

Explicating the Metacognitive Reading Awareness of Pupils in Private Schools: A Quan-Qual Approach

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of metacognitive reading awareness among pupils in private schools. It sought to explore the lived experiences of pupils in developing and applying their metacognitive reading awareness. This study is a mixed method design, utilizing parallel convergent approach. The participants were the Grade 6 pupils in private schools. There were 63 pupils who were being selected using the complete enumeration technique for quantitative and 14 for the qualitative: seven for in-depth interview and seven for focus group discussion which were purposively selected. Results revealed a high level of metacognitive reading awareness particularly in phonemic awareness, phonics, and vocabulary development. The study underscores the experiences of pupils in developing their metacognitive reading awareness emphasizing the difficulties they face which are experiencing metacognitive reading awareness challenges, improving metacognitive reading awareness through practice, developing reading proficiency through metacognition, strengthening proficiency through vocabulary and metacognition, and empowerment from teachers through guided reading strategies and support. While the quantitative phase revealed that pupils exhibit a high level of metacognitive reading awareness, the quantitative data disconfirms it by highlighting the difficulties that pupils face in applying their metacognitive reading awareness. The findings from both the qualitative and quantitative phase diverged, implying that there is a need for ongoing, supportive reading instruction that bridges knowledge and practical use. Educators must provide authentic reading experience for learners that will allow them to actively practice and develop their metacognitive reading awareness.

Keywords: Metacognitive Reading Awareness; Grade 6 Pupils; Mixed Method; Private Schools; Philippines

INTRODUCTION

In the pursuit of enhancing the reading abilities of learners, the idea of metacognitive reading awareness has come out to equip learners with the skill to achieve an effective reading experience. With this, metacognitive reading awareness can be defined as the readers' ability to track their own thinking process while doing the reading. Through this, the reader can be able to utilize strategies in the process that are crucial for them to understand what they are reading and eventually become a good reader (Dardjito, 2019). However, due to the differences in learners' proficiency level, gender and educational background, difference in their level of reading awareness may also vary from one another. One of the issues is that low-ability learners are noted to have struggled in tracking their own reading capacities that led to challenges in engaging with text on a deeper level (Do & Phan, 2021).

Promoting high literacy for learners is the concern of any educational institutions across the globe, however, many students still struggle in this area. As such, in Hong Kong, a significant number of students still struggle to activate their metacognitive reading awareness effectively while reading. This gap in metacognitive reading awareness was due to lack of awareness in phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension (Teng, 2019). In support to this, many learners in South Korea are found to have received

insufficient phonemic awareness and phonics instruction which hinder their fluency and self-monitoring while reading (Odo, 2021). More so, in China learners showed a persistent deficits in phonological skills, especially phoneme and rhyme awareness. This implies large impact on reading outcomes signifying a large gap in metacognitive reading awareness from phonemic awareness to fluent reading (Jiang et al., 2023).

Similarly, in the Philippines there has been a significant problem in students' metacognitive reading awareness, particularly in their ability to regulate and monitor reading comprehension effectively. The study revealed that many Grade Five pupils at Mindanao State University-Integrated Laboratory School struggled with phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary development, and overall reading comprehension due to a lack of metacognitive awareness. These students demonstrated difficulty in recognizing letter-sound relationships, decoding words efficiently, and understanding vocabulary within context, which negatively impacted their ability to construct meaning from texts. The traditional teaching methods did not sufficiently cultivate metacognitive awareness, leading to poor reading comprehension performance (Acmed-Ismael, 2021).

With this in mind, the current study was conducted as enhancing learners' metacognitive reading awareness is a necessity, particularly among pupils in the elementary level, since not all of them are aware enough of the ways to track their own reading capacities. Considering that they are still in the early stage of education, where the use of higher-order thinking to assess their own abilities is not greatly emphasized, it becomes crucial to foster their awareness in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension. Without a strong foundation in metacognitive reading awareness, students may struggle to develop essential literacy skills, which can hinder their academic progress in higher levels of education. Therefore, studying metacognitive reading awareness is vital to ensuring that young learners are equipped with the necessary skills to regulate their reading processes, enhance comprehension, and become independent, strategic readers.

Research Objectives

This study sought to examine the metacognitive reading awareness of Grade 6 pupils through the lens of a convergent parallel mixed methods approach. Specifically, this sought to answer the following research questions.

What is the level of metacognitive reading awareness of Grade 6 pupils?

What is the lived experiences and insights of pupils in applying and developing their metacognitive reading awareness?

To what extent do the quantitative data corroborate with qualitative data?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Metacognitive Reading Awareness

The phrase "metacognitive reading awareness" refers to learners' ability to recognize and regulate their own reading processes. This involves the use of different techniques to improve one's reading abilities by putting premium on one's awareness and control over their cognitive processes. In simpler terms, this means understanding one's cognitive processes while reading (Tyfekçi, 2023).

The importance of metacognitive reading awareness cannot be underestimated as it extends beyond basic cognitive functions allowing learners to take charge of their reading and eventually their learning by monitoring their reading progress. In addition, researches have revealed that applying metacognitive reading awareness yields positive impact during the reading process, particularly when learners face different problems or challenges while reading a text. Therefore, it is essential to develop the metacognitive reading awareness of the learners, as this will help them effectively address the challenges they face when reading (Ahmed, 2020).

One study was conducted to reveal the use of metacognitive reading awareness among students in comprehending text. This study indicated that students possess varying levels of awareness regarding their

metacognitive reading strategies, noting that there were students who were not able to recognize the importance of metacognitive reading awareness to their reading process while some students were also able to apply this strategy effectively. As a result, this points to the idea that students who possess high level of metacognitive reading strategies have also a high chance of developing their reading comprehension, whereas students with low level of metacognitive reading awareness will also have a low chance of developing understanding (Hossu, 2023).

Similarly, a study was conducted that lays emphasis on the critical role of metacognitive reading awareness in enhancing foundational reading skills. The findings of this study indicated that participants who were taught and actively used metacognitive reading awareness showed a stronger grasp of a reading material along with higher proficiency in reading comprehension. In contrast, those who did not receive a targeted instruction struggled more with understanding what they read. With this, metacognitive reading awareness significantly boosts essential reading skills, making it clear that being aware of and managing one's own thinking during reading can lead to more effective learning (Nahar & Mallik, 2022).

