

University of Bahrain

College of Arts



**Department of English
Language and Literature**

**METACOGNITIVE AWARENESS AND THE READING
COMPREHENSION ABILITIES OF BAHRAINI THIRD
YEAR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS**

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master Degree in Applied English Language Studies

Prepared by:

Sara Abdullah Fakhroo

20014450

Supervised by:

Dr. Abdulaziz Mohammad Bulaila

(Associate Professor)

University of Bahrain

Kingdom of Bahrain

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DECLARATION

I declare that this work, which I submit to the University of Bahrain, contains my own investigation and is an original work. This research has not been previously accepted for any degree and is not being currently considered for any other degree at any other university.

Name: Sara Abdullah Fakhroo

ID: 20014450

Signature:.....

Date:.....

The thesis defence committee considered the thesis entitled:

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Submitted to the Department of English Language and Literature for the award of the degree of Master in Applied English Language Studies.

Thesis Defense Committee:

Name	Signature
..... Supervisor	
..... External Examiner	
..... Internal Examiner	

DEFENSE COMMITTEE’S APPROVAL PAGE

University of Bahrain

College of Arts

Department of English Language and Literature

M.A. Program (Master in Applied English Language Studies)

This is to attest that **Ms. Sara Abdullah Fakhroo**, with an ID number of **20014450**, defended her thesis entitled, ***“Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies and Reading Comprehension Abilities of Bahraini Third Year Secondary School Students,”*** by which she fulfilled the requirements for the degree of **M.A. in Applied English Language Studies** on the 10th of June 2017.

The committee recommends awarding of M.A. with the grade of **(A)**.

Thesis Defence Committee:

Name

Signature

..... Supervisor

..... External Examiner

..... Internal Examiner

Academic Department Stamp

Abstract

This research aimed to investigate the relationship between reading comprehension abilities and metacognitive awareness of reading strategies of third year secondary school students in Bahrain. A mixed research approach was used as reflected in the application of both quantitative and qualitative data in the results analysis. The combination of descriptive and correlational research design was also utilized in order to address the research questions. A total of 240 third year high school students were asked to accomplish the translated Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSI) and the First Certificate Exam (FCE) in Reading Comprehension. In addition to that, 17 teachers were interviewed using a semi-structured interview on the students' use of reading strategies and reading comprehension level. The results revealed that students in the government schools have an overall mean score level which is categorized as below B1, while students in the private schools have an overall mean score that is classified as B2 level. High performing students had higher level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies than the students whose CEFR levels were lower than B1 level. There was a statistically significant correlation between the students' reading comprehension abilities and metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. However, only school affiliation had a significant correlation with the respondents' reading comprehension abilities. In other words, gender did not seem to have an effect on the reading comprehension abilities of the students. Both school affiliation and gender have a significant correlation with the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. Overall, there was a significant difference in the intergroup pair comparisons of students between the public and government schools in terms of their reading comprehension abilities and

metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. Male and female students did not differ significantly in terms of their reading comprehension abilities. Training, workshops, and relevant methodological revisions are put forward by the study.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my father who supported me from the beginning of my studies at UOB and to my husband who continuously inspire me.

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Table of Contents

Topics	Page Number
Declaration	I
Defence Committee's Approval Page	II
Abstract	III
Dedication	IV
Acknowledgement	V
Table of Contents	VI
List of Tables	IX
List of Figures	X
List of Appendices	XIV
Chapter One Introduction to the Study	2
1.1 Introduction	2
1.2. Statement of the Problem	5
1.3. Significance of the Study	6
1.3.1. Theoretical and Empirical Contributions	7
1.3.2. Inputs to Language Teaching and Bases for Curriculum Development	7
1.3.3. Signposts for Language Learning Materials Development	8
1.4. Aims of the Study	8
1.5. Research Questions	9
1.6. Research Hypotheses	10
1.7. Scope and Limitations of the Study	11
1.8. Definition of Terms	13
1.9. Thesis Outline	16
Chapter Two Literature Review and Theoretical Framework	18
2.1. Introduction	18
2.2. Theoretical Framework	18
2.2.1. Assumptions Related to Metacognition	18
2.2.2. Assumptions Related to Reading	21

2.3. Literature Review	24
2.3.1. Metacognitive Skills	24
2.3.2. Reading Comprehension Skills	30
2.3.3. Reading Strategies	34
2.3.4. Metacognition and Reading Comprehension	42
2.4. Commentary on the Literature Review	58
2.5. Framework of the Research	62
2.6. Concluding Remarks	64
Chapter Three Methods and Procedures	65
3.1. Introduction	65
3.2. Research Design	65
3.3. The Research Setting	66
3.4. The Research Population and the Sample	66
3.5. Research Tools	69
3.5.1. Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory	69
3.5.2. The Reading Comprehension Test	70
3.5.3. The Interview Questions	72
3.6. Data Collection	72
3.6. Statistical Tools	73
3.7. Concluding Remarks	73
Chapter Four Analysis and Discussion	75
4.1. Introduction	75
4.2. Results for Research Question 1: Reading Comprehension Abilities	75
4.2.1. Reading Comprehension Abilities of Male Students in the Government Schools	75
4.2.2. Reading Comprehension Abilities of Female Students in the Government Schools	77
4.2.3. Reading Comprehension Abilities for Both Male and Female Students in the Government Schools	79
4.2.4. Reading Comprehension Abilities of Male Students in the Private Schools	83
4.2.5. Reading Comprehension Abilities of Female Students in the Government Schools	85

4.2.6. Reading Comprehension Abilities for Both Male and Female Students in the Private Schools	87
4.2.7. Summary of Reading Comprehension Abilities across Group Categories	91
4.3. Results for Research Question 2: Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies	93
4.3.1. Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies among the Male Students in the Government Schools	93
4.3.2. Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies among the Female Students in the Government Schools	94
4.3.3. Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies of Both the Male and Female Students in the Government Schools	96
4.3.4. Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies among the Male Students in the Private Schools	98
4.3.5. Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies among the Female Students in the Private Schools	99
4.3.6. Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies of Both the Male and Female Students in the Private Schools	101
4.3.7. Summary of the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies among the Different Groups	104
4.3.8. Metacognitive Awareness of Global Reading Strategies according to the Respondents' CEFR Level	106
4.3.9. Metacognitive Awareness of Problem Solving Reading Strategies according to the Respondents' CEFR Level	107
4.3.10. Metacognitive Awareness of Support Reading Strategies according to the Respondents' CEFR Level	108
4.3.11. Metacognitive Awareness of Overall Reading Strategies according to the Respondents' CEFR Level	110
4.3.12. Summary of the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies according to the Respondents' CEFR Level	111
4.4. Results for Research Question 3: Commonly and Least Used Reading Strategies	113
4.5. Results for Research Question 4: Correlation of Variables	117
4.6. Results for Research Question 5: Significant Differences among Groups	122
4.7. Summary of Null Hypotheses Rejection/Acceptance	125

4.7. Interpretation and Discussion	128
Chapter Five Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations	133
5.1. Introduction	133
5.2. Summary	133
5.3. Conclusions	135
5.4. Implications	138
5.5. Recommendations	140
References	143
Appendices	151

List of Tables

No.	Table Title	Page
1	Concept and Theories of Metacognition	19
2	Contentions Related to Reading Comprehension	22
3	Summary of Studies on the Relationship between Metacognitive Skills and Reading Comprehension	42
4	Distribution of Respondents	68
5	Reading Comprehension Abilities of Respondents in the Government Schools	80
6	Reading Comprehension Abilities of Respondents in the Private Schools	87
7	Summary of the Reading Comprehension Abilities of the Different Groups of Student-Respondents	92
8	Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies of the Student-Respondents in the Government Schools	97
9	Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies of the Student-Respondents in the Private Schools	102
10	Summary of the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies of the Different Groups of Student-Respondents	105
11	Summary of the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies According the CEFR Level of the Respondents	112
12	Summary of Ranks of the Most Commonly Used Reading Strategies	114
13	Correlation between the Reading Comprehension Abilities and the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies	118

14	Correlation between the Reading Comprehension Abilities and the Other Variables	120
15	Correlation between the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies and the Other Variables	122
16	Significant Differences in the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Overall Mean Score among the Different Groups	123
17	Significant Differences in the Reading Comprehension Abilities among the Different Groups	124

List of Figures

No.	Figure Title	Page
1	Conceptual Framework of the Study	63
2	Reading Comprehension Abilities of Respondents of Male Students in the Government Schools	76
3	Reading Comprehension Abilities of Respondents of Female Students in the Government Schools	78
4	Reading Comprehension Abilities of Respondents of Male Students in the Private Schools	84
5	Reading Comprehension Abilities of Respondents of Female Students in the Private Schools	86
6	Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies among the Male Students in the Government Schools	94
7	Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies among the Female Students in the Government Schools	95
8	Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies among the Male Students in the Private Schools	99
9	Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies among the Female Students in the Private Schools	100
10	Level of Metacognitive Awareness of Global Reading Strategies according to the CEFR Level of the Student-Respondents	106

11	Level of Metacognitive Awareness of Problem Solving Reading Strategies according to the CEFR Level of the Student-Respondents	108
12	Level of Metacognitive Awareness of Support Reading Strategies according to the CEFR Level of the Student-Respondents	109
13	Level of Metacognitive Awareness of Overall Reading Strategies according to the CEFR Level of the Student-Respondents	110

List of Appendices

Number	Appendix Title	Page
A	Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies (English Version)	152
B	Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies (Arabic Version)	157
C	The FCE Test in Reading Comprehension Sample	161
D	The Teachers' Interview Guide (English Version)	169
E	The Teachers' Interview Guide (Arabic Version)	173

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

The pervasive significance of reading is an assumption acknowledged by various experts not only in the academic spheres but also in many social domains. It plays a crucial role in the academic achievement of different learners (Hermida, 2009; Herbers, Cutuli, Supkoff, Heistad, Chan, Hinz, and Masten, 2012), in learning other disciplines such as science and mathematics (Imam, Mastura, and Jamil, 2013), in the sustainable development of various aspects of society (Igwe, 2011), in advancing economic development of a nation (Banerjee, 2009; Jacobs, 2014; Ashmore, 2014), and in the promotion of cultural understanding and social justice (Liu, Unger, and Scullion, 2014).

Despite the efforts to improve the reading proficiency and overall literacy of the general population, there are still many issues and problems associated with meeting the desired target learning outcomes in reading as an aspect of communication skills. Most of the times, reading proficiency levels are below the standard criteria which lead teachers to design instructional content and enhance the reading curricula (Vance and Schreck, 2006).

On a related note, the role of prior knowledge in improving the performance of learners in learning a receptive language skill has been acknowledged in the past. Theoretically, the concept of prior knowledge is under the scope of metacognition, which is an umbrella term that is used to designate the individual's ability to be aware of regulation of cognition and knowledge of cognition such as declarative, procedural, and conditional knowledge (Livingstone, 2010). The significance of

metacognition in ensuring a sustained and autonomous learning apparently provides a promising solution in improving the level of reading comprehension skills of second language learners at the theoretical level. Previous researches have hypothesized the link between metacognition and general language learning. However, the link between metacognitive skills and the specific components of reading skills have never been investigated in the context of Bahrain wherein most of its high school students are considered to be second language learners of the English language. By exploring the assumed relationship between the two variables, new empirical insights can be generated from the research which can be used for future reading improvement programs in local high schools.

It is also evident from the previous empirical studies in language pedagogy that some aspects of the correlation between the aforesaid variables have not been explored yet. For example, the studies of and Sonleitner (2005), Osterholm (2006), Phakiti (2006), Alhaqbani & Riaz (2012), Ahmadi, Ismail, and Abdullah (2013), and Vehovec, Zubkovic, and Reihenic (2014) only focused on the general relationship between reading comprehension and metacognitive skills, but these studies did not actually tackle which aspects of the reading comprehension skills are significantly affected or influenced by the metacognitive behavior of the learners.

Thus, it was essential to analyze the relationship between the metacognitive awareness and the reading comprehension abilities of the target respondents. It is also vital to explore the aforesaid variables in the context of high school students from both the private and public schools. Comparing these two groups of learners may not have been emphasized in other researches which involved the same set of variables. For

example, Temur, Kargin, Saadet, and Bayar (2010) and Wu, Valcke, and Keer (2012), and used respondents who were at the high school or middle school level. Sonleitner (2005), Osterholm (2006), Phakiti (2006), Ditzel (2010), Guo and Roehrig (2011), Alhaqbani and Riazi (2012), Vehovec *et al* (2014), Tavakoli (2014), Thao, Mai, and Ngoc (2014), and Razi and Cubukco (2014) used EFL students.

The aforesaid correlational studies have been conducted in many countries by various scholars in different disciplines and in the field of English language. These studies are reviewed critically in the literature review section. Nonetheless, there have been some gaps in these researches such as the applicability and conclusiveness of the findings to different types of learners such as the gender and type of school affiliation of the research respondents which may be considered moderating variables.

Moreover, the uniqueness of Bahrain situation is a proposition that presents a peripheral research issue rather than a methodological one. The difficulty in reading comprehension tasks experienced by the Bahraini learners, the low motivation to learn how to read, and the perennial teaching-learning complaints on the multifaceted issues related to reading instruction are universal issues that are encountered by almost all educational contexts.

Albeit these are universal issues in most second language learning environments, it must be noted that one purpose of research is to ascertain if these variables have the same extent of applicability or manifestation in one particular research environment or not. Leung (2015) argues that generalizability is important in both quantitative and qualitative research because it provides representativeness of results. From this argument of Leung (2015), it can be advanced that although some language learning

issues and results may be apparent in some locale, it can also be different in some other environments just like in the context of Bahrain – a premise that has always been used by past researchers to justify the conduct of replication studies, developmental researches, evaluation researches, meta-analysis of variables, and other types of research approaches and techniques.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

One of the current problems among language learners in Bahrain especially at the secondary level is their weak reading comprehension. The report of the Quality Assurance Authority for Education and Training (QAAET, 2013), for example, highlights Bahraini students' weak performance in English with reading as one of the most challenging domains. This includes their deficiency to comment on the writer's words, identify the main points of an argument or characteristics, and summarize ideas. Because of this, language teachers in the field have used varied teaching techniques and other pedagogic approaches. Nonetheless, the aforesaid problem still continues to be a bottleneck that is experienced by many language teachers. Thus, conducting this study in the selected secondary schools of Bahrain is a significant research endeavor because it would provide new insights in terms of improving the reading comprehension skills of the students.

A related problem experienced by secondary language learners is to practice autonomy in language learning. Based on the experience of the researcher as an English language teacher, many high school learners in the country rely heavily on the teacher especially in tasks related to reading. Hence, it is imperative to improve their metacognitive awareness because they sometimes find it difficult to learn how to decode meanings

without the direct supervision of their teachers. Metacognition has been recognized to contribute to learning because it concerns the processes by which an individual monitor and control his/her own cognitive processes. It also involves what one knows about cognition, including knowledge about oneself as a learner, about aspects of the task at hand, and about strategies needed to carry out the task effectively (Baker, 2009; Firth, 2012; Chick, 2013).

By determining the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among third year secondary high school students enrolled in the public school and private schools of Bahrain, the researcher could be able to provide insights on how a typical Bahraini learner monitors his/her reading strategies which is an essential aspect for sustained learning. The research did not only measure the current reading comprehension skills of the student-respondents, but it also analyzed the influence of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies over the assumed dependent variable of the study. In summation, these research objectives were justified by the need to find solutions to the perennial problem on the weak reading comprehension of many students in the country, their weak levels of independent learning, and the need to link theory with empirical findings.

1.3. Significance of the Study

At the macro level, the study could give significant contributions in the field of linguistics and language teaching. This includes theoretical and empirical contributions, inputs to language teaching, bases for curriculum development, guide to language planning policies, and signposts for language learning materials development.

1.3.1. Theoretical and Empirical Contributions

Foremost, the results of the study would add to the existing empirical evidence on the nature of metacognition. Put simply, the study could corroborate or debunk previous findings on the relationship between the level of metacognitive application and the level of reading comprehension. This also leads to another important facet in research which is to verify the applicability of existing theories. In the case of this study, theories and models related to metacognition and language learning could be verified by testing the variables that represent such constructs.

1.3.2. Inputs to Language Teaching and Bases for Curriculum Development

By conducting this study, the researcher believes that local language teachers in Bahrain could be guided on how to incorporate metacognitive strategies in the teaching of reading skills among secondary students in the locale. It must be noted that any language curriculum is dynamic in nature, which means that it undergoes several phases of changes. These changes are based on the current needs of the society and the present empirical results in language research. With the results of this research, the present English language curriculum could be modified in the light of the correlation status of the different variables. This means that language curriculum planners in the Kingdom of Bahrain could be guided in terms of how to incorporate metacognitive strategies in the future language learning experiences of the students.

1.3.3. Signposts for Language Learning Materials Development

It is expected that experts who develop language learning materials could make use of the results of the present research because of its implications to language teaching and learning. In more precise terms, textbook writers could incorporate the metacognitive strategies as an integrated skill in many facets of communicative activities in the language textbooks that they are developing. Language website developers could integrate the same skills in the different icons and links for language learning.

1.4. Aims of the Study

The study aimed to achieve the following:

1. Determine the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies used by the third year secondary school Bahraini students;
2. Determine the most commonly used reading strategies among the third year secondary school Bahraini students;
3. Analyze the reading comprehension abilities of the third year secondary school Bahraini students;
4. Find out the correlation between the following variables:
 - 4.1. metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the level of reading comprehension abilities
 - 4.2. type of school affiliation and the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the level of reading comprehension abilities
 - 4.3. gender of the students and the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the level of reading comprehension abilities

5. Find out the significant difference in the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the reading comprehension abilities between the following groups:
 - 5.1. the student-respondents in the private schools and the student-respondents in public school
 - 5.2. the male student-respondents and the female student-respondents

1.5. Research Questions

This research aimed to determine the relationship between reading comprehension abilities and metacognitive awareness of reading strategies of third year secondary school students in Bahrain. It answered the following research questions:

1. What are the reading comprehension abilities of the third year secondary school Bahraini students?
2. What metacognitive awareness reading strategies are used by the third year secondary school Bahraini students?
3. What are the most commonly used reading strategies among these learner-respondents?
4. Is there a correlation between the following variables?
 - 4.1. metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the level of reading comprehension abilities
 - 4.2. type of school affiliation and the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the level of reading comprehension abilities
 - 4.3. gender of the students and the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the level of reading comprehension abilities

5. Is there a significant difference in the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the reading comprehension abilities between the following groups?

5.1. the student-respondents in the private schools and the student-respondents in public school

5.2. the male student-respondents and the female student-respondents

1.6. Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested under 0.05 level of significance:

H_{01} : There is **no** significant relationship between the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the reading comprehension abilities of the third year secondary high school Bahraini students.

H_{02} : There is **no** significant relationship between the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the type of school affiliation of the third year secondary high school Bahraini students.

H_{03} : There is **no** significant relationship between the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the gender of the third year secondary high school Bahraini students.

H_{04} : There is **no** significant relationship between the reading comprehension abilities and the type of school affiliation of the third year secondary high school Bahraini students.

H_{05} : There is **no** significant relationship between the reading comprehension abilities and the gender of the third year secondary high school Bahraini students.

H_{06} : There is **no** significant difference in the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies between the student-respondents in the private schools and the student-respondents in the public schools.

H_{07} : There is **no** significant difference in the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies between the male and female student-respondents.

H_{08} : There is **no** significant difference in the reading comprehension abilities between the student-respondents in the private schools and the student-respondents in the public schools.

H_{09} : There is **no** significant difference in the reading comprehension abilities between the male and female student-respondents.

1.7. Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study was guided by the general scope of investigating the relationship between reading comprehension abilities and metacognitive awareness of reading strategies of third year secondary school students in Bahrain. It was delimited to the selected private and public secondary schools in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

One of the integral scopes of the research was to determine the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies used by the third year secondary school Bahraini students. Unlike other previous researches, this study was delimited to the analysis of metacognitive awareness only and did not include the actual knowledge of cognition and procedural knowledge of the learners. This is because of the fact that the study has set forth its scope of analyzing the metacognitive awareness of the

learners on a variable that is related to reading comprehension such as their reading strategies awareness.

It analyzed the correlation between metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the level of reading comprehension abilities, between the type of school affiliation and the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies, and between the type of school affiliation and level of reading comprehension abilities. Gender of the students was also considered in the analysis of the correlation between the aforesaid variables. The research included the process of determining the significant difference in the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the reading comprehension abilities between the following groups: the student-respondents in the private schools and the student-respondents in public school; and the male student-respondents and the female student-respondents.

Determining the most commonly used reading strategies used by the learner-respondents and analyzing their reading comprehension abilities formed another integral components of this research. It must be noted that the research covered the scope of comparing the levels of reading comprehension between the different groups of learners only. It was delimited to the analysis of other aspects of reading comprehension such as phonemic awareness and other similar concepts. The research covered the scope of examining the extent of correlation between metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the level of reading comprehension abilities among third year secondary school Bahraini students. Finally, the study also determined the significant difference in the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the reading comprehension abilities between the student-respondents in the private schools and the student-respondents in public schools.

1.8. Definition of Terms

The following terms are considered to be focal terminologies in this research. Thus, the following operational definition is imperative in order to facilitate common understanding among varying groups of readers.

Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies pertains to the respondents' observed and perceived awareness of the three types of reading strategies used in reading tasks. This includes the global reading strategies, problem-solving reading strategies, and the support reading strategies (Temur *et al* 2010). This also pertains to the independent variable of the study that is hypothesised to affect the level of reading comprehension abilities of the student-respondents. It was measured through the mean score obtained by the respondents with the use of the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory.

Level of Reading Comprehension refers to the raw scores obtained by the student-respondents in the FCE Reading Comprehension Test. This is hypothesised to be the dependent variable of the study which is composed of several levels such as the A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, and C2 levels according to the Common European Framework (CEFR, 2015).

A1 Level. This refers to a level of competence in language learning that is classified to be a breakthrough or beginner. At this level, the language learner is expected to “understand and use familiar everyday expressions and use very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type” (CEFR, 2015, p.5).

A2 Level. This refers to a level of competence in language learning that is classified to be a waystage or elementary. At this level, the language learner is expected to “understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate” (CEFR, 2015, p.5).

B1 Level. This refers to a level of competence in language learning that is classified to be a threshold or intermediate. At this level, the language learner is expected to “understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc” (CEFR, 2015, p.5).

B2 Level. This refers to a level of competence in language learning that is classified to be a vantage or upper intermediate. At this level, the language learner is expected to “understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in their field of specialization” (CEFR, 2015, p.5).

C1 Level. This refers to a level of competence in language learning that is classified to be an effective operational proficiency or advanced level. At this level, the language learner is expected to “understand a wide range of demanding, longer clauses, and recognize implicit meaning” (CEFR, 2015, p.5).

C2 Level. This refers to a level of competence in language learning that is classified to be a mastery or proficiency level. At this level, the language learner is expected to “understand with ease virtually everything read” (CEFR, 2015, p.5).

Global Reading Strategies. This pertains to one of the components of the language learner’s metacognitive awareness of reading strategies that enables the language learners to examine the macro view of the text that they are reading. Examples of these strategies include having a purpose in mind when they read, thinking about what they know to help them understand what they read, thinking about whether the content of the text fits their reading purpose, skimming the text first by noting characteristics like length and organization, deciding what to read closely and what to ignore, using reference materials such as dictionaries to help

them understand what they read, using tables, figures, and pictures in text to increase their understanding, using context clues to help them better understand what they are reading, checking their understanding when they come across conflicting information, and trying to guess what the material is about when they read (Wu *et al*, 2012).

Problem Solving Reading Strategies. This pertains to one of the components of the language learner's metacognitive awareness of reading strategies that enables the language learners to explore the micro view or individual details of the text that they are reading. Examples of these strategies in the act of include reading aloud to help them understand what they read, underlining or circling information in the text to help them remember it, using reference materials such as dictionaries to help them understand what they read, paraphrasing to better understand what they read, and going back and forth in the text to find relationships among ideas in it (Huo, 2013).

Support Reading Strategies. This pertains to one of the components of the language learner's metacognitive awareness of reading strategies that enables the language learners to be guided with tools and materials that are suitable to the text that they are reading. Examples of support reading strategies include the process of reading slowly but carefully to be sure they understand what they are reading, adjust the reading speed according to what they are reading, trying to picture or visualize information to help remember what they read, re-reading the text to increase their understanding, and trying to guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases (Temur *et al*, 2010).

1.9. Thesis Outline

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 provides a discourse on the nature and background of the problem. It justifies the research objectives such as the need to find solutions to the perennial problem on the weak reading comprehension of many students in the country, their weak levels of independent learning, and the need to link theory with empirical findings. It describes the significance of the thesis such as its theoretical and empirical contributions, inputs to language teaching, bases for curriculum development, guide to language planning policies, and signposts for language learning materials development. It also outlines the research objectives and research aims along with the research hypotheses. The final section of this chapter discusses the research scope and limitation and a succinct overview of the thesis.

Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive and substantial review of related literature on the theories and conceptual contentions about metacognition and reading comprehension. The discussion of the relevant literature is guided by the focal themes of the study such as the concept of metacognition, studies on reading comprehension, reading strategies, and researches that focused on the relationship between metacognitive skills and reading comprehension of different language learners. The last section of this chapter provides a commentary, synthesis, and analysis of the various readings and literature related to the focal variables of the research.

Chapter 3 explains the methodological framework of the research. It elaborates on the relevant methods and approaches of research that were applied in the study in order to address the research. It includes a discussion of the research design, research setting, respondents and the sampling method, the research instruments and their validity and

reliability features, data gathering procedure, and the appropriate data analysis.

Chapter 4 reflects the results based on the empirical data obtained during the data gathering procedure. It specifically addresses the focal research questions of the study such as the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies, the reading comprehension abilities, the relationship between the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and reading comprehension abilities, and the comparison of the significant differences in the respondents' performance in these two focal variables of the study.

Chapter 5 discusses the summary, conclusions, implications, and recommendations of the study. Implications for language pedagogy and learning are based on the empirical results obtained from the data gathering process. Conclusions are presented according to the research questions posed in the first chapter. The recommendations formulated at the end of this chapter primarily address the significant findings of the study, the research methodological framework in terms of its limitations, and the potential trajectories for future research.

Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the theoretical underpinnings and the related empirical research on the variables under investigation in this study. The initial section consists of a succinct discourse on the theories and conceptual contentions about metacognition and reading comprehension which are the focal variables in this study. The second section focuses on the related studies conducted in different contexts and linguistic settings. It is divided into three parts which include the researches on metacognition, studies on reading comprehension, and researches that focused on the relationship between metacognitive skills and reading comprehension of different language learners.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

The succeeding discussion on the theoretical framework is guided by the tables reflecting the basic contentions on the constructs of the two main variables. This includes theories, models, and assumptions related to metacognition and reading comprehension.

2.2.1. Assumptions Related to Metacognition

Table 1 depicts a summary of the arguments and propositions related to metacognition. As observed in the said table, Flavell (1976) defined metacognition as type of thinking that requires higher order processes of cognition involving conscious control. Such awareness of

thinking is essential in reinforcing the learning process in whatever subject areas.

Table (1)
Concept and Theories of Metacognition

Author	Conceptual and Theoretical Arguments
Flavell (1976)	Metacognition is a higher order thinking that involves active control over the thinking processes involved in learning
<u>Oxford (1990)</u>	Metacognitive strategies help learners manage themselves as learners, the general learning process, and specific learning tasks
Schraw and Dennison (1994)	Metacognitive strategies can help students to excel in planning, managing information, monitoring, debugging, and evaluating.
Taylor (1999)	Metacognition is an appreciation of what one already knows, together with a correct apprehension of the learning task and what knowledge and skills it requires, combined with the agility to make correct inferences about how to apply one's strategic knowledge to a particular situation, and to do so efficiently and reliably.
Anderson (2002)	The use of metacognitive strategies ignites one's thinking and can lead to more profound learning and improved performance, especially among learners who are struggling.
Ya-Ling and Wu (2008)	Metacognitive strategies are steps that learner take to manage or regulate their learning, such as planning and arranging for learning tasks, setting goals and objectives, monitoring the learning process for errors, and evaluating progress.

