Developing Reading Strategies to Enhance Vocabulary Comprehension and Purposeful Reading among Third-Grade Elementary Students

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Abstrak: English reading instruction in elementary schools often emphasizes mechanical decoding and pronunciation accuracy, while reading comprehension and reading purposes receive limited attention. This condition leads third-grade students to experience difficulties in understanding texts due to limited vocabulary knowledge and unclear reading objectives. This study aimed to develop English reading strategies that emphasize vocabulary comprehension and purposeful reading for third-grade elementary school students. The study employed a Research and Development method using the ADDIE model, which includes analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation stages. A needs analysis was conducted through classroom observations and teacher interviews to identify students' reading difficulties. The results indicated that students' limited vocabulary knowledge caused them to read English texts mechanically without clear reading purposes. Based on these findings, an English reading strategy module was developed with a structured instructional syntax consisting of setting explicit reading objectives, introducing vocabulary contextually, guided reading practice, comprehension checking, and gradual scaffolding toward independent reading. Expert validation results confirmed that the developed module was valid, practical, and appropriate for classroom use. A limited try-out also showed positive teacher responses and increased student engagement during reading activities. In conclusion, the developed English reading strategies effectively support vocabulary development and purposeful reading in elementary school English instruction.

PENDAHULUAN

One of the most important language skills for learning English in elementary school is reading. Reading comprehension is essential to the development of other language skills in early foreign language contexts, such as vocabulary acquisition, writing, and speaking (Rakhimova, 2024). Reading is not merely a process of decoding written symbols but a meaning-making activity that involves interaction among the reader, the text, and prior knowledge (Hattan et al., 2024).

Students are frequently directed to read texts aloud without adequate support to comprehend the overall meaning or purpose of the text (Dixon & Oakhill, 2024). As a result, students may pronounce words correctly while displaying limited comprehension of main ideas, details, and textual meaning. However, English

reading instruction in many elementary schools, especially at the third-grade level, still emphasizes mechanical decoding and oral reading accuracy.

One crucial factor influencing reading comprehension is the presence of clear reading objectives. Reading activities conducted with specific purposes, such as identifying key ideas, understanding main concepts, or constructing general meaning, are referred to as purposeful reading. When students understand the objectives of a learning task, their engagement and learning performance tend to increase (Cheng, 2023). Empirical studies indicate that readers who approach texts with clear goals demonstrate higher motivation, focus, and comprehension than those who read without defined purposes (Gebremariam & Weldeyohannes, 2025).

The absence of explicit reading objectives in elementary classrooms often results in passive reading behavior and low strategic engagement. Young learners require clear guidance regarding why they read a text before they are expected to comprehend it (Duke et al., 2021). Clearly defined reading objectives during pre-reading activities have also been shown to improve students' comprehension and classroom participation (Oktriyani & Ratmanida, 2025).

A key component of reading comprehension is vocabulary. Lack of vocabulary can make it difficult for pupils to derive meaning from texts, even when they have sufficient decoding abilities (Sánchez-Vincitore et al., 2022). When provided in relevant situations and incorporated into reading activities, vocabulary training is most successful (van der Kleij et al., 2022). It has been demonstrated that pre-teaching important vocabulary, contextual learning, and repeated exposure improve young learners' reading comprehension (Garden, 2022). Students may lose interest in reading and become too reliant on teacher help if they don't receive enough vocabulary support (Pellicer-Sánchez et al., 2021).

The developmental characteristics of elementary school kids must also be taken into account while developing instructional tactics. Gradual scaffolding, planned instruction, and guided learning experiences help third-grade students increase their ability to read independently (Herdiana & Munir, 2023). By gradually shifting accountability from teachers to students, strategy-based reading instruction—which includes guided reading techniques—helps pupils increase their comprehension (Masrul & Wicaksono, 2023); (Lei & Bakar, 2025).