Moreover, it was also revealed that students in Indonesia exhibit moderate level of metacognitive reading awareness. In addition, it was also found that there is a correlation between students' performance and their metacognitive reading awareness. This means low-performing students are less likely to monitor their reading progress compared to the high-performing students. As a result, by increasing students' awareness in foundational reading skills and other strategies, educators can help learners overcome reading difficulties and improve their reading comprehension skills (Zulfadli et al., 2019).

Theoretical Framework

Metacognition Theory. This study is anchored in Flavell's Metacognition Theory (1976), which highlights the individual's ability to monitor, regulate, and evaluate their cognitive processes through conscious awareness and reflection. Flavell described metacognition as "thinking about thinking," encompassing two key components: metacognitive knowledge—awareness of one's cognitive strengths, weaknesses, and the strategies that aid learning—and metacognitive regulation, involving planning, monitoring, and evaluating cognitive activities to enhance understanding and problem-solving. The application of Metacognition Theory has been widely explored in the context of reading comprehension. One study found a significant relationship between students' metacognitive awareness and their understanding of narrative texts, indicating that learners who are more self-aware of their reading processes tend to perform better in comprehension tasks (Rosnaeni, et al., 2020). In support, a study revealed that metacognitive reading strategies were shown to have a positive effect on the comprehension skills of rural EFL learners, reinforcing the theory's emphasis on self-regulation (Pahrizal, 2023). Similarly, it was reported that explicit instruction in metacognitive strategies significantly improved the sustained learning of inferential reading skills among Grade 4 ESL learners in private elementary schools. These studies affirm that metacognitive awareness enhances reading comprehension by enabling learners to become strategic, reflective, and autonomous readers (Furman et al., 2023).

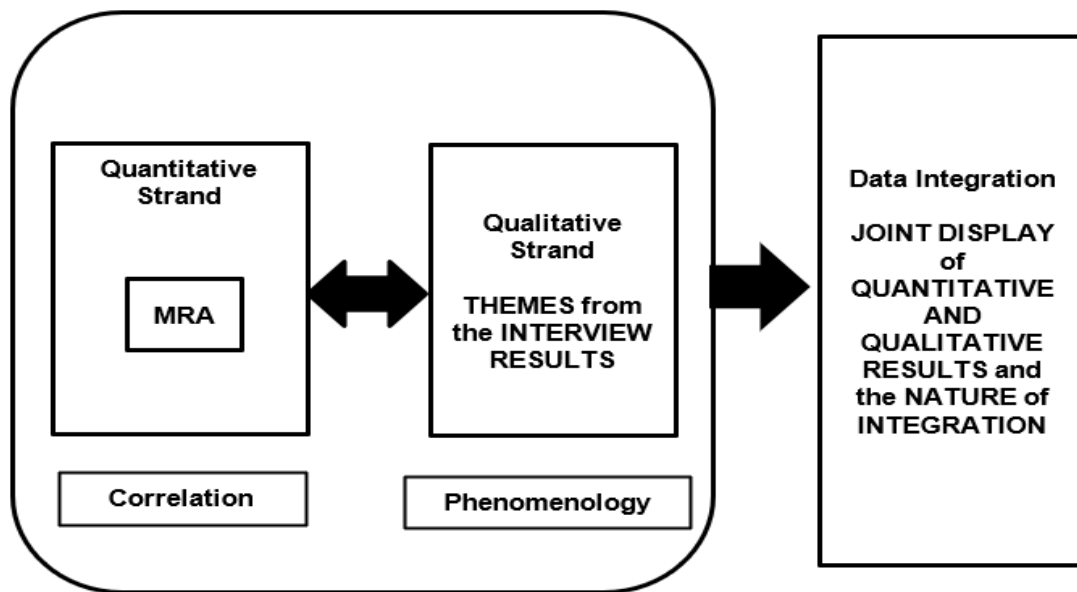
Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of this study. The variable in this study is the metacognitive reading awareness with the following indicators: phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension. Phonemic awareness refers to the ability to recognize the individual sounds or phonemes in spoken words. Phonics refers to the ability to use individual letters or groups of letters to form words. Reading Fluency refers to the ability to read words accurately and smoothly with speed and correct expression. Vocabulary development pertains to a students' knowledge of the meaning of words. And reading comprehension which is all about one's ability to understand and gain meaning from written material.

Definition of Terms

In this section, the concept of metacognitive reading awareness is defined conceptually and operationally to establish a clear understanding of its application in the research context.

Metacognitive Reading Awareness. This refers to one's ability to monitor, and check one's own cognitive activities to maximize reading and learning achievement (Chen et al., 2009). As used in the study, the term refers to phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension.



Adopted from: Dr. Gloria P. Gempes (2023) Editable Templates for Mixed Methods Concepts.

Legend: MRA- Metacognitive Reading Awareness

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

In this study, the convergent parallel approach of mixed methods was utilized. This involves a process where the researcher gathered and analyzed both qualitative and quantitative data, combined its results, and drew conclusion by using a blend of approaches within one study. In this context, "mixing" referred to the combination of these elements to provide a comprehensive understanding of the metacognitive reading awareness of pupils. The integration of qualitative and quantitative approaches at various stages of the study was essential to enhance the overall depth and rigor of the research (Creswell & Plano, 2011).

In addition, the convergent parallel mixed-methods design was used in this study which pertains to the mixing of quantitative and qualitative components simultaneously. This also involves concurrent collection of and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, with the results from both strands being compared and merged during the interpretation phase. described this approach as involving the concurrent collection and analysis of both data types, with results merged or compared during the interpretation phase to provide a well-rounded understanding of the metacognitive reading awareness (Creswell, 2008).

In this study, the method was characterized by the collection and analysis of numerical data to describe and understand the phenomenon of metacognitive reading awareness among Grade 6 pupils in private schools. By utilizing these statistical tools, the study sought to quantify various aspects of pupils' ability to think about and regulate their reading processes, providing a detailed and comprehensive depiction of how pupils approach and manage their understanding of a text. This approach did not only help identify the patterns and relationships within the data, but also offered a deeper exploration into the factors influencing the development and application of metacognitive reading awareness in educational settings.

