

Innovative Strategies to Enhance the Least Mastered Reading Comprehension Skills of Grade Eleven Students

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ABSTRACT: The study aimed to enhance the least mastered reading comprehension skills of Grade eleven students. The study made use of two-group pretest-posttest experimental research design where adapted sentences, passages, and paragraphs, from different sources such as books and the internet were the main data-gathering instrument. Two sections of Grade eleven TVL Cookery students which composed of sixty-eight (68) students from Luis Palad Integrated High School contributed to the study. Aside from the mean scores, paired T-test were used in the statistical analysis of data. The study revealed in the mean pretest scores before the implementation of innovative strategies such as visual story map and gamification were both developing in terms of making inferences and predicting outcomes while beginning level in identifying vocabulary. Meanwhile, in the post-test scores of the respondents after the implementation of innovative strategies such as visual story map and gamification revealed advance level in making inferences and proficient in predicting outcomes, while, developing level was obtained in identifying vocabulary. The study found out that there is a significant difference before and after using the subject-integrated instructional material.

KEYWORDS: Innovative strategies, reading comprehension, least mastered skills

INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-evolving world, student's reading skills are not only vital for academic success but also for thriving in various technical fields. Reading as one of the phases of Communication Arts is a tool subject in senior high schools. It plays a vital role in our educational system. Inability to read is a primary cause of academic failure. Such failure may occur in any subject since the ability to read is essential for all types of academic success. If a learner knows how to read, he/she will be elevated to the next year level. One who has the ability to read may learn any other subject through self-direction. One who cannot read cannot progress satisfactorily in any other subject in the senior high school curriculum. Practically, to be able to adapt the edge in global competitiveness, the students should have mastered the basic communicative approach to deal in certain areas of professions.

Among the five macro skills that compose of listening, speaking, writing, viewing, and reading, the latter is one of the hardest as so many students have not been able to improve it. When reading, we must comprehend the meaning of even a single word in order to decipher the text that we will read. Strong comprehension skills help us to remember and retrieve information more effectively. It enhances our ability to analyse, evaluate, and synthesize information, enabling us to make informed decisions. Overall, strong reading comprehension skills are foundational for lifelong learning and effective participation in the society.

According to the Department of Education's DO 14, S. 2018, which outlines the revised guidelines for the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory, it is essential for all Filipino learners to achieve reading and writing skills appropriate to their respective grade levels.

Thus, DepEd administers Phil-IRI which aims to measure the level of reading performance of the learners in both English and Filipino. The 2019 results from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) revealed that Filipino students ranked lower in reading comprehension compared to students from other participating countries.

However, even the Phil-IRI implementation is already used, reading is still the common problem in the students' progress. One of the common problems is the DepEd mass promotion policy where the teachers promoted the student to the next grade level, although not yet competent in reading. Another factor contributing to the country's reading comprehension problem is the COVID-19 pandemic threat, temporarily closing all public and private schools nationwide (Caasi & Pentang, 2022). In fact, there are only three students in every twenty, who can read the simple text because of the longest school closure as reported in Inquirer.Net (Baltonado, 2023).

If students do not have enough ability to read especially in the higher level, how can the students do the more complex activities? This problem creates impact in students' performances in different learning areas using English language since reading is essential

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in all subjects. With the above-mentioned issues, this research aims to use the innovative strategies such as visual story map and gamification to integrate in the teaching of English subject among Technical-Vocational and Livelihood students and experimenting whether this activity could help the participants in enhancing their least mastered reading comprehension skills.

Students

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to improve the students' least mastered reading comprehension skills through the use of innovative strategies by assessing the following:

1. To identify the mean pretest scores of the respondents in reading before the implementation of innovative strategies such as visual story map and gamification in terms of:
 - 1.1 Identifying vocabulary,
 - 1.2 Making inference; and
 - 1.3 Predicting outcomes.
2. To identify the mean post test scores of the respondents after the implementation of innovative strategies such as visual story map and gamification in terms of:
 - 2.1. Identifying vocabulary,
 - 2.2. Making inferences; and
 - 2.3. Predicting outcomes.
3. To assess the significant difference between mean pretest and post test scores of the respondents before and after the implementation of innovative strategies.

METHODOLOGY

The study used the two-group pretest-post-test experimental research design. This study intended to identify whether using innovative strategies has an effect on the reading comprehension skills of the respondents.

Experimental research design is a research method used to investigate the interaction between independent and dependent variables, which can be used to determine a cause-and-effect relationship (Saigo and Roundry, 2022). This two-group pretest-post-test experimental research design used to test the effectiveness of innovative strategies in enhancing the least mastered reading comprehension skills with the same respondents.