Despite the fact that many research have looked at reading strategies, the majority concentrate on assessing teaching methods rather than creating organized, usable instructional materials for use in the classroom. Furthermore, not much research has systematically included intentional reading and vocabulary development into a Research and Development (R&D) framework for elementary school kids in the third grade (Elmiwati et al., 2025). This disparity emphasizes the necessity of viewing reading strategies as tangible educational outcomes that can be planned, carried out, and assessed rather than just as abstract cognitive processes.

Reading methods are operationalized in this study as a structured instructional module that consists of guided reading stages, integrated vocabulary training, well-defined learning objectives, and sequential reading procedures. This project is to create and validate English reading techniques that are pedagogically grounded, practically usable, and appropriate for third-grade elementary school kids by utilizing a Research and Development (R&D) methodology utilizing the ADDIE paradigm. Thus, this study's research question is: How can a research and development strategy

be used to create and validate English reading strategies that prioritize vocabulary acquisition and purposeful reading for third-grade elementary school students?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Reading Comprehension in Elementary English Learning

One of the most important aspects of learning English in primary school is reading comprehension. According to modern reading theories, reading is a process of creating meaning through interactions between the reader, the text, and past knowledge (Hattan et al., 2024)**.** Reading comprehension aids in the development of other language abilities in early foreign language learning contexts, especially speaking, writing, and vocabulary acquisition (Rakhimova, 2024). Therefore, comprehension should be prioritized over decoding accuracy in reading training.

Purposeful Reading

The term "purposeful reading" describes reading exercises with clear goals, such as figuring out a text's key concepts, finding particular details, or deriving a broad meaning from it. Goal-oriented learning theory states that when students comprehend a task's objectives, they exhibit greater engagement and learning results (Cheng, 2023)**.** According to empirical research, readers who approach texts with specific objectives demonstrate higher levels of motivation, focus, and understanding than those who read without such objectives (Gebremariam & Weldeyohannes, 2025). Purposeful reading in primary school promotes strategic engagement during reading activities and gives young students direction (Duke et al., 2021) ; (Oktriyani & Ratmanida, 2025).

Vocabulary Knowledge in Reading Comprehension

A vital component of reading comprehension is vocabulary knowledge. According to the Simple View of Reading, language comprehension of which vocabulary is crucial interacts with decoding abilities to produce comprehension. Even when their decoding skills are sufficient, students with a small vocabulary frequently find it difficult to understand texts in a meaningful way (Sánchez-Vincitore et al., 2022). According to research, vocabulary training works best when it is included into reading exercises and given in relevant circumstances (van der Kleij et al., 2022). It has been demonstrated that instructional strategies such contextual word acquisition, frequent exposure, and pre-teaching important vocabulary improve primary school pupils' reading comprehension (Garden, 2022)**.**

Scaffolding and Strategy-Based Reading Instruction

The development of young learners' reading skills is greatly aided by scaffolding. Scaffolding, which is based on Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development theory, allows pupils to progressively acquire autonomous reading skills through directed assistance that is in line with their cognitive capacities(Herdiana & Munir, 2023). Students' comprehension results have been proven to be improved by strategy-based reading teaching, which includes methods including summarizing, finding important information, predicting content, and clarifying meaning (Lei & Bakar, 2025). Because they progressively shift responsibility from teachers to students while preserving instructional support,

guided reading techniques are especially beneficial for elementary pupils (Masrul & Wicaksono, 2023).

Research and Development Framework in Reading Instruction

The methodical design, development, validation, and improvement of educational products is the focus of the research and development (R&D) methodology. R&D enables researchers to convert theoretical ideas into useful teaching resources that can be immediately applied in classroom settings. The creation of reading resources that combine vocabulary training with purposeful reading for third-grade elementary pupils has received little attention, according to earlier research (Elmiwati Elmiwati et al., 2025). As a result, an R&D framework offers a good starting point for creating structured reading techniques that are empirically supported, theoretically sound, and adaptable to the demands of the classroom.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a Research and Development (R&D) design to develop English reading strategies that emphasize vocabulary acquisition and purposeful reading for third-grade elementary school students. Research and Development is a systematic approach aimed at designing, developing, validating, and refining educational products to improve instructional effectiveness (Dixon & Oakhill, 2024).This design was selected because the present study focused not only on examining a phenomenon but also on producing a practical instructional product that addresses real classroom needs.