On the other hand, this study sought to adopt a phenomenological approach for qualitative aspect, rooted in the understanding that truth is multifaceted and subjective, reflecting a perspective that values personal

experiences. The primary methods for gathering qualitative data were focus group discussions and one-on-one in-depth interviews. This approach allowed the researcher to connect with the reading aspects of pupils, uncover the underlying reading practices, and gain a deep, personal understanding of their experiences. Through this approach, the researcher identified key themes, ensuring a rich, human-centered exploration (Lanuza, 2024).

Research Locale

This study was conducted in the private schools in the Municipality of Kapalong. There were various private schools in Kapalong, and the schools which were identified were: the Saint Jude Academy of Mindanao, Incorporated, Maryknoll School of Maniki, Incorporated and the Little Lamb Baptist Christian School of Gabuyan, Incorporated were the identified private schools offering elementary level that were chosen by the researcher to carry the purpose of this study. Furthermore, the private schools identified share the same characteristics in terms of the educational environment and resources. They were also recognized by the Department of Education.

Research Respondents

The participants of this study were selected based on their ability to offer valuable insights and address the research questions effectively (Kuper et al., 2008). Specifically, the focus were the Grade 6 pupils in private schools in Kapalong. These pupils were chosen because they were well-positioned to contribute meaningfully to the understanding of their use of metacognitive reading awareness.

Quantitative Phase

In the quantitative phase, the respondents were Grade 6 pupils from various private schools in Kapalong such as Saint Jude Academy of Mindanao, Incorporated; Maryknoll School of Maniki, Incorporated and Little Lamb Baptist Christian School of Gabuyan, Incorporated. These pupils were enrolled in the school year 2024-2025. The selection of these pupils as respondents was intentional, aligning with the study's focus on metacognitive reading awareness among young learners. The complete enumeration technique was used to identify the sample of population of Grade 6 pupils in private schools, allowing all the Grade 6 pupils enrolled in the school to be the respondents of the study, since the population is not that big. The selection criteria for respondents were as follows: (1) the pupils must be in Grade 6, (2) they must be enrolled in a private school such as Saint Jude Academy of Mindanao, Incorporated, Maryknoll School of Maniki, Incorporated and Little Lamb Baptist Christian School of Gabuyan, Incorporated, (3) they can be male or female or any gender, (4) no age limit shall be required from the respondents as long as they are 6th graders. On the other hand, the exclusion criteria are: (1) the pupils must not be Grade 5 and below, (2) they must not be enrolled in public schools, (3) there is no age limit so long as the student is not in high school level, (4) no age limit so long as the student is not in high school level.

As such, the population of Grade 6 pupils in private schools was identified. To wit, there were 33 Grade 6 pupils in Saint Jude Academy of Mindanao, Incorporated, whereas, there are 15 Grade 6 pupils in Maryknoll School of Maniki, Incorporated, as well as 15 Grade 6 pupils in Little Lamb Baptist Christian School of Gabuyan, Incorporated. To sum up, the total respondents of this study in the quantitative phase was 63 Grade 6 pupils as the population of the said pupils from the three mentioned private schools were be combined.

Qualitative Phase

In qualitative research, a purposeful approach to participant selection was used, which differs from the random sampling techniques common in quantitative studies. For this research, a non-probability sampling method known as purposive sampling was employed. This technique involves intentionally selecting individuals who can provide the most relevant and insightful information related to the research questions. The aim is to enhance the understanding of the phenomenon through investigation by choosing participants who are best suited to contribute a valuable perspectives.

In this study, which focuses on the metacognitive reading awareness of Grade 6 pupils in private schools, 14 Grade 6 pupils were selected to participate in in-depth interview. This total number of participants was composed of 7 pupils for in-depth interview and 7 pupils for focus group discussion. This sample aligns to the recommendation of Cresswell and Creswell (2017) which stresses that 10 to 20 participants is generally sufficient in qualitative research.

In addition, the criteria for selecting the participants were as follows: (1) they must be Grade 6 pupils enrolled in private schools namely, Saint Jude Academy of Mindanao, Incorporated, Maryknoll School of Maniki, Incorporated and Little Lamb Baptist Christian School of Gabuyan, Incorporated; (2) they must be enrolled in the school year 2024-2025; (3) can be male or female or any gender; and (4) no age limit is required as long as the participant is a Grade 6 pupil. On the other hand, the exclusion criteria are: (1) they must not be enrolled in public schools, (2) they must not be Grade 5 and below, (3) there must be no age limit as long as the participants are not in high school level.

Research Instrument

Quantitative Phase

The researcher adopted a survey questionnaire for metacognitive reading awareness from Chen et al. (2009). The said questionnaire employed a Five-point Likert Scale which had the following indicators: phonemic awareness, phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary development and reading comprehension.

In a Five-point Likert Scale, respondents were required to rate and tick one box among one (lowest) to five (highest) in each question. In addition, the Likert Scale was deemed suitable for measuring constructs, attitudes and stimuli that are not readily perceivable by human senses. The adopted questionnaire was also subjected to validation by experts in the field. To easily comprehend and analyze the data, below are the set of parameters for the metacognitive reading awareness.

| Range of Means | Descriptive Level | Interpretation |
|----------------|-------------------|---|
| 4.20-5.00 | Very High | The measure described in the memory retention skill is always observed. |
| 3.40-4.19 | High | The measure described in the memory retention skill is oftentimes manifested. |
| 2.60-3.39 | Moderate | The measure described in the memory retention skill is sometimes manifested. |
| 1.80-2.59 | Low | The measure described in the memory retention skill is rarely manifested. |
| 1.00-1.79 | Very Low | The measure described in the memory retention skill is never manifested. |

Qualitative Phase

In the qualitative phase, the researcher constructed a set of two open-ended questions to gather in-depth insights. These questions were reviewed and validated by a panel of experts who serve as a guide for conducting a comprehensive interview with participants who had completed the survey. From the initial survey of respondents, fourteen pupils were purposively selected for interview. This approach allows for the collection of detailed narratives, experiences and opinions of the pupils.