The respondents of this study were purposively selected from two sections of Grade 11 Technical-Vocational Livelihood (TVL) students at Luis Palad Integrated High School, under the Division of Tayabas, situated in the municipality of Tayabas City, Quezon, for the academic year 2024–2025. A total of 68 students participated in the study. These students were administered a pre-reading comprehension assessment prior to the implementation of innovative strategies—namely, visual story mapping and gamification and a post-reading assessment afterward, to measure the effectiveness of the intervention.

Purposive sampling was employed to ensure that the participants aligned with the study's objective of exploring the impact of hands-on, student-centered strategies on reading comprehension. The Cookery strand was specifically chosen over other TVL specializations such as Beauty Care, Electrical Installation and Maintenance (EIM), or Information and Communication Technology (ICT) because students in the Cookery strand typically engage in more structured, practical tasks that require step-by-step comprehension and interpretation—skills that are directly related to reading comprehension. Moreover, Cookery students are observed to benefit from visual and experiential learning approaches, making them an ideal group for testing the effectiveness of visual story maps and gamification.

The researcher also considered existing literature, such as the study by Basit and Nimo (2019), which pointed out that students in the TVL track often show less academic motivation compared to those in the academic track. Similarly, De Los Santos (2022) noted that TVL students tend to perform at an average or below-average level in English subjects. These findings highlight the need to explore alternative instructional strategies that could better engage TVL students and improve their academic performance. Thus, the study aimed to address this gap by implementing and evaluating innovative, interactive teaching methods within the Cookery strand.

The population of this study consisted of two sections of Grade 11 Technical- Vocational Livelihood (TVL) students enrolled in Luis Palad Integrated High School, Tayabas City, for the academic year 2024–2025. The respondents were purposively selected based on their potential to demonstrate enhanced reading comprehension skills. Among the various TVL strands, the Cookery sections were chosen over Electrical Installation and Maintenance (EIM), Information and Communications Technology (ICT), and Beauty Care because Cookery students are generally more responsive to visual and activity-based learning strategies. Their daily learning environment involves step-by-step procedures and visual guides, which closely align with the structure of visual story maps. Additionally, their hands-on nature and engagement in practical tasks make them well- suited for gamification approaches that incorporate decision-making and real-life applications. Compared to other strands, Cookery students also present

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more opportunities to integrate reading comprehension into their routine tasks, such as interpreting recipes, instructions, and kitchen safety guidelines. This connection allows for a more meaningful and relevant application of the innovative strategies used in the study. Furthermore, the selected Cookery students were deemed capable of providing informed feedback and meaningful judgment on the effectiveness of these strategies, making them ideal respondents for the research.

The researcher, in order to attain the objectives, administered pretest and post-test in reading assessments which specified the three skills. The researcher adapted sentences and passages from different sources such as book and the internet.

Students

The reading assessments were consisted of two main parts. The first part of the instrument is the pre-assessment of students' reading comprehension skills before using innovative strategies. It includes different sentences and passages, that focuses on identifying vocabulary, making inferences, and predicting outcomes. Part 2 of the instrument is the post-assessment of students' reading comprehension skills after using innovative motivational activities. The pretest and post-test include ten (10) items for identifying vocabularies, ten (10) items for making inferences, and additional ten (10) items for predicting outcomes, a total of thirty (30) items.

Moreover, the researcher crafted four (4) Lesson Plans which were used to implement the strategies. These cater the four (4) learning competencies of grade eleven students in Reading and Writing subject for the school year 2024-2025.

The two Lesson Plans were made to associate the Visual Story Map one (1) and two (2) which were exposed to story mapping with visual representation of the story elements.

By providing some elements, students are able to map the important information of the story before they understand the whole text. This strategy was placed in the discussion or development part since the students themselves were reported it in the class. Afterwards, thirty (30) items quiz were administered which specified the three skills, such as ten (10) items identifying vocabulary, ten (10) items making inferences, and ten (10) items predicting outcomes.

Meanwhile, another two Lesson Plans were crafted, in which Gamification is the strategy used. This strategy was placed in the lesson plan during the development, activity, and application part. The researcher grouped the students and gave a clear instruction afterwards, then the mechanics of the game were posted. The games involved such as word building challenges and Claim Category Vocabulary Sort Challenge, inference charades and is it a Fact or Bluff? (Making Inferences Edition), and predict the future. Students were learning the vocabulary while they were also enjoying, same in making inferences where they had to experience on how to explain their reasoning, and lastly, they will enjoy reading the passage while making a hypothetical outcome afterwards. Just like the visual story map, there were thirty (30) items quizzes afterwards.

