

# Exploring Different Teaching Approaches of English Reading in Bhutanese Secondary Schools

By

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A thesis submitted to the Department of English and Humanities in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of  
Bachelor of Arts in English

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## **Declaration**

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my/our own original work while completing a degree at Brac University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material that has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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## Approval

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## **Ethics Statement**

Research ethics were taken into account and upheld throughout the entire study. The details are all covered in Chapter 3, the methodology part.

## **Abstract/ Executive Summary**

This study explored the English reading challenges among secondary-level students such as in an ESOL context, Bhutan. The solutions they take to overcome those challenges, and their opinions about reading strategies used in English classrooms and beyond. A qualitative phenomenological study approach was adopted, and seven secondary-level students from rural and urban schools were interviewed. This study has utilised the theories of Kasim and Raisha (2017), Carrell (1984), and Vijaya's (2012). Further, the researcher has added a perspective of students. With the combination of the framework, the researcher found that students encounter various difficulties and different aspects or factors contribute ranging from linguistics to social factors. When asked about their solutions, the participants mentioned the employment of various coping strategies including the schemata approach and social affective strategy. Following this, the researcher gathered opinions on the effectiveness of strategies and found that students enjoy structured and organized learning in the classroom and increased of the student's motivation for the English program through self-autonomy learning and exposure beyond the classroom. The current study has been found in the context of Bhutan, yet it is replicable or can be applied to any other ESOL context.

**Keywords:** English reading, ESOL context, Native speakers of English, Non-native speakers of English.

## **Dedication**

This study is dedicated to my parents and all the teachers for their consistent support and guidance throughout my academic journey (17 years).

## **Acknowledgment**

To my Supervisor, Dr. Sabreena Ahmed,

I would like to express my deepest gratitude and sincere thanks for your support and guidance throughout my thesis journey. Your expertise and motivation have helped me to complete my thesis with a better version.

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## Table of Contents

<b>Declaration.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Approval .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Ethics Statement.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Abstract/ Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Dedication .....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>Acknowledgment.....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>List of Tables .....</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>List of Figures.....</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>List of Acronyms .....</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>Chapter 1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background of the Study .....	1
1.2 Recent Studies on Reading (West and Asian) .....	2-3
1.3 Practice of Reading in Bhutan .....	3-4
1.4 Statement of Problem .....	5-6
1.5 Central Research Objective.....	6
1.6 Research Questions.....	7
1.7 Significance of the Study .....	7
1.8 Scope of the Study .....	8
1.9 Limitations of the Study.....	8-9



1.10 Definition of Key Terms .....	9
<b>Chapter 2 Literature Review .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>2.1 Part I: Reading and its Importance in ESOL Classroom .....</b>	<b>10</b>
2.1.1 The Role of Reading in ESL Classrooms .....	10-11
2.1.2 Challenges of Reading .....	11-12
<b>2.2 Part II: Different Reading Strategies .....</b>	<b>12</b>
2.2.1 Strategies of Reading .....	12-15
<b>2.3 Part III: Reading in the Bhutanese Context.....</b>	<b>16</b>
2.3.1 Educational System.....	16-17
2.3.2 Reading Culture .....	17-19
<b>2.4 Research Gap .....</b>	<b>19-20</b>
<b>2.5 Theoretical Framework.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>2.6 Conceptual Framework of the Study .....</b>	<b>20-22</b>
<b>2.7 Chapter Summary .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Chapter 3 Research Methodology .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>3.1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>3.2 Qualitative Research Paradigms and Philosophical Assumptions.....</b>	<b>24-26</b>
<b>3.3 Setting.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>3.4 Data Collection Procedures.....</b>	<b>27</b>
3.4.1 Phenomenology.....	27
3.4.2 Sampling Technique .....	28

3.4.2.1 Participant's Profile .....	29
3.4.3 Semi-Structured Interviews .....	29-30
3.4.4 Developing Interview Protocol .....	30-3
3.4.5 Analysing Students' Interviews .....	31-32
<b>3.5 Data Analysis.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>3.6 Ethical Consideration .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>3.7 Trustworthiness and Credibility of the Study.....</b>	<b>33-35</b>
<b>3.8 Researcher's Role.....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>3.9 Chapter Summary .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Chapter 4 Result and Discussion.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>4.1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>4.2 Section 1: Challenges while Reading English Texts.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>4.2.1 Linguistic and Content Difficulties.....</b>	<b>37</b>
4.2.1.1 Unfamiliar Vocabulary and not Comprehending.....	37-38
4.2.1.2 Pronunciation Difficulty .....	38-39
<b>4.2.2 Lack of Facilities and Social Support.....</b>	<b>39</b>
4.2.2.1 Lack of Access to English Reading Materials in Rural Areas.....	39-40
4.2.2.2 Many Illiterate Parents and Elders Live by an Oral Lore .....	40-41
4.2.2.3 Lack of Motivation and Interest.....	41-42
<b>4.3 Section 2: Solutions to The Reading Challenges .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>4.3.1 Employment of Various Reading Methods .....</b>	<b>42</b>

4.3.1.1	Inferring the Meaning of the Words and Using Background Knowledge .	42-43
4.3.1.2	Re-reading and Peer Reading Practices .....	43-44
<b>4.3.2</b>	<b>Teacher-Centered Strategies.....</b>	<b>45</b>
4.3.2.1	Guided Reading Practices .....	45
4.3.2.2	Model Reading or Reading out Loud in the Class.....	46
<b>4.4</b>	<b>Social Affective Strategies .....</b>	<b>46</b>
4.4.1	Pre-planning and Keeping Track .....	46-47
4.4.2	Taking Breaks and Changing Surrounding Areas .....	47-48
<b>4.4</b>	<b>Section 3: Perspectives on The Reading Strategies Students Use in The Classrooms and Beyond. ....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>4.4.1</b>	<b>In the Classrooms.....</b>	<b>49</b>
4.4.1.1	Structured and Organised Learning with Varieties of Strategies.....	49
<b>4.4.2</b>	<b>Beyond the Class .....</b>	<b>50</b>
4.4.2.1	Increases the Student’s Motivation for the English Program Through Self-Autonomy Learning and Exposure .....	50-51
<b>Chapter 5</b>	<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>5.1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>5.2</b>	<b>Contribution of the Study .....</b>	<b>52-53</b>
5.2.1	Implications for Knowledge .....	53
5.2.2	Implications for Pedagogy .....	53
5.2.3	Implications for Theories .....	54
<b>5.3</b>	<b>Recommendations.....</b>	<b>54</b>

