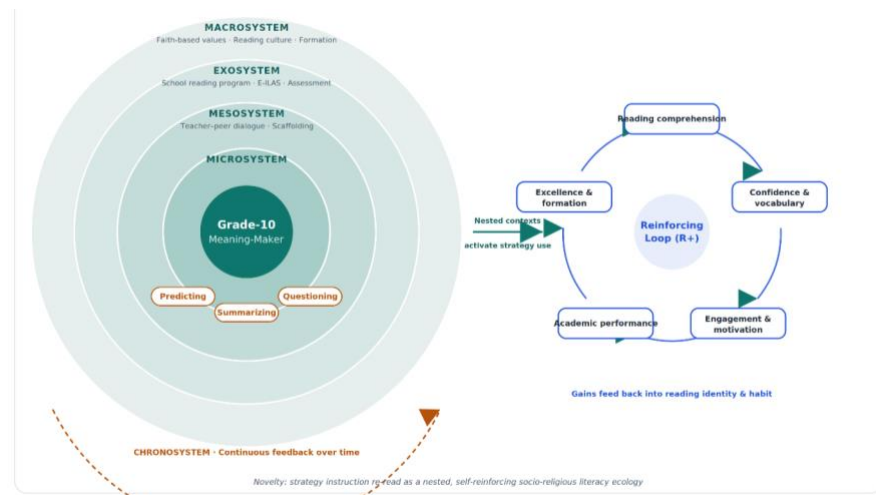


Figure 1. A Reading-Ecosystem and Systems-Thinking Framework: comprehension strategies as nested, self-reinforcing socio-religious literacy practice.

Four practice recommendations follow from the findings. First, teachers should integrate predicting, summarizing, and questioning routinely across English lessons regardless of topic, using explicit modelling and gradual release so that strategy use becomes habitual rather than occasional (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). Second, the school should institute weekly, low-stakes comprehension activities such as electronic interactive learning activity sheets (E-ILAS) paired with continuous, formative feedback, in line with learners' own expressed preference and with evidence on scaffolded practice (Vygotsky, 1978). Third, teacher-facing capacity building is warranted: brief workshops that familiarize the English department with strategy instruction and its cross-subject transfer would strengthen the mesosystem in which learning occurs. Fourth, the school should convene a whole-school reading program that connects classroom strategy, assessment, and the institution's formative mission, thereby operationalizing the ecological framework and providing structured opportunities for learners to demonstrate growth. Assistive tools text-to-speech and summarization applications may support access for diverse learners but should complement, not replace, dialogic strategy instruction. Together these measures aim to convert isolated classroom gains into a durable, self-reinforcing reading culture.

CONCLUSION

Consistent with its aim of evaluating how predicting, summarizing, and questioning relate to Grade 10 learners' academic performance in a faith-based school, this action research found that learners perceived all three reading-comprehension strategies as effective, useful, and convenient, with questioning judged the most effective, and that they associated strategy use with improved comprehension, confidence, motivation, vocabulary, imagination, and classroom participation qualities they linked to better academic work and expressed a wish to sustain through weekly practice and continuous feedback. Interpreted through Vygotskian, Freirean, and Bronfenbrennerian lenses, these perceptions indicate that comprehension strategies are most productively

understood not as isolated techniques but as elements of a nested, self-reinforcing socio-religious literacy ecology that connects classroom practice, teacher–peer dialogue, school programming, and the formative values of the learning community, as captured in the study’s Reading-Ecosystem and Systems-Thinking Framework. Given the small convenience sample, reliance on self-reported perceptions, an unvalidated instrument, and the absence of a control group, these conclusions are formative rather than confirmatory; they establish plausibility and direction rather than causal proof. Even so, the findings offer a coherent, theory-informed rationale for embedding explicit, dialogic strategy instruction within a whole-school reading culture and for treating character formation and comprehension as mutually reinforcing rather than competing goals. Future research should test the framework with larger probability samples, objective comprehension and achievement measures, validated instruments, and controlled or mixed-methods designs, so that a promising local practice may be evaluated as a transferable model for reading improvement in faith-based and public schools alike.

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