The researcher conducted the study to the third quarter of the school year 2024- 2025. The lessons were discussed using strategies to make the students engaged individually or in groups. The two innovative strategies such as visual story map and gamification were associated in the lesson during the period of the experiment, and activities were divided into lessons/topics. The researcher took charge of the administration and distribution of the reading assessments to the respondents. Likewise, the researcher distributed the pre-reading assessment to the two sections of grade eleven TVL students for assessing their initial reading comprehension skills performance. After the retrieval of the answered reading assessments, the researcher proceeded in checking the answer sheets and found that majority of the students in both sections cannot able to comprehend well since their scores were low.

With this, the researcher continues to go as planned by introducing the innovative strategies used such as the use visual story map and gamification. The lessons were taught by the researcher to make sure that the students will fully understand it.

During the first week, the researcher implemented the visual story mapping technique where in, it was associated in the topic of the lesson "narration" that could be found in the development part. The researcher began to the section of TVL 11-C followed on TVL 11- B in which started first by defining narration as the act of telling a story, explaining that it involves not only recounting events but also developing characters, setting, and plot in a structured sequence. Next, the researcher shifted into explaining how a visual story map can enhance understanding and critical thinking when reading a story. The visual story map is a graphic organizer that helps students break down the story into key elements such as characters, setting, problem or conflict, events, and resolution. The researcher explained how this map helps visually organize the story's structure, making it easier to comprehend the relationships between different parts of the story. Further, the researcher showed different examples of visual story maps to illustrate how this tool works. For example, a sample story map for a short story might include sections like: settings, characters, themes, conflicts, and plot. The researcher also showed a completed visual map for a familiar story to demonstrate how to fill it in and encourage the students to visualize the story's elements.

After introducing the visual story map, the researcher divided the students into 5 groups. Each group was assigned the task of reading the short story "The First Voyage of Sinbad the Sailor" by William Patten. The students were instructed to read the story carefully and used the visual story map to identify and organize the key elements of the story. More so, the students were expected to fill out their maps collaboratively, discussing the following: characters: Who is Sinbad? Who are the other characters in the story? Followed by the setting: Where does Sinbad's journey take place? How does the setting influence the events? Next,

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problem/conflict: What challenges does Sinbad face during his voyage? Likewise, Events: what key events happen throughout the story? (For example, encounters with mythical creatures, disasters, or discoveries). And lastly, Resolution: how does Sinbad overcome his challenges, and what is the outcome of his voyage? The researcher roamed around the classroom during the implementation to provide support as needed, helping students engage critically with the text and guiding them in filling out the story map accurately.

Once the groups have completed their visual story maps, each group presented their map to the class. In their presentations, the groups explained how they identified the different elements of the story, sharing insights into how Sinbad's journey unfolded, what obstacles he faced, and how he ultimately succeeded. During this phase, the researcher encouraged students feedback, prompted others in the class to ask questions or offer alternative interpretations of the story's events.

The researcher also guided the students to reflect on the choices they have made in organizing the story elements, helped them draw connections between their critical thinking and widen their story structure. After the group presentations, students were given a 30-item test designed to assess their comprehension of the story. The test included a variety of question types, including: identifying vocabulary that comprised of 10-items multiple questions provided with context clues. Next was, making inferences: some questions asked students to infer meaning or draw conclusions based on clues in the text. For example, students may be asked about what impact do they think the merchant's experiences will have on his future as a merchant? Lastly is the predicting Students

outcomes: Other questions will ask students to predict what might happen next in the story or how certain events could affect the characters. These questions encourage critical thinking by challenging students to use their understanding of the story to see the possible outcomes. The test serves as an individual assessment of each student's understanding of the story. It evaluates how well they grasp vocabulary, make inferences about character motivations, and predict story outcomes. After the test was collected, the researcher provided feedback on both the group activity and the individual test.

On the second week, another set of visual story map were presented and associated to the lesson's "definition". Same procedures were done and implemented and students have noticed enthusiasm in presenting their different visual story maps in the class. It was observable that during the story was incorporated into visual story mapping, the students could easily get the meaning of the passage while strengthening their ability to analyse, infer, and predict as they read. There were also 30-items test questions which divided into the three specified skills such as identifying vocabulary, making inferences, and predicting outcomes. Also, the students' scores on the quizzes after the two weeks of using visual story map were improved.