The said contention is also supported by Oxford (1990) by emphasizing that metacognitive processes assist language learners to take control over themselves in the holistic learning context. Through the consciousness of the overall learning process they are able to understand and manage their general learning processes as well as the specific learning tasks. It is evident from this elucidation that the being actively engaged in the task of processing information is the key to effective learning.

Schraw and Dennison (1994) provided the earliest description of metacognition. They explained that metacognitive strategies can assist students to excel in planning, managing information, monitoring, debugging, and evaluating. Inherent in their argument is the centrality of monitoring and evaluation of learning. This basically means that the contentions of Oxford (1990) and Flavell (1976) are affirmed in this proposition of Schraw and Dennison (1994). For a learner to be successful in his task of assimilating and accommodating concepts to his system, the need to plan, manage, and evaluate the processes he applied throughout the learning process is imperative.

On a similar argument, Taylor (1999) proposed a similar argument with the propositions put forward by Oxford (1990), and Flavell (1976), and Dennison (1994) in terms of the significant role of metacognition in general learning processes. Taylor (1999) explained that the knowledge of one's cognition and deliberate attempt to take control on the efficacy of this knowledge acquisition are key elements of metacognition. Learners appreciate and optimizes on the concepts that they are already familiar in order to move to the next level and close the knowledge gap. They are also assumed to apprehend and approach the learning task with the proper planning of the strategies that can make such attempts

successful and effective. Enthusiasm and awareness to rectify one's mistakes and lapses in learning are also needed in the implementation of authentic metacognitive strategy for learning.

In relation to the aforesaid proposition, Anderson (2002) advocated the idea that metacognition allows learners to maximize their learning and performance by applying active control and management over one's learning. This contention was supported by Ya-Ling and Wu (2008) that metacognitive techniques are important processes that students implement in order to control their learning. It includes their ability to plan which strategies will work best on a particular learning task and their capacity to identify which techniques should come first over the other in order to make their knowledge and skills acquisition efficient.

2.2.2. Assumptions Related to Reading

Some important conceptual underpinnings related to reading comprehension are presented in Table 2. As observed from this table, one of the contentions about reading comprehension is the significance of the background knowledge of the learners. Smith (1994) clearly advanced the idea that the learners' knowledge, experience, and understanding about the topic that they are important in the global understanding of the text. In a related elucidation on the nature of reading, Anderson (1994) emphasised the importance of schema activation and construction in the general understanding of the text that learners decode. This basically implies that readers adjust their own knowledge system when trying to understand a text that is presented to them. This argument is consistent with the cognitivists' perspective of learning wherein the learners are viewed as active participants of the learning process. Readers or learner, in general are expected to construct meanings from the stimuli that are

presented to them rather than by just memorizing and getting used to some respondents.

Table (2)
Contentions Related to Reading Comprehension

Author	Conceptual and Theoretical Arguments
Smith (1994)	The background knowledge of the learner interacts with the reading task and student's knowledge and previous experience with the world is crucial to deciphering a text.
Anderson (1994)	Comprehension is the process of activating or constructing a schema that provides a coherent explanation of objects and events mentioned in a discourse.
Goodman (1988)	Prediction is important in reading because the brain is always anticipating and predicting as it seeks order and significance in sensory inputs.
Mikulecky (2008)	Reading is a conscious and unconscious thinking process.
August and Shanahan (2006)	Second language reading involves many subskills.
Block (1992)	Strategic readers do not only sample the text, but also make hypotheses, confirm or reject them, and make new hypotheses while reading.

The primacy of prediction or anticipation of ideas that readers are going to encounter is another important element in a successful reading task (Goodman, 1988). This means that readers are expected to manage their sensory experience in such a way that they are able to activate prior experiences related to the topic that they are going to read. Being able to

activate appropriate sensory experiences enables a learner to plan and manage the right reading strategy that will be effective in specific reading task.

Block (1992), on a similar argument with that of Goodman (1988) and Anderson (1994), theorized that through metacognition, readers become strategic planners in the sense that they are able test, verify, and make new hypotheses. As an aspect of cognitive process, the contentions of Mikulecky (2008) provide strong support on the importance of metacognition and reading. This is because he viewed reading as a conscious and unconscious thinking process. The reader utilizes various processes to recreate the meaning that the wants to convey to the readers. In order to do this, the reader needs to compare and contrast textual inputs that best fit his or her prior experience and knowledge. This also means that a reader optimizes a large repository of experience and knowledge when he is performing a reading task. This is facilitated through the use of schemata or classified categories of knowledge and experience. It is also argued that the four components of basic comprehension skills, lexical or vocabulary skills, extensive reading ability, and fluency in reaching overlap.

August and Shanahan (2006) argued that extensive reading, comprehension skills, reading fluency, and vocabulary building are all integral parts of the development of effective second-language reading. Instruction in the key components of reading is necessary but not sufficient for teaching language-minority students to read and write proficiently in English. Oral proficiency in English is critical as well but student performance suggests that it is often overlooked in instruction.

From the aforementioned contentions of reading, it can be logically stated that reading is a complex process. This finds verity in the

assumption of Smith (1994), Anderson (1994), and Goodman (1988), who all argued about the cognitive processes involved in the task of reading. Moreover, Mikulecky (2008, August) and Shanahan (2006), and Block (1992) all support the various subskills that are important when a reader is performing a reading task.

2.3. Literature Review

In the succeeding discussion, empirical studies related to the level of metacognitive skills of different groups of learners, the level of reading comprehension skills of various language learners, and the relationship between the application of metacognitive skills and reading comprehension are reviewed.

2.3.1. Metacognitive Skills

There are various studies related to the level of metacognitive skills or types of metacognitive strategies applied by different groups of learners around the world. For example, Cardenas (2009) conducted a study on the impact of meta-cognitive awareness-raising strategy that was integrated in typical English sessions of EFL classroom who were taking up an education program in tertiary institution in Chile. It endeavored to evaluate the influence of awareness raising mechanism of metacognition on the levels of proficiency of the target language and the extent of independence toward learning.

One of the strengths in the said research of Cardenas (2009) is the fact that it not only investigate the relationship between the dependent and independent variables but it also examined several moderating and intervening variables, which led to the generalization that some

relationships between and among variables are not linear in the sense that these relationships are complex in nature. Involving a total of 40 college students who were under the education program of a tertiary institution was another strengths of the research. However, this could have been increased by the researcher in order to increase the generalizability of results. The said respondents were also exposed to conscious-raising activities integrated in their language lessons. The results of the study revealed that training the students to be aware of their learning strategies through conscious raising activities can result to increased proficiency levels. Such results were mostly evident among the weak learners which makes this an important research findings. Quantitative analysis of the research data indicated a complex type of relationship between the variables. Because of the significant positive effects of metacognition and the awareness raising activities, the research strongly recommend the integration of such strategies in many academic areas.

Magaldi's (2010) work discussed one aspect of metacognition which is the nature of learner autonomy and its positive influence on learning outcomes. The aforesaid endeavor explored the different theories and models of language learning and their impact on the curriculum framework and instructional strategies in the context of metacognition. It argued that metacognition significantly promotes enhanced learning because of its component processes such awareness of oneself and of the learning process itself. One of the strengths of the said research is that after enumerating the ramifications of using metacognition in several instructional models, the said paper proposed the use of incorporating the teaching and development of learning strategies in order to promote autonomous learning. The ability of the learners to exercise autonomy allows assimilation of important schema and concepts that are needed

effective and long-term learning process. An evident limitation of the said research is that it only covered a general scope of language learning and did not specifically focus on a specific language skills such as that of reading comprehension or writing skills.

Vaiciuniene and Uzpaliene's (2013) is significant to mention because it analyzed the different online reading strategies used by a specific group of learners and the said study also evaluated the correlation between metacognitive awareness and the level of online reading strategies. Through the use of the Online Survey of Reading Strategies (OSORS), the strategies applied by the student-respondents in various reading tasks were identified. It must be noted that the reading task and the reading strategies were in the context of a foreign language.

It can be argued that one of the strengths of Vaiciuniene and Uzpaliene's (2013) research is that it utilized a combination of the descriptive analysis and quantitative research method in addressing the research problem. However, it only used a total of 89 bonafide students who have different levels and experiences of online reading were selected as the respondents of the study. This number of respondents is relatively small in number but it still contributed to a significant empirical result in terms of metacognitive skills of a specific group of learners. The study revealed that many readers work directly with the passage that they are reading in order solve specific and global problems related to the text in online reading. An important implication of the said research is its proposition to integrate metacognitive reading strategies in reading instruction. The identification of their mostly used online reading strategies as revealed in the results obtained from research instrument could assist language teachers in designing lessons and activities that would support and complement the use of such strategies.

Vianty (2007) investigated into the students' use of metacognitive reading strategies in the context of analytic and pragmatic approaches to reading in two mutually distinct languages. A total of 101 students were selected to answer the Metacognitive Reading Strategies questionnaire (MRSQ). One of the strengths of the said research is that before administering the questionnaire to the target respondents, the researcher conducted an instrument validation procedure wherein the internal consistency of the respondents' responses based from the two English and Bahasa versions of MRSQ were confirmed. With the use of the t-test, it was revealed that there exists some significant differences in the use of metacognitive reading strategies between English texts and Bahasa texts. A more analytic reading strategy was used by the student-respondents when they are asked to read articles that are written in their native language. Nonetheless, when reading English texts, the student-respondents used a more pragmatic reading strategies. The attitude of the students to use pragmatic reading strategies was recorded to be highly favored and this was attributed to an identified factor. The simplicity of pragmatic reading strategies was one of the reason why students prefer the use of these type of reading strategies especially for less advanced readers. Despite the clear statistical differences between the various respondent clusters and the accurate statistical results, the research recommends a replication procedure to a larger sample in the future in order to verify the said findings. Hence, an evident limitation of this research is the relatively small number of respondents.

In the research of Jaleel (2016), it was argued that developing metacognitive abilities does not necessarily mean that readers are trained to be reflective in their reading tasks. Instead, it primarily entails the learning and application of specific learning strategies. There are various

terminologies and jargons associated with the umbrella term of metacognition and this includes executive skills, higher-order skills, metacomponents, metamemory, metacognitive awareness process, metacognitive experiences, metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive skills, and metacognitive beliefs. These processes and conditions allow the learners to be mindful and be aware of the processes about learning and the acquisition of concepts and information.

The aforesaid study of Jaleel (2016) has some strengths and limitations. One of its strengths in relation to the present study is that it investigated the metacognitive awareness of a specific group of high school students with the use of an awareness inventory that was standardized in nature. It also verified the assumption that there exists significant variations in the metacognitive awareness of the respondents when grouped according to gender, locality, and the type of school affiliation. Through the use of appropriate statistical tools and tests, it advance the idea that the application of metacognitive skills vary from one group of students to the other and some factors such as gender and locality could affect the application of these metacognitive processes. One apparent limitation is the application of a single group of learners instead of comparing the results with other group of learners from another culture or using a longitudinal approach.

Another important study in the area of metacognition is that of Aydin (2016) which investigated the correlation between secondary school students' self-efficacy perceptions and beliefs toward a science subject and their extent of usage of several metacognitive strategies in learning biology as a science subject. One of the strengths of this research is the use of a relatively large sample as reflected in its utilization of a total of 268 secondary schools students in different high schools as the

respondents of the research. The said students were enrolled in a biology class in Kars, Turkey and they were required to complete a research survey after being selected to be part of the research sample. The Self Efficacy for Learning and Performance was administered to these group of respondents and the Metacognitive Self-Regulation subscales of Motivational Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) was also administered after the respondents completed answering the first research instrument. The last research instrument that was administered was the Academic Motivation Scale for Learning Biology. The research was delimited in the usage of a quantitative approach in terms of its research methodology.

It was revealed in the research findings of Aydin (2016) that the utilization of metacognitive strategies along with the manifestation of self-efficacy had a promising effect and correlation with their internal motivation to learn the subject matter. Demotivation was found out to have a direct correlation with self-efficacy, however. In like manner, the use of metacognitive strategies did not predict amotivation but it was significantly considered to be one of the best predictor for extrinsic motivation. Finally, the research findings revealed that amotivation has a negative relationship with the other sub-variables. An important implication that can be drawn from the said research is the significance of metacognitive strategies in learning and in predicting some types and aspects of motivation.

Alvarado, Puente, Jimenez, and Jimenez's (2012) research is also significant to note because it utilized a modified Scale of Reading Consciousness in assessing the level of metacognitive skills of a selected group of respondents. It was argued in the said research that metacognition involves structures about knowledge and about certain

processes that are cognitive in nature. It put forward the assumption that young learners assimilate and accommodate a bulk of knowledge and beliefs that allow them to control, monitor, and evaluate their learning as they are exposed to new ideas and experiences. In general, metacognition has been assumed and acknowledged to affect academic performance but little has been done to investigate its applicability for deaf learners. Nonetheless, it was recommended that metacognitive awareness and skills need to be developed in many academic areas. The strengths of their study are reflected in the use of valid and reliable research instruments before proceeding with the data gathering procedure. However, their study was delimited also to the application of quantitative approach in terms of data gathering process and data analysis.

2.3.2. Reading Comprehension Skills

One of the focal variables is reading comprehension skills. In the succeeding discussion, the different researches that focus solely on reading comprehension, reading motivation, and reading strategies are reviewed. One of the studies related to the investigation of reading comprehension skills of selected learners was conducted by Baier (2005). The said study hypothesized that students who use reading comprehension strategies while reading has the propensity to retain large chunks of information and inputs that allow them to understand the text in an efficient manner.

One evident limitation of the research of Baier (2005) is the use of a relatively small number of samples. In more specific premise, a total of 14 elementary students from a private school were selected as the respondent of the research. On the contrary, it has notable research methodological strengths because it applied a longitudinal approach as

reflected in the process of requiring the research participants to complete the Qualitative Reading Inventory and answer different sets of reading comprehension tests. At the onset of the study, the student-respondents were asked to learn strategies for self-questioning during a reading task. It consisted for a total of six weeks and at the end of the sixth week, the student-respondents were required to answer the Qualitative Reading Inventory and the reading comprehension tests. It was revealed that a total of 12 out of 14 respondents had an improvement in terms of their reading comprehension skills after the six weeks of training and learning the strategies for self-questioning. It was also concluded that training the students the reading questioning strategy could promote advantageous effect on the students' general reading comprehension skills because the said strategy is a component of metacognition that can evidently promote effective and long-term learning.

In the research of Jiang (2011), the interrelationships of first language (L1) literacy, second language (L2) proficiency, and L2 reading skills of a selected group of EFL learners were investigated. The results indicated that there was a correlation between first language literacy and the second language reading comprehension skills of the learner-respondents. After performing the regression analysis, it was indicated that second language proficiency contributed up to 30% of the variance in second language reading comprehension performance. Such results imply that reading comprehension is a complex process wherein many variables that constantly interact with each other. Investigating the factors of prior learning and metacognition in relation with the various levels of reading comprehension especially in the context of second language or foreign language reading is a research endeavor that is worthy to be implemented.

One of the strengths of Jiang's (2011) research was the use of relatively large samples. A total of 246 Chinese university level students were chosen as the respondents in the said study. Their literacy in their first language and their performance in their second language were determined by using the admission examinations upon entering college level. Another positive feature of the said research is the use of a combination of a researcher-made test and a reading comprehension section of a standardized exam in measuring their second language reading comprehension skills. On another note, the research could have used a mixed method approach by applying an interview technique that could have elicited opinions and narrative descriptions from the participants about their experiences.

Cromley's (2005) research is also relevant in this research because it tackled a focal variable which is reading comprehension skills. The results indicate a number of the student respondents used think-aloud protocol when they were required to read the text that was historical in nature. An important finding of the study is its affirmation that background knowledge and vocabulary were seen as the best predictor for the overall reading comprehension levels. Consequently, there exists a significant difference in the general comprehension levels of reading comprehension between low and advance student-participants in the experiment. The extent of predictiveness of background knowledge and vocabulary was also influenced by the type of learner wherein low and advance student-participants have different levels of reading comprehension predictors. It can be implied from the findings that background knowledge as a component of prior learning in metacognitive skills awareness utilization is important in enhancing reading comprehension.

One of the strengths of Cromley's (2005) research is its exploration of an important research problem. Albeit the said study did not tackle the entire metacognitive variable, it is important to mention that it did confirm the important role of prior knowledge in achieving the goal of enhanced reading performance. Another strength of his study is that it primarily replicated a comparison of the Construction-Integration (CI), Verbal Efficiency (VE), and Inferential Mediation (IM) models of reading comprehension. These four models were tested using its individual fitness in terms of the respondents' performance in inferencing, using background knowledge, utilizing appropriate vocabulary, reading words accurately, and general reading comprehension.

Akyol, Cakiroglu, and Kuruyer (2014) conducted a study that aimed to improve the reading performance of the students in a selected institution. It was revealed that the respondents improved significantly in the skills of reading aloud and word recognition. Finally, the student concluded that the application of appropriate enrichment program is vital in achieving the goal of enhancing the reading comprehension skills of the students. One way of achieving this is to optimize the prior knowledge and background experiences of the learners.

An apparent strength in the research of Akyol *et al* (2014) is its application of an enrichment program as part of the research process. However, it is delimited only to a total of 3 participants in the fifth grade who were selected and were tested in terms of their skills in word recognition and overall reading comprehension skills. Because it used a combination of qualitative and quantitative statistical measures in order to analyze the data obtained from the respondents, it makes the study significant in terms of its application of research methodological design.

2.3.3. Reading Strategies

In the area of reading strategies, the research of Rastakhiz and Safari (2014) is important to note. The said study examined the correlation between support reading strategies and global reading strategies of a group of foreign language learners at the intermediate level in Iran. It analyzed the effect of the said reading strategies on the respondents' reading comprehension ability. The most frequently used reading strategy among the learner-respondents was the support reading strategy. Global reading strategies were the second in rank in terms of reading strategy usage and awareness. It was the problem solving reading strategy that was found to be the least used among the respondents. It was affirmed that there was a correlation between strategy use and the general comprehension abilities of the students.

The aforesaid study of Rastakhiz and Safari (2014) has some strengths and limitations. Only total of 100 EFL learners were selected as the respondents of the study. This number could have been increased in order to increase the generalizability. One of its strengths is that the respondents were subjected to take a Cambridge reading exam and the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS). These instruments have high level of reliability and validity, which makes the research results conclusive and highly reliable. The results revealed that the EFL learners had a high level of awareness of their reading strategies and that they were categorized as active readers because of this level of utilization.

Solak and Altay (2014) also investigated the usage of reading strategies among 130 prospective teachers of English in a specific government university. It was indicated in the results that the problem solving reading strategies were the most commonly used strategies employed by the respondents. They had to mark, underline, and encircle

the reading text in order to facilitate better understanding of what they are reading. There was no significant difference in the reading strategy usage between the male and female student-respondents.

An obvious positive application in the said research of Solak and Altay (2014) is its usage of the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSI). This instrument has high level of validity and reliability since it has been developed and modified by previous scholars who also investigated the same focal variable. The use of academic reading materials based on the university curriculum in order to measure their reading comprehension abilities was another positive feature of the research. Using an internal measure of reading comprehension skills, instead of using the Cambridge or any other standardized reading comprehension instruments, have given the respondents of the study an opportunity to use an authentic and relevant material that is free from higher cultural load.

Another empirical research that delved into the analysis of reading strategies is that of Chen and Chen (2015). In their study, the reading strategies used by high school foreign language students were explored. It was evident in the findings that there was a considerable high level of awareness and usage of reading strategies among the participants. Global reading strategies were the most frequent reading strategy to be applied in reading tasks among the respondents and this was followed by the problem,-solving reading strategies. In terms of gender differences, it was revealed that female learners employ more reading strategies in EFL reading tasks than their male counterparts.

It is apparent that one of the strengths of the said research of Chen and Chen (2015) is its application of a large number of samples. Unlike the previous studies on the analysis of reading strategy usage, the study

made use of a large number of respondents because they selected approximately 1,200 high school students as respondents. It also utilized Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) in measuring the student-respondents' reading strategy usage. This adds to its research methodological strength because the said instrument has high level of validity and reliability as well.

Hung and Ngan (2015) also analyzed the extent of reading strategy usage among a certain group of language learners in an EFL setting. To be specific, selected freshmen and junior level English major students in one of the universities in Vietnam were selected to participate in the research. It was the junior university students who used translating, resourcing and highlighting more frequently than any other reading strategy. An interesting finding in the said research is that there was a significant variation in the junior students' use of identification, analyzing, and elaboration reading strategies. In general the two groups of learners had a moderate level of reading strategy usage. One of the strengths of the said research is that instead of using the conventional reading strategies questionnaire, the aforesaid researchers used an instrument that was composed of 22 statements indicating the reading strategy usage. It was discovered that the first year students used skimming, scanning, translating, highlighting, and relevant-thinking more frequently than the other strategies.

Mahmoudi's (2014) research explored awareness of reading strategies of around 115 university student. It is important to note that the results of the said quantitative study confirmed that the language learners had moderate level of usage of the reading strategies. Nonetheless, there exist some significant differences in the various scales of the research instrument. The highly used reading strategy was the problem solving

reading strategy. It was proven to be higher than the global and support reading strategies. It was argued that the goal of identifying the most common reading strategy by the language learner is an important element in the design and delivery of language lessons to various groups of learners. Being cognizant of the various reading strategies can allow language teachers to integrate the use of the most helpful reading strategy in their language learning sessions. One of the strengths of the said research is its usage of highly reliable and valid research instruments. It was, however, delimited to the use of a single approach, which is the quantitative research approach.

The study of Shehadeh (2015) analyzed also the different types of reading strategies employed by engineering students in a selected polytechnic university. An important contribution of the study is that it aimed to investigate the differences of reading strategy usage between high proficiency and low proficiency students. Identification of the highly used and the least used reading strategy for the different groups of learners was sought by the aforementioned research. With the involvement of 100 engineering students as the respondents of the study, it was revealed that the most commonly used reading strategy was the global reading strategy which was followed by the problem solving reading strategy. An important finding in the said study is its affirmation that there exist a correlation between the language learners' reading comprehension abilities and the use of global reading strategies. It was evident in the findings that there was a significant difference in the usage frequency of reading strategies between highly proficient readers and the low proficient readers. For top-down processing, the global reading strategy was the most frequently use by the language learners. Both the highly proficient and low proficient readers have the same order of

preference in terms of the reading strategy use: that is global, problem-solving, and support reading strategies.

One of the notable strengths in the study of Shehadeh (2015) is the fact that instead of using the traditionally used instruments for measuring this variable, the said study employed three types of instruments such as the questionnaire on the use of reading strategy, selected TOEFL reading passages, and the samples of reading passages from newspapers. Another important contribution of the study is that it aimed to investigate the differences of reading strategy usage between high proficiency and low proficiency students. Identification of the highly used and the least used reading strategy for the different groups of learners was significant in the sense that previous researchers lack the comparison in terms of this variable.

Chen's (2015) research is vital to note when it comes to the analysis of reading strategy use because the said study analyzed the foreign language learners' usage of such strategies in online reading tasks. In this study, a total of 94 foreign language learners were subjected to an online survey of their current use of reading strategies. Similar to the findings of the previous studies, it was revealed that the global reading strategies were the most frequently used strategies among the foreign language learners. This was evident in their frequent use of contextual clues, table observations, picture marking strategies in various online articles and texts. Highly proficient learners employ more global and problem reading strategies than the low proficient language learners. It is interesting to note that the analysis did not affirm the significant difference in the use of reading strategy between the male and female foreign language learners when it comes to reading only text.

The aforesaid study of Chen (2015) bears similarity with the study of Shehadeh (2015) because it also compared the reading strategies of different group of learners with varied levels of proficiencies. One of its strengths is its application of valid and reliable research instruments. Nonetheless, the researcher could have incorporated introspection research techniques in order to elicit personal attitudes and perceptions of the research respondents.

Amer, Barwani, and Ebrahim (2010) also examined the online reading strategy usage of two groups of university students who are foreign language learners of the English language. The Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) was utilized in measuring the said variable. It was affirmed in the analysis that there was a significant difference in the use of reading strategies between the fourth year level university students and the first year level university students. The results were also corollary with the previous studies on reading strategy usage. As it was revealed in the results, highly proficient readers tend to use global reading strategies than the low proficient readers. Support reading strategies were more frequently used by the first year university students than the other types of reading strategies. Gender did not affect the use of reading strategy. Global reading strategies were more frequently used by the fourth year university students. In terms of reading proficiency level, it was revealed that the fourth year students were more proficient readers than the first year students. One of the strengths of the said study is its usage of the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS), which is a highly reliable and valid research instrument. An apparent limitation of this study is its sole usage of cross-sectional research approach and quantitative design.

The online reading strategies of another group of foreign language learners were also investigated by Al-Yami (2013). The said study

involved the 110 university students who were enrolled under the languages and translation program of the university. The Survey of Online Reading Strategies was used to measure the said variable. In this study, the respondents frequently used the problem solving reading strategies which was followed by the global reading strategies. Support reading strategies were the least frequently used strategies among the said group of respondents. Based on the correlational analysis performed by the researcher, it was indicated that there was no correlation between the reading strategy usage and the respondents' age, level of university study, frequency of online interaction, and the years of computer usage. There was a low level of correlation between internet usage and online reading strategy use. Gender was only found to have a significant correlation in terms of the respondents' use of support reading strategies. An obvious strength of the research is its application of valid methodological framework which is the correlational research design because the study aimed to determine the correlation of focal variables. However, the study could have complemented the numerical results with the qualitative inputs from the respondents in the form of interview responses.

Abidin and Riswanto's research is also important to note because (2012) they conducted a research on the comprehension studies of 60 language learners in a foreign language classroom setting. The Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) questionnaire was also used in measuring the variables of the study. It was affirmed in the analysis that gender is not a causative variable on the use of reading strategy. An important finding that was put forward in the study is the proposition that language learners understand the significance of the use of such reading strategies in improving their comprehension of a particular reading passage but they lack the knowledge of how to use such strategies. Just like the previous

researches on reading strategy usage, the said research has an apparent limitation is the usage of a single research approach, which is quantitative in orientation. Its evident research strength is its compliance to valid research methodological design.

In the empirical work of Elhoweris, Alsheikh, and Haq (2011), the reading strategies of students with learning disabilities were explored. With the use of both quantitative and qualitative research approaches, it was found out that the respondents were aware of the reading strategies but they do not use these strategies in actual reading tasks. In processing difficult text passages, the most commonly used strategies were to examine how the content of the reading passage suits the purpose of the author and the process of taking a pause and thinking about the nature of the text that the respondents are reading. Problem-solving reading strategies were the most frequently used strategy, while the support reading strategies were the least frequently used strategy in reading difficult and easy textual passages. It is apparent that one of the strengths of this research is its application of a mixed method approach as reflected in its usage of both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis.

Quiroz's (2014) research is another research that is important to be reviewed in this section because it explored the use of reading strategies among 19 bilingual university students. Through the use of the think-aloud technique and semi-structured interviews, it was discovered that the reading proficiency levels of the language learners significantly affect their use of reading strategy. The significant difference in the reading strategy utilization between the highly proficient and the low proficient readers was only evident at the level of syntax reading tasks. It was assumed based on the results of the study that the shared systems of

writing between the first language and second language could affect the use of reading strategy.

In the research of Quiroz (2014), one of the research strengths is its application of a mixed method approach as reflected in its usage of both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis. This is similar to the technique used by Elhoweris *et al* (2011) wherein they also used both quantitative and qualitative research approaches in investigating the reading strategies of students with learning disabilities. Reviewing empirical researches related to reading strategies is imperative because of the main variable of the current study which is on the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies.