Data Collection

Quantitative Phase

In the quantitative phase of the study, an adopted questionnaire was utilized to evaluate the level of the metacognitive reading awareness of Grade 6 pupils. This questionnaire was distributed to Grade 6 pupils in a face-to-face mode of survey. To gain access to the respondents' data with regard to their metacognitive reading awareness, compliance with institutional protocols were considered. The researcher submitted a formal letter of request to the school principal, seeking permission to conduct the study in their institution. The collected data was systematically tallied, computed and analyzed to provide a quantitative basis that was contrasted and compared with the qualitative findings. This approach allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the metacognitive reading awareness of Grade 6 pupils, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data.

Qualitative Phase

For qualitative phase, one-on-one interviews was conducted with those who were identified participants to gather their lived experiences regarding their metacognitive reading awareness. An interview guide was used to facilitate this in-depth interview. To ensure the authenticity and relevance of the participants, the researcher invited them through personal contacts. Each participant was informed about the tasks involved and the schedule was arranged to accommodate their convenience. In addition, an in-depth interview was conducted to explore the insights of Grade 6 pupils with regard to their metacognitive reading awareness. This was gathered by considering the use of audio recording.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Data Analysis

In the quantitative data analysis, descriptive analysis, such as the mean, was used to assess the average responses of the respondents. Once collected, the survey data served as the basis for in-depth analysis. After retrieving the questionnaire, the data was tallied and processed accordingly. The survey data were then analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for both descriptive and inferential statistics. These treatments were applied to ascertain the status of metacognitive reading awareness among Grade 6 pupils.

Qualitative Data Analysis

In the qualitative data analysis, the researcher utilized coding and thematic analysis. This involved examination of the patterns and themes that emerged from the participants' statements during the one-on-one and focus group interviews. The themes were developed to analyze the lived experiences of Grade 6 pupils with regard to their use of metacognitive reading awareness. The data was analyzed carefully to identify and extract relevant theme to meet the research objectives and provide insights into the participants' experiences in this context.

Sequence, Emphasis, and Mixing Procedure

Sequence. The research design chosen for this study was a convergent parallel mixed-method approach. In this design, qualitative data was collected through audio recordings, transcriptions, and interviews, while quantitative data were gathered using a survey questionnaire. Both types of data were analyzed simultaneously. For the qualitative phase, coding and thematic analysis were applied to explore the issues on the use of metacognitive reading awareness among Grade 6 pupils. In the quantitative phase, statistical analysis were used to examine students' profiles and the key indicators of metacognitive reading awareness. Finally, the researcher compared the qualitative and quantitative findings to provide a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

Emphasis. In this study, a special attention was given to the results from both qualitative and quantitative phases. The framework used, a parallel convergent design, outlines two phases where data collection and analyses for both the qualitative and quantitative aspects are conducted at the same time.

Mixing Procedure. In this study, the initial integration of data took place at the design level through the use of a convergent parallel design, where the results from both the qualitative and quantitative phases were combined. To thoroughly answer the research questions, further integration occurred during the interpretation stage, linking the qualitative data with the quantitative findings. This combined data was analyzed in the context of the study's goal which was to explore and describe the experiences of Grade 6 pupils in their use of metacognitive reading awareness in a private school.

Flow of Procedures

Figure 4 illustrates the systematic procedure of the study, showing how convergent parallel mixed-method approach was used. This approach involved combining qualitative and quantitative data to gain a clearer understanding of Grade 6 pupils' experiences with regard to their use of metacognitive reading awareness. Both the quantitative and qualitative phases were carried out simultaneously. During the quantitative phase, a validated and adopted questionnaire was administered to survey respondents who were chosen through a complete enumeration sampling. Hence, the responses for this phase provided a numerical data for analysis.

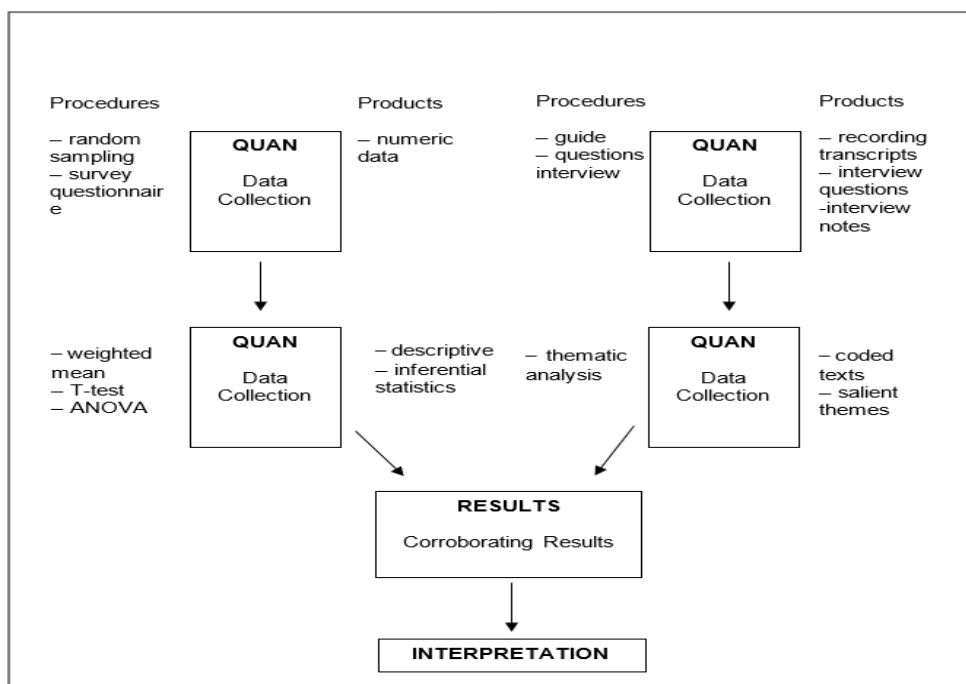


Figure 4. Flow of Procedures

Ethical Considerations

The researcher took great care to address ethical considerations throughout this study. Permission was requested from the school principal to interview participants and distribute survey materials. A consent letter was provided to all selected participants, and the questions asked was clear and straightforward to ensure participants to fully understand them. Confidentiality was handled with sensitivity, and information was shared in a respectful and considerate manner. Further, this pertained to anonymity, vulnerability of the participants, risks, benefits, safety, privacy and confidentiality of the participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results of data in both quantitative and qualitative phase. The first phase deals with the quantitative part in which it displays the status of pupils in terms of their metacognitive reading awareness and its variables which significantly predict it. The second phase deals with the qualitative part which was presented through a matrix form. The matrix shows the responses of the participants on their lived experiences regarding their metacognitive reading awareness. Further, the matrix contains the issues probed, core ideas,

code or categories, essential themes, and the supporting theoretical perspectives. Moreover, another matrix shows the data integration of the salient quantitative and qualitative findings.