Consequently, the third week shifted to gamification in which the series of games were associated to the topic of the lesson "Implicit and Explicit Claims". The strategies can be found in the lesson during primer activity, development, and application part. During the game 1 that found on the priming activity, the researcher facilitated the students to expand their vocabulary by divided the class into 5 groups. Through the game called "Word Building Challenges" the researcher provided words from the lesson, and the students were challenged to create as many vocabulary words as possible within a time limit. The words that they have formed were also supplied with meaning. After accomplishing the task, each group presented their work. Then, the researcher introduced a point system, the group was earned 5 points for a correct word and 10 points for definitions. There was also a score board for the earned points to track progress for each group. It was noticeable that during this game, competitions were happened as the groups wanted to win, also the class were active and busy brainstorming with each other.

Meanwhile, the game 2 was called inference charades which can be found on the development part. In a group of 6, the students acted out a scenario or concept without speaking while others guessed what it is. The guessing students explained their reasoning, then making inferences based the stated reason. After reading the sample situation, the timer was on. One of the example situations is "Jam and Rissa shared an intimate conversation that deepened their friendship, revealing dreams and fears they had never voiced before" and the possible answer could be "the use of "intimate conversation" suggests that Jam and Rissa have a strong, trusting bond, allowing them to share personal thoughts". In this activity, the class learned to make inferences by interpreting contextual clues from their classmates' gestures, expressions, and movements. Since there are no verbal explanation, students must rely on indirect evidence to understand meaning, reflecting the skill needed. Also, corresponding points were earned by pairs who exhibited well.

On the other hand, the game 3 which called predict the future was placed during the application part. In a pair of two, the students have read the passage and later identified the explicit and implicit claims that could be found on the paragraph. Afterwards, the students made predictions about the future based on explicit and implicit claims, and compared those predictions to actual or hypothetical outcomes. Once everyone has written down their predictions, they compared them with their partner, and discussed whether those predictions were reasonable or likely. To accomplish the task, the timer was on and corresponding points for the group who declared winner based on the correct answer and who finished first were given. In this activity, the class was responded positively to the gamified structure of the activity. The presence of a timer and the opportunity to earn points created a motivating and fun environment. Also, each pair showed increased focus while reading, as they needed to distinguish explicit claims (clearly stated) from implicit claims (implied or suggested). The researcher facilitated the games while focused on managing the classroom

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because students were active and sometimes lead to noisiness.

After the three (3) series of games, there was a story to read and answered the thirty (30) items questions which break down into identifying vocabulary, making inferences, and predicting outcomes afterwards. The same lesson was introduced to the two sections of TVL.

On the fourth week, the games were associated to the topic of the lesson "types of claims". Just like on the third week, the games were placed on the primer activity, development, and application part. The first game was named is it a fact or bluff? (making inferences edition). To introduce the concept of making inferences, the researcher divided the class into 10 small groups. Each group was provided with chalk and a used illustration board, which served as their answer board. The students were informed that they would participate in a game where they had to listen carefully to various statements and decide whether each statement was a "Fact" or a "Bluff". Also, the students were reminded that a fact could be supported by evidence and logic, while a bluff might sound convincing but would be false or misleading. The researcher emphasized the importance of using prior knowledge, reasoning, and critical thinking to infer whether the statements were true or not. After each statement was read aloud by the researcher, the students discussed within their groups and wrote their chosen answer ("Fact" or "Bluff") on the board along with a brief explanation of their inferences, that is, the reasoning or clues that led them to their conclusion. Once all groups had responded, the researcher revealed the correct answer, provided an explanation, and displayed the logical inference behind it. For example: the statement "sharks are mammals because they give birth to live young" is a bluff. The possible inference was "although some sharks give birth to live young, they are classified as fish, not mammals, because they breathe through gills, have scales, and are cold-blooded". The groups whose inferences most closely aligned with the researcher's reasoning received the highest points. Scores were tallied and shown on the board after each round; it kept the class engaging and competing.

The researcher then facilitated the game 2, which focused on categorizing vocabulary according to different types of claims namely fact, value, policy, cause, and effect. The class was divided into groups of three, and each group was given a set of vocabulary words related to real-world issues or academic topics. Their task was to identify the type of claim each word was associated with, then use the vocabulary in original sentences that reflected its meaning and category. For example, words like "mandatory," "fairness," and "data" were categorized under Policy, Value, and Fact, respectively. Once the categorization and Students sentence construction were completed, the groups presented their work to the class. They explained their reasoning for the categorization and read their sentences aloud. To encourage timeliness and teamwork, the researcher was giving additional points to the groups that finished early and submitted correct answers.