2.3.4. Metacognition and Reading Comprehension

The relationship between metacognition and reading comprehension is one of the hypotheses of the study. Hence, reviewing the succeeding studies which focused on the correlation of the two variables is an imperative process that reinforces the empirical underpinnings of the present research. Table 3 reflects the main features of these related empirical studies.

Table (3)

Summary of Studies on the Relationship between Metacognitive Skills
and Reading Comprehension

Authors	Variables	Participants/ Respondents	Instruments Used
Ahmadi, Ismail & Abdullah (2013)	Metacognitive Reading Strategy Awareness and Reading Comprehension	Secondary Sources	Literature Review and Meta-analysis of Existing Empirical Literatures

Authors	Variables	Participants/ Respondents	Instruments Used
Alhaqbani & Riazi (2012)	Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategy Use	122 Undergraduate EFL University Students	30-Item Survey of Reading Strategies based on the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSI) (Mokhtari & Reichard, 2002)
Vehovec, Zubković, Reinić (2014)	Metacognitive Knowledge, Attitude toward Reading, and Reading Comprehension	Early Adolescents in Croatia	14-Item Measure of Metacognitive Knowledge of Reading Strategies (Miholic, 1994 and Schmitt, 1990); 20-Item Elementary Reading Attitude Survey (ERAS; McKenna & Kear, 1990)
Osterholm (2006)	Metacognitive Skills and Reading Comprehension	9 Student Teacher Volunteers	Reading Comprehension on Texts Focusing Mathematical Topics; Oral Interviews and Focus Group Discussion on Metacognitive Strategies Used
Phakiti (2006)	Metacognitive Strategies and Reading Performance	358 EFL University Students	EFL Reading Test (Rational Cloze Test and Comprehension); Cognitive and Metacognitive Strategy Questionnaire (Verbal Reports, Self-Reports, Think-Aloud Protocols, Retrospective Interviews)

Authors	Variables	Participants/ Respondents	Instruments Used
Sonleitner (2005)	Metacognitive Strategy and Attitude toward Reading in the Different Disciplines	430 Biology Students	Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSI); Likert Scale on the Attitude toward Reading (based on Shaw and Wright, 1967)
Tavakoli (2014)	Metacognitive Strategy Awareness and Reading Comprehension	100 Undergraduat e Students	Michigan Test of English Language Proficiency (MTELP); the Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS), semi-structured interview, a demographic profile questionnaire, and a reading comprehension test.
Thao, Mai, and Ngoc (2014)	Metacognitive Strategies and Reading Comprehension Skills in Technical Subject Areas	592 First Year Students in a University	Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS); Reading Comprehension Test
Guo and Roehrig (2011)	Metacognitive Awareness; Second Language Comprehension and Language Knowledge- Related Variables	278 Undergraduat e Students	Reading Test in the TOEFL; Metacognitive Reading Strategies Questionnaire (MRSQ); Metacognitive Reading Awareness Inventory (MRAI)

Authors	Variables	Participants/ Respondents	Instruments Used
Razi and Cubukco (2014)	Metacognition and Reading Comprehension	93 Freshmen University Students	Reading Comprehension Test; Metacognitive Reading Strategy Questionnaire
Ditzel (2010)	Metacognitive Reading Strategies and Self-Regulation	5 College Students	Interviews, Think-Aloud Protocols, Informal Observations, and Document Analysis
Wu, Valcke, and Keer (2012)	Metacognitive Awareness and Reading Strategies	494 - 2119 Middle School Students	Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory
Temur, Kargin, Bayar, and Bayar (2010)	Metacognitive Awareness	101 Grade 6,7, and 8 Students	Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSI)
Magogwe (2013)	Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies and Reading Skills	University Students	Survey of Reading Strategies Questionnaire and Structured Interview
Yuksel and Yuksel (2012)	Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies and Reading Skills	University Students	Survey of Reading Strategies
Ghyasi, Safdaria, and Farsani (2013)	Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies and Reading Skills	Undergraduate Students	Survey of Reading Strategies and Structured Interview

Authors	Variables	Participants/ Respondents	Instruments Used
Huo (2013)	Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies and Reading Skills	Junior College Students	Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory and Reading Test

One of the relevant studies that attempted to investigate the correlation between metacognition and reading comprehension is that of Ahmadi, Ismail & Abdullah (2013). The said research attempted to determine whether or not meta-cognitive reading strategy awareness improves the general reading abilities of EFL learners. Finally, the results of the said empirical research indicated that metacognitive reading comprehension competency is important in holistic second language learning. Proficient learners are found to be more likely to utilize metacognitive reading comprehension skills than less proficient language learners. Readers who maximize the usage of metacognitive reading comprehension skills are more efficient in handling problems in different reading texts and tasks. An important conclusion of the study is its emphasis on the empirical findings that metacognitive reading comprehension skills has a positive effect on the reading performance of both less proficient and more proficient readers.

It is apparent that Ahmadi's *et al* (2013) research has several strengths because of its significant contributions. One of the most important contributions of the paper is its clarification on the construct of metacognitive reading strategy and its significance in promoting enhanced reading comprehension abilities. Second, it provided a comprehensive literature review in terms of the process related to

metacognitive reading strategy. It also analyzed the assumed correlation between metacognitive reading strategy awareness and reading comprehension.

In the study of Alhaqbani & Riazi (2012), the awareness of reading strategy among tertiary level students were investigated in the context of reading Arabic texts. It was revealed that problem solving reading strategies were perceived to be more practical than support reading strategies or even global reading strategies. There was a significant statistical correlation between the student-respondents' Arabic reading ability and their overall use of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies, between their Arabic reading ability and use of global reading strategies, and between their Arabic reading ability and use of problem solving reading strategies. African language learners apply a more global reading strategy than Asian language learners. Students at the higher level of education applied more strategy usage than those who were still in their freshmen and sophomore years.

Although the study of Alhaqbani & Riazi (2012) offers significant empirical information on the nature of the correlation between reading comprehension skills and the use of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies, there were limitations pointed out. To address these limitations, it was recommended to replicate the study by involving both genders and by using different texts other than Arabic. One apparent strength of the said research is that it made use of context of reading Arabic texts, which was highly relevant to the respondents of their study. It also made use of a significant number of respondents wherein a total of 122 college students from Asia and Africa were required to answer a 30-item inventory of reading strategies. Hence, the use of this cross-sectional design poses to be one of the unique features of this research.

The research of Vehovec, Zubković, and Reinić (2014) is also relevant to be reviewed because it examined the metacognitive knowledge of reading strategies and the attitudes toward reading before adulthood by taking into consideration the influence of gender in these developmental changes. It also analyzed and evaluated a model of correlation between different set of variables such as the correlation between gender and metacognitive knowledge of reading comprehension, the correlation between reading attitudes and metacognitive knowledge of reading comprehension, the correlation between actual reading comprehension levels and metacognitive knowledge of reading comprehension. The results revealed that metacognitive knowledge of reading strategies had a significant influence in improving the reading comprehension levels of the respondents at the onset of their adolescent years. Recreational reading attitudes decreased during their fourth grade level while academic reading attitudes decreased significantly at the start of their grade 6 level. It was also revealed that females had better usage of metacognitive knowledge of reading strategies than males.

One of the most important strengths in the study of Vehovec *et al* (2014) is its application of a longitudinal design. It can be noted that a total of 175 learners comprised this longitudinal study which started when the respondents were still in grade 4. The use of longitudinal approach is commendable in the sense that it gives the researcher an overview of the progress that a learner makes over time. Another strength of the said research is the use of follow-up evaluations. In the said study, follow-up evaluations of their performance and behaviors in terms of the aforesaid variables were conducted when they were in grade 6 and grade 8.

In the study of Tavakoli (2014), the general structure of metacognitive awareness of reading strategy utilization and its correlation

with reading comprehension were explored. It analyzed the impact of gender and the language competency or proficiency level on the usage patterns of these strategies. It was revealed that there exists a significant correlation metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and reading comprehension level. The most frequently used strategy by the Iranian EFL students was the Support Reading Strategies (SUP). This is followed by the Global Reading Strategies (GLOB). Problem-Solving Strategies (PROB) were the least utilized strategies by the Iranian EFL students.

An evident strength in the research of Tavakoli (2014) is the usage of valid and reliable instruments as well as the application of a mixed method approach. To be specific, the instruments used included the Survey of Reading Strategies Questionnaire (SORS), an interview procedure that was semi-structured, and a reading comprehension test. Random sampling of respondent samples was opted by the researcher. Descriptive statistics such as the frequency counts and mean scores were used to summarize the data on the strategy usage. To analyze the correlation between the learners' reading comprehension and their usage of metacognitive reading strategies, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used. With the use of one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), the researcher was able to analyze the variation of strategy usage when the respondents are grouped according to gender and other categories. These features of the said research contribute to its overall strength.

Thao, Mai, and Ngoc (2014) also analyzed the relationship between metacognition and reading comprehension. In the said research, a total of 28 reading strategies were identified and the respondents indicated a significant difference in the utilization of these strategies. This significant difference in the strategy usage was reflected between low

performing students and high performing students and this was recorded in the area of applying context clues to understand meanings, guessing the meanings of unknown phrases and words, and the going back and forth in the reading passage. Advanced readers were seen to apply 7 out of 8 strategies and this was higher in number than the weak readers in the said research. The strategy of translating into the local language or terminology had a significant difference recorded among the low-proficiency cluster of learners. Reliance on the verbatim translation of phrases and words in the reading passage was seen to be most frequently used strategy by the low-proficiency readers. Avoiding the literal translation of phrases and words in the reading passage was observed most often among the high-proficiency readers. This is because they tend to use more linguistic markers in decoding the meaning of the text. The application of valid quantitative statistical measures and the use of highly reliable research instruments are some of the strengths of this research.

One of the researches that examined the functions of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies, awareness of syntactic structures in English, and the knowledge of vocabulary structures in reading comprehension is that of Guo and Roehrig (2011). The aforementioned study selected Chinese-speaking college students as the respondents. Findings of the study indicated that specific knowledge of the second language was the best predictor for reading comprehension of a second language. It was indicated in the results of the study using multi-group analysis that there was a significant correlation between metacognitive awareness, specific knowledge of the second language, and the reading comprehension skills of the second language learners. The strong significant correlation between second language reading comprehension and metacognitive awareness of reading strategies implies that integrating

metacognitive awareness training in language classrooms is important in achieving efficient language learning results. Probing specific reading comprehension subskills and its relation to the metacognitive awareness of the language learners poses to be one of the strengths of this research aside from the fact that it also utilized valid measures of its variables.

Razi and Cubukcu (2014) also investigated the impact of a metacognitive reading strategy training programme (METARESTRAP) on metacognitive reading strategies and reading comprehension. A total of 93 first year college students taking a language education program in a university were chosen as the respondents of the research. It was revealed in the results of the research that the training program significantly increased the reading comprehension skills of the learner-participants because of they were trained how to use their metacognitive awareness skills. To be precise, they were taught how to use the different aspects of metacognitive skills such as their procedural knowledge, declarative knowledge, and conditional knowledge. The significant effect of the metacognitive awareness training program was recorded to be most efficient in the areas of textual coherence, structures of the reading text, questions related to global meaning, cohesion questions that are in matching type formats, and tasks related to the identification of main ideas, opinions, and other similar textual patterns.

In the aforesaid research of Razi and Cubukcu (2012), one of the apparent strengths is the use of a different research design rather than the traditional descriptive survey. Using a quasi-experimental research design, the students who participated in the research were given a pre-test and posttest in terms of their reading comprehension levels. Then, they were exposed to a six weeks of training on the metacognitive reading strategy technique. However, some limitations in this type of research are

the threats to external and internal validity that could have been inherent in the matching process and in the manipulation of the treatment given to the different group of respondents.

The metacognitive reading strategies and the reading comprehension skills of five university students were investigated by Ditzel (2010). Through the use of a case study approach, the ability of the student-respondents to regulate their reading was examined and analyzed. In the said research several instruments and tools were highlighted such as the utilization of think-aloud techniques, observations that are not formal in nature, analysis of documents, and interviews. It was indicated from the results of the case study that reading comprehension is improved significantly through the use of metacognitive reading strategies. It also allowed the learners to regulate their reading in order to tackle difficult reading tasks and problems. An obvious limitation of the study is the generalizability of results because of the inclusion of only five respondents. Consequently, this type of research applied a case study approach which justified the inclusion of this specific number of research participant.

Wu, Valcke, and Keer's (2012) research is significant to note because it aimed to verify the validity and applicability of the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory in the Chinese educational context (MARSI-CN). Two pilot studies were conducted before the main study was implemented. At the onset of the first pilot study, the original questionnaire in English was translated into Chinese and there were 216 students from various middle schools who participated. The next final study involved the process of revising the initial translation and having it administered to another 494 students. After determining and ensuring the validity and reliability of the said

instrument, a final copy of the translated questionnaire was set. This was included in the main study, wherein the revised MARSI-CN was administered to 2119 students. The methods used in determining the validity of the instruments included exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. An important contribution of the said study was its empirical data suggesting that the MARSI-CN is a valid and reliable instrument in measuring the metacognitive awareness of second language learners in terms of tasks related to reading comprehension. The use of valid and highly reliable research instruments and the process of translating the instruments into the local language of the research respondents are some of the notable strengths of this research.

Temur, Kargin, Bayar, and Bayar (2010) investigated the variations among 6th, 7th, and 8th grades in terms of their metacognitive awareness of the reading process. A correlational research design was utilized in the study and a total of 101 learners from a public institution were selected as the respondents. Through the use of appropriate and relevant statistical tests, the results revealed that there was a positive correlation between the reading comprehension skills of the public school learners and their usage of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. One of the apparent limitations in this research is its sole usage of the quantitative approach. Other research designs could have been integrated in order to maximize triangulation techniques.

Similar to the previously-mentioned studies, Magogwe's (2013) study also explored metacognitive awareness but it was in the context of the University of Botswana students in the Faculty of Social Sciences. It made use of the Survey of Reading Strategies Questionnaire (SORS) of Mokhtari and Sheorey (2002) and the semi-structured interview technique in order to gather relevant data. The findings revealed that the ESL

learner-respondents have high level of reading comprehension levels and the same time they also reported to have high level of usage of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. Learners who have higher usage of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies are better in terms of reading proficiency levels than those who have lower usage of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. This is because of the fact that they are able to manage and monitor their reading more efficiently than those who do not use such processes in a more frequent manner. The use of a mixed method approach is one of the strengths of this research.

The research of Yuksel and Yuksel (2012) is another empirical endeavor that focused on the analysis of the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and its correlation with the reading comprehension involving academic texts. In the said study, a group of Turkish college students were selected as the respondents and they were asked to complete the Survey of Reading Strategies questionnaire. It was indicated based on the statistical analysis that the university students employed global, problem solving, and support reading strategies when they are asked to read academic articles. The most frequently used reading strategies were the problem solving reading strategies and the least used reading strategies are the support reading strategies. The respondents also reported that they are aware of the importance of such strategies because of the nature of academic reading which requires them to use such processes. The said research could have utilized a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches to complement the numerical data with the qualitative data from the research respondents.

Ghyasi, Safdaria, and Farsani's (2013) study also investigated the metacognitive awareness in reading English texts in the context of selected tertiary level students. The Survey of Reading Strategy (SORS)

was specifically used and the said questionnaire categorizes reading strategies into three classifications such as global, problem solving, and support strategies. The results revealed that some of the university students were not aware of these strategies. Problem solving strategies were seen to be the most frequently used strategies, while the global reading strategies were seen to be the second in rank in terms of the frequency of strategy usage. Support reading strategies were reported to be the least used strategies in reading. Because of these findings, it was recommended that teaching second language and foreign language learners in terms of the use and importance of such strategies is vital in the goal of increasing their overall linguistic competence of the target language. One of the strengths of this study is its application of a relatively large number of samples. A total of 194 university students in three different universities were selected as the respondents of the study. It also used highly reliable and valid research instruments.

Huo (2013) conducted a study that identified the types of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies of a select group of foreign language students at the tertiary level. It attempted to explore the correlation between metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the reading performance of Taiwanese students in an identified university. The findings revealed that the most frequently used reading strategies were the problem-solving reading strategies and this was followed by the global reading strategies. The least used reading strategies are the support reading strategies. Correlation analysis indicated that the general usage of these metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the specific use of problem-reading strategies could positively influence the reading comprehension levels of the learners. Similar to the study of Ghyasi *et al* (2013), one of the strengths of this

study is its application of a relatively large number of samples. To be specific, the research selected 454 university students who use English as their foreign language. It also used highly reliable and valid research instruments and applied valid statistical measures.

In the study of Osterholm (2006), a set of comprehension criteria was used to explore the learners' performance in reading a text. A total of 9 student teachers were chosen to be part of the research respondents and they were interviewed in terms of their general understanding of the text. They specifically reported that they experience some difficulties in understanding the article related to a technical subject matter. Monitoring their reading is one of the commonly reported strategies and this was attributed to the nature of the text that they are reading. Evidently, the text contained some symbolic language and required the readers to have conceptual and procedural understanding. Such processes are important components of metacognitive skills and metacognitive awareness in general. Hence, the importance of training learners on how to use such metacognitive strategies especially in reading technical texts is emphasized. The use of qualitative approach is not supported with quantitative data in this research, which poses some limitations. The number of respondents could have been increased in this study of Osterholm (2006).

The research of Phakiti (2006) is important to review because it examined the nature of cognitive strategies and metacognitive strategies and their correlation with the reading comprehension levels of second language learners. The results indicated that effective reading comprehension was facilitated with the use of memory and retrieval strategies. Some of the useful strategies included monitoring strategies, planning strategies, comprehending strategies, and evaluating strategies.

One of the important research findings is the impact of comprehending strategy on the general EFL reading comprehension performance. Consequently, the study emphasized that the correlation between cognitive and metacognitive strategies and the general reading performance must be investigated further because other intervening or moderating variables might be at play and this includes the context of the reading task and other constructs.

One of the strengths in the study of Phakiti (2006) is that it utilized the structural equation modeling (SEM) approach in addressing the research problems. It also used a relatively large number of samples which increases the generalizability of results. A total of 358 students in various state universities were selected as the respondents of the study. They were required to complete a reading comprehension test and the questionnaire on strategy usage.

Finally, Sonleitner's (2005) research also delved into the examination of a related construct which is the reading strategies utilized by a specific group of learners. The results of the study indicated that learners who both received and did not receive instruction had a positive change in terms of their perceptions and attitude towards reading a scientific text. It also affirms the premise that strategy usage can improve the attitude towards reading which leads to the improvement of the general comprehension skills in the long run. An important implication of this study is the proposition that teaching students how to use reading strategy can enhance not only their attitudes towards the reading process but it can also improve their proficiency levels in reading. It is important for language teachers to consider the integration of strategy usage in their language classes in order to achieve a more sustained improvement in the proficiency level of the target language.

It is evident that Sonleitner's (2005) research utilized a valid methodological design. As it can be noted in the said study. A total of 143 university students who were taking up a science course were required to answer the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSI). The MARSI is a highly reliable and valid research instrument which adds strength to the said research. Another strength of the said research is that a longitudinal approach was integrated in the sense that for a period of eight weeks, a total of 10 students were selected to participate in a controlled instructional session.

2.4. Commentary on the Literature Review

In the aforesaid discussion, the theoretical and conceptual literature related to metacognition and reading comprehension was reviewed. Flavell (1976), Oxford (1990), Schraw and Dennison (1994), Taylor (1999), Ya-Ling and Wu (2008), and Anderson (2002) provided a clear definition and description on the process of metacognition. As pointed out by these proponents, metacognition is a process wherein the learners take active engagement and awareness over their learning by planning, monitoring, evaluating, and modifying their strategies for learning in order to achieve the target knowledge and skills required in a particular subject area.

Reading comprehension is an area of language teaching that has received several theoretical underpinnings in the past. Nonetheless, cognitive-oriented theoretical contentions were deemed necessary in this research given the nature of the independent variable which is metacognition. As such, the definition and arguments of Smith (1994), Anderson (1994), Goodman (1988), Mikulecky (2008), August and Shanahan (2006), and Block (1992) were seen to be the most relevant

ideas to support the theoretical framework of the present research. This is because of the fact that these proponents emphasised that reading is a cognitive process wherein learners use prior knowledge, predict information, use prior learning and sensory experiences, and become actively conscious in the process of comprehension itself.

In the area of metacognition research, most of the researchers focused on the metacognitive skills or its application in different content areas. This was primarily investigated by Hunter (2010), Magaldi (2010), Vaiciuniene and Uzpalene (2013), Vianty (2007), Aydin (2016), and Alvarado, Puente, Jimenez, and Jimenez (2012). It was only Cardenas (2009) and Jaleel (2016) who focused on the awareness of metacognitive skills among learners. In terms of respondents, most researches on metacognition involved learners at the university or college levels such as the respondents reflected in the study of Cardenas (2009), Hunter (2010), Magaldi (2010), Vaiciuniene and Uzpalene (2013), and Vianty (2007). Secondary students were used as respondents in the study of Jaleel (2016) and Aydin (2016). In the research of Alvarado, Puente, Jimenez, and Jimenez (2012), however, a different group of respondents were used because deaf individuals were the focus of their study. The use of Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAI) was prominent in the study of Cardenas (2009), Hunter (2010), and Jaleel (2016). Metacognitive Reading Strategies Questionnaire (MRSQ) was used in the study Vianty (2007), while the Online Survey of Reading Strategies (OSRS) was used in the research of Vaiciuniene and Uzpalene (2013). The Metacognitive Self-Regulation Subscales of the Motivational Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) was used in the research of Aydin (2016), while the Scale of Metacognitive Application in Reading Comprehension in

Spanish was used in the research and Alvarado, Puente, Jimenez, and Jimenez (2012).

Reading comprehension researches in the past 10 years were conducted in various educational contexts. However, due to university standards, only researches published in accredited journals were fit to be reviewed in this chapter. This included the reading comprehension researches of Baier (2005), Jiang (2011), Cromley (2005), and Akyol, Cakiroglu, Kuruyer (2014). Only Baier (2005) and Akyol *et al* (2014) used elementary students as respondents in their research, while Jiang (2011) and Cromley (2005) used mature learners as research respondents. Actual reading comprehension levels were assessed in the research of Baier (2005) and Jiang (2011), while the difficulty in reading comprehension and the categorical processes applied in reading were the variables investigated by Cromley (2005) and Akyol *et al* (2014). In terms of research instruments, only Baier (2005) and Akyol *et al* (2014) used an inventory type of research instrument in combination with a standardized reading test, while Jiang (2011) and Cromley (2005) used a set of standardized reading comprehension test.

The correlation between metacognition and reading comprehension skills was primarily investigated by Ahmadi *et al* (2013), Alhaqbani & Riazi (2012), Vehovec *et al* (2014), Osterholm (2006), Phakiti (2006), Sonleitner (2005), Tavakoli (2014), Thao *et al* (2014), Guo and Roehrig (2011), Razi and Cubukco (2014), Ditzel (2010), Wu *et al* (2012), and Temur *et al* (2010). In terms of research respondents, only Wu *et al* (2012), and Temur *et al* (2010) used respondents who were at the high school or middle school level. Alhaqbani & Riazi (2012), Vehovec *et al* (2014), Osterholm (2006), Phakiti (2006), Sonleitner (2005), Tavakoli (2014), Thao *et al* (2014), Guo and Roehrig (2011), Razi and Cubukco

(2014), Ditzel (2010) used EFL students at the college or university level. Hence, it is clear that most researches that focused on the correlation of the said variables included primarily of mature learners. Investigating the correlation of the said variables in the context of high school learners or younger language learners can contribute to the generalizability of the data.

One of the most popular research instruments in measuring the level of metacognition is the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSI). This was used in the research of Alhaqbani & Riazi (2012), Sonleitner (2005), Razi and Cubukco (2014), Guo and Roehrig (2011), Wu *et al* (2012), and Temur *et al* (2010). The 14-Item Measure of Metacognitive Knowledge of Reading Strategies was solely used by Vehovec *et al* (2014), while Oral Interviews and Focus Group Discussion on Metacognitive Strategies was used by Osterholm (2006), Ditzel (2010), and Phakiti (2006). The Survey of Reading Strategies (SORS) was specifically used in the study of Tavakoli (2014), and Thao *et al* (2014).

In measuring the reading comprehension variable, some researchers used a researcher-constructed and validated questionnaire, which proved to be valid. This included the Reading Comprehension on Texts Focusing Mathematical Topics of Osterholm (2006), the EFL Reading Test (Rational Cloze Test and Text Comprehension) of Phakiti (2006), and the Reading Comprehension Test of Thao *et al* (2014) and Razi and Cubukco (2014).

It also logical to state that the investigation of metacognition among learners in private and public school environments has never received significant attention in recent years. There has been no documented empirical researches (descriptive, correlational, or

experimental) that compared the metacognitive skills between the learners in public schools and learners in public schools especially in the context of Bahrain. The closest research on metacognition that was conducted in Bahrain was that of Abdulrahim (2006), but it did not primarily compare the two different educational environments because her research only involved first year and second year Arab students majoring in Information Technology at the University of Bahrain.

In the context of linguistics theory and practice, it can be logically put forward that some researches in reading comprehension in the past did not actually address the issue on which specific aspects of metacognition could significantly affect a specific level of reading comprehension. For example, Ahmed (2012) only addressed the problems of Bahraini EFL learners in listening comprehension while Qabarzad (2004) only focused on the students' motivation for reading. Al-Khaja (2002) primarily focused in measuring the effects of an accelerated learning programme on the reading comprehension among underachievers in Bahrain while Abdulrahim (2002) just focused on the relationship between formal schema and second language learning comprehension. These studies undoubtedly contributed to the empirical knowledge and theory of second language learning; however, it is the goal of this proposed research to probe deeper into the main variables of reading comprehension and metacognitive skills by determining the aspects of metacognitive skills that can best predict a specific aspect of reading comprehension (literal, interpretative, or evaluative levels).

2.5. Framework of the Study

Based on the assumptions and implications extracted from the previous theoretical and empirical literatures in this chapter, the

conceptual framework of this study was formulated. It is depicted in Figure 1. As seen in this figure, the study investigated the relationship between reading comprehension abilities and metacognitive awareness of reading strategies of third year secondary school students in Bahrain. It analyzed the focal variables in terms of the different groups of respondents such as those from the private schools and those from the government schools. Another group classification was male and female group categories.