<b>References</b> .....	<b>56-72</b>
<b>Appendix A</b> .....	<b>73</b>
Letter of Consent for Participants .....	73-74
<b>Appendix B</b> .....	<b>74</b>
Interview Questions for Participants.....	75
<b>Appendix C</b> .....	<b>77</b>
Notational Conventions of the Interview Transcript .....	77
<b>Appendix D</b> .....	<b>78</b>
Sample Interview Transcription of Student (Bok).....	78
<b>Appendix E</b> .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Sample of Inter-coding Template of Student (Bok) ....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
<b>Appendix F</b> .....	<b>91</b>
Theme Generation Sample.....	92-93
<b>Appendix G</b> .....	<b>94</b>
Rating for Students' Interview by Rater 1 .....	94
Inter-Rater Reliability Calculation for Students' Interviews.....	96
<b>Appendix H</b> .....	<b>97</b>
Member Checking Sample.....	97
<b>Appendix I</b> .....	<b>98</b>
Audit Trail of the Study .....	98

## List of Tables

Table 3.1: The Philosophical Assumptions of the Study.....	25
Table 3.2: Participant's Profile .....	29

## List of Figures

Figure 2.1 The Procedural Conceptual Framework.....	22
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## List of Acronyms

ESOL	English Speakers of Other Languages
ELT	English Language Teaching
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
MoESD	Ministry of Education and Skills Development, Bhutan
DSE	Department of School Education, Bhutan
REC	Royal Education Council of Bhutan
ELL	English Language Learner
MOE	Ministry of Education, Bhutan

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the Study

English in modern society plays a key role and contributes to effective communication. For the meaningful interchange of expression, the competency to read is significant. An individual's proficiency in comprehending the written text is beyond schooling as every area demands reading to learn something. Reading as asserted by Yurko et al. (2020) is the potential of a person to process the text, comprehend the main message, and blend with the readers' prior knowledge. Readers' skills and proficiency in processing information influence the ability to comprehend and understand the text.

Particularly for English language learners, reading sheds light and shows a path towards achieving goals in their academic performance. Every day we have to deal with numerous English written texts and thus, reading unlocks windows of global knowledge and regards those news inputs for references (Yurko et al., 2020). In an ESOL context, English reading plays an important role in multiple facets. Reading helps students enrich their linguistic constructions through exposure to different text settings and resources. Moreover, Paul (2019) mentions that vocabulary enhancement, grammatical knowledge, and critical thinking of the learners will also be expanded beyond the linguistics area through reading competency. Overall, reading's importance stretches beyond the academic field as it also assists in the immersion of a person into different societies and fosters an understanding of accessing new information and knowledge.

## **1.2 Recent Studies on Reading (West and Asian)**

Reading competency within the students differs from one context to another based on their linguistic background and setting. For instance, proficiency in spoken language also plays a role in better reading and pace of reading. A study found that Bilingual students in the USA who performed well in reading demonstrated an advanced competency in oral skills. On the other hand, another study observed that while comprehending the text, native English speakers and ELL learners possess distinct skills. To illustrate, native English speakers use both word-level and sentence-level skills to conceive the texts. Whereas, ELL students usually rely on word-level skills (Anthony, 2019).

While in New Zealand, according to Arrow et al., (2015), reading culture is largely dependent on the reading materials, resources, and guides supplied by the Education Ministry. Yet, teachers on the contrary make the effort to teach reading through the use of various teaching methods. The predominant approaches include shared reading, guided reading, independent reading, and dialogic reading (reading to the learners by the teachers). In this regard, Egiyantinah et al. (2018) also emphasised that teaching approaches are also one of the key aspects in determining the accomplishment or failure of learners' reading comprehension activity. Thus, he highlights the importance of teachers' utilisation of different techniques in helping students understand the texts they read.

In Asian countries such as India, the study implies that learners have not received the training such as level-based reading skills or reading approaches like in other standard English proficiency phenomena. Even the syllabus for English subject is designed for a particular context and lacks certain reactions from teachers like instant feedback and assessment (Megala

& Premraj, 2020). Moreover, learners in the higher secondary level are compelled to concentrate on listening and writing strands, so reading is given less attention. Likewise, in Bangladesh from the reading skills view, learners at the university level also deal with numerous reading difficulties, including previewing, visualizing the texts, linking the words, summarising, inferring, pronouncing the letters, and questioning (Amin, 2019).

Similarly, Dewi and Jayanti, (2018) cited that students in Bengkulu in Indonesia lack competency in reading and are not capable of effective use of reading abruptly due to inconsistency in using reading approaches. Also, sociocultural factors and background affect learners' ability to read as parents lack literacy and are not able to motivate them to read. Yet, in the context of the Philippines, besides the typical reading problems, the technique called gallery walk, where learners work and interact together in a group during classes was seen to help students of 8th grade improve reading comprehension better than the usual lectured methods. This technique was verified to better attain reading comprehension because such techniques create questions ranging from lower-order thinking to high-order thinking skills (Lopez & Ruth, 2022). So, it shows that though some countries deal with the issues, numerous reading approaches are employed to improve learners' reading ability.

### **1.3 Practice of Reading in Bhutan**

In Bhutan, the inspiration to engage oneself in reading comes from His Majesty the King himself. His Majesty has repeatedly said that the pursuit of knowledge must be lifelong and thus we must read about everything around us, and not just subjects that interest us (Wangchuk, 2019). Regarding the importance of reading, the year 2015 was declared as the 'National Reading Year' in Bhutan and it was launched by His Majesty the King himself in Thimphu on



December 9, 2014. The Prime Minister's State of the Nation report on July 5, 2016, pronounced the 'National Reading Year' as a big success (Dorji, 2020).

With that, in the educational curriculum of the schools in Bhutan, students are encouraged to develop love and interest in reading. Therefore, schools are ingrained with many activities and actions to promote reading culture and habit. For instance, at the secondary level, students particularly in the English subject classroom, had a culture of maintaining a reading portfolio, a collection of the number of books students read. Moreover, students were mandated to show it to the English instructor weekly and do a book discussion during English subject class hours. In addition, schools have also allocated specific days and times for a reading period to groom learners for betterment.

Besides, the Royal Education Council and Education initiatives (2011) showed continuous and meager diminishing scores in English from students learning assessments for the years 2008, 2010, and 2011 for grades 4, 6, and 8. Where students could only perform better in recall questions, indicating that students across all grade levels lacked comprehension reading abilities in English. The reason behind the research conducted was students were not really eager and interested to read during their free time and only focused on the advised and directed texts. Moreover, according to Dorji (2020), he observed that students' reading habits have decreased after joining colleges. As per the interviews with the students, they responded because of the vast distinct academic culture. Participants mentioned that in the schools, there have been many literary activities including English reading competitions, debates, declarations, and quizzes which require reading to prepare for such an event. Whereas in colleges, none of this happens and also assert that to read, they just go through the internet for

some summary and hardly read books. Thus, such changes led them to deteriorate interest and motivation in reading.