For the third game, the researcher prepared a structured debate centered on predicting the outcomes of claims categorized as fact, value, or policy. The students were divided into six teams, with each team assigned one of the three types of claims. The researcher provided a real-world scenario for each debate. One sample topic was, "should schools require uniforms?" and each team constructed and presented their assigned claim: Claim of Fact: "Uniforms improve academic performance.", Claim of Value: "Uniforms are an important tool for fostering equality among students.", Claim of Policy: "The government should mandate school uniforms across the nation."

After presenting their arguments, students were required to predict the possible outcomes if each type of claim were implemented. For example, a group arguing the policy claim predicted that standardizing uniforms might reduce peer pressure but could limit student expression. Pointing and reward system were also given. After the series of games, there was also a passage to read and thirty (30) items test questions which divided into the three specified skills such as identifying vocabulary, making inferences, and predicting outcomes.

During the on-set of games, the class were enthusiastic and lively, making the room of fun and engaging. The students score during the quizzes have seen improvement while they were engaging in the activity.

Finally, after 4 weeks of teaching and answering, the researcher distributed the post-reading assessment to assess the reading comprehension skills of the respondents after the implementation of innovative strategies.

For ethical consideration, the instruments were sent to the three expert teachers in English for validation since some of the passages are adapted by the researcher. After, the researcher sought permission from the Division Office Superintendent, District Supervisor and the head of the school to pilot and conduct the study and submit letter of consent to utilize the chosen students who served as the respondents.

After the pretest and post-test, the researcher collected the data, and submitted to the statistician for the treatment. For the hundred percent retrieval of the instrument, the researcher herself conducted the teaching and giving of the test to the respondents. It will be treated with confidentiality and solely for the conduct of the study only.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Mean pretest scores of the respondents before the implementation of innovative strategies such as visual story map and gamification.

Least Mastered Reading Comprehension Skills	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Identifying Vocabulary	3.12	1.11	Beginning
Making Inferences	5.51	1.95	Developing
Predicting Outcomes	4.56	3.09	Developing
Overall	13.19	3.09	Developing

*Legend (per Skills): 0-3 (Beginning); 4-5 (Developing); 6-7 (Proficient); 8-10 (Advanced).
Legend (Overall): 0-9 (Beginning); 10-15 (Developing); 16-23 (Proficient); 24-30 (Advanced).*

Table 1 presents the results of the pretest of the respondents before the implementation of innovative strategies such as visual story map and gamification. The reading performance of the respondents before the use of innovative strategies fell under Developing level in terms of making inferences and predicting outcomes which have a mean of 5.51 and 4.56. The results indicated that the students were having difficulties in inferring and predicting the possible results of the story thus they have to be improved; also, in developing level, the students were building comprehension. The students cannot draw conclusions well or having misunderstanding in the meaning of the text that are not explicitly stated. Likewise, the students were having difficulties to think the possible event that will happen next in a given situation.

As stated by Bailey (2019), making inferences requires students to combine what they are reading with what they already know, to reach into their own personal knowledge and apply it to what they are reading. Also, it helps the readers to draw conclusions based on information that has been implied rather than directly stated and is an essential skill in reading comprehension. Similarly, learners need prediction skills to understand text passages and improve performance in reading comprehension. Application of prediction skills in reading enables learners to make guesses about the meaning of texts before reading and relate the possible outcomes, after which comparing own predictions with actual contents of such texts (Nguyen, 2016).

Meanwhile, identifying vocabulary had a mean of 3.12 and having a verbal interpretation of Beginning. This result means that the students were having difficulties in getting the meaning of the unfamiliar word and needing of more foundational decoding help. Likewise, most learners have difficulties in reading because they do not know the meaning of the words. According to Ilter (2019), there is increasing evidence that a lack of vocabulary is a key factor underlying the failure of students to achieve their reading goals. To further improve the student's ability in identifying vocabulary, Zuhra (2015), supported this, that through extensive reading learners advance their ability of guessing the meanings of unknown words and phrases from clues in the context.

The results above implies that the teachers or language educators should find strategies that suited to this comprehension skills. This was supported by Putri Helmina (2017), stating that one of the reasons why students cannot fully comprehend is because they do not have any strategy to solve their reading comprehension problem on the text. In relation to the study conducted, after the pretest, the researcher used innovative strategies such as visual story map and gamification to enhance the least mastered reading comprehension skills which are identifying vocabulary, making inferences, and predicting outcomes.