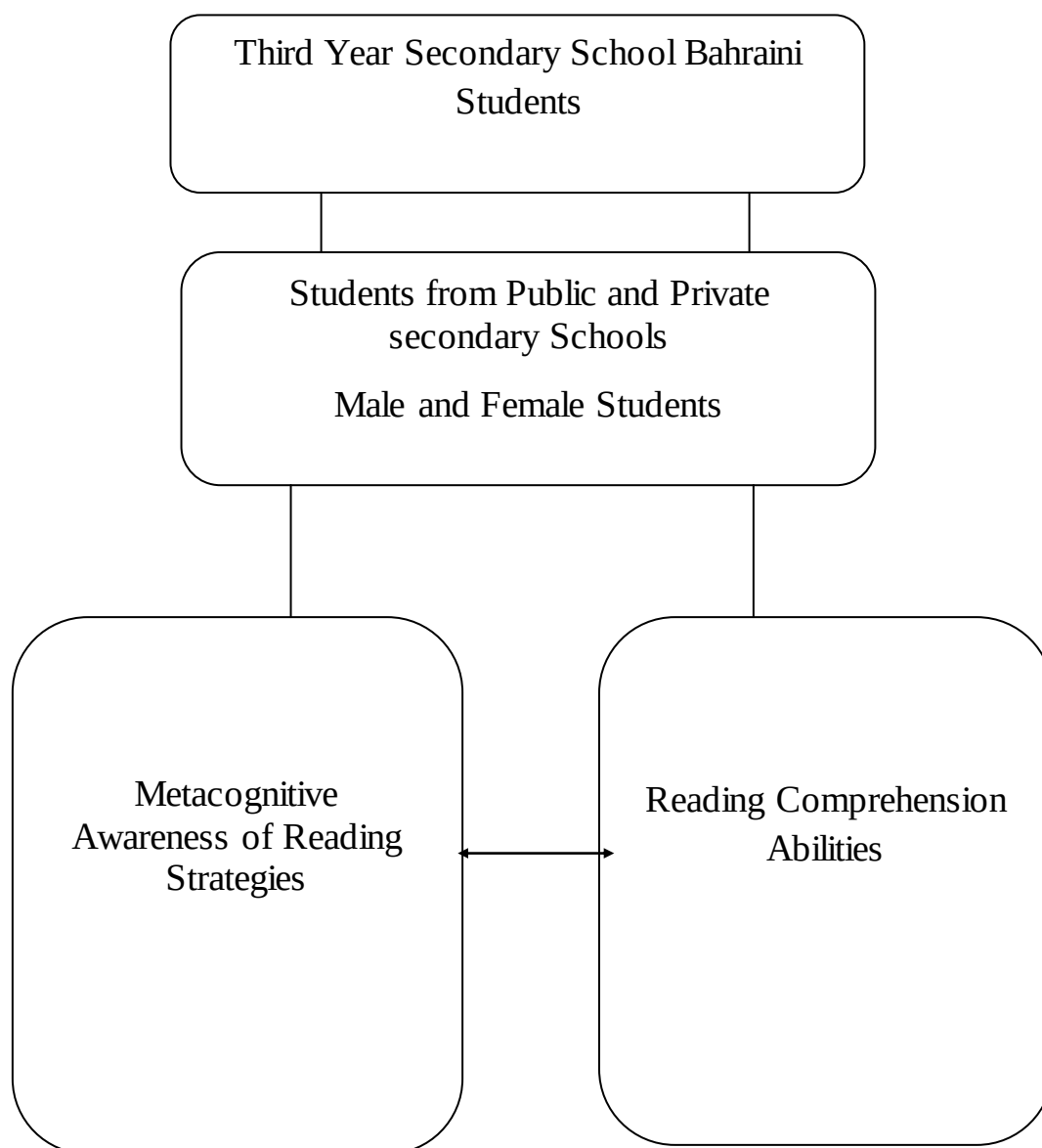


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

It can also be gleaned from the figure that the main objective of the research was to examine the extent of correlation between metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the level of reading comprehension abilities among third year secondary school Bahraini students. It also determined the significant difference in the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the reading comprehension abilities between the different groups of respondents.

2.6. Concluding Remarks

This chapter provides a substantial review and analysis of the related theoretical and empirical literatures related to the focal variables of the study such as the metacognition and reading comprehension. It discussed the related literature according to the major themes such as the researches on metacognition, studies on reading comprehension, and researches that focused on the relationship between metacognitive skills and reading comprehension of different language learners. Based on the arguments and assumptions of these related literatures, a relevant conceptual framework was developed which guided the implementation of the research.

Chapter Three

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

3.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the relevant methods and approaches of research that were applied in this study in order to address the research questions posed in the first chapter. It includes a discussion of the research design, research setting, respondents and the sampling method, the research instruments and their validity and reliability features, data gathering procedure, and the appropriate data analysis.

3.2. Research Design

The study utilized mixed method approach because it employed both quantitative and qualitative data analysis and interpretation techniques. A quantitative approach was reflected because one of the data sets that was obtained from the data gathering process was in a form of numerical values from rating scales and raw scores. Moreover, qualitative approach was also applied as a complementary aspect of data gathering particularly in including the teacher-respondents and this was reflected in the results of the interview on the teacher-respondents' perceptions, beliefs, and observations about the reading comprehension abilities and the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies of their students. In terms of research design, a combination of descriptive and correlational research design was deemed applicable in this study due to the inherent research objective of determining the significant relationship of the variables and the objective of proving the significant influence of the hypothesized independent variable on the reading comprehension skills of the student-respondents.

3.3. The Research Setting

The study was conducted in a number of private and public secondary schools in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The said locale was chosen to be the research setting because of several rationalisations. Foremost, the researcher was formerly connected and affiliated in one of the institutions in this locale and now she is currently connected with the Ministry of Education that handles the aforesaid area. Having a direct connection with the said locale, the researcher believed that she could implement the research process with effectiveness and efficiency because she was already well-acquainted with its employees.

Another justification for opting for the said environment as a research locale is the researcher's concern on the perennial problem pertaining to the students' weak reading performance in the English language. Over the years of her career as an English teacher in the said locale, she has encountered different students with varying difficulties in reading. Hence, implementing a research that aims to affirm the applicability of a particular promising strategy could give significant contribution not only to her career as a language teacher, but also to the field of language teaching. Inclusion of the private schools as part of the research locale was justified by the premise that there was a need to investigate the differences in the reading comprehension abilities and metacognitive awareness between the high school students in the private and public schools of Bahrain.

3.3. The Research Population and the Sample

The target population of the study was composed of secondary school students enrolled in private and public secondary schools in Bahrain. Due to the relatively large number of the population, the study

determined the ideal sample size of schools to be involved. The use of sampling approach was justified in the researches of Baier (2005), Jiang (2011), Cromley (2005), and Akyol, Cakiroglu, Kuruyer (2014).

The selection of the eight secondary schools was guided with the use of convenience sampling, which is a type of non-probability sampling. In other words, the researcher selected the private and public schools based on the school head's response to the request made in terms of conducting the data gathering procedure in their respective schools. It must be noted that some schools did not respond to the researcher's request during the conduct of the study because of various reasons such as the conflict with their examination schedules and non-availability of the teachers who would participate in the interview phase.

In determining the sample size of the secondary students in the different secondary schools in Bahrain, the recommendation of Dornyei (2007) was followed. As noted by Dornyei (2007), at least 30 samples should be selected in a descriptive or correlational research. Since this research utilizes the same research design, a total of 120 students were randomly selected from the public secondary schools and another 120 students were randomly selected from private secondary schools that were identified to be responsive with the researcher's request.

Table 6 reflects the distribution of respondents from both the private and public secondary high schools in Bahrain. As indicated in the table, a total of 60 samples were taken from the male population in the private school and another 60 samples were taken from the female population in the private school. The study also involved 60 male students from the public school and another 60 female students from the public school. The overall student samples for both private and

public schools are 240. It must be noted that a total of 17 teacher-respondents were taken as one of the respondent-category in this study for the qualitative aspect in the data gathering process.

Table (4)

Distribution of Respondents

Schools	Types	Gender Population	Number of Samples
Riffa Secondary School for Girls	Public	Female	30
Hamad Town Secondary School for Girls	Public	Female	30
Al Taawon Secondary School for Boys	Public	Male	30
Al Hidayah Secondary School for Boys	Public	Male	30
Al Iman Private School for Girls	Private	Female	30
Kanoo International School - Girls	Private	Female	30
Al Iman Private School for Boys	Private	Male	30
Hawar International School - Boys	Private	Male	30
Total			240

The students in the public schools are exposed to only one English subject daily. The English subject delivery usually lasts for 45-50 minutes. The average class size in the public schools is between 30-42 students. There are apparently no active reading clubs and reading

competitions in most public schools. Most of the subject areas in the public schools are taught in Arabic and this includes arts-related subjects. The only subject that is taught in English is English itself.

However, students in the private schools are exposed to more than one English class and it is conducted twice daily. In the arts section, students take modern literature and classical literature, which are taught in English. The average class size in the private schools is between 18-25 students. Many subject areas are taught in English such as Science, Mathematics, and English. There are also notable active reading clubs, spelling bee contest, and report writing competitions.

3.5. Research Instruments

The study utilized two standardized research instruments in order to address the research objectives and to obtain relevant empirical data that were needed in the hypotheses testing process. The translated Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSI) and the First Certificate Exam (FCE) in Reading Comprehension were specifically used for this purpose.

3.5.1. Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory

The Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSI) (*see Appendix A and B*), which is a standardized instrument, was used in measuring the level of metacognitive awareness of the respondents. It is considered a standardized test because it is type of test or measure that is administered to select group of respondents and scored in a consistent or standard manner. Standardized tests are developed in a

manner wherein the questions or statements in a scale, the scoring procedures, and the interpretations are consistent (Phelps, 2016).

The MARSİ was used in the studies of Alhaqbani & Riazi (2012), Sonleitner (2005), Razi and Cubukco (2014), Guo and Roehrig (2011), Wu *et al* (2012), and Temur *et al* (2010). Using this instrument was justified by the premise that one of the main objectives of the research was to measure the level of metacognitive awareness of the respondents in terms of their application of reading strategies during reading process.

It must be noted that since this is a standardized test, there was no need for a validation process. Ozturk (2012) reported that the MARSİ has high level of validity and reliability. The reliability coefficients in the inventory ranged from .76 and .85. Based on these numerical values, the MARSİ is considered to have enough reliability and validity that can be used in various contexts of educational researches.

3.5.2. The Reading Comprehension Test

In determining the level of reading comprehension abilities of the learners, the use of the First Certificate Exam (FCE) in Reading Comprehension was imperative (*see Appendix C*). This test is divided into different sections that measure the different level of reading comprehension of the test-taker. Since this is a standardized form of evaluation, there was also no need for an additional validation process. As emphasized by Phelps (2016) standardized tests are developed in a manner wherein the questions or statements in a scale, the scoring procedures, and the interpretations are consistent.

Using the objective type of reading comprehension test in the FCE is supported in different empirical researches in the past such as the Reading Comprehension on Texts Focusing Mathematical Topics of

Osterholm (2006), the EFL Reading Test (Rational Cloze Test and Text Comprehension) of Phakiti (2006), and the Reading Comprehension Test of Thao *et al* (2014) and Razi and Cubukco (2014).

Similar to other standardized tests, the First Certificate Exam (FCE) in Reading Comprehension did not need any validation process because its reliability and validity constructs had already been established by experts. Grossman (2010) reports the construct validity of the FCE test particularly the reading comprehension section where the test-takers are tested in terms of their general comprehension of propositional, sociolinguistic, and functional concepts at different levels such as the lexical, sentential, or paragraph discourse levels. Test-takers are also measured in terms of their general comprehension of the specific details of the text, textual organization of the passage, and the tone or mood implied in the article.

In terms of the reliability of the FCE, it can be put forward that it has high reliability. It has a Cronbach Alpha of .84, which means that it has high level of item consistency (Grossman, 2010). As a whole, the FCE has a reported composite reliability level of .92 which is a relatively high level of reliability (Geranpayeh, 2004). In other words, the FCE is a highly valid and reliable instrument in measuring the reading comprehension skills of different language learners.

Selecting FCE as the instrument in measuring the reading comprehension level of the student-respondents was not only valid and reliable given its high standards set forth at the onset of its construction and development but also because it is equivalent to B2 level of the Common European Framework (CEFR). It must be noted that the student-respondents of the present study are expected to have B2 level of English language proficiency. Hence, the use of a reading comprehension

measure that is appropriate to their level was imperative and the FCE test was an apt instrument for this purpose.

3.5.3. The Interview Questions

In addition to the FCE and the translated MARSI, the research also used the interview technique in order to elicit relevant information from the secondary school teachers' observations on their students' reading comprehension experience and their metacognitive awareness of reading strategies (*see Appendix D and E*). The said interview questions were constructed based on the constructs of the focal variable of this research. The validity of this interview guide was determined through the professional and technical suggestions of the researcher's research supervisor. The questions reflected in the interview guide were approved by the professors after the validity of the content of each item was examined.

3.6. Data Collection

Data collection commenced as soon as the approval from the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the school heads of the different schools involved. It was facilitated with the use of research instruments that are already standardized and validated by previous works. First, the FCE Reading Comprehension Test was administered to the respondents who were given 60 minutes to accomplish the test. After that, the student-respondents were asked to answer the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory in the last 30 minutes of the data collection process. The total time allocated for data collection from the student-respondents was 90 minutes. The researcher was present in the field and administered the process after explaining each task.

The structured interview technique was used to facilitate the gathering of data on the teacher-respondents' observations of their students' metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. The conduct of the interview was facilitated by the researcher herself and it lasted from 10-15 minutes for each of the teacher-participants. A total of 17 teachers participated in the interview phase of the data collection procedure.

3.6. Statistical Tools

The numerical data that were obtained from the rating scales and raw scores were processed using descriptive statistics such as the mean score and standard deviation. Inferential statistics such as the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, Chi-Square, and the t-test for Independent Samples were used in testing the null hypotheses of the study. Statistical test was not applicable in processing the qualitative data obtained from the interview. It was transcribed by the researcher and used it as a complementary data to support the numerical data inherent in the raw scores from the reading comprehension test and the ratings from the MARSI.

3.7. Concluding Remarks

This chapter provides a description of the methodology that was used in this research. It clarified the use of mixed-method approach and the research environment involving both private and public schools in the Kingdom of Bahrain. It also explained the selection of research respondents and their nature as well as some background of how the respondents were distributed based on the school affiliation. The research instruments' features were also explored in this chapter along with the

justification on the selection of these instruments in relation to the focal variables of the research. Lastly, this chapter described the data gathering procedure and the relevant data processing techniques that were used.

Chapter Four

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the results based on the empirical data obtained during the data gathering procedure. It specifically addresses the focal research questions of the study such as the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies, the reading comprehension abilities, the relationship between the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and reading comprehension abilities, and the comparison of the significant differences in the respondents' performance in these two focal variables of the study.

4.2. Results for Research Question 1:

Reading Comprehension Abilities

In analyzing the reading comprehension abilities of the student-respondents of this research, the use of the statistical tables and figures is imperative. These are discussed according to the different categorical classification of the student-respondents such as the male and female high school students and the high school students enrolled in the government and private schools.

4.2.1. Reading Comprehension Abilities of Male Students in the Government Schools

In Figure 2, the reading comprehension abilities of the male student-respondents in the government schools are reflected. It can be gleaned from this figure that most of the male students in this type of school had the highest number of cases of reading comprehension that is

below B1 level. This is indicated by the highest frequency count of 49 out of 60 respondents under this category or 81.66% of the total number of samples.

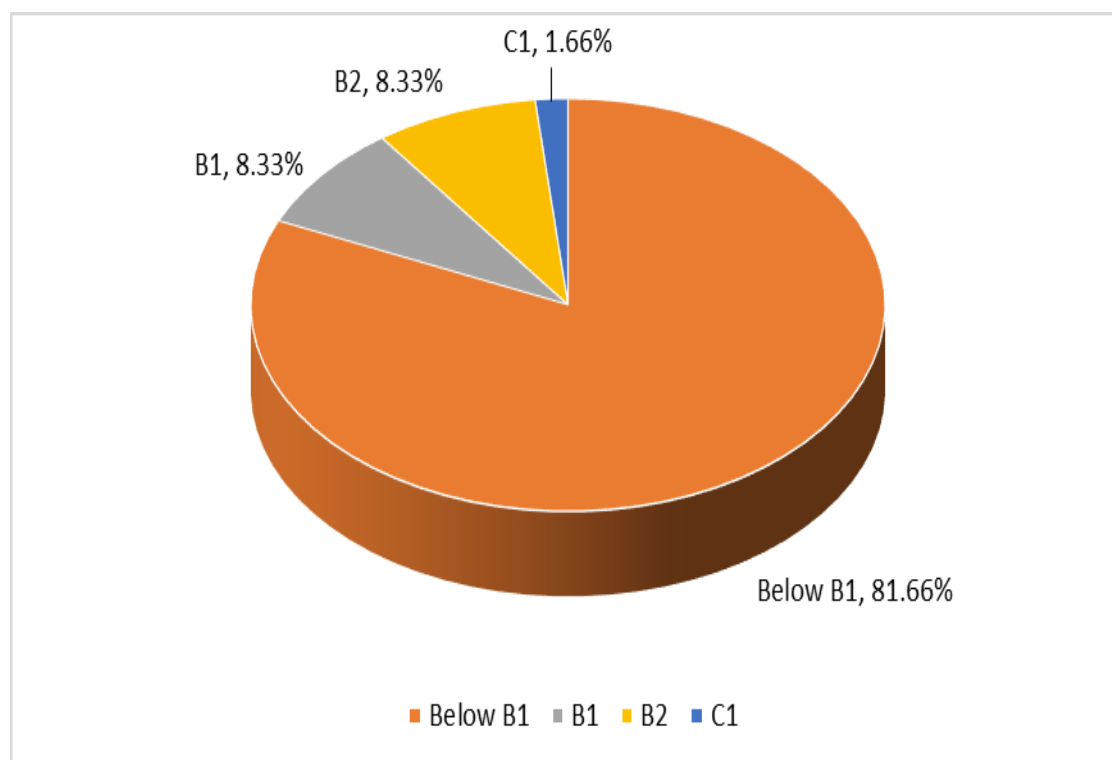


Figure (2)
Reading Comprehension Abilities of the
Male Students in the Government Schools

There was a total of 5 male student-respondents (8.33%) who were categorized to have a B1 level in reading comprehension, while another 5 of them (8.33%) obtained a B2 level in reading comprehension. There was 1 male student (1.66%) who was categorized to have a C1 level in reading comprehension.

The aforesaid findings are corollary with the arguments of Carvalho (2009) who explained that students in the public schools often experience difficulties in the general subject areas than the students in the

private schools. In addition, reading is a complex process that needs attention and more practice on the part of the learners. As Ya-Ling and Wu (2008) pointed out, reading involves the overall knowledge, experience, and understanding of the learners on the topic the learners are going to read. This is also corollary to the assumption that reading involves schema activation and construction and that reader must adjust their own knowledge system when trying to understand a text. Given these propositions, it is important for teachers in the government schools to consider ways in which reading instruction could be enhanced and in which learners could be taught of the strategies on how to read effectively.

During the interview with the teachers, it was reported that some students in public schools find it difficult to stay focused on the reading task. This is especially true of male students in the government schools where the teachers always apply various motivation strategies to get the attention of their students. Students tend to be motivated to read when they are required to answer questions involving the recall of events of persons from a reading text.

4.2.2. Reading Comprehension Abilities of Female Students in the Government Schools

Figure 3 reflects the reading comprehension abilities of the female student-respondents in the government schools. As observed from this figure, most of the female students in the government schools have below B1 level in reading comprehension based on the CEFR scale. This is indicated by the highest frequency count of 34 out of 60 respondents under this category or 56.66% of the total number of samples.

Teachers in the public schools for girls reported that motivating their students to finish a reading task is not difficult. Most of their students would finish a reading task but the strategy applied over the next few sessions need to be changed because students would not pay attention anymore if the same set of activities or tasks is given to them.

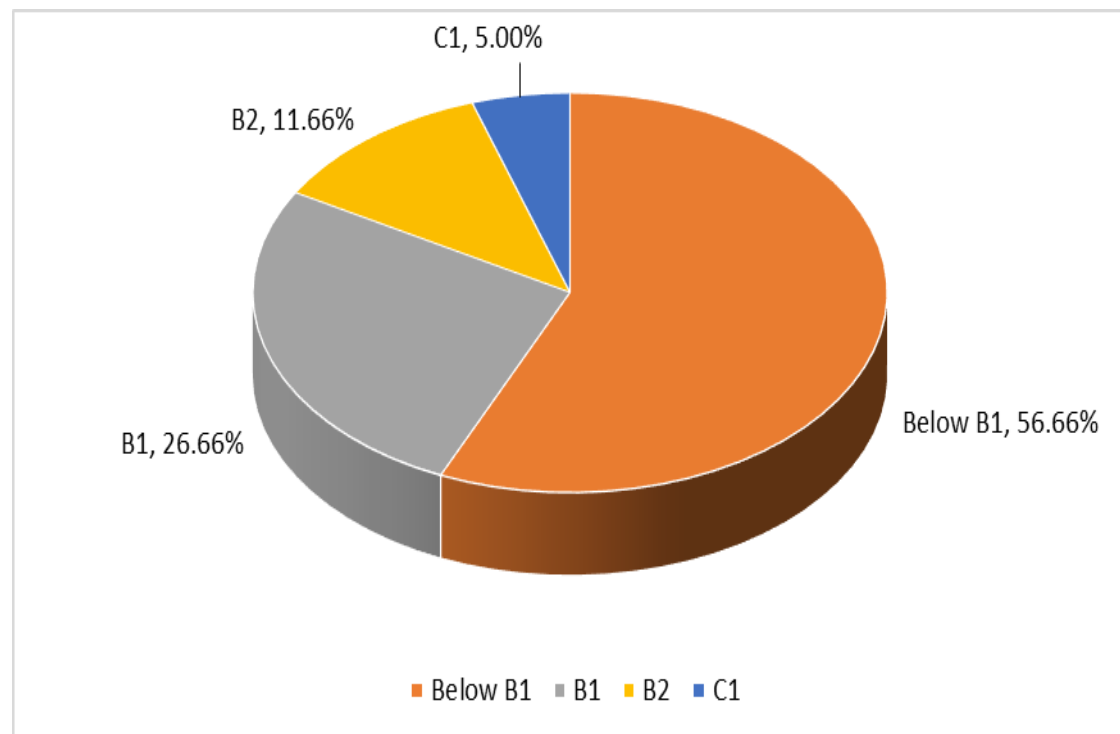


Figure (3)

Reading Comprehension Abilities of Respondents of Female Students in the Government Schools

A total of 16 female students out of the 60 respondents or 26.66% were categorized to have a B1 level in reading comprehension, while another 7 of them or 11.66% obtained a B2 level in reading comprehension. Only 3 female students or 5% from the total number of samples were categorized to have a C1 level of reading comprehension. In relation to this group of learners in the research locale, it was reported

by the concerned teachers that they are often faced with the difficulty of teaching higher order thinking skills in reading such as the skills of interpreting the tone of the reading text or extracting the attitudes or moods of the characters in a given reading selection.

In the same manner, the aforesaid results also confirm the arguments of Carvalho (2009) who emphasized the relatively weak performance of most government schools because of various factors. It can also be emphasized that the skill of reading is something that is developed through time and with the consideration of many factors. In fact, it is emphasized that reading involves prediction and sensory inputs, while Mikulecky (2008) and August and Shanahan (2006) argued on the highly cognitive processes involved in the reading process. This primarily implies that teachers in the government schools may integrate more classroom activities that would enable students to apply their ability to creatively construct meanings from the text such as the use of creative and critical thinking skills.

4.2.3. Reading Comprehension Abilities for Both Male and Female Students in the Government Schools

Table 5 reflects the reading comprehension abilities of both male and female student-respondents in the government schools according to their gender classification. As observed from this table, the male group (81.66%) had a higher percentage of below B1 level cases as compared with the female group (56.33%). The female group (26.66%) had a higher percentage of B1 level cases as compared with the male group (8.33%). In terms of C1 level cases, the female group (5%) also had a higher percentage from the total number of samples as compared with the male group (1.66%).

Table (5)

Reading Comprehension Abilities of Students in the Government Schools

CEFR-Based Reading Level	Male	Female
	Percentage	Percentage
Below B1	81.66%	56.66%
B1	8.33%	26.66%
B2	8.33%	11.66%
C1	1.66%	5.0%
Total	100%	100%

One of the teachers in the government schools reported that she finds it challenging to teach reading in her language arts classes. This is because of the attitude of her students inside the classroom. In one of her recollections, she described that most students are demotivated to read the selections that are given to them during the class or even the reading assignments that are required for the students. She opined that some of her students are not paying attention to the lesson because the topic of the reading passage was not interesting to the said student.

When asked about the common challenges and issues that are encountered in the teaching of reading, some teachers in the government schools mentioned a number of bottlenecks. One of the most common problems that they experience when they teach reading is that some students do not know how to use the reference materials such as the dictionary. Because of this, the students highly depend on their teachers

when they do not understand the meaning of words and terminologies that are found in the reading passage.

Another challenge that is usually encountered by the teachers in the government schools is the poor comprehension skills of the students. This, according to their observations, could be attributed to the weak English language proficiency of the students. Some of the students find it difficult to note details, draw conclusions, and determine the mood of the story in a given reading selection.

The weak vocabulary of the students in the government schools is another common challenge that most teachers reported. Lack of vocabulary impedes the rate and speed of reading process among their students because they keep on asking for the meaning of words during the task itself. They are usually weak in the use of context clues which is the reason for high dependence on the teachers when it comes to the unlocking of difficulties in terms of word meanings.

One important observation among teachers in the government schools was that most of their students have difficulty in previewing the reading material and clarifying the purpose of why they are asked to read. Students in their classes would immediately want to finish the reading task which is why they do not preview the material or ask questions on what is the nature and purpose of the reading task. In other words, they just proceed with the reading task without knowing the objectives at the onset of the activity. They rarely ask questions related to what they know about the material before they read. As noted by one of the teacher-respondents, one of her students immediately encircled the choices of the all the items as soon as the reading passage was given to the class along with the comprehension questions.

Students in their classes would usually ask different types of questions when they find the reading material too difficult. Some would take down notes or read the text aloud. However, few of them would summarize the text or discuss their ideas to their peers, or use references. This is because they are hesitant to ask their peers or ask questions for some cultural reasons. Most of them would be hesitant to interact with their peers to discuss the ideas reflected in the text because for the fear that their friends might tease them for being too serious with their studies. In other words, peer pressure is significantly strong among this group of learners.

In most cases, teachers in the government schools would often extend the allocated reading time due to the request of their students. Students in the government schools would ask for more extension time to finish reading a selection. The use of visual organizers is not much practiced among students in the government schools. However, teachers report that they would sometimes draw some pictographic symbols on the side of the reading material or some of them would underline some words and phrases in the text. As noted by one of the teachers, using reference material to find the meaning of words or trying to guess the meaning of terminologies are some of the weaknesses of this group students.

When teachers ask their students to read something, the common reaction is passivity among the students. However, this is not always the case. If the topic is interesting to the students then they would be interested to read. If the topic has no relevance to them, then they would be bored and their level of enthusiasm would be low. Although some students are interested in all the communicative activities in the typical language classrooms, there are still some who have low motivation to perform such tasks.

In one of the reports of a language teacher, it was emphasized that students in her class can sustain a reading task after the middle part of the reading passage is reached. She also claimed that students in her classes would try their best to understand what they are reading by doing several strategies. One observation is that some students would voice out the lines in the reading passage in a soft manner. This technique allows the students to hear the pronunciation of a word and at the same time take time to understand its meaning as it is used in the sentence according to one of the teacher who was interviewed.

In one of the accounts, it was reported that students just submit their papers or reading activity after they have finished reading the text. As soon as they finish reading, they would rush for the break period. Students are excited to chat and tell stories with their peers. In other words, most of them do not find enthusiasm and pleasure in reading.

4.2.4. Reading Comprehension Abilities of Male Students in the Private Schools

Figure 4 depicts the reading comprehension abilities of the male student-respondents in the private schools. It can be averred from this table that most of the male students in the private schools have B1 level in reading comprehension based on the CEFR. This is indicated by the highest frequency count of 23 out of 60 respondents under this category or this 38.33% from the total number of samples. For most teachers in the private schools, teaching reading also presents several challenges and this includes the preparation of materials to be used in the language classrooms. Some reading texts in different textbooks and language materials may not catch the attention or interest of their students. The

result is the language learner's lack of interest in finishing the reading task required for them to accomplish.