In accordance with the R&D framework put forth by (Siregar, 2025) the development process followed an organized order that included needs analysis, product design, expert validation, limited try-out, and product revision. The created product was guaranteed to be theoretically sound, experimentally supported, and practically useful in educational contexts thanks to this phased approach.

Development Model

The ADDIE model, which comprises five stages analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation was the development methodology used in this investigation. For the development of educational products, the ADDIE model offers a methodical yet adaptable framework that permits ongoing revision at every level. (Sabil et al., 2025), claim that the ADDIE model's emphasis on requirements analysis, instructional alignment, and formative evaluation throughout the development process makes it especially appropriate for language learning product creation.

Through classroom observations and interviews, curriculum requirements, teachers' instructional needs, and students' reading challenges were determined during the analysis stage. According to (Duke & Cartwright, 2021), requirements analysis is an essential stage in instructional design because it guarantees that educational materials are applicable to learners' real-world situations and learning environments.The instructional framework, learning objectives, reading objectives, and vocabulary exercises were all methodically developed during the design phase. In order to guarantee instructional efficacy, (Brown & Green, 2024) stress that

learning objectives and learner characteristics should be taken into account while designing instructional materials.

During the development stage, the intended reading techniques were turned into a concrete teaching tool in the form of an English reading module. During this phase, reading activities were divided into pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading phases. Additionally, instructional methods were developed and vocabulary instruction was integrated. (Joshua & Ph, n.d.) state that instructional development should make sure that theoretical underpinnings and classroom applicability are consistent.A small trial was conducted during the implementation phase to assess the generated product's viability and usability. According to (Permatasari et al., 2025), restricted try-outs are crucial in development research to find any problems with operational viability and instructional clarity prior to broader adoption.

Lastly, the evaluation step concentrated on evaluating the quality of the product using user feedback and expert validation. According to (Nita et al., 2022), assessment in research and development attempts to guarantee that the finished product satisfies quality requirements and is prepared for use in classrooms.

Research Subjects and Setting

Third-grade elementary school pupils, one English instructor, and qualified validators made up the research subjects. The selection of the expert validators was based on their proficiency in teaching English, reading instruction, and elementary education. Expert judgment is a useful technique for evaluating the validity of educational goods, especially when it comes to instructional design, language appropriateness, and content accuracy (Afriani et al., 2025).

One third-grade English instructor and third-grade pupils from UPTD Negeri 076676 Sisarahiligamo participated in the limited tryout. The relevance of students' reading challenges to the study goals and the site's accessibility for data collection were taken into consideration when selecting the research environment.

Research Instruments and Data Collection

Expert validation sheets, questionnaires, interview guidelines, and observation sheets were among the tools used to gather data. In order to obtain qualitative information about students' reading habits and the difficulties teachers experience in the classroom, observations and interviews were carried out throughout the analysis phase. According to (Pope, 2022), gathering qualitative data via interviews and observation is suitable for determining learning issues and instructional needs.

Expert validation sheets and questionnaires were used to gather quantitative information about the viability and validity of the product. Descriptive questionnaires are frequently employed in development research to evaluate user perceptions and product viability, according to (Octaviany et al., 2024).

Data Analysis Techniques

Both qualitative and descriptive quantitative data analysis methods were used in this study. To find trends pertaining to students' reading challenges and reactions to the created techniques, qualitative data from observations and interviews were examined utilizing data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. This procedure adhered to the framework for qualitative analysis put forth by (Amrullah et al., 2024).