On the other hand, Zangmo and Wangchuk (2021) in their research found that students preferred reading more for recreational purposes than for academic benefit. However, according to an independent t-test found no significant difference in scores between respondents' gender and their attitude towards both recreational and academic reading. Additionally, some students prefer reading in school than at home because of disturbances in household chores, they can't take out time to read. Whereas some prefer reading home as well and they have yielded good and positive outcomes too. On the contrary, the Ministry of Education, Bhutan (2014) admits that students from urban areas performed better in reading English than learners of rural communities because of uneven resources and materials. Despite such varying matters and preferences, learners still show a productive and promising reading habit.

#### **1.4 Statement of Problem**

English-written texts or materials surround us in our everyday lives or interactions influencing how we communicate, learn, and share information. The value of being able to read English well is evident in a wide range of contexts and also an essential ability to navigate the intricacies of contemporary culture. Therefore, students are required to carry out all the academic work in English. For instance, Abbasi et al., (2022) state that English is taught all over the academic period in Pakistan, yet learners still face difficulties at the university level in grasping the meaning of the texts. They lack competency in reading and the learners are not aware of employing reading approaches even when they have theory classes. Besides, such an issue is

not only limited to one country but stands as a worldwide concern and challenge. So, it is apparent that proficiency in English reading is highly acknowledged and essential to access any kind of information.

Additionally, reading is greatly perceived as one of the primary tools in academic learning. Any learners without the knowledge to read will encounter certain weaknesses as reading unlocks significant learning beyond the classrooms (Girsang et al., 2023). So, several authors from various contexts have explored reading in English sessions, methods of reading, challenges associated with it, and opinions and reflections of teachers, and students on English reading. However, there is hardly any study on how reading in English classrooms is taught in an ESOL context such as Bhutan. Thus, this study intends to explore English reading challenges among secondary-level Bhutanese students, how they overcome those challenges, and what they think about reading strategies used in English classrooms and beyond. Moreover, this study is useful for the English language teachers in Bhutan and any ESOL context for further reference and to improve learners' English reading comprehension.

### **1.5 Central Research Objective**

The primary focus of the study is to explore different teaching approaches that teachers utilise during the English Reading classrooms at the Secondary level such as in an ESOL context, Bhutan. The study will also delve into the challenges associated with English reading with the students, how they overcome those problems, and what students think about the English reading methods they employ and beyond the classrooms.

## **1.6 Research Questions**

To fulfill the objectives of the study, the following set of research questions have been developed:

1. What challenges do students face while reading English?
2. How do they overcome the challenges of English reading?
3. What are their perspectives regarding the reading approaches used in English classrooms and beyond?

## **1.7 Significance of the Study**

To date, several researchers have been published on reading in general, yet there are hardly any articles conducted particularly on English reading in Bhutan. Thus, the current study attempts to fill the gap of knowledge regarding English reading challenges among secondary-level Bhutanese students. Also, to explore how they overcome those challenges, and what they think about reading strategies used in English classrooms and beyond. The outcome of this study will help the teachers in Bhutan for informational purposes and as a result, teachers can identify and recognise the challenges and they will be able to take measures to avoid facing issues. Through the opinions of learners on reading strategies, teachers can gain insights and they will either make adjustments or keep its essence. Lastly, it can also serve as an additional source of guidance or reference for any future researchers.

## **1.8 Scope of the Study**

The study explores the English reading challenges among secondary-level Bhutanese students, how they overcome them, and what they think about reading strategies used in English classrooms and beyond. There is limited studies conducted on this aspect that the present analysis is attempting to examine. The reason for choosing this topic of research is that reading is the primary step in learning any skills in English and these skills are important for the comprehension of any written texts. Therefore, it is crucial to address the challenges and learners' perspectives so that the teachers can make more effective and necessary modifications to ensure learners are aware of better comprehension. As their perspectives on the topic are explored through the interviews, a qualitative approach to the research problem suits the project. Though the study focuses on the learners of an ESOL context as Bhutan, its scope extends beyond the academic area to other different contexts.

## **1.9 Limitations of the Study**

The study has a few limitations. The whole study's findings are particularly intended for the exploration of secondary-level students in Bhutan. However, since the researcher was physically in Bangladesh, it was not possible to go for class observation and to observe tests in a real-life experience since the researcher had to balance the research and other courses. Thus, the researcher had to take interviews and tests through Google Meet. So, in this case, the researcher faced difficulties in reaching participants as some did not even respond to the mail, and some were reluctant to join for interviews. Though could reach a few yet, the researcher could not analyse much of their reading comprehension due to the network issues and their inconvenience. The participants gave only a brief interview as some of them were preparing

for their midterm examination and it would have been better if the period of interview we took was much longer.

### **1.10 Definition of Key Terms**

**ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages):** Learning English by individuals whose first language is other than English. As an example, the participants involved in this study were ESOL learners who are from Bhutan.

**Native Speakers of English:** Native speakers refer to those people whose first language is English. People from such countries as Australia, the UK, and Canada are known as native speakers of English.

**Non-native Speakers of English:** Individuals who speak English as a second or third language. For instance, the researcher of the current study is a non-native speaker of English and speaks and learns English as a second language.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

#### **2.1 Part I: Reading and its Importance in ESOL Classroom**

English is one of the languages that is employed extensively in areas like education, commerce, business, science, and technology culture, demanding the advancement of reading proficiency to accommodate intercommunication (Mulatu & Regassa, 2022). The flourishing significance of acquiring English as a foreign language retains further concentration on the competence of four skills inclusive of reading. In this era, being a good reader does not mean a bed of roses, it is still a basic skill one should possess. Since reading is an essential part of all educational purposes, though the content is in print format, learners extract knowledge through reading (Hasan et.al, 2022). As the priorities and value of English are substantial, the era demands more attention towards reading approaches since they usher better outcomes.

##### **2.1.1 The Role of Reading in ESL Classrooms**

Reading in English is the most important skill in an ESL classroom. It is believed to be one of the methods for expanding the proficiency of English and advancing the learning of other skills (Mulatu & Regassa, 2022). Likewise, it helps in improving two major areas of language learning: grammar and vocabulary. Reading improves learners' spelling abilities and enriches their vocabulary storage, and it facilitates the development of literacy skills that everyone needs for effective communication in different contexts (Laličić & Dubravac, 2021).

English Reading helps students use their higher-order thinking skills to develop their storylines and Reading has long been regarded as a very important skill for learning any language. For instance, the reader not only can comprehend but also can judge the authenticity and reliability of the text in various contexts (Hasan et.al, 2022). In this regard, Laličić and Dubravac (2021) in their quantitative study also found that 52.63% of students strongly agree that they are reading to improve their communication skills seeing the impact in the classes and beyond that academic context.