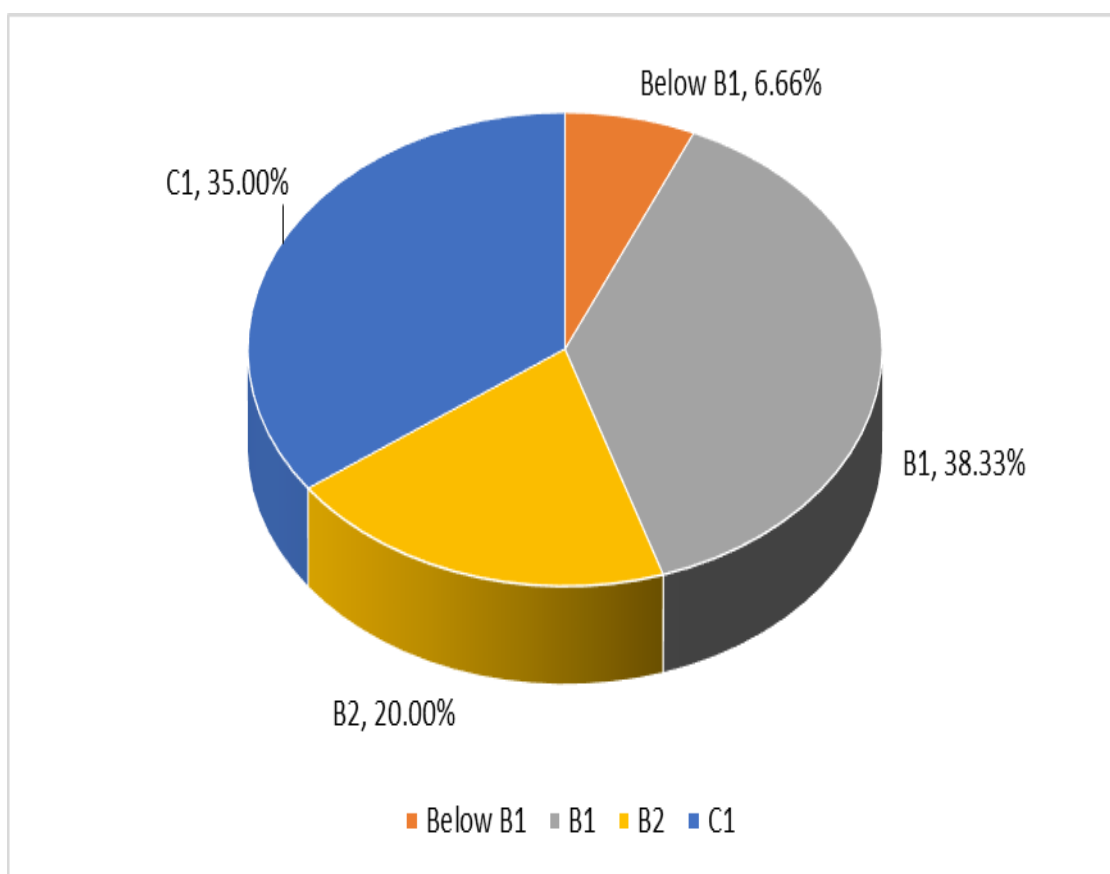


Figure (4)
Reading Comprehension Abilities of Respondents of
Male Students in the Private Schools

From the same figure, it can be seen that a total of 12 male students or 28% were categorized to have a B2 level in reading comprehension, while 4 of them or 6.66% obtained a level that is below B1 in reading comprehension. A total of 21 male students or 35% from the total number of samples were categorized to have a C1 level in reading comprehension. Some of the teachers in the private schools described their students to be idiosyncratic learners in the sense that each of their students have different interests and styles in approaching a reading text.

Some students would be interested only at the beginning of a reading activity, while others could sustain their enthusiasm in reading for a longer period of time.

The aforesaid results can be attributed to the students' effective usage of reading strategies when they are exposed to a reading task. It must be noted that Rastakhiz and Safari (2014), Solak and Altay (2014), and Chen and Chen (2015) affirmed the important role of reading strategies in the general reading comprehension of various groups of language learners. Hence, language teachers in the private schools must continue to improve their practice of integrating activities that encourage the use of these strategies in order to develop language learners who are independent proficient readers of the target language.

4.2.5. Reading Comprehension Abilities of Female Students in the Private Schools

The reading comprehension abilities of the female student-respondents in the private schools are reflected in Figure 5. It can be gleaned from this figure that most of the female students in these schools had the highest number of cases of both B1 and C1 level in reading comprehension. This is indicated by the highest frequency count of 20 out of 60 respondents under these two categories: 33.33% of the total number of samples for B1 level and another 33.33% of the total number of samples for C1 level.

It can also be observed from the table that there was a total of 18 female student-respondents or 30% from the total number of samples who were categorized to have a B2 level in reading comprehension, while 2 of them or 3.33% obtained a level that is below B1 in reading comprehension. It is important to note that teachers of this group of

students describe their classrooms to be filled with interaction and discussion. Many of their students would usually ask several questions related to the topic. Other students of this group would try to present new ideas and suggest ways to carry out the class even if the lesson has already been planned beforehand by the language teacher.

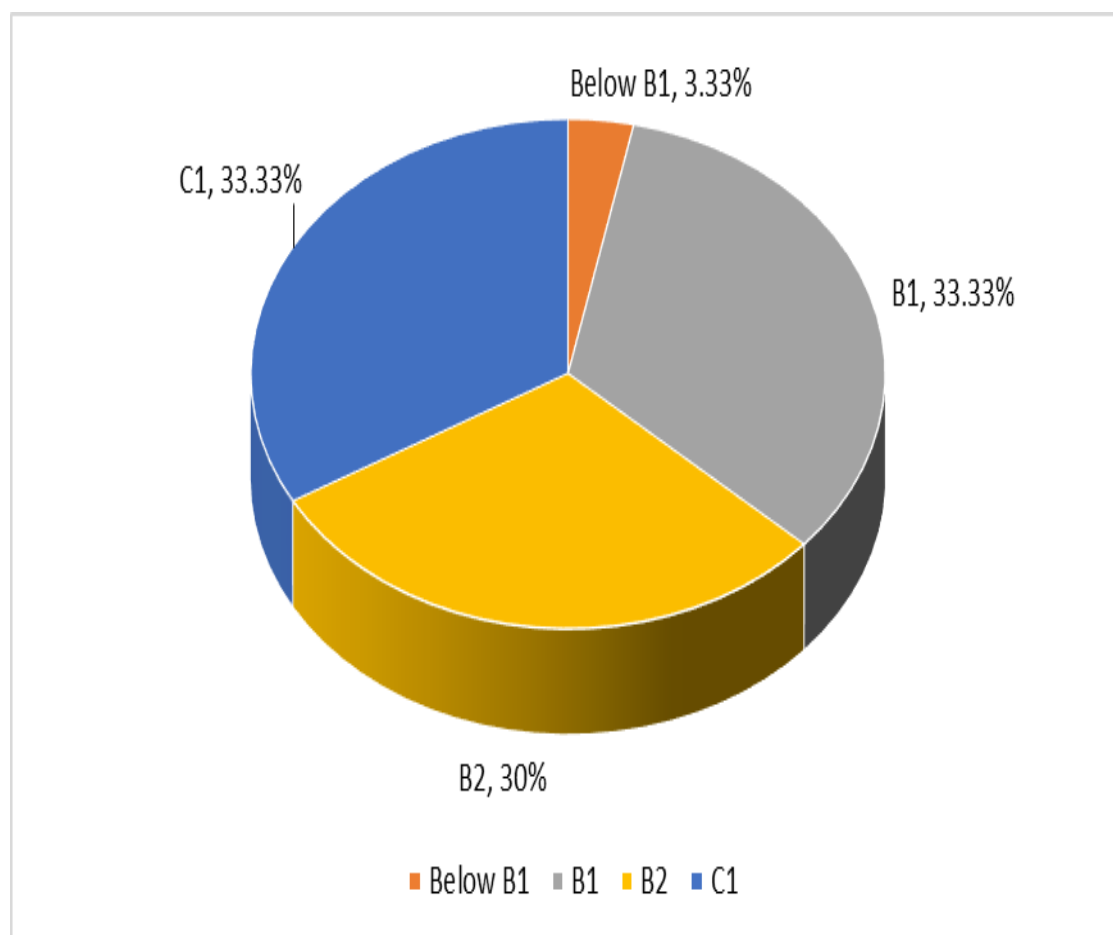


Figure (5)

Reading Comprehension Abilities of Respondents of Female Students in the Private Schools

The relatively high percentage of high proficient readers in the private schools as revealed in this section of this study can also be attributed to their effective use of reading strategies. In the study of Chen and Chen (2015) it was revealed that female learners who employ more

reading strategies in EFL reading tasks than their male counterparts, which resulted to their relatively high level of performance in this particular language skills. As such, it is important for language teachers to train their students to develop the skills of using various reading strategies.

4.2.6. Reading Comprehension Abilities for Both Male and Female Students in the Private Schools

Table 6 reflects the reading comprehension abilities of both male and female student-respondents in the private schools according to their gender classification. As observed from this table, the male group (6.66%) had a higher percentage of below B1 level cases as compared with the female group (3.33%). The male group (38.33%) had also a higher percentage of B1 level cases as compared with the female group (33.33%).

Table (6)

Reading Comprehension Abilities of Respondents in the Private Schools

CEFR-Based Reading Level	Male	Female
	Percentage	Percentage
Below B1	6.66%	3.33%
B1	38.33%	33.33%
B2	20.0%	30%
C1	35.0%	33.33%
Total	100%	100%

In terms of B2 level cases, the female group (30%) had a higher percentage from the total number of samples as compared with the male group (28%). A different observation can be drawn in terms of the C1 level cases, wherein the male group (35%) had a higher percentage as compared with the female group (33.33%). It is evident from this result that both the male and female students in the private schools have a relatively high level of reading comprehension abilities. This can be attributed to many factors such as the language curriculum and the educational contextual variables that are constant interaction with the language learners and the language teachers.

Based on the interview with the teachers in the private schools, it was noted that there are some challenges in the area of reading instruction. Some teachers opined that teaching reading is challenging because they need to prepare effectively in advance for their classes. This is because of the fact that their students would usually ask questions and demand more from them in terms of the concepts and skills related to reading competencies. If preparation is not done properly before their classes, they usually experience many problems such as the students' lack of interest in their teaching performance and the lack of enthusiasm in the activities in the classroom. However, if they preparation is done effectively, they are able to integrate various activities in the class which enable the students to interact and learn at the optimum level.

One of the common challenges that teachers experience in the teaching of reading in the private schools is students' tendency to be preoccupied with different things during classroom activities. Some of the teachers who were interviewed clearly remembers the first week of her teaching wherein most of her students were busy with a lot of things: some students would read English novels while she was discussing some

concepts in the class; others would browse their i-phones and gadgets and read the latest trends and developments; and others would do some creative activities such as drawing and sketching. Although these activities are not detrimental to learning, the teachers consider these as challenges because their focus for the reading task is divided. It only shows that students in the private schools demonstrate high levels of diversity and creativity which language teachers need to address.

In the private schools, the teachers who were interviewed reported that it is a common practice for their students to preview the reading material, clarify the purpose of why they are asked to read, or ask questions related to what they know about the material before they read. Because of this, teachers in the private schools need to prepare significantly before a teaching episode. They said that they are always equipping themselves with the possible divergent questions that their students might ask prior or during a reading task. Creative materials are imperative when they teach their students because their students would react if the materials they use are not interesting enough, to say the least. Students also would share personal experiences related to the theme of the reading selection and they would usually discuss and debate some important issues related to the topic of the reading task prior to the task itself.

It is interesting to note that teachers in the private schools oftentimes observe their students to take down notes, read the text aloud, summarise the text, discuss their ideas to their peers, or use references when they find the reading material too difficult. It is the culture in their classrooms that when the reading material is difficult, asking their peers is a shameful thing to do. In other words, their students would often feel ashamed when they ask for help because they feel that they are inferior to

their other classmates. This mindset among their students can be attributed to their observations of why most of the students would bring reference materials with them such as the dictionary so that they will not be asking for help from their peers or teachers when they encounter a difficult word in a specific reading selection.

Discussing the materials with their peers is a common practice in their language classroom. This does not always mean that they will ask for the meanings of the difficult words. Text summarization is another important practice in their classes because most of their students wanted to get the overview before and after reading a specific reading material. According to them, their students find it helpful if they summarize the entire reading passage because they are able to obtain the macro-view of the material.

There were some instances wherein some students would ask the teachers to give them more time to finish a reading task. This was observed in both high performing and high performing learners. High performing students in their class usually want to extend the time for reading because they enjoyed the reading material or that they wanted to take down specific notes or draw some conceptual maps on the side of the reading material. Low performing students would usually ask for an extension in the reading task because they want to find meaning of the difficult words in the text or that they needed more time to process the information reflected in the passage.

When their students are asked to read something, there are usually mixed emotions among their students. Most of their students would be interested especially those who excel in language and the arts but some students would just be passive about the activity, but there is a general high level of enthusiasm among the students in the private schools when

they are required to read something. For those who have interests in the arts and literature, they would often ask many questions and suggest of some creative activities to be performed or conducted inside the classroom.

Most of the students would usually ask questions in the middle of a reading task. Others would suggest some creative activities to their teachers in order to break the monotony of the classroom atmosphere. This includes mini-quiz bee inside the class, short debates, and some discussion sessions. The use of online reference materials such as the online dictionary and search engines are most of the time observed from the students in the private schools. They would search additional information about the topic and try to probe deeper more about the topic so that they can share information with their peers at the end of the task.

After reading a specific material inside the class, students in the private schools would do several things. In one of the accounts of the teacher, most of her students would ask several questions about the characters in the story and the possible alternate ending of the story. Others would suggest debates and classroom competitions in order to make the class lively and interesting.

4.2.7. Summary of Reading Comprehension Abilities across Group Categories

Table 7 summarizes the reading comprehension abilities of the different groups investigated in this research. As observed from this table, the female students in the private schools had the highest level of reading comprehension abilities among all the groups. This is indicated by their overall mean score levels of 29.71, which is categorized under B2 level. The male students in the private schools had the second highest level of

reading comprehension abilities. This is indicated by their overall mean score levels of 29.28, which is categorized under B2 level as well.

On the contrary, the female students in the government schools had the lowest level of reading comprehension abilities among all the groups. This is indicated by their overall mean score levels of 13.48, which is categorized to be below B1 level of the CEFR scale. The male students in the government schools had obtained an overall B1 level in terms of their reading comprehension abilities. This is indicated by their overall mean score level of 16.16.

Table (7)

Summary of the Reading Comprehension Abilities of the Different
Groups of Student-Respondents

Groups Categories	Overall Mean Score	CEFR Level
Male Students in Government Schools	16.16	B1 Level
Female Students in Government Schools	13.48	Below B1 Level
Male Students in Private Schools	29.28	B2 Level
Female Students in Private Schools	29.71	B2 Level

Legend 1: 15 and below – Below B1 Level; 16-23 – B1 Level; 24-36-B2 Level; 37 and above – C1 Level

4.3. Results for Research Question 2:

Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies

In the succeeding section, the profile of the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among the student respondents are presented according to various group categories. This includes the high school student-respondents according to the type of school they are affiliated with and their gender categories.

4.3.1. Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies among the Male Students in the Government Schools

The graph in Figure 6 reveals the profile of the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among the male students in the government schools. As seen in this figure, most of the male students in the government schools use global reading strategies in various reading tasks. This is indicated by the highest frequency count of 49 out of 60 respondents under this category or 81.66% of the total number of samples.

There was a total of 8 male student-respondents or 13.33% from the total number of samples who use support reading strategies. Only 3 male student-respondents or 5% from the total number of samples use problem solving reading strategies. This makes the problem solving reading strategies to be the least used strategy by the male students in the government schools in tasks that require any form of reading process. The aforesaid results are corollary with the findings in the research of Rastakhiz and Safari (2014), Chen and Chen (2015), Shehadeh (2011),

Chen (2015), Amer *et al* (2010) who all affirmed the pervasiveness of global reading strategy usage among language learners.

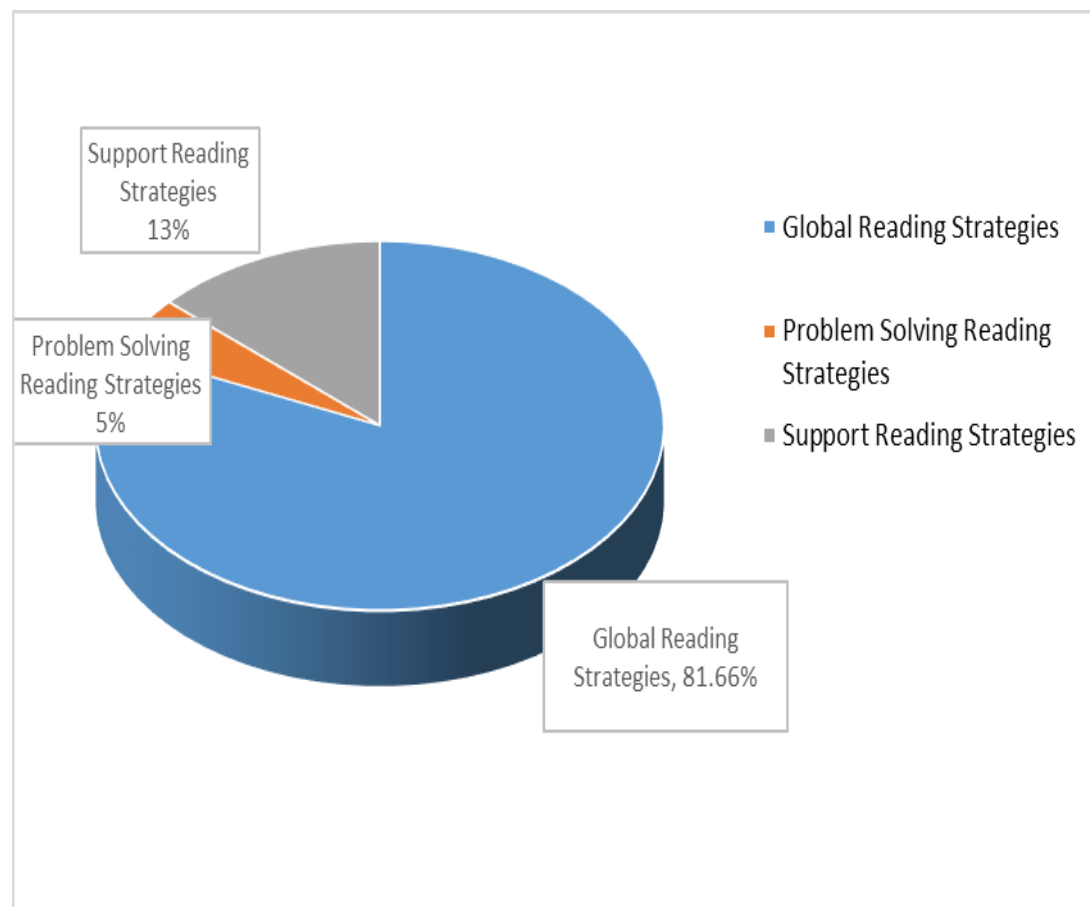


Figure (6)

Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies among the Male Students in the Government Schools

4.3.2. Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies among the Female Students in the Government Schools

Figure 7 indicates the profile of the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among the female students in the government schools. It can be averred from the said figure that most of the female students in

the government schools use global reading strategies in various reading tasks. This is indicated by the highest frequency count of 55 out of 60 respondents under this category or 91.66% from the total number of samples. Similar to the previous findings, the results in this section are also corollary with the findings in the research of Rastakhiz and Safari (2014), Chen and Chen (2015), Shehadeh (2015), Chen (2015), Amer *et al* (2010) who confirmed the frequency of global reading strategy usage.

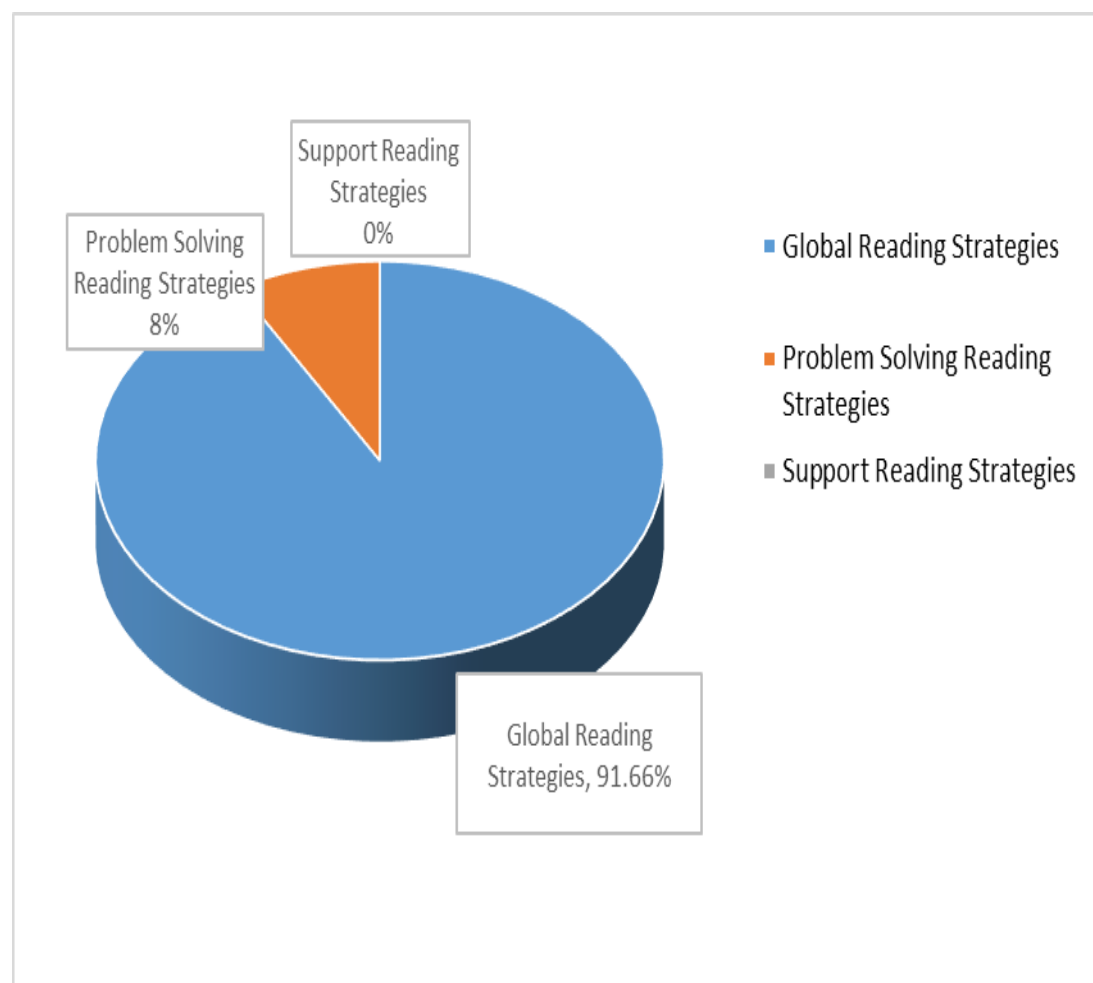


Figure (7)

Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies among the Female Students in the Government Schools

The aforesaid table also indicates that there was a total of 5 female student-respondents or 8.33% from the total number of samples who use problem solving reading strategies. None of the female student-respondents in the government schools use support reading strategies. This makes the support reading strategies to be the least used strategy by the female students in the government schools.

4.3.3. Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies of Both the Male and Female Students in the Government Schools

Table 8 indicates the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies of both the male and female students in the government schools. As observed from this table, the female group (91.66%) had a higher percentage of global reading strategy usage than the male group (81.66%). The female group (8.33%) also had a higher percentage of problem solving reading strategy usage than the male group (5%). However, the male group (13.33%) had a higher percentage of support reading strategy usage than the female group (0%). As mentioned in the earlier sections, the use of global reading strategy among learners as the most frequently used reading strategy has been affirmed also in the studies of Rastakhiz and Safari (2014), Chen and Chen (2015), Shehadeh (2015), Chen (2015), and Amer *et al* (2010).

Teachers in the government schools report that they sometimes observe their students to have purpose in mind when they read, take notes while reading to help them understand what they read, and think about they know to help them understand what they are supposed to read. Only a few of their students would preview the text before reading, read the text aloud to help them understand what they read, apply summarization,

reflect on important information in the text, think about whether the content of the text fits their reading purpose, and discuss what they read with others to check their understanding.

Table (8)

Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies of the Student-
Respondents in the Government Schools

Reading Strategies	Male	Female
	Percentage	Percentage
Global Reading Strategies	81.66%	91.66%
Problem Solving Reading Strategies	5.0%	8.33%
Support Reading Strategies	13.33%	0%
Total	100%	100%

When asked about specific observations in terms of the general reading strategies of their students, they reported that their students would rarely skim the text first by noting characteristics like length and organization, try to get back on track when they lose concentration, underline or circle information in the text to help them remember it, adjust their reading speed according to what they are reading, and use reference materials such as dictionaries to help them understand what they read.

However, teachers also sometimes observe their students to use pictures in text to increase their understanding, stop from time to time and think about what they are reading, try to picture or visualize information to help remember what they read, and use typographical aids like bold

face and italics to identify key information. According to them, it is sometimes difficult for their students to use context clues to help them better understand what they are reading, paraphrase ideas in their own words to better understand what they read, and go back and forth in the text to find relationships among ideas in it. In some instances, students would check their understanding when they come across conflicting information, try to guess what the material is about when they read, and try to guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases.

4.3.4. Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies among the Male Students in the Private Schools

Figure 8 indicates the profile of the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among the male students in the private schools. As reflected in this figure, most of the male students in the private schools use global reading strategies in various reading tasks. This is indicated by the highest frequency count of 34 out of 60 respondents under this category or 56.66% of the total number of samples. It can be noted that the use of global strategies as the most frequently used strategies in reading is not only evident in the government schools but also among the male students in the private schools. This result is again corollary to the findings of Amer *et al* (2010), Rastakhiz and Safari (2014), Chen and Chen (2015), Shehadeh (2015), and Chen (2015).

A total of 15 male student-respondents or 30% from the total number of samples use problem solving reading strategies. Only 11 male student-respondents or 18.33% from the total number of samples use support reading strategies. Hence, it is logical to state that the support reading strategies is the least used set of strategies by the male students in the private schools in various reading tasks.

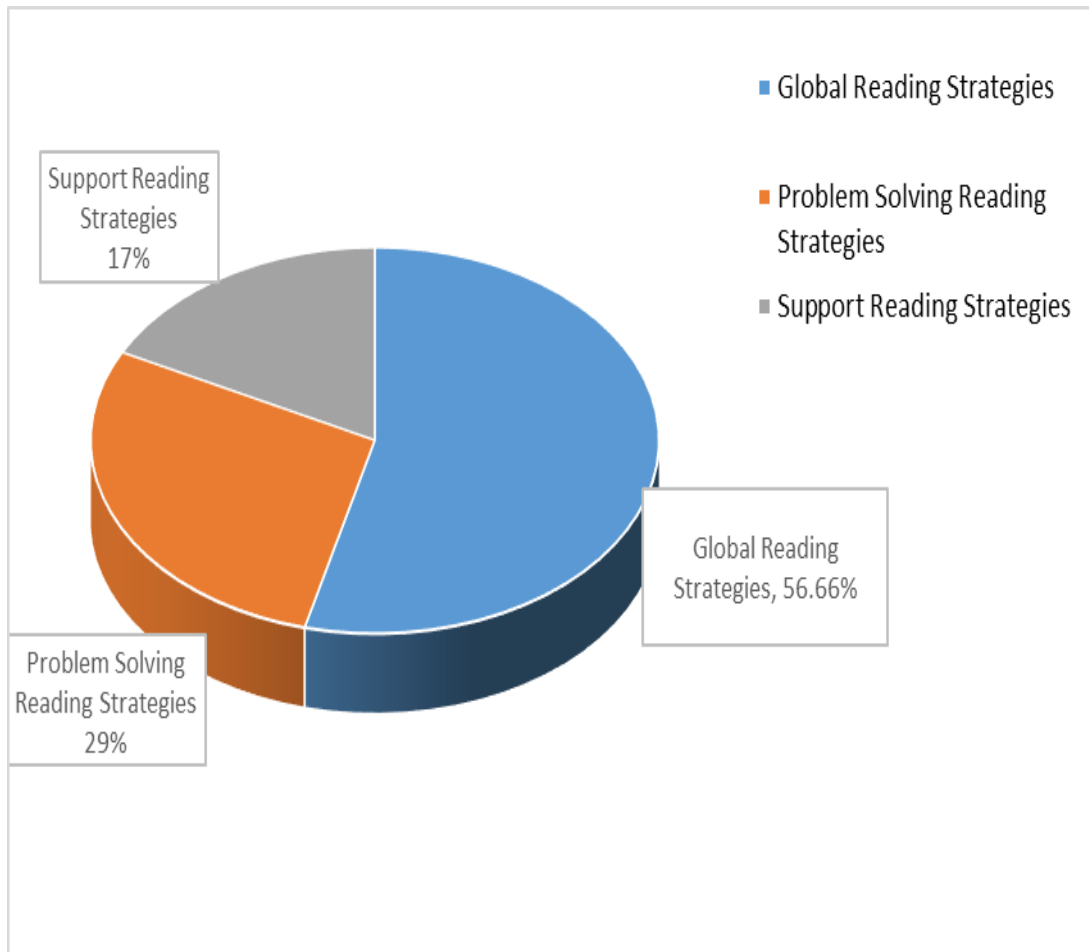


Figure (8)

Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies among the Male Students in the Private Schools

4.3.5. Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies among the Female Students in the Private Schools

Figure 9 reveals the profile of the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among the female students in the private schools. It can be gleaned from this figure that most of the female students in the private schools use global reading strategies in various reading tasks. This is indicated by the highest frequency count of 48 out of 60 respondents under this category or 80% of the total number of samples.