Table 2. Level of Metacognitive Reading Awareness

| No. | Items | Mean | Descriptive Rating |
|-------------------------------|--|-------------|--------------------|
| Phonemic Awareness | | | |
| 1. | Identifying Common Sounds Between Words. | 3.48 | High |
| 2. | Splitting Words Into Individual Sounds. | 3.43 | Moderate |
| 3. | Blending Sounds In Order To Form A New Word. | 3.63 | High |
| 4. | Dividing Sounds Into Words. | 3.51 | High |
| 5. | Making Full Connections Between The Sequence Of Letters And Its Pronunciation. | 3.65 | High |
| Phonics | | | |
| 1. | Reading And Spelling Words Accurately. | 4.06 | High |
| 2. | Combining Vowel And Consonants To Form Words. | 3.79 | High |
| 3. | Converting Letters To Sound To Form Recognizable Words. | 3.86 | High |
| 4. | Blending Sounds To Read The Word. | 3.75 | High |
| 5. | Reading Alone Confidently. | 4.06 | High |
| Category Mean | | 3.90 | High |
| Reading Fluency | | | |
| 1. | Reading A Text Word By Word Without Mistakes. | 3.41 | Moderate |
| 2. | Reading A Text With Speed. | 3.30 | Moderate |
| 3. | Reading Sentences With Appropriate Facial Expression. | 3.33 | Moderate |
| 4. | Practicing Reading Aloud To Develop My Fluency. | 3.57 | High |
| 5. | Pronouncing Unfamiliar Words With Ease And Confidence. | 3.40 | Moderate |
| Category Mean | | 3.40 | Moderate |
| Vocabulary Development | | | |
| 1. | Defining The New Word I Learn In My Own Words. | 3.59 | High |
| 2. | Using New Words That I Learned In Sentences. | 3.65 | High |
| 3. | Figuring Out The Meaning Of A New Word From The Context. | 3.68 | High |

| | | | |
|--|--|-------------|-----------------|
| 4. | Using The Dictionary To Look For Unfamiliar Words. | 3.30 | Moderate |
| 5. | Looking For The Synonyms Of The New Words That I Find. | 3.24 | Moderate |
| Category Mean Reading Comprehension | | 3.90 | High |
| 1. | Identifying The Main Idea Of The Text I Just Read. | 3.73 | High |
| 2. | Summarizing The Text I Just Read. | 3.56 | High |
| 3. | Telling The Key Facts From The Text I Just Read. | 3.40 | Moderate |
| 4. | Making Predictions From The Text That I Read. | 3.35 | Moderate |
| 5. | Developing Conclusions About The Text I Just Read. | 3.13 | Moderate |
| Category Mean | | 3.43 | Moderate |
| Overall Mean | | 3.55 | High |

Level of Metacognitive Reading Awareness

The result showed that the overall mean of the metacognitive reading awareness of pupils is 3.55 which is descriptively rated as high. This means that the pupils oftentimes manifest the metacognitive reading awareness. In terms of the indicators, the phonemic awareness has an overall mean as 3.54 which was given a descriptive equivalent as high indicating that it is oftentimes manifested by pupils. The phonics also gained an overall mean of 3.90 which was descriptively rated as high indicating that it is oftentimes manifested by pupils. Similarly, the vocabulary development has attained an overall mean of 3.49 which was descriptively rated as high indicating that it is oftentimes manifested by pupils. On the other hand, both the reading fluency and reading comprehension were descriptively rated as moderate as reading fluency gained an overall mean of 3.40 whereas the reading comprehension gained 3.43 indicating that they were sometimes manifested by pupils.

Table 3. Themes and Core Ideas on the Lived Experiences and Insights of Pupils Regarding their Metacognitive Reading Awareness

| Issues Probed | Core Ideas | Code/Categories | Essential Themes | Theoretical Support |
|---|--|--------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Difficulties in Developing and Applying Metacognitive Reading Awareness | <p>Encountering unfamiliar words and complex sentences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finding it difficult to pronounce certain words accurately. <p>Struggling with silent words.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Misreading words due to | Challenges in Word Recognition | Experiencing Meaning-Making Challenges | Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 1988) |

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| | similar spellings or structures. | | | |
| | <p>Having trouble understanding complex sentences or lengthy text.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having the need to reread a word or a text to understand. <p>Losing focus while reading long passages.</p> <p>Struggling to grasp the main idea of a passage.</p> | Difficulties in Reading Comprehension | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relying on teachers, parents, and online sources for understanding. <p>Pupils rely on dictionaries to discover the meaning of a word.</p> <p>Asking peers for help in understanding difficult words.</p> | Reliance to External Sources for Understanding | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facing difficulties in finding out the meaning of a word due to limited vocabulary. <p>Being confused when giving meaning to a word.</p> <p>Struggling to</p> | Difficulties in Vocabulary Development | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| | <p>remember the meanings of newly learned words.</p> <p>Having trouble using learned words in sentences correctly.</p> | | | |
| Ways of Enhancing Metacognitive Reading Awareness | <p>Reading with classmates aids pupils' confidence in reading.</p> <p>Finding group reading a beneficial tool to foster understanding.</p> <p>Implementing oral reading in front of the class is beneficial for pupils to build confidence in their reading abilities.</p> | Engagement to Social and Collaborative Reading | Improving Metacognitive Reading Awareness through Practice | Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978) |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using dictionaries and online sources to understand better. Relying on modeled teaching in reading to gain understanding and reading strategies. Assisting reading through videos flashed on the television aids pupils to read | Utilization of Resources for Reading Comprehension | | |

| | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| | new words. | | | |
| | <p>Familiarizing and reviewing difficult words are pupils' way of developing their reading abilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practicing independent reading goals by practicing repeated reading for fluency and practicing context clues for independent learning. • Reading practice with family members aids pupils to improve their reading skills. | Development of Reading Skills Through Practice | | |
| Impact of Metacognitive Reading Awareness on Understanding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affecting thinking process while reading to get the exact thought conveyed. <p>Thinking about reading aids in analyzing the information or context being read.</p> <p>Enabling the pupils to form ideas or thoughts based on what they have read.</p> | Enhancement of Thinking Processes in Reading | Developing Reading Proficiency Through Metacognition | Metacognition Theory (Flavell, 1979) |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applying consciously metacognitive | Application of Metacognitive Strategies | | |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| | <p>strategies for better understanding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing pupils to practice reading processes. • Expanding reading skills or proficiency by reflecting. | for Comprehension | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing opportunity to make meaning out from what is being read through being engaged in reading. • Developing awareness or consciousness in reading process for better understanding <p>Recognizing that metacognitive reading awareness aids in retention of information into the memory.</p> | Development of Awareness for Meaningful Reading | | |
| Pupils' Recommendations on Developing Metacognitive Reading Awareness | <p>Summarizing and familiarizing words to improve understanding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaking words into parts to understand their meaning. | Enhancement of Vocabulary and Word Understanding | Strengthening Reading Proficiency Through Vocabulary and Metacognition | Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978) |

| | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using dictionaries and familiarizing their meanings to develop understanding of new words. | | | |
| | <p>Daily reading practice to develop foundational skills in reading like fluency and phonics.</p> <p>Rereading and reviewing reading levels to develop reading confidence and readiness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using or reading books to aid confidence in reading more. | Development of Reading Fluency and Confidence | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asking teachers, peers, and family members for guidance in developing metacognitive reading awareness. <p>Using online resources to aid the development of metacognitive reading awareness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seeking feedback from others to enhance | Utilization of Support Systems for Metacognitive Awareness | | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | <p>comprehension strategies.</p> <p>Engaging in reflective discussions about reading experiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping a reading journal to track progress and self-awareness. | | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practicing word recognition skills through reading more or watching videos online. <p>Engaging in phonemic awareness activities for better recognition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using flashcards and word games to reinforce word familiarity. • Applying repetitive exposure to challenging words for retention. <p>Connecting word recognition to real-life experiences for better recall.</p> | Practice Word Recognition Skills | | |
| Teacher's Role in Enhancing Metacognitive Reading | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers implement group reading to enhance | Implementation of Group and Interactive Reading Strategies | Empowering Learners through Teacher- | Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky, 1978) |

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| Awareness | <p>reading skills.</p> <p>Teachers use interactive activities like popcorn reading to make reading interesting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers engage pupils in exciting reading activities to motivate students to read. | | Guided Reading Strategies and Support | |
| | <p>Teachers use engaging activities like spelling bees and fast reading contests to develop certain reading skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers provide activities that reinforce understanding through writing and practice. <p>Teachers use daily reading exercises to enhance metacognitive reading awareness.</p> | Incorporation of Engaging Activities for Skill Development | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers provide books and printed materials for practice. Teachers encourage individual reading to | Provision of Resources for Reading Practice | | |

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| | <p>strengthen independent learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers model reading strategies to develop reading abilities. | | | |
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Experiencing Meaning-Making Challenges. The experiences of the participants when it comes to meaning-making includes their difficulties in recognizing some words, comprehending what they read and difficulties in creating meaning of a word based on context clues. They also made mentioned that external sources are significant as they rely on them for better understanding.

In alignment to the study conducted, many students are found to encounter a significant challenges in areas such us word recognition, reading comprehension and vocabulary development. He emphasized that students often struggle due to lack of awareness of effective reading strategies (Ambarwati, 2019). Similarly, a study revealed that learners in Columbia face difficulties in word recognition, reliance on re-reading for comprehension and limited use of metacognitive reading strategies hampering their ability to make meaning during English reading tasks (Guerrero, 2022). Further, a study among Grade 4 EFL learners revealed the struggles they face such as inferential comprehension. These students are found to rely on metacognitive reading strategies such as self-questioning and reflective thinking (Rodriguez, 2023).

Improving Metacognitive Reading Awareness through Practice. The pupils also shared the practices and drills that they employed as they develop and apply their metacognitive reading awareness. This includes the social and collaborative reading, utilization of resources for reading comprehension practice, and the continuous development of reading skills through practice involving both independent and social reading practices.

The finding is also aligned with the study which examined the impact of parent-involved reading activities on primary school students' attitudes toward reading. It also revealed that such activities, which encompass social and collaborative reading practices, utilization of reading resources, and development of reading skills with family members, significantly enhanced students' reading attitudes (Caliskan et al., 2022). Also, a study supports this result emphasizing that learners foster understanding through practice with peers in the form of collaborative face-to-face and online discussions. Students shared that comprehension-monitoring strategies and utilizing peer and digital support helped them decode unfamiliar words and reinforce understanding while reading (Jones & Hardie, 2024). In addition, pupils in an eight-session interactive workshop designed to develop their metacognitive reading skills reported enhanced ability to monitor comprehension, use external sources and collaborate with peers for better comprehension (Abdelghani et al., 2024).

Developing Metacognitive Reading Proficiency Through Metacognition. The pupils shared their experiences as well in terms of developing their metacognitive reading proficiency through metacognition which includes the experiences they face in enhancing their thinking processes in reading, applying metacognitive strategies for comprehension and developing awareness for meaningful reading.

This finding is also aligned with the findings of study which revealed the impact of metacognitive strategies on students' reading comprehension. Their study found that teaching students to plan, monitor and evaluate their reading processes led to significant improvements in comprehension. This study also underscored the importance of enhancing thinking processes, applying metacognitive strategies for comprehension and developing awareness for meaningful reading among elementary pupils (Muhid et al., 2020). Similarly, a study supported this result as it revealed that elementary learners who received explicit metacognitive reading strategy training such as prediction, questioning, summarizing and clarifying constantly practice such strategies during both independent and collaborative reading (Babashamasi et al., 2022). In addition, students

actively engaged in metacognitive practices such as planning, monitoring and evaluating during collaborative inquiry-based reading tasks (Divrik et al., 2020).