The three aforementioned comprehension skills are important to develop especially to the group of selected respondents. For Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) students, especially that these respondents are in the cookery strand, the comprehension skills of making inferences, predicting outcomes, and identifying vocabularies are highly valuable in both academic and practical settings. Making inferences enables cookery students to understand recipes, instructions, and cooking techniques even when all details are not explicitly stated. For example, they may need to infer what adjustments to make when ingredients are missing or when cooking times vary due to equipment differences. This skill helps them become more adaptable and resourceful in the kitchen. Similarly, predicting outcomes is essential in cooking, as it allows students to anticipate what will happen during each step of a recipe, such as how ingredients will react under certain temperatures or what the final dish should look and taste like. By predicting results, students can plan ahead, avoid mistakes, and improve time management and efficiency in food preparation. On the other hand, understanding specific terms—such as sauté, blanch, julienne, or al dente—is essential for accurately following recipes, safety procedures, and kitchen instructions. By identifying and understanding culinary vocabulary where in most of the respondents are wanted to pursue in the future, students can better comprehend the steps and techniques required in food preparation and cooking. These comprehension skills not only enhance their understanding of culinary concepts but also prepare them to solve real-life kitchen challenges with confidence and critical thinking.

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With regards to the low results of pretest scores, the researcher continues to go as planned by using the two innovative which are the visual story map and gamification. Visual story mapping strategy was used in order to assess the students' least mastered reading comprehension skills in terms of identifying vocabulary, making inferences, and predicting outcomes and experiment it to the grade eleven TVL students whether it is effective to them or not. With this, visual story mapping strategy allows students to explore their comprehension by creating a visual map using story elements, characters, possible outcomes and themes. It can be done before, during and after reading by using whole group instruction or by using co-operative learning groups, or by individual students (Palma, 2023).

The implementation of the two innovative strategies among TVL Cookery students was carried out over four weeks, integrating visual story mapping and gamified activities to enhance students' understanding of various English lessons. During the first and second weeks, the researcher introduced visual story mapping to the topics "Narration" and "Definition." Students were divided into groups, read short stories, and collaboratively filled out story maps to identify key elements like characters, setting, problem or conflict, and resolution. This approach allowed them to visually organize information, deepening their understanding and critical thinking. Students presented their visual story maps, engaged in discussion, and then took a 30-item quiz assessing vocabulary identification, making inferences, and predicting outcomes. The results showed improved scores, and students expressed enjoyment and active participation throughout the sessions.

In the third week, the researcher introduced gamified learning associated with the topic "Implicit and Explicit Claims." A series of three games, Word Building Challenge, Inference Charades, and Predict the Future were designed to strengthen vocabulary, making inferences, and prediction skills. Students were enthusiastic, collaborative, and competitive, showing excitement and engagement as they earned points and worked with timer. The gamified structure kept the class energized and focused. A post-activity quiz again revealed improved comprehension scores, especially in the three target skills.

The fourth week followed a similar structure, with games aligned to the topic "Types of Claims." Activities included Fact or Bluff (inference-making), Vocabulary Categorization, and a Structured Debate where students identified the types of claims and predicted their outcomes. These tasks combined critical thinking, vocabulary use, reasoning, and teamwork. Once again, a 30-item quiz was administered after the activities, showing continued improvement in students' performance.

Within four weeks, students were actively engaged, showed increased enthusiasm for learning, and consistently improved in quizzes. The integration of visual story maps and games made learning dynamic, interactive, and effective, especially in developing the comprehension skills of identifying vocabulary, making inferences, and predicting outcomes skills essential not only in English learning but also in practical applications in their field of cookery.

Additionally, the said strategies according to Naz and Murad (2017) can be particularly useful for learners who prefer a more visual and hands-on learning style. The researcher chosen the visual story map and gamification since the respondents are more on hands-on activities and based from the study of De Los Santos (2022), the Technical Vocational Livelihood students perform academically in English subject on average level and sometimes below.

Table 2. Mean post-test scores of the respondents after the implementation of innovative strategies such as visual story map and gamification.

Least Mastered Reading Comprehension Skills	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
Identifying Vocabulary	5.50	1.41	Developing
Making Inferences	8.04	1.31	Advanced
Predicting Outcomes	6.12	1.37	Proficient
Overall	19.66	2.16	Proficient

Legend (per Skills): 0-3 (Beginning); 4-5 (Developing); 6-7 (Proficient); 8-10 (Advanced).
Legend (Overall): 0-9 (Beginning); 10-15 (Developing); 16-23 (Proficient); 24-30 (Advanced).