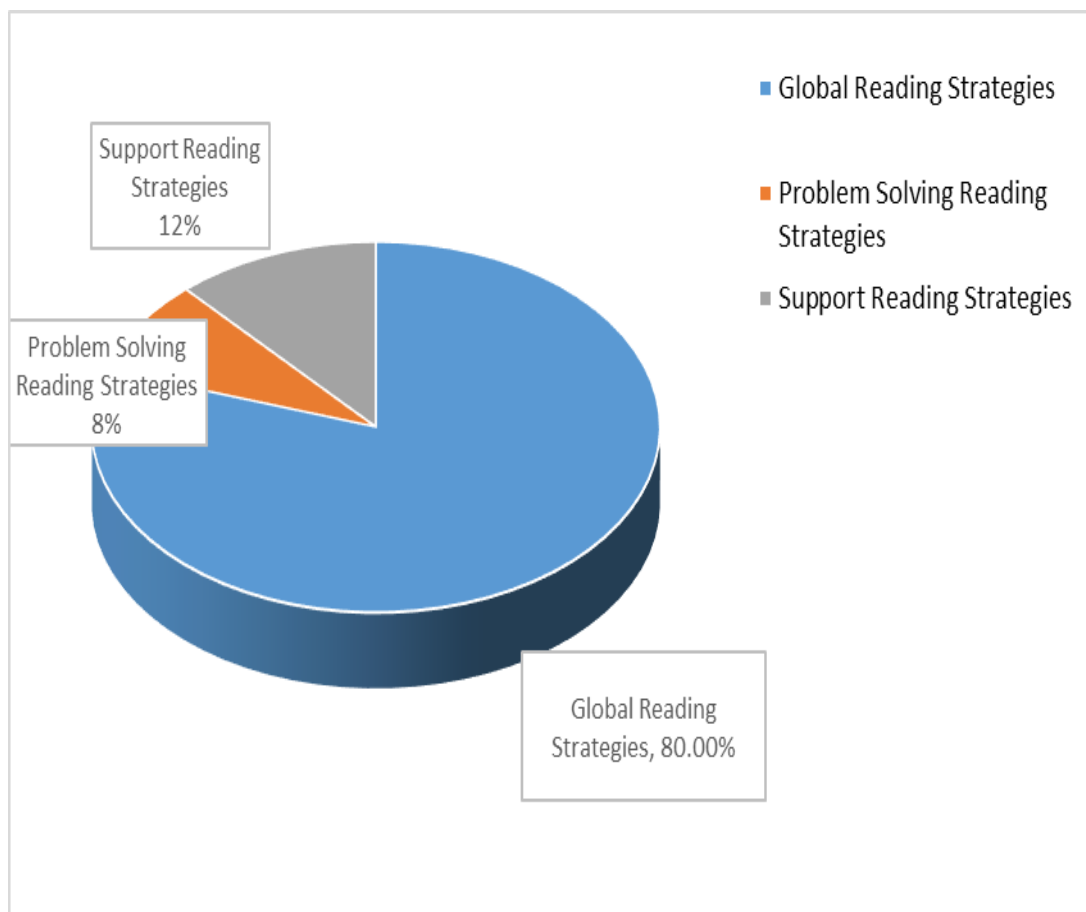


Figure (9)

Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies among the Female Students in the Private Schools

The said results basically imply that the high percentage of global strategy usage is not only inherent among the male students in the private schools but also among the female students of the same, which is corollary to the findings of Amer *et al* (2010), Rastakhiz and Safari (2014), Chen and Chen (2015), Shehadeh (2015), and Chen (2015). Female students in the private schools were described by their teachers to be highly motivated to learn the target language. Most of them would bring other reading materials in English to the classroom. Some of them like to read novels and other stories in English without being told to do so. They know how to maximize the use of online resources such as the

dictionary and thesaurus to find meanings of words and terminologies that they do not understand.

The same table also indicates that a total of 7 female student-respondents or 11.66% from the total number of samples use support reading strategies. Only 5 female student-respondents or 8.33% from the total number of samples use problem solving reading strategies. Hence, it is logical to state that the problem solving reading strategies is the least used set of strategies by the female students in the private schools in various reading tasks.

4.3.6. Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies of Both the Male and Female Students in the Private Schools

Table 9 indicates the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies of both the male and female students in the private schools. It can be gleaned from the table that the female group (80%) had a higher percentage of global reading strategy usage than the male group (56.66%). It was the male group (30%) that had a higher percentage of problem solving reading strategy usage than the female group (8.33%). The male group (18.33%) also had a higher percentage of support reading strategy usage than the female group (11.66%).

In the private schools, teachers who were interviewed reported that they sometimes observe their students to have high level of reading strategy usage as seen in their frequent skimming of the text first by noting characteristics like length and organization, trying to get back on track when they lose concentration, underlining or circling information in the text to help them remember it, adjusting their reading speed according to what they are reading, and using reference materials such as

dictionaries to help them understand what they read. This basically shows that there is a high level of motivation among the students in the private schools because of their intrinsic drive to perform all these things in order to understand what they are reading.

Table (9)

Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies of the Student-
Respondents in the Private Schools

Reading Strategies	Male	Female
	Percentage	Percentage
Global Reading Strategies	56.66%	80.0%
Problem Solving Reading Strategies	30%	8.33%
Support Reading Strategies	18.33%	11.66%
Total	100%	100%

Teachers also observe their students to stop from time to time and think about what they are reading, try to picture or visualize information to help remember what they read, use pictures in text to increase their understanding, and use typographical aids like bold face and italics to identify key information. Most of their students would bring extra reference materials in their classes in order to demonstrate their enthusiasm for reading. This is also nurtured by the general environment wherein their peers demonstrate such characteristics. Most often their students would check their understanding when they come across conflicting information, try to guess what the material is about when they

read, and try to guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases. All of these behaviors contribute to the high level of metacognitive awareness of their students in terms of strategy usage.

Another evidence on the high level of metacognitive awareness in terms of the reading strategy usage for the students in the private schools are the observed behaviors noted by their teachers. According to their language teachers, they would oftentimes have purpose in mind when they read, take notes while reading to help them understand what they read, and think about they know to help them understand what they are supposed to read. Most of them would also preview the text before reading, read the text aloud to help them understand what they read, apply summarization, reflect on important information in the text, think about whether the content of the text fits their reading purpose, and discuss what they read with others to check their understanding. These behaviors and general attitudes toward reading are indicators that students in the private schools are able to monitor and regulate their strategies for reading in order successfully complete a reading task.

Because of the culture of having an intrinsic motivation for general learning, teachers have noted that their students find it easy to use context clues to help them better understand what they are reading, paraphrase ideas in their own words to better understand what they read, and go back and forth in the text to find relationships among ideas in it. These specific reading strategies signify that students in the private schools are independent learners because they can proceed with the reading task without the assistance from their language teachers.

An important generalization that can be formulated from the aforesaid findings is the high percentage of global reading strategy usage for both male and female students in the private schools. Such empirical

data is also affirmed in the studies of Amer *et al* (2010), Rastakhiz and Safari (2014), Chen and Chen (2015), Shehadeh (2015), and Chen (2015).

4.3.7. Summary of the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies among the Different Groups

Table 10 reflects a summary of the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies of the different groups of ESL learners who were the focal respondents investigated in this research. As observed from this table, the male students in the private schools had the highest level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among all the groups. This is indicated by their overall mean score level of 3.98, which means that this group of student-respondents have high level of metacognitive awareness of the different reading strategies that enables them to use such strategies in dealing with various reading tasks. The female students in the private schools had the second highest level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. This is indicated by their overall mean score level of 3.56, which is categorized as a group that has a high level of metacognitive awareness of the said strategies in reading.

From the data presented in the same table, it is logical to state that the female students in the government schools had the lowest level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. This is indicated by their overall mean score level of 2.11, which is categorized as a group that has low level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies in dealing with different sets of reading tasks.. The male students in the government schools were categorized as a group that has also low level of metacognitive awareness of the various strategies in reading. This is indicated by their overall mean score level of 2.61.

Table (10)

Summary of the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies of the
Different Groups of Student-Respondents

Groups Categories	Overall Mean	Interpretation
Female Students in Government Schools	2.11	Low
Male Students in Government Schools	2.61	Low
Female Students in Private Schools	3.56	High
Male Students in Private Schools	3.98	High

Legend: 1-2.66 – Low; 2.67-3.40 – Moderate; 3.41-5.0 - High

This result implies that students in the private schools have higher levels of metacognitive awareness as reflected in the results of the MARSI. In the report of Carvalho (2009), it was emphasized the private schools perform better than most government schools. This assumption is evident not only the reading comprehension skills of the students but also in their level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. Various factors could be attributed to this behavior and this includes to the type of curriculum applied in the private schools and the general educational culture.

4.3.8. Metacognitive Awareness of Global Reading Strategies according to the Respondents' CEFR Level

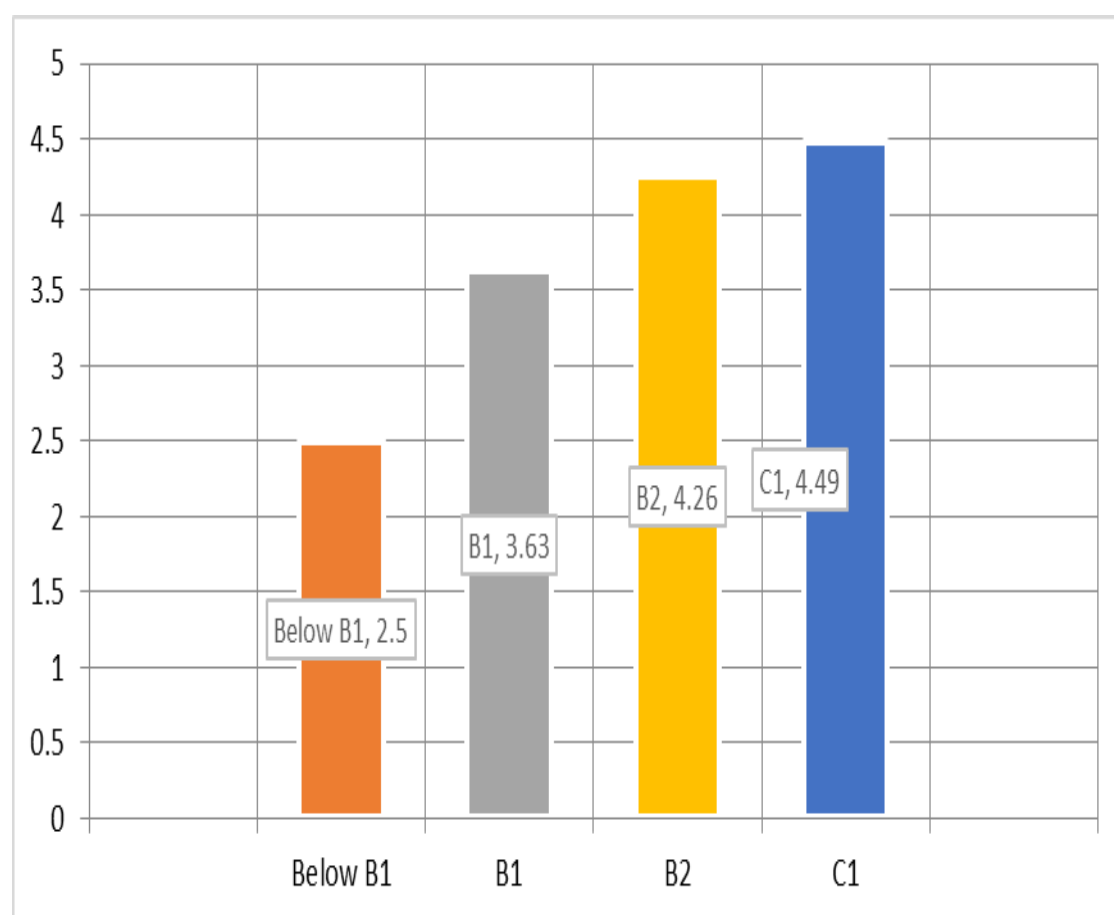


Figure (10)

Level of Metacognitive Awareness of *Global Reading Strategies* according to the CEFR Level of the Student-Respondents

In Figure 10, the student-respondents' metacognitive awareness of global reading strategies is presented according to their CEFR levels. As seen in this figure, B2 and C1 learners have high level of metacognitive awareness of the global reading strategies. The aforesaid observation is indicated by their overall mean score levels of 4.26 and 4.49,

respectively. They usually use global reading strategies in various reading tasks. B1 level learners also usually use these global reading strategies, which is indicated by the mean score levels of 3.63. Below B1 level learners have the lowest mean score level in terms of their metacognitive awareness of the global reading strategies, which is indicated by the mean score level of 2.50. The said findings imply that the higher the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies, the higher the reading comprehension ability is also recorded among the language learners. This is corollary to the results in the researches of Sonleitner (2005), Osterholm (2006), Phakiti (2006), Alhaqbani & Riazi (2012), Ahmadi *et al* (2013), and Vehovec *et al* (2014).

4.3.9. Metacognitive Awareness of Problem Solving Reading Strategies according to the Respondents' CEFR Level

Figure 11 reveals the student-respondents' metacognitive awareness of problem solving reading strategies according to their CEFR levels. Similar to the previous findings, both B2 and C1 level learners have high level of metacognitive awareness of the problem solving reading strategies, which is indicated by their overall mean score levels of 3.94 and 4.33, respectively.

The figure also shows that the B1 level learners sometimes use these problem solving reading strategies, which is indicated by the mean score level of 3.18. Below B1 level learners have the lowest mean score level in terms of their metacognitive awareness of the problem solving reading strategies, which is indicated by their overall mean score level of 1.31. Hence, it can be implied that as the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies of the language learner goes higher, the

higher the reading comprehension skills will also be observed from them. An empirical observation that is also affirmed by Sonleitner (2005), Osterholm (2006), Phakiti (2006), Alhaqbani & Riazi (2012), Ahmadi *et al* (2013), and Vehovec *et al* (2014).

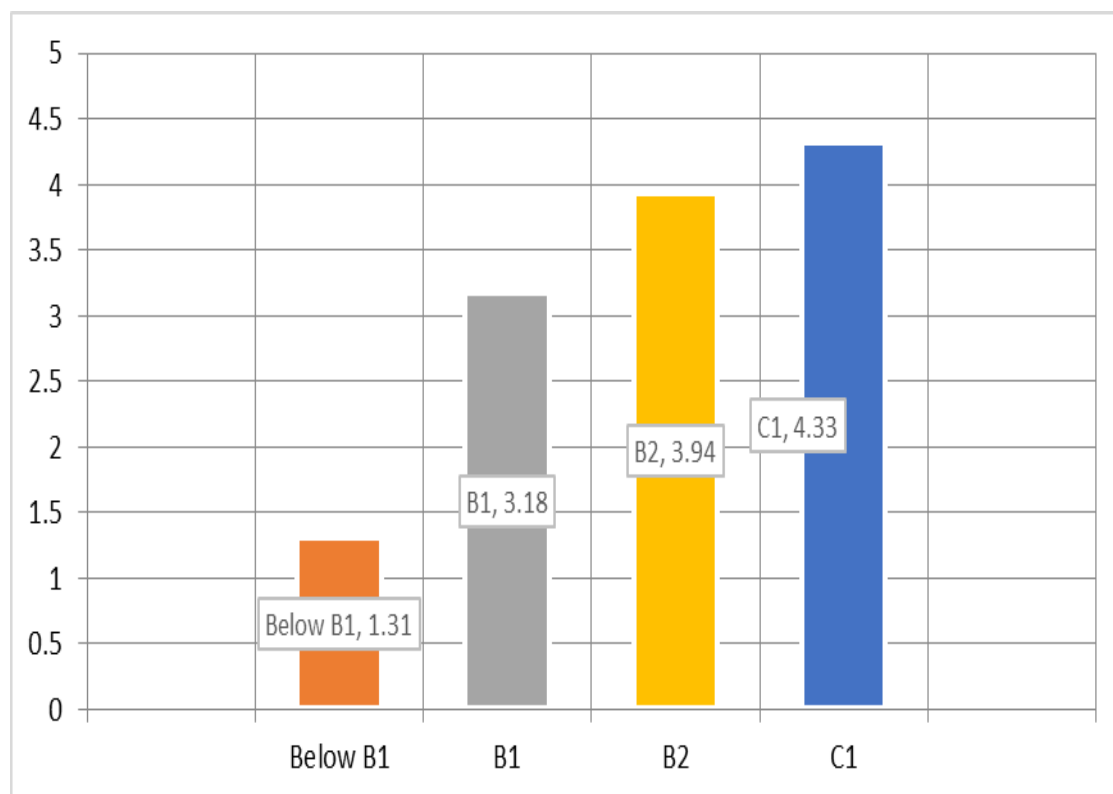


Figure (11)

Level of Metacognitive Awareness of *Problem Solving Reading Strategies* according to the CEFR Level of the Student-Respondents

4.3.10. Metacognitive Awareness of Support Reading Strategies according to the Respondents' CEFR Level

The student-respondents' metacognitive awareness of support reading strategies according to their CEFR levels are presented in Figure 12. It was the B2 and c1 level learners which obtained the highest mean

score level of metacognitive awareness of the support reading strategies. The table depicts that the B1 level learners sometimes use these problem solving reading strategies, which is indicated by the mean score level of 3.26. Below B1 level learners have the lowest mean score level in terms of their metacognitive awareness of the support reading strategies, which is indicated by their overall mean score level of 1.61. In the research of Temur *et al* (2010), Ditzel (2010), Guo and Roehrig (2011), Wu *et al* (2012), Tavakoli (2014), Thao *et al* (2014), and Razi and Cubukco (2014), the same observation is also affirmed, wherein the level of metacognitive awareness of the students has a positive association with their reading comprehension skills.

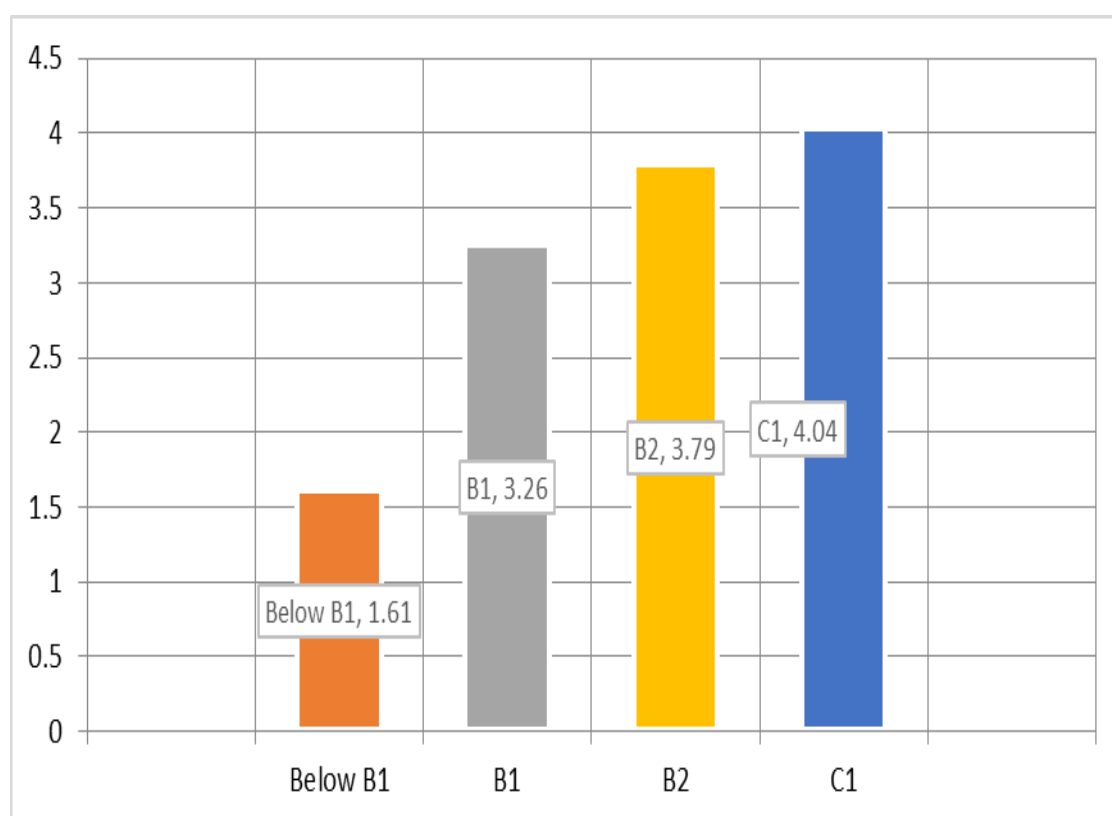


Figure (12)

Level of Metacognitive Awareness of Support Reading Strategies
according to the CEFR Level of the Student-Respondents

4.3.11. Metacognitive Awareness of Overall Reading Strategies according to the Respondents' CEFR Level

Figure 13 shows the student-respondents' overall metacognitive awareness of reading strategies according to their CEFR levels. From the said table, it can be gleaned that the B2 (4.0) and C1 level learners (4.29) had the highest mean score level in terms of the overall metacognitive awareness of reading strategies.

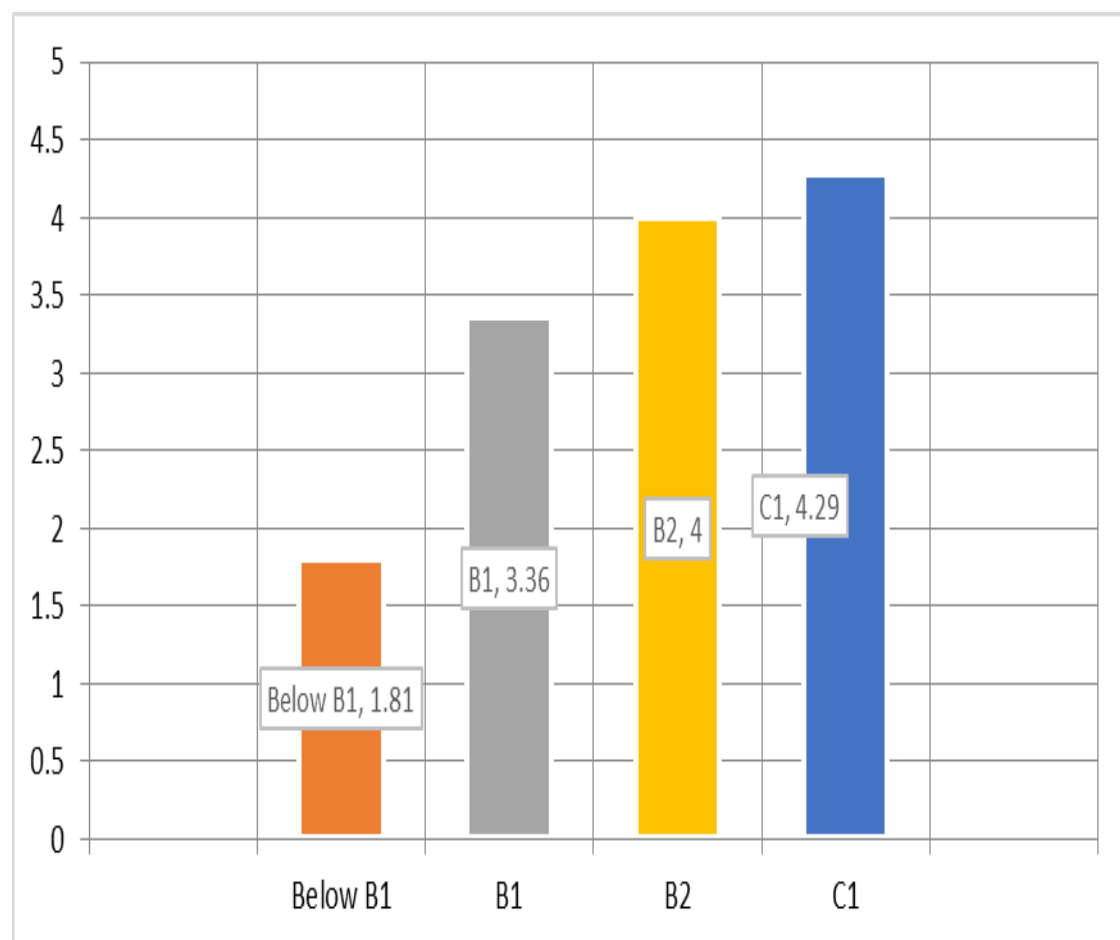


Figure (13)

Level of Metacognitive Awareness of Overall Reading Strategies according to the CEFR Level of the Student-Respondents

Similar to the previous results, the B1 level learners are sometimes metacognitively aware in terms of their reading strategies usage, which is indicated by the mean score level of 3.36. Below B1 level learners had the lowest mean score level in terms of their overall metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. This means that they really rarely utilize these strategies because of their lack of awareness of it. Thus, the results emphasize that the level of metacognitive awareness of the students has a positive association with their reading comprehension skills, which was also affirmed in the in the study of Temur *et al* (2010), Ditzel (2010), Guo and Roehrig (2011), Wu *et al* (2012), Tavakoli (2014), Thao *et al* (2014), and Razi and Cubukco (2014).

4.3.12. Summary of the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies according to the Respondents' CEFR Level

Table 11 depicts the cross-sectional summary of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies according to the CEFR of the respondents. It primarily suggests the global reading strategies (2.50) are the most frequently used strategies among readers with below B1 levels. This is followed by the support reading strategies (1.61) and problem solving reading strategies (1.31). Global reading strategies (3.63) are also the most frequently used strategies among B1 level readers. The support reading strategies (3.26) ranked second for the B1 level readers and this was followed by problem solving reading strategies (3.18).

For B2 level learners, global reading strategies (4.26) are also the most frequently used strategies. Problem solving reading strategies (3.94) ranked second and the support reading strategies (3.79) ranked third for

the said level of learners. Global reading strategies (4.49) are also the most frequently used strategies among C1 level readers. This was followed by problem solving reading strategies (4.33) and the support reading strategies (4.29).

Table (11)

Summary of the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies

According the CEFR Level of the Respondents

CEFR Level Categories	Global Reading Strategies		Problem Solving Reading Strategies		Support Reading Strategies		Overall Reading Strategies	
Below B1	2.50	Low	1.31	Low	1.61	Low	1.81	Low
B1	3.63	High	3.18	Mod	3.26	Mod	3.36	Mod
B2	4.26	High	3.94	High	3.79	High	4.0	High
C1	4.49	High	4.33	High	4.04	High	4.29	High

Legend: 1-2.66 – Low; 2.67-3.40 – Moderate; 3.41-5.0 - High

It is important to note that the aforesaid results indicate that there is a positive association between the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the level of reading comprehension abilities of the respondents. In other words, the findings are supported by the arguments of Ahmadi *et al* (2013), Alhaqbani & Riazi (2012), Vehovec *et al* (2014), Osterholm (2006), Phakiti (2006), Sonleitner (2005). In the same manner, the propositions of Temur *et al* (2010), Ditzel (2010), Guo and Roehrig

(2011), Wu *et al* (2012), Tavakoli (2014), Thao *et al* (2014), and Razi and Cubukco (2014) are also affirmed with these findings.