### **2.1.2 Challenges of Reading**

English is a second language in most countries, and mastering English reading is the biggest issue they deal with. For example, Mukmini et al. (2022) found that particularly, for young learners, reading is considered to be for engagement or recreational reading, and they only learn to decode the wordings encountered. Thus, with fewer vocabulary stocks, they face problems in comprehending the meaning of the words. Similarly, Rungswang and Kosashunhanan (2021), in their mixed method study, discussed how Thai EFL students encountered problems in English reading when learners ran into new words and had to guess the meaning of new words with the context and root of the words. Likewise, Schmidt (2019) examined the reading strategies and comprehension discrepancies between native and non-native English-speaking learners. Native speakers were found to be better at comprehending reading, fluency, and having more vocabulary than non-native learners. In this case, non-native learners face difficulty in comprehending any English text because English is their second language (Peter, 2019). Correspondingly, learners take less interest and it is difficult to encourage and motivate students to read English texts.



Besides, another factor that challenges students in English reading activities is the need for more interaction between the teacher and students (Rungswang & Kosashunhanan, 2021). It was also found that the absence of support from parents and administrations influenced students' reading habits. In this context, Aigul (2022) examined a weak reading was also due to a lack of aid, encouragement, and apathy from friends and also from families. Likewise, Ghadamgahi and Ghafournia (2022) state the application of metacognitive reading techniques in English reading in Iranian learners was found to be not applicable due to certain aspects like not having access to English reading materials, utilising old reading methods, and the sway trend of concentrating more on memorising instead of understanding.

On the other hand, they discovered that there was a lack of training and workshops for teachers regarding the teaching of reading (Ligudon & Ildefonso, 2022). As a result, Fathi and Elashhab (2021) state teachers were found to lack standard instructions and knowledge for teaching English readings. For example, Matakane's (2018) qualitative study found that teachers lack the implementation of reading techniques like pre-while and post-activities while reading. Such inadequately equipped teaching English techniques and practice were also claimed in the mixed method conducted by Mulatu and Regassa (2021). Therefore, the mentioned challenges and issues interfere with facilitating learners' in their English reading goals.

## **2.2 Part II: Different Reading Strategies**

### **2.2.1 Strategies of Reading**

To understand the text substantially, one should implement effective and suitable reading strategies. According to Anthony (2019), more different reading techniques could obtain a

greater outcome in overcoming the apprehension of reading new texts. On this account, her quantitative study found out that global reading strategies like previewing the text before reading are used frequently followed by support strategies like underlining and taking notes while reading. Whereas, problem-solving strategies are applied minimum. Also, learners are most often asked to look at the title, make predictions, and ask questions about texts. Students are also encouraged to attend to the unknown words, silent reading, and translating. The least involved is giving quizzes on the texts. In this regard, Manurung et al. (2023) claim that the support techniques like rephrasing and comparing the ideas were incorporated poorly. On the other hand, problem-solving methods like finding the meaning of new vocabulary, reading closely, and re-engaging in reading are used in the same way. Likewise, global methods like employing prior information, and recalling past knowledge are used by students the very (Mustafa & Barany, 2023). This shows that learners incorporate different techniques as per their suitability and preferability.

Another technique Ahmed et al. (2024) explored was post-reading techniques such as text synthesis, summarising, and reflecting on their grasp of the texts significantly enhanced learners' comprehension of the texts. Further, the post-test taken on the stand of post-reading skills seems to be more productive in students developing intellectual abilities. Meanwhile, Ligudon and Ildefonso (2022) mention that English teachers in the Philippines also adequately and widely implemented pre-, while, and post-reading techniques. For instance, activities like jotting the concepts, and group work are associated. Also, teachers extensively help and make interactive sessions with query sessions. Coming to post-reading strategies, teachers recall the activities, check students' understanding, and opinions, and provide feedback or suggestions. Similarly, in such situations during reading and post-readings, teachers encourage learners to verbalise thoughts, make connections, and reflect (Apoko & Marcellin, 2023).

To develop reading competency as cited by Rungswang and Kosashunhanan (2021), students were instructed to use the bottom-up and thus spend too much on new words to dissuade from using other methods like skimming, scanning, and inferring. While, students in Afghanistan were seen to be engaged in giving time towards visuals, previewing titles, and employing their background knowledge for guessing and noting the key points. They were also found to concentrate more on understanding the overall context and summarizing using their language (Wsay, 2021). The authors Aldibs and Khalel (2022) also asserted teachers utilized various materials and resources other than the usual academic texts. Some research has illustrated reading is far beyond than visualization of words or texts. It involves intellectual abilities like comprehension, analysis, and inferring. It means the individual reader puts more effort into generating and presenting facts and findings than the existing texts.

According to Phuong (2022), the teachers frequently used threading methods like inferring, letting students retell the reading text, query sessions, and visual learning sessions to help learners understand the text, to be attentive and on track with their reading materials, and make connections comprehensively. Despite that, Edlund and Alshairawi (2022) mention with digitalisation, the problem of reading can be solved gradually as online tools like Legimus, audiobooks, and YouTube videos are encouraged to aid English readers facing difficulties. Also, it found that teachers employ techniques like learning from each other, peers, group tasks, and reading-aloud methods. Safrianti (2020) noted that English teachers often used reading techniques like think-pair-share, reciprocal teaching, question-and-answer relationships, and small group discussions. For example, learners were provided a set of questions to be answered to examine their understandings and takeaways.

Among other techniques, Graden (2023) states that guided reading is more effective yet the combination of three methods of reading: guided reading, phonetic grounded methods, and sight word methods is much more effective. Aside from this, as per Aldibs and Khalel (2022), teachers employing reading techniques like pausing while reading and using the reading out-loud method was explored as more beneficial. However, some teachers refrain from using specific techniques as they encourage students to be self-construal and understand the texts. Learners with their preferences for reading strategies help to develop reading skills and in return bring better outcomes (Albiladi, 2019). At the same time, learners involved ardently in reading know the particular skills they need to enhance their understanding of texts (Rosemary, 2019).

Despite all the techniques, the teacher-centered method is also applied where the teacher explains, demonstrates, and the learners just listen and the entire attention is towards the teacher (Apoko & Marcellin, 2023). Teachers also use significant tasks like preparation, tasks to assign, and assessments to help learners in English reading learning. Aside from that, teachers are flexible and adjustable in applying techniques per the learners' suitability and immersion (Pandiang et al, 2021). In the same way, Apoko and Marcellin (2023) mention teachers administer teacher-centered methods incorporating question-and-answer sessions, and scaffolding to facilitate during difficulties. Comparably, the translation method was most employed constantly when teachers translated English text into their native language (Mavriqi & Alkaaby, 2022). Parallely, students with good reading skills were made to be models and modeling assists students in producing good outcomes or results (Fathi & Elashhab, 2021).