By computing mean scores and percentages, quantitative data from expert validation sheets and questionnaires were analyzed descriptively. The outcomes were then classified according to pre-established criteria, such as legitimate, practical, or in need of change. Descriptive quantitative analysis is suitable for assessing instructional products in research and development projects, according to (Polat, 2025).

RESULT AND DISSCUSION

The research and development process of English reading strategies for third-grade elementary school pupils is presented in this part, along with a discussion of the outcomes. The stages of development needs analysis, product design and development, expert validation, product modification, and restricted try out were used to arrange the outcomes. In compliance with the IMRAD format, all outcomes were presented in the past tense.

Results of Needs Analysis

The needs analysis identified a number of significant problems with elementary school English reading education. According to observations made in the classroom, the majority of pupils read English texts by concentrating more on word pronunciation than on comprehending the text's overall meaning. Seldom did students show awareness of reading objectives, such as recognizing key concepts or particular details.

Students' poor vocabulary proficiency seriously hampered their reading comprehension, according to interviews with the English teacher. Additionally, the instructor noted the lack of organized reading protocols that lead pupils through reading phases while methodically incorporating vocabulary training. These results showed that pupils' cognitive and linguistic demands had not been sufficiently met by current reading training.

Tabel 1. Summary of Needs Analysis Results

Aspect Analyzed	Findings	Implication for Product Development
Reading behavior	Students focused on pronunciation without understanding meaning	Reading strategies needed to emphasize reading purposes
Vocabulary mastery	Students had limited English vocabulary	Vocabulary instruction needed to be integrated into reading
Teaching strategies	No structured reading strategies were applied	A systematic and practical reading module was required

Results of Product Design and Development

English reading techniques were created to address the issues found in the needs analysis. Pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities were the three primary phases of the designed product. Vocabulary-focused exercises, guided questions, and well-defined reading objectives were all part of each level.

The final product was created as a reading module that elementary school teachers could actually use. Visual aids were added to enhance comprehension, and the reading texts were modified to correspond with the third-grade kids' comprehension level. The principles of contextual vocabulary acquisition and intentional reading were represented in the module's general framework.

Results of Expert Validation

The created English reading strategies were generally valid and appropriate for use in elementary school settings, according to the expert validation results. The product was assessed according to its usefulness, linguistic appropriateness, instructional clarity, and content relevancy.

The results of the validation demonstrated that the reading techniques were in good alignment with the principles of reading comprehension and curriculum objectives. Experts did, however, recommend a number of enhancements, especially in terms of improving vocabulary integration, making reading objectives more clear, and streamlining instructional language. The product was revised based on these suggestions.

Results of Product Revision

Revisions were made to enhance the quality of the established reading techniques after expert assessment. Improved vocabulary exercises that pushed students to deduce word meanings from context rather than depending just on translation were part of the updated module. Step-by-step instructions were clarified, and reading objectives were presented more clearly.

A more unified and user-friendly educational product was the outcome of these changes. The updated module encouraged students to read texts more actively and gave teachers more precise instructions on how to apply the reading practices.

Results of Limited Try-Out

To test the viability and usefulness of the updated reading module, a small trial was held. Both the teacher and the kids responded well, according to the findings. The teacher indicated that the tactics were simple to implement in the classroom, and students showed increased interest and involvement throughout reading exercises. Students' understanding of reading objectives and vocabulary use increased, and classroom interactions during reading sessions became more structured.

Tabel 1. Summary of Limited Try-Out Results

Observation Aspect	Findings
Student engagement	Students showed increased interest in reading activities
Strategy usability	Teacher reported the strategies were easy to apply
Classroom interaction	Reading activities became more structured

Discussion

The results of this study show that the development of structured reading strategies combining vocabulary instruction and purposeful reading successfully addressed the reading issues found during the needs analysis, especially the students' mechanical reading habits and limited vocabulary knowledge. According to (Hattan et al., 2024)**,**these findings are consistent with modern perspectives that read as an interactive process of meaning-making that involves the reader, the text, and prior knowledge. In contrast to the enlarged perspective of reading comprehension beyond the Simple View of Reading framework, the pupils' initial attention on pronunciation without comprehension suggests an overemphasis on decoding (Duke et al., 2021).