4.4. Results for Research Question 3:

Commonly and Least Used Reading Strategies

Table 12 exhibits the summary of the most commonly used as well as the least used reading strategies among the student-respondents. The table indicates that all of the most commonly used strategies by the respondents are categorized as global reading strategies. This includes having a purpose in mind when they read, thinking about what they know to help them understand what they read, thinking about whether the content of the text fits their reading purpose, skimming the text first by noting characteristics like length and organization, deciding what to read closely and what to ignore, using reference materials such as dictionaries to help them understand what they read, using tables, figures, and pictures in text to increase their understanding, using context clues to help them better understand what they are reading, checking their understanding when they come across conflicting information, and trying to guess what the material is about when they read. To reiterate, the high level of global strategy awareness among the student-respondents in this study is also affirmed in the research findings of Amer *et al* (2010), Rastakhiz and Safari (2014), Chen and Chen (2015), Shehadeh (2015), and Chen (2015).

During the interview, the teachers reported that students usually ask questions about the topic of the reading task. This confirms the student-respondents' usage of global reading strategies particularly in ensuring that they have a purpose when they perform a reading task. In most cases, the students often share experiences or first-hand memories

related to the topic that they are going to read. This is also one of the features of global reading strategies.

Many of the teachers also described their high performing students to be global readers because they usually would flip the pages of the text before they begin to read. Hence, skimming the text first by noting characteristics like length and organization is common especially to those who have high level of reading comprehension performance.

Table (12)

Summary Ranks of the Most Commonly Used Reading Strategies

Most Commonly Used Reading Strategies	Strategy Type	Mean Score	Rank
1. I have a purpose in mind when I read.	Global	3.50	10
2. I take notes while reading to help me understand what I read.	Support	2.91	21
3. I think about what I know to help me understand what I read.	Global	3.51	9
4. I preview the text to see what it's about before reading it.	Global	3.52	8
5. When text becomes difficult, I read aloud to help me understand what I read.	Support	2.80	23
6. I summarize what I read to reflect on important information in the text.	Support	3.07	17
7. I think about whether the content of the text fits my reading purpose.	Global	3.53	7
8. I read slowly but carefully to be sure I understand what I'm reading.	Problem-Solving	2.85	22

9. I discuss what I read with others to check my understanding.	Support	3.0	19
10. I skim the text first by noting characteristics like length and organization.	Global	3.60	6
11. I try to get back on track when I lose concentration.	Problem-Solving	3.19	15
12. I underline or circle information in the text to help me remember it.	Support	2.79	24
13. I adjust my reading speed according to what I'm reading.	Problem-Solving	2.97	20
14. I decide what to read closely and what to ignore.	Global	3.61	5
15. I use reference materials such as dictionaries to help me understand what I read.	Support	2.78	25
16. When text becomes difficult, I pay closer attention to what I'm reading.	Problem-Solving	3.18	16
17. I use tables, figures, and pictures in text to increase my understanding.	Global	3.62	4
18. I stop from time to time and think about what I'm reading.	Problem-Solving	3.05	18
19. I use context clues to help me better understand what I'm reading.	Global	3.70	2
20. I paraphrase (restate ideas in my own words) to better understand what I read.	Support	2.71	26
21. I try to picture or visualize information to help remember what I read.	Problem-Solving	2.49	30

22. I use typographical aids like bold face and italics to identify key information.	Global	3.13	13
23. I critically analyze and evaluate the information presented in the text.	Global	3.12	14
24. I go back and forth in the text to find relationships among ideas in it.	Support	2.71	27
25. I check my understanding when I come across conflicting information.	Global	3.71	1
26. I try to guess what the material is about when I read.	Global	3.69	3
27. When text becomes difficult, I re-read to increase my understanding.	Problem-Solving	2.51	28
28. I ask myself questions I like to have answered in the text.	Support	3.26	11
29. I check to see if my guesses about the text are right or wrong.	Global	3.14	12
30. I try to guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases.	Problem-Solving	2.50	29

The table also reveals that the least used strategies by the respondents are classified to be either support reading strategies or problem solving reading strategies. As seen in the said table, the least used support reading strategies include the process of reading aloud to help them understand what they read, underlining or circling information in the text to help them remember it, using reference materials such as dictionaries to help them understand what they read, paraphrasing to better understand what they read, and going back and forth in the text to find relationships among ideas in it.

The table also shows that the least used problem solving reading strategies include the process of reading slowly but carefully to be sure they understand what they are reading, adjust the reading speed according to what they are reading, trying to picture or visualize information to help remember what they read, re-reading the text to increase their understanding, and trying to guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases.

One of the general observations reported by the secondary school teachers in the selected research locale was the lack of strategy use among low performing learners. Most of the low performing learners are hesitant in reading the text aloud to support their reading comprehension. They are not also aware of how to maximize the use of various reference materials that could improve their understanding of the text that they are reading. Because of the inability of the learners to use reference materials such as the dictionary, they are not able to paraphrase some of the important lines in the text that could support their comprehension skills.

4.5. Results for Research Question 4:

Correlation of Variables

One of the research questions posed at the onset of the study is related to the hypothesized relationship between the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the comprehension abilities of the student-respondents. This is discussed in detail in the succeeding section along with the presentation of the significant correlations of other variables in the study.

The correlation data in Table 13 is a result of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation test statistics. As noted in the previous chapter, this

statistical test was used to determine the strength of the relationship between the two focal variables: the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies (independent) and the reading comprehension abilities (dependent) of the student-respondents.

Table (13)

Correlation between the Reading Comprehension Abilities and the
Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies

Independent Variables	Computed Value	P-Value	Interpretation
Global Reading Strategies	.533	.000	Highly Significant
Problem Solving Reading Strategies	.478	.000	Highly Significant
Support Reading Strategies	.550	.000	Highly Significant
Overall Reading Strategies	.531	.000	Highly Significant

Level of Significance: .05

It is revealed from the said table that there is a significant relationship between the overall level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the reading comprehension abilities of the student-respondents. It is indicated by the *r* value of .531 with a p-value of .000. The said *r* value suggests that there is a positive correlation between the

two variables and the p-value that is lower than .05 level of significance affirms the rejection of the null hypothesis, which states that there is no relationship between the overall level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the reading comprehension abilities of the student-respondents.

On a closer examination, the individual components of the independent variable are also significantly correlated with the reading comprehension abilities of the learners. This is evident in the global reading strategies ($r = .533$), problem solving reading strategies ($r = .478$), and support reading strategies ($r = .550$), wherein their p-values are lower than .05 level of significance. Such findings strongly confirm the assumption that as the language learner increases his/her level of awareness of the various reading strategies, the level of reading comprehension also is improved or enhanced. Hence, a positive linear type of relationship exists between the two variables.

The aforesaid result is not surprising because Temur *et al* (2010), Ditzel (2010), Guo and Roehrig (2011), Wu *et al* (2012), Tavakoli (2014), Thao *et al* (2014), and Razi and Cubukco (2014) also discovered the same correlation results in terms of this two variables. Sonleitner (2005), Osterholm (2006), Phakiti (2006), Alhaqbani & Riazi (2012), Ahmadi *et al* (2013), and Vehovec *et al* (2014) also affirmed the same proposition on the positive correlation between the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the reading comprehension of the students.

In Table 14, another set of correlation data is presented and it focuses on the relationship between the reading comprehension abilities and the demographic characteristics of the student-respondents. This was not articulated in the research problem but because of the inherent relationship of the said set of variables, it is worthy to report the said

empirical analysis. In this correlation analysis, however, the Chi-Square test statistics was used because of the nature of data obtained in the independent variable. To be specific, a nominal or categorical set of data was obtained in the pool of independent variable cluster: the type of school affiliation and the gender of the student respondents. A numerical data was obtained for the dependent variable in a form of a rating scale value. Hence, the Chi-Square test statistics was used because of the combination of a numerical data and a categorical data.

Table (14)

Correlation between the Reading Comprehension Abilities and the Other Variables

Independent Variables	Computed Value	P-Value	Interpretation
Type of School	.654	.000	Highly Significant
Gender	.379	.052	Not Significant

Level of Significance: .05

From the said table, it can be seen that the school of the respondents has significant correlation with their reading comprehension abilities. This is indicated by the p-value of .000 that is lower than .05 level of significance. Gender has no significant correlation with the reading comprehension abilities of the student-respondents. This is indicated by its p-value of .052, which is evidently higher than .05 level of significance.

The aforesaid result implies that reading comprehension is influenced by many factors such as the type of school affiliation of the student. Mikulecky (2008) argued that reading is a conscious and unconscious thinking process, while August and Shanahan (2006) explained that second language reading involves many subskills. Hence, the curriculum of the school significantly affects the reading skills of the language learners. If a language learner is exposed to a holistic curriculum that supports the development and learning of the target language, then a more effective process of reading comprehension skill development is achieved.

Table 15 focuses on the relationship between the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the demographic characteristics of the student-respondents. Similar to the previous analysis, the Chi-Square test statistics was used because of the same set of variable data combinations. The results of the analysis revealed that the school affiliation and the gender of the respondents had a significant correlation with metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. This is indicated by the p-values that are lower than .05 level of significance.

This result implies that metacognitive awareness is a complex process that is influenced by many factors such as the type of school environment and the gender of the students. Hunter (2010), Magaldi (2010), Vaiciuniene and Uzpaliene (2013), Vianty (2007), Aydin (2016), and Alvarado, Puente, Jimenez, and Jimenez (2012) acknowledged this idea by emphasizing that metacognition is influential in any learning task such as reading.

Table (15)

Correlation between the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies
and the Other Variables

Independent Variables	Computed Value	P-Value	Interpretation
Type of School	.441	.000	Highly Significant
Gender	.278	.010	Significant

Level of Significance: .05

4.6. Results for Research Question 5:

Significant Differences between Groups

The last research question posed in this study is related to the significant differences in the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the reading comprehension abilities between the different groups of student-respondents. Earlier in this chapter, the profile of the student-respondents is presented according to the various groups of classification. Hence, in this section, a statistical test was used in order to confirm the differences in the mean score levels obtained by the different groups. To put simply, any differences in the mean score may not be an actual difference unless it is tested statistically. This is the reason for opting the t-test for independent samples as a statistical measure for this purpose.

Table (16)

Significant Differences in the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading

Strategies Overall Mean Score among the Different Groups

Group Comparison Pairs	T-Value	P-Value	Interpretation
Private Schools and Government Schools	10.103	.000	Highly Significant
Male Students and Female Students	3.760	.000	Highly Significant

Level of Significance: .05

Results of the t-test revealed that the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies between the students in the private schools and the students in the government schools differ significantly. This is indicated by the p-value of .000, which is lower than 0.05 level of significance. Given this p-value, it is logical to reject the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant difference in the overall metacognitive awareness of reading strategies between the students in the private schools and the students in the government schools. The results imply that the type of school affiliation could affect their metacognitive awareness levels and also in terms of their actual usage of the said reading strategies. In the context of the study, the aforesaid statistical result is in favor of the private schools, which means that the private schools had a higher level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies than the students in the government schools.

Table 16 also indicates that there is also is a significant difference in the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies between

male students and female students. This is indicated by the p-value of .000, which is lower than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected, which states that there is no significant difference in the overall metacognitive awareness of reading strategies between the male students and the female students. The said statistical result is in favor of the male students, which means that the male students had a higher level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies than the female students.

Table (17)
Significant Differences in the Reading Comprehension

Abilities among the Different Groups

Group Comparison Pairs	T-Value	P-Value	Interpretation
Private Schools and Government Schools	13.170	.000	Highly Significant
Male Students and Female Students	1.691	.093	Not Significant

Level of Significance: .05

Table 17 demonstrates the significant differences in the reading comprehension abilities of the different groups of student-respondent. As revealed in this table, there is a significant difference in the reading comprehension abilities between the students in the private schools and the students in the government schools. This is indicated by the p-value of .000, which is lower than 0.05 level of significance. On a closer analysis, the aforesaid statistical result is in favor of the private schools, which

means that the students in the private schools had a higher level of reading comprehension abilities than the students in the government schools.

However, another important observation from the same table is the non-significant difference in the level of reading comprehension abilities between male students and female students. This is indicated by the p-value of .093, which is higher than 0.05 level of significance.

4.7. Summary of Null Hypotheses

Rejection/Acceptance

Null Hypothesis 1

H_{01} : There is **no** significant relationship between the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the reading comprehension abilities of the third year secondary high school Bahraini students.

Interpretation: There is a significant relationship between the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the reading comprehension abilities of the third year secondary high school Bahraini students.

Null Hypothesis 2

H_{02} : There is **no** significant relationship between the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the type of school affiliation of the third year secondary high school Bahraini students.

Interpretation: There is a significant relationship between the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the type of school affiliation of the third year secondary high school Bahraini students.

Null Hypothesis 3

H_{03} : There is **no** significant relationship between the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the gender of the third year secondary high school Bahraini students.

Interpretation: There is **a** significant relationship between the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the gender of the third year secondary high school Bahraini students.

Null Hypothesis 4

H_{04} : There is **no** significant relationship between the reading comprehension abilities and the type of school affiliation of the third year secondary high school Bahraini students.

Interpretation: There is a significant relationship between the reading comprehension abilities and the type of school affiliation of the third year secondary high school Bahraini students.

Hypothesis 5

H_{05} : There is **no** significant relationship between the reading comprehension abilities and the gender of the third year secondary high school Bahraini students.

Interpretation: There is no significant relationship between the reading comprehension abilities and the gender of the third year secondary high school Bahraini students.

Null Hypothesis 6

H_{06} : There is **no** significant difference in the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies between the student-respondents in the private schools and the student-respondents in the public schools.

Interpretation: There is a significant difference in the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies between the student-respondents in the private schools and the student-respondents in the public schools.

Null Hypothesis 7

H_{07} : There is **no** significant difference in the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies between the male and female student-respondents.

Interpretation: There is a significant difference in the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies between the male and female student-respondents.

Null Hypothesis 8

H_{08} : There is **no** significant difference in the reading comprehension abilities between the student-respondents in the private schools and the student-respondents in the public schools.

Interpretation: There is a significant difference in the reading comprehension abilities between the student-respondents in the private schools and the student-respondents in the public schools.

Null Hypothesis 9

H_{09} : There is **no** significant difference in the reading comprehension abilities between the male and female student-respondents.

Interpretation: There is no significant difference in the reading comprehension abilities between the male and female student-respondents.

4.8. Interpretation and Discussion

The results of the study provide various points for further empirical discussion. These points of interpretation and discussion are explored in this section. A salient finding in this study is the high percentage of government school students whose reading comprehension levels are below B1 level. Previously it was noted that most of the male and female students in the government schools have below B1 level in reading comprehension. The said result is supported by Carvalho (2009) and Peterson (2002) who both affirmed that students in the public schools may experience difficulties in various academic areas and this includes the area of reading comprehension.

The result of the study also highlights the high percentage of B1 learners in the private schools. For example, it was noted earlier that most of the male and female students in the private schools have B1 level in reading comprehension based on the CEFR. This could be attributed to the curriculum of the private schools, wherein students are exposed to many subjects that are taught in English and various extra-curricular activities that promote their language skills. Such generalized findings of the study find strong support in the study of Carvalho (2009) and Peterson (2002) as well. It must be noted also that the reading comprehension data in this study provide a different perspective in the sense that previous studies on reading comprehension only involved students from the elementary levels such as the researches of Baier (2005), Jiang (2011), Cromley (2005), and Akyol, Cakiroglu, Kuruyer (2014). In other words, the results on the reading comprehension levels between the private and government schools provide a different cross-sectional perspective.

The high percentage of usage on the global reading strategies is one of the most important findings in this research. For example, most of the male students in the government schools use global reading strategies in various reading tasks, as indicated by the highest frequency count of 49 out of 60 respondents under this category (81.66%). It was also discovered earlier that most of the female students in the government schools use global reading strategies in various reading tasks as indicated by the highest frequency count of 55 out of 60 respondents under this category or 91.66% from the total number of samples. The same is true in the private schools, wherein most of the male students in the said schools also use global reading strategies in various reading tasks, as indicated by the highest frequency count of 34 out of 60 respondents under this category or 56.66% of the total number of samples. These important findings also find similar corroborations in the studies of Chen and Chen (2015), Shehadeh (2015), and Chen (2015), wherein they also confirmed the pervasiveness and centrality of global reading strategy awareness and usage among the language learners they have studied.

The propositions of Chen and Chen (2015), Shehadeh (2015), and Chen's (2015) research are also affirmed in the present study in the sense that regardless of the majors, global reading strategy was seen to be the most frequently used strategy, wherein most of the students in the various secondary schools use global reading strategies in various reading tasks. Another evidence is the fact that, for B2 to C1 level learners, global reading strategies are the most frequently used strategies. Both the problem solving reading strategies and the support reading strategies ranked next for the said level of learners. The most commonly used strategies by the respondents are categorized as global reading strategies. In other words, global reading strategies were imperative strategies that

the student-respondents apply in any given reading task because these strategies allow them to have a purpose in mind when they read or think about what they know to help them understand what they read. This set of strategies also enables them to think about whether the content of the text fits their reading purpose and allows them to decide what to read closely and what to ignore.

Another important affirmation in this research is the prevalence of high metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among high performing learners. This is evident with students who have B2 and C1 levels of reading comprehension. For example, B2 and C1 level learners had high level of metacognitive awareness of the global reading strategies, as indicated by their overall mean score levels. It was also noted that B2 and C1 learners also had high level of metacognitive awareness of the problem solving reading strategies. It must be noted that Rastakhiz and Safari (2014), Quiroz (2014), Solak and Altay (2014), Hung and Ngan (2015), Mahmoudi (2014), Amer, Barwani, and Ebrahim (2010), and Al-Yami (2013) also corroborated the significance of reading strategy usage among various levels of learners, particularly for high performing language learners.

Part of the focal highlight of the present research is the significant relationship between the overall level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the reading comprehension abilities of the student-respondents. As noted earlier in this chapter, all the individual components of the independent variable are also significantly correlated with the reading comprehension abilities of the learners, which is evident in the p-values of global reading strategies, problem solving reading strategies, and support reading strategies that are lower than .05 level of significance. The said high correlation between the abovementioned focal

variables is strongly affirmed in the researches of Ahmadi *et al* (2013), Alhaqbani & Riazi (2012), Vehovec *et al* (2014), Osterholm (2006), Phakiti (2006), Sonleitner (2005), Tavakoli (2014), Thao *et al* (2014), Guo and Roehrig (2011), Razi and Cubukco (2014), Ditzel (2010), Wu *et al* (2012), and Temur *et al* (2010).

Such significant correlation was further explored in the study by analyzing the significant differences among the different groups of student-respondents. The t-test analysis advanced the findings that metacognitive awareness of reading strategies between the different groups of students differ significantly, as indicated by the p-value of .000, which is lower than 0.05 level of significance. There was also a significant difference in the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among all the different groups of student-respondents, as indicated by the p-value of .000, which is lower than 0.05 level of significance, except for the student-respondents who were grouped according to major or specialization. In the context of these findings, the researches of Ghyasi *et al* (2013), Alhaqbani & Riazi (2012), and Vehovec *et al* (2014) are worthy to note because their results also confirmed the cross-sectional differences in terms of the manifestations of the said variables.

In summation, the current research confirmed that significance of metacognitive skills, particularly the student-respondents' metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. Hence, the assumptions of Flavell (1976), Oxford (1990), Schraw and Dennison (1994), Taylor (1999), Ya-Ling and Wu (2008), and Anderson (2002) on the nature of metacognition is highly relevant in the context of the research findings. Because high-performing learners take active engagement and have awareness over their learning by planning, monitoring, evaluating, and

modifying their strategies during a reading task, they are able to successfully perform various reading tasks.

Such mechanisms of metacognition were evident in the student-respondents' utilization of various reading strategies and their awareness of these strategies. Thus, it affirms the assumptions about reading which involves the learners' prior experiences (Smith, 1994), activation of schema (Anderson, 1994), centrality of prediction processes (Goodman, 1988), application of both conscious and unconscious processes (Mikulecky, 2008), involvement of other subskills (August and Shanahan, 2006), and usage of hypothesis testing processes on the part of the language learners) Block (1992).

Chapter Five

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the summary, conclusions, implications, and recommendations of the study. Implications for language pedagogy and learning are based on the empirical results obtained from the data gathering process. Conclusions are presented according to the research questions posed in the first chapter. The recommendations formulated at the end of this chapter primarily address the significant findings of the study, the research methodological framework in terms of its limitations, and the potential trajectories for future research.

5.2. Summary

This research aimed to determine the relationship between reading comprehension abilities and metacognitive awareness of reading strategies of third year secondary school students in Bahrain. This included the processes of investigating the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies used by the third year secondary school Bahraini students; analyzing their most commonly used reading strategies; analyzing their reading comprehension abilities; determining the correlation between metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the level of reading comprehension abilities; and determining the significant differences in the level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the reading comprehension abilities between the student-

respondents in the private schools and the student-respondents in public school.

A mixed method approach was used with the utilization of both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. A quantitative approach was used in processing the data in a form of numerical values from rating scales and raw scores. In addition, the qualitative approach was also applied in the sense that the research made use of open-ended interviews which elicited qualitative data from the teacher-respondents. A combination of descriptive and correlational research design was also utilized in order to address the research questions. A total of 240 third year high school students from Riffa Secondary School for Girls, Hamad Town Secondary School for Girls, Al Taawon Secondary School for Boys, Al Hidayah Secondary School for Boys, Al Iman Private School for Girls, Kanoo International School for Girls, Al Iman Private School for Boys, and Hawar International School for Boys were chosen as the respondents.

The translated Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (MARSI) and the First Certificate Exam (FCE) in Reading Comprehension were used to measure the focal research variables. An interview technique was also used in order to elicit relevant information from the secondary school teachers' observations on their students' reading comprehension experience and their metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. In analyzing the data, descriptive statistics such as the mean score and standard deviation were employed. Inferential statistics such as the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, Chi-Square, and the t-Test for Independent Samples were deemed imperative in testing the null hypotheses of the study.

5.3. Conclusions

In terms of the reading comprehension abilities, it was affirmed that most of the male students in the government schools have below B1 level in reading comprehension based on the CEFR. A large percentage of the female students in this type of school also had the highest number of cases of below B1 level in reading comprehension.

On another note, most of the male students in the private schools have B1 level in reading comprehension, which is indicated by the highest frequency count of 23 out of 60 respondents under this category or this 38.33% from the total number of samples. Most of the female students in these schools also had the highest number of cases of B1 level in reading comprehension, which is indicated by the highest frequency count of 20 out of 60 respondents under this category or 33.33% of the total number of samples. In terms of B1 level cases, the male group (38.33%) had a higher percentage from the total number of samples as compared with the female group (33.33%). The male and female students in the private schools had the highest level of reading comprehension abilities among all the groups. On the contrary, the male and female students in the government schools had the lowest level of reading comprehension abilities among all the groups.

In terms of the respondents' profile of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies, it was revealed that most of the male students in the government schools use global reading strategies in various reading tasks, which is indicated by the highest frequency count of 49 out of 60 respondents under this category or 81.66% of the total number of samples. Likewise, most of the female students in the government schools use global reading strategies in various reading tasks, which is indicated

by the highest frequency count of 55 out of 60 respondents under this category or 91.66% from the total number of samples.

The same observation was seen in the private schools wherein most of the male students in the private schools use global reading strategies in various reading tasks, which is indicated by the highest frequency count of 34 out of 60 respondents under this category or 56.66% of the total number of samples. In addition, most of the female students in the private schools use global reading strategies in various reading tasks, which is indicated by the highest frequency count of 48 out of 60 respondents under this category or 80% of the total number of samples. It was the male and female students in the private schools which had the highest level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among all the groups. However, the male and female students in the government schools had the lowest level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies.

When grouped according to their CEFR levels, it was revealed that both B2 and C1 level learners had high level of metacognitive awareness of the global reading strategies. Similar to the previous findings, B2 and C1 level learners have high level of metacognitive awareness of the problem solving reading strategies. It was also the B2 and C2 level learners which obtained the highest mean score level of metacognitive awareness of the support reading strategies. Both the B2 and C1 level learners had the highest mean score level in terms of the overall metacognitive awareness of reading strategies.

The most commonly used strategies by the respondents are categorized as global reading strategies. This includes having a purpose in mind when they read, thinking about what they know to help them understand what they read, thinking about whether the content of the text

fits their reading purpose, skimming the text first by noting characteristics like length and organization, deciding what to read closely and what to ignore, using reference materials such as dictionaries to help them understand what they read, using tables, figures, and pictures in text to increase their understanding, using context clues to help them better understand what they are reading, checking their understanding when they come across conflicting information, and trying to guess what the material is about when they read.

On the contrary, the least used reading strategies among the student-respondents are classified to be either support reading strategies or problem solving reading strategies. The least used support reading strategies include the process of reading aloud to help them understand what they read, underlining or circling information in the text to help them remember it, using reference materials such as dictionaries to help them understand what they read, paraphrasing to better understand what they read, and going back and forth in the text to find relationships among ideas in it. The least used problem solving reading strategies include the process of reading slowly but carefully to be sure they understand what they are reading, adjust the reading speed according to what they are reading, trying to picture or visualize information to help remember what they read, re-reading the text to increase their understanding, and trying to guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases.

The correlation profile of the focal variables indicated that there is a significant relationship between the overall level of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the reading comprehension abilities of the student-respondents. All of the individual components of the independent variable are also significantly correlated with the reading comprehension abilities of the learners. This includes the global reading

strategies, problem solving reading strategies, and support reading strategies. Only school affiliation of the respondents had a significant correlation with the reading comprehension abilities of the students. Both school affiliation and the gender of the respondents had significant correlation with their metacognitive awareness of reading strategies.

Intergroup analysis on the results of the t-test for independent samples revealed there was a significant difference in the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies between and among the various groups of student-respondents. This is indicated by the p-values of .000 in all category pairs, which is lower than 0.05 level of significance. This includes the students between private and public schools and the male and female students.

In similar manner, there was also a significant difference in the reading comprehension abilities between student respondents in the private and public schools. However, there was no significant difference in the reading comprehension abilities between the male and female students.

5.4. Implications

From the given empirical results, several implications and insights could be articulated. In the area of language instruction, it is crucial for language teachers to integrate classroom activities that could maximize the language-learners' use of reading strategies, may it be global, problem-solving, or support reading strategies. It is believed that once language learners are aware of the different reading strategies that are available, they could choose which of these sets of strategies are applicable in a specific reading task.

In the preparation and development of language learning materials, language teachers, especially those who specialize in the teaching of reading to second language learners, could consider instructional materials that could reinforce their global reading strategies or those that could improve the language learners' support and problem solving reading strategies. This includes the use of online learning journals or electronic message boards wherein the language learners could have purpose in mind when they read, think about what they know to help them understand what they read, or think about whether the content of the text fits their reading purpose.

In the selection of various classroom activities for learning, second language learners in the Kingdom of Bahrain maybe trained to efficiently use reference materials such as dictionaries to help them understand what they read. They could be given reading activities that involve the use of tables, figures, and pictures in text to increase their understanding. Teachers may emphasize the use of context clues to help them better understand what they are reading. In so doing, allowing the language learners to check their understanding when they come across conflicting information would be helpful to them. Before the start of the reading task, language teachers may elicit some sharing of the students' personal experiences and memories related to the topic in order for them to guess what the material is about when they read. These classroom activities are deemed important in reinforcing the global reading strategies of the learners.

In the construction of evaluation and assessment materials, language teachers may consider performance based approaches such as asking the language learners to do interpretative reading. Using open-ended type of reading evaluation formats instead of the mere multiple

choice types would also enhance the problem-solving and support reading strategy awareness and usage of the language learner. This includes asking the language learners to paraphrase what they are read and to find relationships among ideas in it.