## **2.3 Part III: Reading in the Bhutanese Context**

### **2.3.1 Educational System**

The Bhutanese Educational system evolved from monastic education to modern educational practices. Monastic education is primarily through the teachings of Mahayana Buddhism. As Buddhism emerged as a main religion and as a seat of learning, calligraphy, music, astrology, herbal medicine, philosophy, stylized dances, Zorig Chusum (the thirteen traditional arts and crafts), literature, and linguistics were included in teaching. The medium of instruction was either Choekey (classical Tibetan) or Dzongkha. Dzongs were the main place of learning and later Rabdeys (monastic branches) and Drubdeys (meditation centers), Shedras (monastic colleges), Rigneys (colleges of education), and Anim dratshangs (nunnery centers) were established in various areas. The monks, nuns, and Gomchens (lay monks) devote themselves to monastic education in different centers. Still, monastic education is one of the prides of preserving and promoting the culture and tradition of Bhutan. Therefore, with assistance from the Royal Government of Bhutan and Buddhist scholars in and out of Bhutan, the monastic education system is further reinforced with a new English curriculum, other approaches, and methods. Jekhenpo (head of monk body) heads the monastic education and monastic education is completely separated from politics by law and demands only to ensure the promotion of the spiritual heritage of Bhutan as per Article 3 (cited in the Constitution of Bhutan, pg. 9).

On the other hand, Modern Education came into Bhutan only in the early 1960s and it was inherited as similar to what existed in British India. Gradually, schools were built and started the enrollment of students and Indian teachers played a significant role in the development of modern education in Bhutan (Paul, 2017). Since then, though the national language of Bhutan is Dzongkha, English, and Dzongkha were started as mediums of instruction in the education

system. Unlike some countries, as specified by the Royal Education Council (2018), Bhutan does not have a separate school like Dzongkha medium schools and English schools. The schooling level starts from primary schools (grades PP-VI), lower secondary schools (VII-VIII), middle secondary schools (IX-X), higher secondary schools (XI-XII), and then tertiary education (colleges and universities). Hence, the education system follows the Dual language instruction or bilingual teaching method where Dzongkha is only used for instructing Dzongkha subject whereas, English is used for teaching all other subjects starting from pre-school.

### **2.3.2 Reading Culture**

The government of Bhutan and the Ministry of Education are actively taking effort to build reading habits by commencing various programs and activities. The programs like observing a reading month yearly, upholding reading activities in the schools and submitting reading reflections (number of books read) of individual learners in the classes (Delma, 2015). Every year, coinciding with International Literacy Day, schools in Bhutan celebrate Reading Week in September. Moreover, many public libraries are established aside from school libraries to enhance reading habits and culture (Ministry of Education and Skill Development, Bhutan). Such practice is considered a habit and a culture to be nurtured in Bhutan.

Additionally, the major change in the Bhutanese education system is the adoption of English as one of the core subjects and as the medium of instruction for other subjects (Royal Education Council, 2018), mastering English reading skills has been essential for Bhutanese students to communicate effectively with people from diverse backgrounds and pursue higher education opportunities. Thus, teachers use different reading strategies and techniques to encourage

students in the schools. For example, focuses on critical reading: it means reading beyond and beneath surface meanings to the assumptions, arguments, and strategies behind them. Besides, teachers pay special attention to the 3Rs: read, recite, and review methods (Department of School Education, 2023). Yet, it is still a recurring issue and problem when it comes to English Reading. It includes lack of resources, motivation, and the surrounding environment are some factors that interrupt the teaching of English Reading (Gyeltshen, 2021).

According to the Department of School Education (2023), at the secondary level in the Bhutanese context in English Reading, students are expected to

- Read fluently and demonstrate comprehension of grade-appropriate texts with challenging themes and vocabulary from a variety of texts (fiction and non-fiction).
- View and demonstrate comprehension of visual texts with complex ideas and specialized features (e.g., websites, reference books, magazines).
- Use a variety of strategies to construct and confirm meaning, and evaluate texts in different media and technologies.
- Understand and derive meaning from the structures and features of a range of texts.
- Read academic articles to garner information and ideas.
- Analyse how an author's choices of text structure create effects such as mystery, tension, and surprise.

- Read relevant major literary works from Bhutan and other countries to reflect on cultural and fundamental values like Truth, Goodness, and Beauty (viii).

## **2.4 Research Gap**

Scholarly literature on English reading discusses various challenges the reader face (Mukmini et al. (2022); Schmidt, 2019; Rungswang & Kosashunhanan, 2021; Peter, 2019; Aigul, 2022; Ghadamgahi & Ghafournia, 2022; Ligudon & Ildefonso, 2022; Fathi & Elashhab 2021; Matakane, 2018; Mulatu & Regassa, 2021). Besides, some researchers have explored types of reading approaches that highlight post-reading strategies (Ahmed et al., 2024; Ligudon & Ildefonso, 2022; Apoko & Marcellin, 2023; Wsay, 2021; Manurung et al. 2023; Safrianti, 2020; Mavriqi & Alkaaby, 2022). In contrast, some authors have drawn attention to using pre-reading strategies such as previewing, employing prior knowledge, and inferring activities utilized in English reading classes (Rungswang & Kosashunhanan, 2021; Anthony, 2019; Phuong, 2022; Mustafa & Barany, 2023). Some researchers like Edlund and Alshairawi (2022), Aldibs and Khalel (2022), and Fathi and Elashhab (2021) asserted that teachers use resources like online tools like Legimus, audiobooks, and YouTube videos to aid English readers. Additionally, teachers are seen to be flexible and adjustable in applying techniques as per learners' preferences and suitability (Albiladi, 2019; Pandiang et al, 2021).

To date, numerous studies have been conducted, focusing particularly on types of English reading approaches to teaching reading, reading challenges, and the students' and teachers' preferences on using reading strategies. However, there is hardly any study on how reading in English classrooms is taught in an ESOL context such as Bhutan. Thus, the current study attempts to fill the gap of knowledge regarding English reading challenges among secondary-



level Bhutanese students, how they overcome those challenges, and what they think about reading strategies used in English classrooms and beyond.

## **2.5 Theoretical Framework**

The study builds its conceptual framework based on the challenges readers face (Kasim and Raisha (2017), schemata strategies (Carrell's (1984)) and Vijaya's (2012), socio-affective strategies used during reading (as cited in Anuarudin et al., 2021). Further, the researcher has added a perspective of students regarding the reading strategies they used in classrooms and beyond. Firstly, according to Kasim and Raisha (2017), students face challenges such as (grammar, phonetics, vocabulary, resources, environment, and interests). On the other hand, to overcome the mentioned challenges, students employ a coping strategy of Carrell's (1984) content schemata or schema theory strategy (linguistic, content, and formal schema). Similarly, Vijaya's (2012) social affective strategies during reading (asking questions, cooperating with others, empathising with others, lowering anxiety, encouraging oneself, and taking the emotional temperature). Besides, all the mentioned approaches are well established in the subsequent chapter.