Strengthening Reading Proficiency Through Vocabulary and Metacognition. The pupils also revealed that there must be various drills and ways that pupils like them should consider when strengthening reading proficiency through vocabulary and metacognition. This includes enhancing vocabulary and word understanding through different techniques and resources; developing reading fluency and confidence, utilizing support systems for metacognitive awareness and practicing word recognition skills.

In accordance to a study, the impact of metacognitive strategy on elementary students' vocabulary acquisition and reading proficiency was revealed. Implementing a comprehensive vocabulary instruction program that emphasized metacognitive awareness encourage students to reflect on their learning processes and employ strategies such as self-questioning and contextual analysis. Also, students who actively engaged in these metacognitive practices experienced significant improvements in vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension (Pape-Lindstrom et al., 2022). In fact, interactive e-books with word-learning and comprehension-monitoring strategies provide children significant gains in vocabulary knowledge and application of metacognitive monitoring while reading (Day et al., 2024). Similarly, reciprocal teaching interventions that foster metacognitive strategies on fluency, vocabulary and comprehension revealed improvements on metacognitive awareness (Florit et al., 2023).

Empowering Learners Through Teacher-Guided Reading Strategies and Support. The finding also revealed that pupils view teacher-guided reading strategies and support as a fundamental tool toward empowering them for developing their metacognitive reading awareness. With this, they recognized that implementing group and interactive reading strategies, incorporating engaging activities and skill development and providing resources for reading practice, teachers can support and help in reinforcing and strengthening of their metacognitive reading awareness.

Teachers' use of metacognitive strategies supports reading comprehension skills of elementary students with learning disabilities. When teachers explicitly instructed and modeled metacognitive strategies, students can demonstrate improved comprehension and greater awareness of their reading processes. Thus, teacher-guided instruction has a great role in developing metacognitive reading awareness among elementary learners (Lacin & Cetin, 2022). Additionally, teachers who explicitly modeled metacognitive reading strategies increased learners use of strategies such as activating prior knowledge, skimming and predicting independently and in peer discussions (Khurram, 2023). Similarly, teacher-led reciprocal teaching sessions that focuses on teacher guidance and group dialogues significantly developed pupils' metacognitive awareness (Florit et al., 2023).

Table 4. Joint Display of Salient Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

| Aspect or Focal Point | Quantitative Findings | Qualitative Findings | Nature of Data Integration | Axiological Implication |
|---|---|--|----------------------------|--|
| Pupils' Metacognitive Reading Awareness | In table 2, on the indicator phonemic awareness specifically in item number 1- identify common sounds between words, with an overall average mean of 3.48 and has a descriptive equivalent as high. | In table 2.1 on the lived experiences and insights of pupils with a code of Encountering Challenges in Word Recognition, specifically in the core idea 1- encountering unfamiliar words and complex sentences. | Merging-diverging | The data shows that while pupils have strong phonemic awareness, they struggle with word recognition and complex sentences, especially |

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| | | | | when encounterin g unfamiliar words. |
| | In the same table, on the indicator phonemic awareness specifically in item number 5- make full connections between the sequence of letter and its pronunciation, with an overall average mean of 3.65 and has a descriptive equivalent as high. | In table 2.1, on the lived experiences and insights of pupils with a code of Encountering Challenges in Word Recognition specifically in the core idea 3- struggling with silent words. | Merging-diverging | The contrasting data suggests that although pupils can decode and pronounce words based on spelling, they struggle to recognize letter sounds in silent words. |
| | In table 2, on the indicator phonics specifically in item number 1- read and spell words accurately, with an overall mean 4.06 and has a descriptive equivalent of very high. | In table 2.1, on the lived experiences and insights of pupils with a code of Encountering Challenges in Word Recognition specifically in the core idea 4- misreading words due to similar spellings or structures. | Merging-diverging | Despite high phonics scores in quantitative data, qualitative results reveal that pupils struggle to read words accurately, especially those with similar spellings or structures. |
| | In table 2, on reading fluency specifically in item number 5- pronounce unfamiliar words with ease and confidence, with an overall mean 3.40 and has a descriptive value as moderate. | In table 2.1, on the lived experiences and insights of pupils with a code of Encountering Challenges in Word Recognition specifically in the core idea 2- finding it difficult to pronounce certain words accurately. | Merging-diverging | The qualitative data implies that while quantitative data shows that pupils show high fluency specifically when pronouncing unfamiliar words, still |

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| | | | | pupils cannot pronounce unfamiliar words with accuracy despite their high level of fluency. |
| | In table 2, on vocabulary development specifically in item number 1- define the new word I learn in my own words, with an overall mean 3.59 and has a descriptive equivalent as high. | In table 2.1, on the lived experiences and insights of pupils with a code of Facing Difficulties in Vocabulary Development specifically in the core idea 1- facing difficulties in finding out the meaning of a word due to limited vocabulary. | Merging-diverging | Qualitative data suggests that despite quantitative results showing pupils can define new words, their limited vocabulary hinders them from independently decoding word meanings. |
| | In the same table, on vocabulary development specifically in item number 2- use new words that I learned in sentences, with an overall mean 3.65 and has a descriptive equivalent as high. | In table 2.1, on the lived experiences and insights of pupils with a code of Facing Difficulties in Vocabulary Development specifically in the core idea 4- having trouble using learned words in sentences correctly. | Merging-diverging | Qualitative data suggests that despite high vocabulary development scores, some pupils still struggle to correctly and consistently use newly learned words in meaningful sentences. |
| | In the same table, on vocabulary development specifically in item number 4- use the dictionary to look for unfamiliar words, with | In table 2.1, on the lived experiences and insights of pupils with a code of Enhancing Vocabulary and Word Understanding specifically in the core | Merging-converging | The pupils exhibit strong dependency with dictionaries when faced |