Enrichment activities could be incorporated as part of the pre-reading activities. During this phase, language teachers could ask the learners to read slowly but carefully to be sure they understand what they are reading. Teachers could also ask the learners to adjust the reading speed according to what they are reading. Through this, they can effectively monitor the pronunciation of the individual phonemes of the words that the students are reading as well. Other creative ways of starting a reading lesson could include the process of using pictures in order for the language learners to visualize and related meanings to the reading text.

5.5. Recommendations

The significant correlation between the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies and the reading comprehension abilities of the student-respondents calls for a proposition that language teachers in Bahrain, especially those who are in the secondary level, be exposed to several trainings that aim to equip them with the skills of integrating metacognitive awareness of reading strategies in the teaching of general reading skills. It can be noted from the qualitative responses of the language teachers that most of them need to be trained in the area of metacognitive skills application. Albeit, it can be argued that they are equipped with the language teaching competence, the area of metacognition and its utilization in language teaching need to be demystified to them. Conducting workshops and trainings related to the

application of metacognition in the teaching of reading could result to a more enhanced teaching-learning process in the future.

It is also logical to propose that curriculum planners revisit the current language curriculum in Bahrain given the variability of the reading comprehension abilities and the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. Certain reading competencies maybe emphasized over the other or several reading competencies maybe clustered based on themes or skill domain in order to provide a meaningful teaching of reading. By doing so, it would be easier to incorporate the integration of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among these learners who are at the core of language pedagogy.

Future research on metacognition and reading comprehension may consider several points of exploration. First, the analysis of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies could make use of other instruments or a combination of several instruments. It can be noted that in the present study, the data on the student-respondents' metacognitive awareness of reading strategies are based on the responses of obtained from the MARSI. Future research could combine this instrument with other research instruments used in the past. A modification of this instrument is also suggested in combination with other forms of assessment for this variable. In this manner, a reinforced generalizability of results could be achieved because of the nature of research instruments.

Second, the possible intervention of other variables could be explored in the future. This could include the inclusion of other sociocultural or psychological variables such as the type of personality of the language learners, their attitudinal profile, or the cognitive abilities. In the present study, only two variables were correlated aside from the inclusion of the auxiliary demographic-related variables in the analysis.

Hence, in future studies, the analysis of other possible intervening factors could be tackled.

Third, to further increase the generalizability and conclusiveness of the results, future research could also increase the target respondents or compare two types of language learners with different mother tongues. Past researches, including the present research, have only included one group of language learners who speak one language profile. Including different language speakers in future studies could further provide insights on the nature of language learning and the process of metacognition itself.

Finally, in terms of the methodological framework, future research could apply other research designs and approaches. Experimental designs could be conducted in the future if the researcher has full control of the threats to internal and external validity. Longitudinal approach or diachronic method, instead of the cross-sectional approach, could also be tried in the future because this is not fully explored in the context of metacognitive awareness of reading strategies.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A:

**THE METACOGNTIVE AWARENESS OF READING
STRATEGIES INVENTORY**

Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory
ENGLISH VERSION

Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory

DIRECTIONS: Listed below are statements about what people do when they read academic or school-related materials such as textbooks, library books, etc. Five numbers follow each statement (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) and each number means the following:

1 means “I never or almost never do this.”

2 means “I do this only occasionally.”

3 means “I sometimes do this.” (About 50% of the time.)

4 means “I usually do this.”

5 means “I always or almost always do this.”

After reading each statement, circle the number (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) that applies to you using the scale provided. Please note that there are no right or wrong answers to the statements in this inventory.

Strategies	1	2	3	4	5
1. I have a purpose in mind when I read.					
2. I take notes while reading to help me understand what I read.					
3. I think about what I know to help me understand what I read.					
4. I preview the text to see what it's about before reading it.					
5. When text becomes difficult, I read aloud to help me understand what I read.					
6. I summarize what I read to reflect on important information in the text.					
7. I think about whether the content of the text fits my reading purpose.					

8. I read slowly but carefully to be sure I understand what I'm reading.					
9. I discuss what I read with others to check my understanding.					
10. I skim the text first by noting characteristics like length and organization.					
11. I try to get back on track when I lose concentration.					
12. I underline or circle information in the text to help me remember it.					
13. I adjust my reading speed according to what I'm reading.					
14. I decide what to read closely and what to ignore.					
15. I use reference materials such as dictionaries to help me understand what I read.					
16. When text becomes difficult, I pay closer attention to what I'm reading.					
17. I use tables, figures, and pictures in text to increase my understanding.					
18. I stop from time to time and think about what I'm reading.					
19. I use context clues to help me better understand what I'm reading.					
20. I paraphrase (restate ideas in my own words) to better understand what I read.					
21. I try to picture or visualize information to help remember what I read.					
22. I use typographical aids like bold face and italics to					

identify key information.					
23. I critically analyze and evaluate the information presented in the text.					
24. I go back and forth in the text to find relationships among ideas in it.					
25. I check my understanding when I come across conflicting information.					
26. I try to guess what the material is about when I read.					
27. When text becomes difficult, I re-read to increase my understanding.					
28. I ask myself questions I like to have answered in the text.					
29. I check to see if my guesses about the text are right or wrong.					
30. I try to guess the meaning of unknown words or phrases.					

Appendix B

Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory ARABIC VERSION

استبانة قياس إستراتيجيات القراءة

الهدف من هذه الاستبانة هو جمع المعلومات عن الاستراتيجيات التي تستخدمها اثناء قرائتك للنصوص الأكاديمية باللغة الإنجليزية في بعض الدروس، وخاصة مايتعلق منها بدراستك لمقرر اللغة الإنجليزية مثل: القراءة في الكتب الدراسية أو القصص والروايات المصاحبة للمقرر. الفقرات الواردة بالنص أدناه تعود إلى قرائتك باللغة الإنجليزية للنصوص الأكاديمية في مقررات اللغة الإنجليزية في المدرسة. كل فقرة ستتبع بخمسة أرقام 1-2-3-4-5 وكل رقم يعني الآتي:

- 1- أبدا لا أفعل هذا إطلاقاً. الاسم:
- 2- نادراً. التاريخ:
- 3- أحيانا أفعل ذلك (بنسبة 50%). المدرسة: (Private - Government)
- 4- عادة أفعل ذلك.
- 5- دائما أفعل ذلك.

الرقم	الإستراتيجية	1	2	3	4	5
1	يكون لي هدف حينما أقرأ					
2	عندما أقرأ أكتب بعض الملاحظات لمساعدتي في الفهم					
3	أستخدم معرفتي السابقة لتساعدني في فهم ما أقرأ					
4	انظر إلى النص نظرة عامة لمعرفة ماهيته قبل قراءته					
5	حينما يصبح النص صعباً أقرأ بصوت عال لمساعدتي في فهم ما أقرأ					
6	أفكر فيما إذا كان محتوى النص يتفق مع هدفي الرئيس من القراءة					
7	أقرأ ببطء وتمهل حتى أتأكد من استيعاب ما أقرأ					
8	قبل أن أقرأ أستعرض النص لمعرفة بعض خصائصه كطول النص وتقسيمه					

					9	حينما أفقد التركيز في القراءة، أراجع النص مرة ثانية
					10	أضع خطأ أو دائرة حول بعض المعلومات في النص لمساعدتي في تذكرها
					11	أضبط سرعتي في القراءة تبعاً لما أقرأه
					12	عندما أقرأ، أحدد ما سوف أقرأه بتركيز وماسوف أهمله
					13	أستعين ببعض الأدوات (كالمعجم مثلاً) لمساعدتي في فهم ما أقرأ
5	4	3	2	1	الرقم	الإستراتيجية
					14	حينما يكون النص صعباً، أحاول التركيز فيما أقرأ
					15	أستعين بالأشكال والصور في النص لأزيد من استيعابي
					16	أتوقف من حين لآخر لأفكر فيما أقرأ
					17	أستعين ببعض القرائن والإشارات في محتوى النص لمساعدتي في الفهم
					18	أصيغ بعض الأفكار بمفرداتي الخاصة لأزيد من فهمي للنص
					19	أحاول أن أتصور وأتخيل المعلومات لمساعدتي في تذكر ما أقرأ
					20	أستعين بتنسيق الكتابة كتعريض الخط والأقواس لتمييز المعلومات الأساسية
					21	أحلل وأقيم وأنقد المعلومات لمساعدتي في تذكر ما أقرأ
					22	أراجع النص مراراً لإيجاد العلاقات بين أفكاره

					أراجع معلوماتي حينما تعترضني معلومات جديدة	23
					حينما أقرأ، أحاول تخمين محتوى النص	24
					عندما يصبح النص صعباً، أقرأه مره ثانية لأفهمه فهما تاماً	25
					أطرح على نفسي أسئلة أثناء القراءة أتمنى ان أجد إجابتها في النص	26
					أراجع لاتأكدما إذا كانت توقعاتي حول النص المقروء صواباً أم خطأ	27
					حينما أقرأ، أحاول تخمين معنى الكلمة أو العبارة التي لا أعرفها	28
					حينما أقرأ، أترجم من اللغة الإنجليزية إلى لغتي الأم	29
					حينما أقرأ، أفكر في المعلومات الواردة باللغة الإنجليزية وكذلك بلغتي الأم	30

Appendix C

THE FCE

READING COMPREHENSION TEST

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE ESOL EXAMINATIONS

English for Speakers of Other Languages

FIRST CERTIFICATE IN ENGLISH

PAPER 1 Reading

SAMPLE PAPER

Additional materials:
Answer sheet

Time 1 hour

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Do not open this question paper until you are told to do so.

Write your name, Centre number and candidate number on your answer sheet if they are not already there.

Read the instructions for each part of the paper carefully.

Answer all the questions.

Read the instructions on the answer sheet.

Mark your answers on the answer sheet. Use a pencil.

You **must** complete the answer sheet within the time limit.

At the end of the test, hand in both this question paper and your answer sheet.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

There are 30 questions on this paper.

Questions **1 – 15** carry two marks.

Questions **16 – 30** carry one mark.

Part 1

You are going to read an extract from a novel. For questions 1 – 8, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

I shifted uncomfortably inside my best suit and eased a finger inside the tight white collar. It was hot in the little bus and I had taken a seat on the wrong side where the summer sun beat on the windows. It was a strange outfit for the weather, but a few miles ahead my future employer might be waiting for me and I had to make a good impression.

There was a lot depending on this interview. Many friends who had qualified with me were unemployed or working in shops or as labourers in the shipyards. So many that I had almost given up hope of any future for myself as a veterinary surgeon.

There were usually two or three jobs advertised in the *Veterinary Record* each week and an average of eighty applicants for each one. It hadn't seemed possible when the letter came from Darrowby in Yorkshire. Mr S. Farnon would like to see me on the Friday afternoon; I was to come to tea and, if we were suited to each other, I could stay on as his assistant. Most young people emerging from the colleges after five years of hard work were faced by a world unimpressed by their enthusiasm and bursting knowledge. So I had grabbed the lifeline unbelievably.

line 15

The driver crashed his gears again as we went into another steep bend. We had been climbing steadily now for the last fifteen miles or so, moving closer to the distant blue of the Pennine Hills. I had never been in Yorkshire before, but the name had always raised a picture of a region as heavy and unromantic as the pudding of the same name; I was prepared for solid respectability, dullness and a total lack of charm. But as the bus made its way higher, I began to wonder. There were high grassy hills and wide valleys. In the valley bottoms, rivers twisted among the trees and solid grey stone farmhouses lay among islands of cultivated land which pushed up the wild, dark hillsides.

Suddenly, I realised the bus was clattering along a narrow street which opened onto a square where we stopped. Above the window of a small grocer's shop I read 'Darrowby Co-operative Society'. We had arrived. I got out and stood beside my battered suitcase, looking about me. There was something unusual and I didn't know what it was at first. Then it came to me. The other passengers had dispersed, the driver had switched off the engine and there was not a sound or a movement anywhere. The only visible sign of life was a group of old men sitting round the clock tower in the centre of the square, but they might have been carved of stone.

Darrowby didn't get much space in the guidebooks, but where it was mentioned it was described as a grey little town on the River Arrow with a market place and little of interest except its two ancient bridges. But when you looked at it, its setting was beautiful. Everywhere from the windows of houses in Darrowby you could see the hills. There was a clearness in the air, a sense of space and airiness that made me feel I had left something behind. The pressure of the city, the noise, the smoke – already they seemed to be falling away from me.

Trengate Street was a quiet road leading off the square and from there I had my first sight of Skeldale House. I knew it was the right place before I was near enough to read *S. Farnon, Veterinary Surgeon* on the old-fashioned brass nameplate. I knew by the ivy which grew untidily over the red brick, climbing up to the topmost windows. It was what the letter had said – the only house with ivy; and this could be where I would work for the first time as a veterinary surgeon. I rang the doorbell.

- 1 As he travelled, the writer regretted his choice of
- A seat.
 - B clothes.
 - C career.
 - D means of transport.
- 2 What had surprised the writer about the job?
- A There had been no advertisement.
 - B He had been contacted by letter.
 - C There was an invitation to tea.
 - D He had been selected for interview.
- 3 The writer uses the phrase 'I had grabbed the lifeline' (line 15) to show that he felt
- A confident of his ability.
 - B ready to consider any offer.
 - C cautious about accepting the invitation.
 - D forced to make a decision unwillingly.
- 4 What impression had the writer previously had of Yorkshire?
- A It was a beautiful place.
 - B It was a boring place.
 - C It was a charming place.
 - D It was an unhappy place.
- 5 What did the writer find unusual about Darrowby?
- A the location of the bus stop
 - B the small number of shops
 - C the design of the square
 - D the lack of activity
- 6 What did the writer feel the guidebooks had missed about Darrowby?
- A the beauty of the houses
 - B the importance of the bridges
 - C the lovely views from the town
 - D the impressive public spaces
- 7 How did the writer recognise Skeldale House?
- A The name was on the door.
 - B It had red bricks.
 - C There was a certain plant outside.
 - D It stood alone.
- 8 How did the writer's attitude change during the passage?
- A He began to feel he might like living in Darrowby.
 - B He became less enthusiastic about the job.
 - C He realised his journey was likely to have been a waste of time.
 - D He started to look forward to having the interview.
-

Part 2

You are going to read an article about a woman who is a downhill mountain-bike racer. Seven sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences **A – H** the one which fits each gap (**9 – 15**). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

Downhill racer

Anna Jones tells of her move from skiing to downhill mountain biking and her rapid rise up the ranks to her current position as one of the top five downhill racers in the country.

At the age of seven I had learnt to ski and by fourteen I was competing internationally. When I was eighteen a close friend was injured in a ski race, and as a result, I gave up competitive skiing. To fill the gap that skiing had left I decided to swap two planks of wood for two wheels with big tyres.

My first race was a cross-country race in 1995. It wasn't an amazing success. **9** After entering a few more cross-country races, a local bike shop gave me a downhill bike to try. I entered a downhill race, fell off, but did reasonably well in the end, so I switched to downhill racing.

I think my skiing helped a lot as I was able to transfer several skills such as cornering and weight-balance to mountain biking. This year I'm riding for a famous British team and there are races almost every weekend from March through to September. **10** In fact, there's quite a lot of putting up tents in muddy fields.

Last season I was selected to represent Great Britain at both the European and World Championships. Both events were completely different from the UK race scene. **11** I was totally in awe, racing with the riders I had been following in magazines. The atmosphere was electric and I finished about mid-pack.

Mountain biking is a great sport to be in. People ask me if downhill racing is really scary. I say, 'Yes it is, and I love it.' Every time I race I scare myself silly and then say, 'Yeah let's do it again.'

When you're riding well, you are right on the edge, as close as you can be to being out of control. **12** However, you quickly learn how to do it so as not to injure yourself. And it's part of the learning process as you have to push yourself and try new skills to improve.

Initially, downhill racing wasn't taken seriously as a mountain-biking discipline. **13** But things are changing and riders are now realising that they need to train just as hard for downhill racing as they would do for cross-country.

The races are run over ground which is generally closer to vertical than horizontal, with jumps, drop-offs, holes, corners and nasty rocks and trees to test your nerves as well as technical skill. At the end of a run, which is between two and three minutes in this country your legs hurt so much they burn. **14** But in a race, you're so excited that you switch off to the pain until you've finished.

A lot of people think that you need to spend thousands of pounds to give downhill mountain biking a go. **15** A reasonable beginner's downhill bike will cost you around £400 and the basic equipment, of a cycle helmet, cycle shorts and gloves, around £150. Later on you may want to upgrade your bike and get a full-face crash helmet, since riders are now achieving speeds of up to 80 kilometres per hour.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>A I've fallen off more times than I care to remember.</p> <p>B I usually have to stop during practice sessions.</p> <p>C The courses were twice as long and the crowds were twice as big.</p> <p>D I'm not strong enough in my arms, so I've been doing a lot of upper-body training this year.</p> | <p>E The attitude was: how much skill do you need to sit on a saddle and point a bike in the same direction for a few minutes?</p> <p>F I finished last, but it didn't matter as I really enjoyed it.</p> <p>G Nothing could be further from the truth.</p> <p>H It's not all stardom and glamour, though.</p> |
|--|--|

Part 3

You are going to read a magazine article about people who collect things. For questions 16 – 30, choose from the people (A – D). The people may be chosen more than once.

Mark your answers on the separate answer sheet.

Which person

had to re-start their collection?	16
has provided useful advice on their subject?	17
was misled by an early success?	18
received an unexpected gift?	19
admits to making little practical use of their collection?	20
regrets the rapid disappearance of certain items?	21
is aware that a fuller collection of items exists elsewhere?	22
has a history of collecting different items?	23
performed a favour for someone they knew?	24
is a national expert on their subject?	25
is aware that they form part of a growing group?	26
insists on purchasing top-quality items?	27
noticed items while looking for something else?	28
has to protect their collection from damage?	29
would like to create a hands-on display of their collection?	30

The World of Collecting

A **Ron Barton** shares his home with about 200 sewing machines. His passion began when he was searching for bits of second-hand furniture and kept seeing 'beautiful old sewing machines that were next to nothing to buy'. He couldn't resist them. Then a friend had a machine that wouldn't work, so she asked Barton to look at it for her. At that stage he was not an authority on the subject, but he worked on it for three days and eventually got it going.

Later he opened up a small stand in a London market. 'Most people seemed uninterested. Then a dealer came and bought everything I'd taken along. I thought, "Great! This is my future life." But after that I never sold another one there and ended up with a stall in another market which was only moderately successful.'

Nowadays, he concentrates on domestic machines in their original box containers with their handbooks. He is often asked if he does any sewing with them. The answer is that, apart from making sure that they work, he rarely touches them.

B As a boy, **Chris Peters** collected hundreds of vintage cameras, mostly from jumble sales and dustbins. Later, when the time came to buy his first house, he had to sell his valuable collection in order to put down a deposit. A few years after, he took up the interest again and now has over a thousand cameras, the earliest dating from 1860.

Now Peters 'just cannot stop collecting' and hopes to open his own photographic museum where members of the public will be able to touch and fiddle around with the cameras. Whilst acknowledging that the Royal Camera Collection in Bath is probably more extensive than his own, he points out that 'so few of the items are on show there at the same time that I think my own personal collection will easily rival it.'

C **Sylvia King** is one of the foremost authorities on plastics in Britain. She has, in every corner of her house, a striking collection of plastic objects of every kind, dating from the middle of the last century and illustrating the complex uses of plastic over the years.

King's interest started when she was commissioned to write her first book. In order to do this, she had to start from scratch; so she attended a course on work machinery, maintaining that if she didn't understand plastics manufacture then nobody else would.

As she gathered information for her book, she also began to collect pieces of plastic from every imaginable source: junk shops, arcades, and the cupboards of friends. She also collects 'because it is vital to keep examples. We live in an age of throw-away items: tape-recorders, cassettes, hair dryers – they are all replaced so quickly.'

King's second book, *Classic Plastics: from Bakelite to High Tech*, is the first published guide to plastics collecting. It describes collections that can be visited and gives simple and safe home tests for identification.

King admits that 'plastic is a mysterious substance and many people are frightened of it. Even so, the band of collectors is constantly expanding.'

D **Janet Pontin** already had twenty years of collecting one thing or another behind her when she started collecting 'art deco' fans in 1966. It happened when she went to an auction sale and saw a shoe-box filled with them. Someone else got them by offering a higher price and she was very cross. Later, to her astonishment, he went round to her flat and presented them to her. 'That was how it all started.' There were about five fans in the shoe-box and since then they've been exhibited in the first really big exhibition of 'art deco' in America. The fans are not normally on show, however, but are kept behind glass. They are extremely fragile and people are tempted to handle them. The idea is to have, one day, a black-lacquered room where they can be more easily seen.

Pontin doesn't restrict herself to fans of a particular period, but she will only buy a fan if it is in excellent condition. The same rule applies to everything in her house.

Appendix D

THE INTERVIEW GUIDE *for* TEACHERS

(English Version)

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS ON THEIR STUDENTS' METACOGNITIVE AWARENESS OF READING STRATEGIES

Name of Teacher-Respondent(optional):_____

School:_____

School Type: Public _____ Private _____

Part 1. Introductory Questions

1. Do you find the teaching of reading challenging? Why?

2. What are the common challenges and issues that you encounter in the teaching of reading to this particular group of students(Grade 12)?

Part 2. Probing Questions

1. If you don't clarify the purpose of reading, do your students preview the reading material, ask for the purpose of reading, or ask questions related to what they know about the material before they read? To what extent is this observed in your classroom? Please give specific situations.

2. When your students find the reading material too difficult, what do they usually do? Do they take down notes, read the text aloud, summarise the text, discuss their ideas to their peers, or use references? To what extent is this observed in your classroom? Can you give some examples?

3. Were there any instances wherein your students wanted you to give them more time to read slowly, used some visual organizers to help them understand what they were reading, or tried to guess the meaning of unknown words without using reference materials? Provide situations.

4. What is the first thing your students usually do when you ask them to read something?

5. What other things do your students usually do in the middle of a reading task?

6. What do your students do if they find the reading material challenging?

7. After reading a specific material inside the class, what do your students usually do or ask from you(post reading activity)?

Part 3. Closing Questions

8. Do you think that the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies among your students is important in the development of their reading comprehension skills? Why?

9. How can you improve your students' metacognitive awareness of reading strategies during your teaching?

10. What other recommendations or suggestions can you propose in order to improve the general reading comprehension skills as well as the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies of your students?

Appendix E

THE INTERVIEW GUIDE *for* TEACHERS

(Arabic Version)

مقابلة المعلمين بخصوص وعى الطلاب ما وراء المعرفى لإستراتيجيات القراءة والإستيعاب

القرائى لديهم

إسم المدرس (اختياري): _____

المدرسة: _____

نوع المدرسة: _____ حكومية _____ خاصة

الجزء 1: الأسئلة التمهيدية

1. هل ترى أن تدريس القراءة فيه تحديات ؟ لماذا؟
2. ماهي الصعوبات و المشاكل الشائعة التي تواجهك عند تدريس القراءة لهذه المجموعة من الطلاب (الصف الثاني عشر)؟

الجزء 2: الأسئلة السابرة

1. قبل قراءة النص، هل يقوم طلابك بمعاينة مواد القراءة؟ أو توضيح الغرض من طلبكم لهم للقراءة؟ أو طرح أسئلة متعلقة بما يعرفونه عن المادة ؟ إلى أي مدى قد لوحظ ذلك في فصلك؟ يرجى إعطاء أمثلة.
2. ماذا يفعل طلابك عادة عندما يجدون أن مادة القراءة صعبة جدا؟ هل يقومون بتسجيل الملاحظات؟ أو قراءة النص بصوت عال؟ أو تلخيص النص و مشاركة أفكارهم مع زملائهم؟ أو إستخدام المراجع؟ إلى أي مدى قد لوحظ ذلك في فصلك ؟ هل بإمكانك ذكر مواقف ؟
3. هل كانت هناك أي حالات قد طلب فيها طلابك المزيد من الوقت للقراءة ببطء؟ هل قاموا بالرجوع للصور والرموز الموجودة بالنص لكي تساعدكم على فهم ما يقرأونه؟ أو هل حاولوا تخمين معنى الكلمات الغير معروفة دون إستخدام المواد المرجعية؟ يرجى الإستشهاد بتجاربك الخاصة في حال قد رصدت مثل هذه السيناريوهات في فصلك؟

4. ماذا يفعل طلابك عادة عندما تطلب منهم قراءة شيء دون تحديدك لهدف القراءة؟

5. ماذا يفعل طلابك عادة أثناء القراءة؟

6. ماذا يفعل طلابك عادة عندما يجدون أن نص القراءة صعب؟

7. ماذا يفعل أو يطلب منك طلابك بعد قراءة نصوص معينة في الصف (أنشطة مابعد القراءة)؟

الأسئلة المغلقة :

8. هل تعتقد أن استخدام طلابك لإستراتيجيات القراءة مهم لتطوير مهاراتهم القرائية؟
لماذا؟

9. كيف يمكنك تحسين وتطوير وعي طلابك بالموارد معرفي باستراتيجيات القراءة خلال التدريس؟

10. ماهي التوصيات أو الإقتراحات الأخرى التي يمكنك تقديمها من أجل تحسين مهارات الإستيعاب القرائي العامة لطلابك فضلا عن تنمية الوعي بالموارد المعرفي في إستراتيجيات القراءة؟

الملخص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى استقصاء العلاقة بين قدرات الاستيعاب القرائي والوعي ما وراء المعرفي باستراتيجيات القراءة لطلاب الصف الثالث الثانوي البحرينيين. تم استخدام أساليب بحث مختلطة والذي يظهر من خلال تطبيق طرق بحث كمية ونوعية في تحليل النتائج. و تم أيضاً استخدام الجمع بين تصميم البحث الوصفي والارتباطي من أجل معالجة أسئلة البحث. وطلب من 240 طالب من طلاب السنة الثالثة في المرحلة الثانوية الاجابة على استبانة مترجمة عن الوعي ما وراء المعرفي باستراتيجيات القراءة (MARSI) بالاضافة إلى الاجابة على اسئلة امتحان (FCE) المعتمد من كامبريدج في مهارة القراءة ، كما تم اجراء مقابلات مع 20 معلم بخصوص مدى استخدام الطلاب لاستراتيجيات القراءة وتأثير ذلك على الاستيعاب القرائي . وكشفت نتائج اختبار القراءة (FCE) أن الطلاب في المدارس الحكومية سجلوا مستوى أقل من B1 في مهارة القراءة على حسب الإطار الأوروبي المرجعي العام للغة. في حين أن الطلبة في المدارس الخاصة كان مستواهم العام هو B2. وسجل الطلبة ذوي الأداء العالي في اختبار القراءة مستوى أعلى بالوعي ما وراء المعرفي لإستراتيجيات القراءة من الطلاب الذين كان مستواهم أقل من مستوى B1. كان هناك ارتباط ذو دلالة إحصائية بين قدرات الطلاب في الاستيعاب القرائي والوعي ما وراء المعرفي لإستراتيجيات القراءة لديهم. كان هناك تأثير واضح لعامل القطاع المدرسي (حكومي/خاص) على قدرات الاستيعاب القرائي للطلاب المشاركين، في حين أن الوعي وراء المعرفي بإستراتيجيات القراءة كان له علاقة واضحة مع كلا من عاملي القطاع المدرسي (حكومي/خاص) و الجنس . وعموماً، كان هناك فرق واضح في المقارنات بين مجموعات طلبة المدارس الخاصة والمدارس الحكومية من حيث قدراتهم على الاستيعاب القرائي والوعي وراء المعرفي بإستراتيجيات القراءة، ولكن لم يكن تأثير الجنس كبيراً على قدراتهم

على الاستيعاب والفهم القرائي. وتقدم الدراسة بعد مناقشة النتائج بعض المقترحات كعمل دورات تدريبية وورش عمل وتطبيق البحث بطرق وأساليب استقصاء أخرى.