## **2.6 Conceptual Framework of the Study**

The study's conceptual framework consists of four stages. Firstly, the respondents were free to share their views and perspectives to answer the following questions: 1) What challenges do students face while reading English? According to Kaism and Rashi (2017), students encounter various difficulties either linguistically or non-linguistically. Therefore, the researcher interviewed the secondary level Bhutanese students to identify the problems. To answer the

second research question: 2) How do they overcome the challenges of English reading? the researcher explored the measures they took to overcome their challenges. In this stage, the researcher concentrated on the students' use of Carrell's (1984) schema theory (linguistics, content, and formal schema) in reading and Vijay's (2017) social affective strategies (asking questions, cooperating with others, empathising with others, lowering anxiety, encouraging oneself, and taking the emotional temperature).

Next, the framework looks at the final question; 3) What are their perspectives regarding the reading approaches used in English classrooms and beyond? Here, the study examines and gathers the participants' views on the effectiveness of various reading strategies that they used in English classrooms and beyond. With that, any researcher in the future can satisfactorily and sufficiently convince the gap of knowledge regarding English reading challenges among secondary-level Bhutanese students, how they overcome those challenges, and what they think about reading strategies they use in English classrooms and beyond.

### **Challenges of reading English**

- Grammar
- Phonetics
- Vocabulary
- Resources
- Environment
- Interests

Kasim and Raisha's (2017)



### **Coping strategies for English reading challenges**

**Content schemata or schema theory** (Carrell's (1984), three types of schema-

- linguistic,
- content, and
- formal schema).

**Social Affective strategies** (Vijaya's (2012), socio-affective strategies during reading

- asking questions,
- cooperating with others,
- empathising with others,
- lowering anxiety,
- encouraging oneself, and
- taking the emotional temperature



**Perspectives regarding the coping  
strategies used in English classrooms  
and beyond**

*Figure 2.1: The Procedural Conceptual Framework of the study*

## **2.7 Chapter Summary**

The initial chapter part one explores reading, its importance, its role in the ESL classroom, and the challenges of reading. The second part discusses different types of reading strategies employed while reading English. The third part studies reading in the Bhutanese context where the educational system is briefly introduced followed by the reading culture in Bhutan. Lastly, the chapter ends with the research gap and the aim of the current study.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the research methodology followed or adopted to conduct the study. As mentioned in the previous chapters, the study aims to explore different teaching approaches to English reading in Bhutanese secondary schools. Therefore, the first research question explores the challenges students face while reading English and the next question finds out how they overcome the challenges. The final question explores the students' perspectives regarding the reading approaches used in English classrooms and beyond. Further in this chapter, the researcher reviews the reason for choosing qualitative research methodology, the process of data collection, the framework of data analysis, and the procedures for establishing ethical considerations to ensure the study's credibility.

#### **3.2 Qualitative Research Paradigms and Philosophical Assumptions**

Research paradigms and philosophy, both refer to the sets of beliefs, assumptions, and principles that underlie the way that approach the study or any kind of academic research project. It also encapsulates the nature of knowledge an individual seeks or expects to obtain by undertaking a particular study (Creswell, 2014). Hence, among the different paradigms, in this study, the researcher has employed interpretivism or social constructivism as the current study attempts to fill the gap of knowledge regarding English reading challenges among secondary-level Bhutanese students. Also, explores how they overcome those challenges, and what they think about reading strategies used in English classrooms and beyond.

The Interpretivism paradigm essentially takes the side that reality is socially constructed. Studies the complex social phenomena and individual perspectives which are naturally more subjective and nuanced. Usually, in this regard, the researchers concentrate on the meanings that people bring to the situation and behaviours and the ways they use this to interpret the world (Kamal, 2019). Thus, in the current study, the knowledge is obtained or co-constructed between the researcher and participants who are secondary students.

The following table which has the description of the philosophical assumptions of the current study has been modified from Creswell’s (2007) table of “Philosophical Assumptions with Implications for Practice” (p.17).

<b>Research Paradigm</b>	<b>Philosophical Assumptions</b>			
Interpretivism	Ontological	Epistemological	Axiological	Methodological
	Phenomenology-subjective views of participants	The researcher’s participation throughout the session like in the interview.	The researcher’s values and biases will be discussed along with the participants’ interpretations	Qualitative Phenomenological study approach

Table 3.1: The Philosophical Assumptions of the Study

According to Creswell (2014), the ontological philosophy of interpretivism is based on more than one reality or multiple that are context-bound. For instance, in the current study, the researcher explores the phenomenology of secondary-level Bhutanese participants on English reading challenges. Also, explores how they overcome those challenges, and what they think

about reading strategies used in English classrooms and beyond. The next feature of these assumptions is epistemological where it is subjective and the knowledge is received through interpretation or an explanation as cited by (Kamal, 2019). So, to know about the students' challenges and perspectives on English reading comprehension, the researcher can get a better understanding through the interviews. Later, the researcher interprets and simplifies the study. The axiological assumption is the ethical consideration demonstrated in the study (Kivunja, 2017). Thus, the researcher interprets the data along with the participants' experiences and views rather than noting her own opinions and notions. Lastly, Creswell (2014) states that the methodological assumption includes the approaches and methods used to determine some information. For this study, the researcher utilised qualitative data collection methods like interviews to learn the participants' subjective views.

### **3.3 Setting**

The study is set in an ESOL context, Bhutan. The reason for selecting Bhutan is though the English Language has been taught from the primary level itself, it is still a challenging issue where students face difficulties, especially in the four skills area. Thus, the selection of participants is particularly concentrated on secondary students as it is an important development stage, so the study can guide further intervention and support approaches to prepare for future growth. Hence, the data collection is mainly through interviews with students in rural and urban schools.

## **3.4 Data Collection Procedures**

### **3.4.1 Phenomenology**

The researcher chose phenomenological research for the study because it helps to attain the central purpose of the study and its objective. According to Gautam<sup>1</sup> and Gautam<sup>2</sup> (2023), phenomenology is reflected as an approach that explores the essence of a phenomenon from the subjective experiences and individual's interaction with the world. Phenomenology is viewed and influenced by many phenomenologists providing their special and unique opinions (Gautam & Sundararaman, 2021). Transcendental inspired by Husserl explores the significance of the researcher's consciousness and relationship to the world. existential rooted in Heidegger and Sartre, concentrates on the individual's experiences and existence on aspects like freedom, choice, and authenticity themes. On the other hand, hermeneutic phenomenology influenced by Merleau-Ponty is a study of experiences with their meaning (Kafle, 2011 as stated in Gautam<sup>1</sup> and Gautam<sup>2</sup>, 2023).