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| | an overall mean 3.30 and has a descriptive equivalent as moderate. | idea 3- using dictionaries and familiarizing their meanings to develop understanding of new words. | | with unfamiliar words that leads to the enhancement of their vocabulary development. |
| | In table 2, on reading comprehension specifically in item number 1- identify the main idea of the text I just read, with an overall mean 3.73 and has a descriptive equivalent as high. | In table 2.1, on the lived experiences and insights of pupil with a code of Having Difficulties in Reading Comprehension specifically in the core idea 4- struggling to grasp the main idea of a passage. | Merging-diverging | The qualitative data implies that while pupils show high level of reading comprehension in terms of identifying the main idea of the text they read as revealed by the quantitative data, but pupils still struggle to grasp the main idea of the passage. |
| | In table 2, on reading comprehension specifically in item number 2- summarize the text I just read, with an overall mean 3.56 and has a descriptive equivalent as high. | In table 2.1, on the lived experiences and insights of pupils with a code of Enhancing Vocabulary and Word Understanding specifically in the core idea 1- summarizing and familiarizing words to improve understanding. | Merging-converging | The pupils utilize summarizing as means to aid understanding. |

Encountering Challenges in Word Recognition. The gap between cognitive reading skills and practical word recognition and fluency suggests that while pupils exhibit high phonemic awareness and fluency in structured

survey, they struggle with real-world reading tasks involving unfamiliar words, silent letters and complex spelling structures. This indicates the need for contextualized and experienced-based reading interventions that go beyond phonics drills, focusing on meaningful word recognition, pronunciation accuracy and confidence in reading. This is aligned to the idea that the difficulties pupils encounter in acquiring phonological skills is a result of their lack of awareness in word recognition, reading fluency and comprehension. Specifically, pupils with poor phonological awareness struggled with pronouncing words correctly and spelling accurately which are critical component of reading proficiency (Ndalila, 2021).

Facing Difficulties in Vocabulary Development. The main concept behind the axiological integration of items and response in the aspect of facing difficulties in vocabulary development revolves around meaning-making and language proficiency in literacy growth. The data from Hairell et al., 2019 suggests that while pupils demonstrate some level of vocabulary acquisition through structured learning, their ability to apply, define and utilize words meaningfully remains a challenge. This finding is aligned with the study which indicates that elementary pupils often encounter challenges in vocabulary development that impede their overall literacy progression. They also highlight that without targeted vocabulary instruction, students may struggle to acquire and retain new words, affecting their reading comprehension and overall academic performance.

Having Difficulties in Reading Comprehension. Despite the high level of reading comprehension of pupils, a challenge and gap in grasping the main idea of a passage remains a problem. A recent study underscores that elementary students often encounter difficulties in reading comprehension, particularly in identifying the main idea of a passage. It was found out that summarizing and main idea extraction is the common problems face by students in the process of developing reading comprehension. Additionally, it was revealed that those struggling with their reading comprehension are those with reading difficulties and only depending on explicit instruction as without such targeted strategies they may still continue to struggle identifying the main idea of a text (Stevens et al., 2019).

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

First, the level of pupils' metacognitive reading awareness is high in terms of phonemic awareness, phonics, and vocabulary development. However, moderate in terms of reading fluency and reading comprehension. Thus, the high level of phonemic awareness, phonics and reading fluency indicates that pupils oftentimes manifest these in the process of developing their metacognitive reading awareness. On the other hand, the moderate level for reading fluency and reading comprehension only indicates that pupils sometimes manifest these in the process of developing their metacognitive reading awareness.

Second, the thematic analysis of the data was done based on the responses gained from the in-depth and focused group interview. The results revealed the experiences encountered by pupils in developing and applying their metacognitive reading awareness. Qualitatively, the pupils have been experiencing different situations and difficulties that contribute to how they develop and apply their metacognitive reading awareness as well as their insights regarding it. The following themes emerged: Experiencing metacognitive reading awareness challenges, improving metacognitive reading awareness through practice, Developing reading proficiency through metacognition, Strengthening reading proficiency through vocabulary and metacognition and empowering learners through teacher-guided reading strategies support.

Lastly, to better understand the impact of students' experience towards metacognitive reading awareness, the responses were analyzed thematically to confirm the quantitative results of the study. Both the findings of the two phases are integrated based on the nature of the plan. The level of metacognitive reading awareness in the quantitative results show that it diverged with the data gained from the qualitative phase. Therefore, the qualitative data disconfirms the results from quantitative data that states the metacognitive reading awareness of pupils is high as despite the high result still pupils share that they struggle on some aspects of developing and applying their metacognitive reading awareness.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were drawn:

Since the level of the metacognitive reading awareness reveals that among the five indicators of metacognitive reading awareness, the reading fluency and reading comprehension have only the moderate level, it is recommended that in the aspect of reading fluency, the pupils must engage in daily reading practice that targets to develop their fluency. Also, reading books every now and then is a good way to develop reading fluency. Similarly, in terms of the recommendations for developing reading comprehension, the pupils must apply summarizing and familiarizing in order to improve their understanding. Rereading and reviewing reading levels is also suggested in order to develop reading comprehension.

Furthermore, based on the qualitative phase results on the lived experiences of pupils with regards to their metacognitive reading awareness, pupils must utilize various resources like books and other videos online to practice their skill in reading comprehension. They may also seek support from friends, parents and teachers to help them keep track of their progress in developing their metacognitive reading awareness. It is also recommended that they may keep reading a journal to track their progress and self-awareness in reading processes. They may also continue utilizing dictionaries to widen their vocabulary repertoire and engage in phonemic awareness activities to master other foundational skills in reading.

The researcher recognizes the importance of metacognitive reading awareness in all dimensions of education, therefore in an ever-evolving world, being proficient in foundational skills of reading cannot be underestimated as it open doors for one's awareness in terms of their reading capacities and eventually master the reading with understanding. With this, the researcher would like to suggest that pupils may develop first their phonemic awareness before moving forward with the other foundational skills of reading as reading starts from basic and in doing so, they must engage in drills and practices that would develop this skill by asking for support from parents, older siblings and even teachers for a better reading experience. Also, they may develop their reading fluency by reading books together with other classmates for a more engaging drills and also allow parents to be involved in this process to give feedback in their fluency progress.

Lastly, it is also recommended for pupils to apply metacognitive reading awareness as this aids them to have a clear grasp of what they are reading not just in reading books but also in other educational undertakings. They may do this by reflecting and employing strategies to have a better grasp on how their metacognitive reading awareness progresses each day. Teachers can intervene in this process by modeling reading strategies to further develop their reading abilities. They may also integrate in their instruction different interactive activities like reading contests, spelling bees and popcorn reading to allow pupils to reflect on their reading levels and learn in an engaging environment.

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Bottom of Form

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