Table 2 presents the results of the post-test administered to the respondents following the implementation of innovative strategies such as visual story mapping and gamification. The results show a noticeable improvement in the respondents' mean scores. In particular, their reading performance in the area of making inferences reached an Advanced level, with a mean score of 8.04. The results indicated that the students show improvement in drawing conclusions and can now understand the meaning of the text even though it is not explicitly stated; likewise, they can analyze and evaluate deeper meaning. They can interpret implied ideas, and draw logical conclusions, which are essential skills for academic success. This enhanced ability allows them to engage more critically with reading materials, participate more confidently in discussions, and apply their understanding to various situations. As for, Casey (2022), the ability to infer helps learners to think critically about a text and engage with it academically.

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Not only does this help learners understand a text, but also helps to improve their reading comprehension skills.

As for the strategies used by the researcher, visual story mapping helps students to visually organize and connect information in the story, which is important for drawing inferences. By mapping characters, events, and relationships, students can analyze what is implied rather than explicitly stated. Meanwhile, gamification likely provided scenarios or challenges where students had to make inferences to "win" or progress, reinforcing this skill in an engaging way.

Moreover, predicting outcomes are in the proficient level considering the second highest mean which had a mean of 6.12, implying that the reader can now interpret the text independently where in the students' ability to think the possible event that will happen next in a given situation has improve. After improving their skills in predicting outcomes, students are now better able to anticipate future events or possible consequences in a given situation. According to the study of Hasruddin (2021), he experimented the use of prediction strategy to improve students' reading comprehension of English recount text to 28 students in the academic year 2020/2021. The researcher used pre-experimental research and carried out pre-test. The results show that the student's reading comprehension has been improved by using the prediction strategy as a learning tool and students' can be active in the learning process through the use of the prediction strategy.

Based on the four weeks of teaching to the respondents, gamification allows them to predict events in order to see the possible scenarios. This encourages the class to actively plan ahead and simulates authentic reading experiences. Meanwhile, visual story maps allow learners to track the plot of the story, making it easier to anticipate what might happen next. Hasruddin (2021) supports this strategy, noting how prediction encourages active engagement and improves comprehension.

Furthermore, the results show an increase in mean scores for identifying vocabulary, which reached a total mean of 5.50, placing the students at the Developing level after the use of innovative strategies such as visual story mapping and gamification. The results indicate that the students show a little improvement in getting the meaning of the unfamiliar word. Although the improvement was not as significant as in making inferences and predicting outcomes, the results still indicate that students made improved in vocabulary test.

Still, through the use of visual story maps help contextualize new vocabulary, making them easier to understand. Likewise, gamification is also useful to engage the students in vocabulary development. The little improvement here suggests a need for more targeted vocabulary strategies.

Over all, the results above lead to conclude that the innovative strategies are important to the respondents as it help them to engage in the reading process which made them advance and proficient in making inferences and predicting outcomes. Meanwhile, in identifying vocabulary, the mean increases and steps into developing level which also implies that respondents were improved.

With this, the researcher should think or develop specific vocabulary-focused gamification tasks as well as refine the visual story maps in teaching reading to strengthen this area further just like in like making inferences and predicting outcomes. Additionally, in teaching reading, various techniques need to be used in order to motivate the learners to enjoy the English language as well as the vocabulary and to avoid them from getting bored while reading (Rofiq et al., 2022). The results were significantly improved since the respondents were engaged in various strategies during the experimentation. It indicates that with the use of innovative strategies, it improves the reading comprehension skills of the students. According to (Putri Helmina, 2017) when they use a reading strategy, they will be able to cracks the problems in reading with the specific strategy and it helps their comprehension problems.

Table 3. Difference between mean pretest and post-test scores of the respondents before and after the implementation of innovative strategies.

Paired Samples T-Test							
Pretest – Posttest	statistic	df	p	Mean difference	SE difference	95% CI	
						Lower	Upper
Identifying Vocabulary	-11.37	67.0	< .001	-2.38	0.210	-2.80	-1.96
Making Inferences	-9.25	67.0	< .001	-2.53	0.274	-3.08	-1.98
Predicting Outcomes	-5.63	67.0	< .001	-1.56	0.277	-2.11	-1.01

Note. $H_0: \mu_{\text{Measure 1}} - \mu_{\text{Measure 2}} = 0$

Table 3 presents the significant difference between the pretest and post-test scores of the respondents before and after the implementation of innovative strategies. Results showing the mean difference between the pretest and post test scores in terms of identifying vocabulary (-2.38), making inferences (-2.53), and predicting outcomes (-1.56). These data representing that there was an improvement after the implementation of innovative strategies. Moreover, based on the result, identifying vocabulary, making inferences and predicting outcomes has a p-value of less than 0.001 which is less than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there was a significant difference between the pretest and post-test scores of the respondents before and after the

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implementation of innovative strategies such as visual story map and gamification in terms of identifying vocabulary, making inferences and predicting outcomes.