This implies that decoding skills alone are not enough for comprehension; linguistic comprehension and strategic engagement are also necessary.

Goal-oriented learning theory, which emphasizes that students perform better when instructional goals are openly conveyed, is in line with the created module's inclusion of clear reading targets (Cheng, 2023). Classroom observations revealed that students were more engaged and participated when they grasped the goal of the reading exercises. This result supports the claims made by (Duke et al., 2021) that students' strategic reading habits are improved by explicit comprehension instruction and well-defined reading objectives. In a similar vein, (Oktriyani & Ratmanida, 2025) discovered that organized pre-reading exercises raise students' motivation and understanding. Thus, the current study demonstrates that reading with purpose is important for encouraging active comprehension in primary school students.

Incorporating vocabulary into the created reading skills was also crucial. According to the requirements analysis, pupils' capacity to derive meaning from texts was hampered by their limited vocabulary. This result is consistent with the findings of (Sánchez-Vincitore et al., 2022), who showed that vocabulary knowledge is a key element of language comprehension and has a direct impact on reading results. Furthermore, (van der Kleij et al., 2022), stress that reading experience and comprehension development are closely linked to vocabulary expansion. The idea that contextual vocabulary education improves reading comprehension is supported by the increase in student participation during the limited tryout. These findings also support those of (Garden, 2022) and (Pellicer-Sánchez et al., 2021), who emphasize the value of including vocabulary training into worthwhile reading exercises.

The significance of developmentally appropriate instructional design is further supported by the favorable expert validation results. According to the scaffolding theory, which has its roots in Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, learners can progressively become proficient readers with directed guidance (Lei & Bakar, 2025); (Herdiana & Munir, 2023). The designed module's pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities are organized into steps that represent a scaffolding strategy that gradually shifts accountability from the teacher to the students. This is in line with the findings of (Masrul & Wicaksono, 2023), who discovered that explicit teaching methods greatly enhance elementary students' vocabulary acquisition and comprehension.

This study makes a contribution by operationalizing reading strategies into a structured instructional module created using a Research and Development framework, in contrast to earlier studies that mostly looked at the efficacy of reading strategies in experimental settings (Elmiwati et al., 2025).. The ADDIE methodology was used to methodically integrate the theoretical concepts of scaffolding, vocabulary education, and reading comprehension into a useful classroom output. In the teaching of primary English, this improves the connection between theory and practice.

Although the study was limited to expert validation and a small-scale try-out, the findings suggest that strategy-based instruction integrating purposeful reading and contextual vocabulary development is theoretically grounded and pedagogically appropriate. Therefore, this study contributes to the growing body of research emphasizing structured reading strategy development as an essential component of elementary school English instruction

CONCLUSION

With an emphasis on word understanding and purposeful reading, this study sought to create English reading strategies for third-grade elementary school pupils. The results of the needs analysis showed that pupils' inadequate vocabulary competence and unclear reading objectives made it difficult for them to comprehend English literature.

The suggested reading techniques were methodically created to integrate vocabulary development and stated reading objectives while guiding pupils through structured reading stages. The tactics are useful, suitable, and in line with the cognitive traits of primary school students, according to the findings of expert validation and restricted try-out.

These results imply that the established strategies can help teachers plan more successful reading lessons and help students become more involved and significant readers. The results show the methods' potential for wider classroom application, despite the fact that this study was restricted to product creation and limited deployment. To further investigate the efficacy of the suggested reading techniques, future research is advised to use experimental designs with larger samples and a variety of learning scenarios.

AKNOWLEDGEMENT

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