In the study, the researcher has chosen hermeneutic phenomenology, the main purpose of which is to explore various teaching approaches to English reading in Bhutanese secondary schools and to examine students' perceptions of its effectiveness and challenges. Hermeneutic phenomenology is rooted in interpretation (Sloan & Bowe, 2014), the researcher can grab the border exploration of the educational landscape in Bhutan by interpreting the participants' experiences. Such variations and diversity of opinions on their loved experiences can enrich the validity and credibility of the study with more comprehensive ideas (Neubauer et al., 2019). Moreover, the distinct and complex data gathered from the individual's lifeworld and experiences contributes to the study's detailed analysis and outcomes.



### **3.4.2 Sampling Technique**

Selecting accurate sampling techniques influences the study's reliability and authenticity. It shapes the credibility and accuracy of the data collected by the researcher (Friday & Leah, 2024). Among the different sampling techniques, in the current study, the researcher chose the purposive sampling technique. According to Cohen et al. (2018), purposive sampling is the technique in which the researcher purposely selects the participants for their research instead of seeking casual and informal participation. The main aim is to take on and enlist participants who can give a clear understanding and information to the study.

Since the sampling technique focuses on secondary students (age group of 13-14 years old) of the Bhutanese context, this study is bound with certain characteristics and requirements. Moreover, this study explores and finds out the English reading approaches associated with the challenges of the students, the intentional selection of secondary students will further give profound insights and perspectives. Participants' diverse views and experiences will bring out the greatest contribution to the researcher's analysis and can get overall views or a bigger picture of students in the same stage. Thus, the criteria for selecting the participants are as follows:

1. The participants must be Bhutanese residing
2. The participants must be secondary students from grades 7-8.
3. The participants' willingness to take part in the study
4. Four participants were from rural and three from urban.

### 3.4.2.1 Participant's Profile

Sl. No	Gender	Class	Setting	Anonymised name
1	Female	VIII	Rural	Bok
2	Male	VII	Urban	Peeaaaa
3	Female	VII	Rural	Kin
4	Male	VIII	Urban	Cho
5	Female	VIII	Urban	Jam
6	Female	VII	Rural	Ugy
7	Male	VIII	Rural	San

Table 3.2: Participant's Profile

### 3.4.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

Interviews in general, are conducted to gather information either from the specific individual or an event. The data gathered from the interview usually consists of ideas that are unavailable and found in some sources. Hence, in qualitative research, interviews are often used as a data collection method. Interviews are not mere conversations but based on directed and purposeful interaction to access information. Commonly, interviews are classified into three types: structured, unstructured, and semi-structured according to Sahoo (2022). However, in the current study, the researcher concentrated on semi-structured interviews to collect and gather data. Alhabsy et al. (2022), stated that semi-structured interviews are considered the most effective and relevant than other types of interviews as they aid researchers in obtaining extensive and comprehensive attestations from the interviewees. Further, it facilitates adaptability and flexibility for the researchers to set a favorable atmosphere for the interviewees

to encourage forwardness. Accordingly, the researcher chose the semi-structured interviews for a profound analysis through the study of evidence contextually, situationally, and interactionally. Also, the interviewees opened up their views and perspectives, the researcher employed a blend of closed and opinion-based questions.

### **3.4.4 Developing Interview Protocol**

To conduct the semi-structured interviews, the researcher adopted the interview protocol of Rabionet's (2011) published in the Qualitative Report as follows;

- a. selecting the type of interview;
- b. establishing ethical guidelines,
- c. crafting the interview protocol;
- d. conducting and recording the interview;
- e. analysis and discussion and
- f. reporting the findings.

According to Rabionet (2011), there are six stages to conducting semi-structured interviews. The first stage is selecting the type of interview which means deciding to conduct the semi-structured interview. The semi-structured interview helps focus on the topic and elicits stories related to the study. Thus, the researcher starts with an opening introduction, and structured questions followed by supplementary queries if additional information is needed. In the second phase, the author states establishing ethical guidelines and morals while consulting the interviewee's response is important. So, the researcher ensured that the respondents were fully aware of the purpose of the analysis by providing them with a detailed explanation of the

purpose of the study, and the procedures involved in the research, including the methods of data collection and analysis. Also, to ensure fairly and ethically, the researcher described the participant's identity confidentiality and protection. The third stage of crafting the interview protocol consists of two significant components: (a) introduction to the person being interviewed and (b) the questions to be asked.

To fulfill the first component, the researcher creates an adequate atmosphere by maintaining rapport and gradually assures the rationality of the study with the interview time limitation, and the protocol also includes the assurance of consent and ethical guidelines. Regarding the second component, the researcher was attentive towards the question asked and content generated and also contemplated whether the questions asked were conscious and respected. In the fourth stage, conducting and recording the interview, the author mentions various ways of recording the interview like taking notes while interviewing, writing after the interview, audio recording, and video recording. In the current study, since it is conducted online through Google Meetings, the researcher recorded the whole interview through the consent from the participants. In the fifth stage, analysing and summarising the interview, the researcher worked on organisation and transcription and structured the codes as per the themes. In the final stage, reporting the findings means the researcher wrote the final analysis according to the previous stage's organisation and scheme without errors and mistakes.

### **3.4.5 Analysing Students' Interviews**

The interviews were conducted in Dzongkha (The national language) and the local dialect (Sharchop). Later the recorded interviews were transcribed in English to analyse the students' interviews, and the transcription was coded with the seven-column coding template of Ahmad

(2017). Later, the researcher employed the two coding steps (Adu, 2021). Firstly, the researcher coded the transcript of each student's interviews, selected the prominent codes from all the transcripts, and then put them on a table for prominent categories (see Appendix E). Further, the categories were used in identifying the themes in each case and then all the themes were compared to make a thematic pattern (see Appendix F) to answer the study questions.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

The following section discusses the steps adopted to analyse the data collected by the researcher such as participants' interviews, recordings, and observations. To analyse the data, the researcher adopted the thematic analysis framework of Rosario (2023). According to the author, thematic analysis is most commonly used in social sciences research, particularly for qualitative research because it helps researchers comprehend the overall meaning through the identification of themes of the data collected with various approaches. The framework is generalized into six steps; the first step, familiarisation is the researcher being well-informed about the data. Thus, the researcher was involved in the repeated reading of the data and transcribing the data. In the second step, coding, the researcher identifies the important ideas and information and color-coded to find out the prominent codes. The third step is finding the themes, so the researcher puts the codes on the table for categories, and the categories are used for identifying thematic patterns. The fourth step includes reviewing the themes where the researcher reviews whether the themes link to the coded data. The fifth step includes labeling and defining themes that the researcher accurately and exactly stated. The final step is writing a detailed and comprehensive analysis.