It indicates that the innovative strategies such as visual story map and gamification are both tools that could significantly help the students in increasing their comprehension level in terms of identifying vocabulary, making inferences, and predicting outcome. With this, it only signifies that using innovative strategies can positively impact student learning and engagement, which can help increase student motivation and improve their overall learning experience (Subramanian & Kelly, 2019). More so, with the types of innovative strategies that used by the researcher such as visual story map helped the students to get the meaning of the text easily especially with the purpose of the visual representation that this tool has. Students are able to map the important information of the story before they understand the whole text, leading them to easily identified the unfamiliar vocabularies, made inferences and predicted the possible outcomes of the story. Also, based on the study of Rofiq et al. (2022), it stated that the use of visual story map, the student's ability in reading comprehension increases because the students could able to immerse themselves in story mapping especially in unlocking vocabulary, also they could able to make logical inferences while trying to justify the scenario in the story, as well as in anticipating the possible ending of the story. It proved that the use of visual story mapping technique for teaching reading comprehension could give significant improvement for the students. Additionally, studies consistently showed the positive effect of story mapping strategy on reading comprehension especially when this technique will use constantly into teaching of reading and comprehension (Boon, Paal, Hintz, & Cornelius-Freyre, 2015).

In like manner, during the experimentation, the students were actively engaged in gamification where the researcher used this strategy in the study by associating it in the lesson plan through a series of activities that focus on the least mastered reading comprehension skills of the students. During the games, students have to compete to make their group as the winner. Students also find it engaging and fun when identifying vocabularies, making inferences, and predicting outcomes were treated as some sort of competition wherein, they aim for good grades and rewards. Since the activities involved such as word building challenges and Claim Category Vocabulary Sort Challenge, inference charades and is it a Fact or Bluff? (Making Inferences Edition), and predict the future; Students were learning the vocabulary while they were also enjoying, same in making inferences where they had to experience on how to explain their reasoning, and lastly, they will enjoy reading the passage while making a hypothetical outcome afterwards. The results were supported by Lube (2020) who also conducted study on reading comprehension through vocabulary mastery in a form of game showed an increase in the posttest of the students. Further, Clavito, et al. (2023), stated that during games where a person wins or receives positive feedback, it is widely recognized that the brain's pleasure pathways are activated, resulting in the production of the neurotransmitter dopamine. This gamification affects the reward and pleasure centers of the brain, as well as the ability to learn. Additionally, Hanus and Fox (2015) stated that in the development of curriculum, gamification is the preferred methodology because it raises the attractiveness of learning processes, increases innovation, increases fun, boosts productivity, and increases the ability to retain knowledge and acquire new abilities. With the claim above, it only proves that using games is advantageous to any language level classes though it may serve different purposes and may be used in different ways.

Based on the results, it implies that different strategies may use by the language teachers as enhancement of reading comprehension but as much as possible, full facilitation and clear instruction during the implementation is require to fully achieve the desired results.

CONCLUSIONS

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

1. The reading performance of the respondents in the mean pre-test scores before the implementation of innovative strategies such as visual story map and gamification were both developing in terms of making inferences and predicting outcomes, while identifying vocabulary is under beginning level.
2. gamification revealed advance level in making inferences, proficient in predicting outcomes. Lastly, the lowest mean was obtained in identifying vocabulary which under developing level.
3. There is a significant difference between the pretest and post-test scores of the respondents before and after the implementation of innovative strategies such as visual story map and gamification. The null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there was a significant difference between the pretest and post-test scores of the respondents before and after the implementation of innovative strategies such as visual story map and gamification in terms of identifying vocabulary, making inferences and predicting outcomes. The said strategies can provide more capability to enhance comprehension through different skills such as identifying vocabulary, making inferences, and predicting outcomes.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Based From the drawn conclusion, the following recommendations are formulated:

1. Since both strategies significantly improved students' performance in making inferences and predicting outcomes, these tools may be consistently integrated into the reading curriculum. As for language teachers, they may implement these strategies across various grade levels and select appropriate reading materials to reinforce skills and encourage deeper comprehension. Also, the school may suggest a need for training teachers to effectively use these strategies focusing in making inferences and predicting outcomes.
2. In identifying vocabulary, language teachers may develop specific vocabulary-focused gamification tasks as well as refining visual story maps in teaching reading to strengthen this area further.
3. Future researchers may conduct a similar study using other reading comprehension skills to assess the effectiveness of the strategies used, and may also expand the number of respondents in a wider scope.

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