### **3.6 Ethical Consideration**

The researcher has taken all the necessary steps to ensure her research is ethical and conducted by accepted standards (see Appendix A). Before requesting the interview, the researcher assured that the respondents were fully aware of the purpose of the analysis and gave their explicit permission to share their views. The researcher provided them with a detailed explanation of the purpose of the study, the procedures involved in the research, including the methods of data collection and analysis, and the potential benefits associated with their participation.

So, the researcher recorded the interviews, and notes, then transcribed and analysed the data, keeping the participant's identity confidential and anonymized. Moreover, the citations and references have been properly cited and mentioned. This ensures that the researcher adheres to ethical guidelines and that privacy is respected.

### **3.7 Trustworthiness and Credibility of the Study**

A qualitative research study maintains trustworthiness and credibility only if the researcher upholds certain requirements. Morse (2018), asserts that the study is judged rigorous if it is determined by validity and reliability in qualitative research. Like in quantitative research, the validity and reliability of the collected data are recovered by the trustworthiness and credibility in qualitative research using Lincoln and Guba's (1986) four-dimension criteria: credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (as cited in Forero et al., 2018).

Thus, in the study, to establish the credibility of the data, the researcher employed member checking, triangulation, inter-rater reliability checking, audit trail, and thick description. According to Varpio et al. (2017), member checking is a process where the researchers present data transcripts to the participants to reflect if the participants' responses are accurate. Sending the transcripts to the participants helps the researchers remove the misinterpretations and the words participants do not want to disclose during the analysis (Candela, 2019). Thus, the researcher emailed the transcripts for member checking to ensure the credibility of the data (see Appendix H).

Further, triangulation, as stated by Carter et. al (2014), is an approach to enhance the understanding of the phenomena using different methods or sources. For instance, the researcher has taken inter-rater reliability as an analyst triangulation where multiple reviews were invited to review and assess the findings (Pandey and Panik, 2014). In this case, the researcher has emailed the Associate Professor to review and rate the interview transcripts to verify the accuracy and validity of the themes (see Appendix G).

Another strategy to establish trustworthiness in qualitative research is a research audit trail- a record of steps carried out throughout the study by the researchers with proper documentation to present transparency (Caracry, 2020). The researcher kept a record of the dates, activities, and steps carried out to conclude the study (see Appendix I). Besides, Lincoln and Guba (year) mentioned in Stahl and King (2020) that, the most significant factor to trustworthiness is transferability, which can only be achieved by a thick description. So, the researcher emphasises the thick description of the study's contexts, methods, and procedures. Hence, to

portray the trustworthiness and credibility of the study, the researcher has undertaken the above-stated steps.

### **3.8 Researcher's Role**

To accomplish the research with a general picture, according to Fink (2000), the qualitative researcher must actively participate and be personally engaged throughout the research process, because the entire paper will be grounded as per the researcher's role and judgment made. The author also mentioned the researcher's role is complex, for instance, he stated three different themes that the researcher mostly comes across to address and manage in the whole process: the techniques for data collection, the character of data, and the way data is processed and presented.

In the case of the current study, the researcher being an ELT and Applied Linguistics major, she was interested in undertaking the research in this particular skill reading. Despite Bhutanese students being trained and focused in the English Reading stand from the early stage, the students still struggle and face challenges. Given that the researcher is also Bhutanese, the audience may seem colored or one-sided, in reality, the analysis is without any cultural biases or individualised opinions as the researcher employed member checking, triangulation, and inter-rater reliability checking to ensure credibility and to establish the trustworthiness of the data. Thus, given the distinct complexities related to data collection, analysis, and presentation, the researcher was deeply involved and diligently engrossed until the conclusion.



### **3.9 Chapter Summary**

The initial chapter discusses the philosophical assumptions and research paradigms. It is followed by the intention behind choosing phenomenological research, and semi-structured interviews as data collection methods. Next, the procedures conducted and carried out were well described and explained by the researcher. Lastly, the researcher discussed the data analysis framework adopted and the steps in establishing the study's trustworthiness and credibility.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Result and Discussion**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The central objective of the study was to explore the different teaching approaches teachers utilise during the English Reading classrooms among ESOL Secondary level students. The researcher explored the challenges of reading English texts, the solutions they take to overcome, and their opinions about reading strategies used in English classrooms and beyond by adopting phenomenological research.

Thus, the researcher focused on the following research questions to present the findings.

1. What challenges do students face while reading English?
2. How do they overcome the challenges of English reading?
3. What are their perspectives on the reading approaches used in English classrooms and beyond?

#### **4.2 Section 1: Challenges while Reading English Texts**

##### **4.2.1 Linguistic and Content Difficulties**

###### **4.2.1.1 Unfamiliar Vocabulary and not Comprehending**

Students often encounter difficulties with the new vocabularies which the meanings are unclear and vague while reading. Given the difficulties with the new vocabulary, it is hard to comprehend and understand the texts they are reading. To catch and comprehend the texts, students need to have vocabulary exposure and expansion. Moreover, while reading, students

are required to know the meaning of the words, be able to decode the words, competent in extracting the unseen meanings and masked messages. Analysing and evaluating the function of sentences and understanding the whole text with the implications is also part of what the readers need to have expansion (Idrees & Nauman, 2022). Likewise, all the participants stated struggling with complex sentences and expressions impeded them from interpreting and understanding the texts. Hence, Mukmini et al. (2022) findings have relevance to these findings as all seven participants responded to the vocabulary difficulties and complex word formation hindering their attentiveness and comprehension while reading the material. One of the respondents stated,

*“I do face difficulties in vocabulary. For example, during this break, hmmmmmm.....I had recently read a book and got stuck in the word "Epiphany" which I didn't understand anything about. Further, English always consists of complex sentences, it is composed of longer sentences and structures. Also, some of the figurative language or devices are complicated, so it is difficult to understand the text too.*

From the above response, it can be inferred that most of the learners are facing difficulties with new vocabulary while reading English texts. It also shows that vocabulary knowledge is positively related to the comprehension of the texts and the fluency of reading. Thus, can be concluded that advancing vocabulary is a central part of improving reading comprehension.

#### **4.2.1.2 Pronunciation Difficulty**

Pronunciation is the most important and difficult problem that non-native English speakers have to face. Phonemic awareness is the foundational base for the learners' English reading. Students with precise and detailed knowledge of sound pronunciation can acquire great

achievement in reading and comprehending (Uyen and Diem, 2023). This finding is significantly relevant to Schmidt (2019) as students mention that they are distracted from reading English texts or materials due to the pronunciation errors and difficulties they face. They are unable to read as they face a lack of the correct use of stress, intonation, and overall pronunciation being as non-native English-speaking learners. One of the students in the interview mentioned that

*I cannot pronounce the new words correctly. For pronunciation, I need help pronouncing the bombastic words. Sometimes, even if the books are up to our level, some words are unknown and I cannot recognise which leads to pronouncing them correctly. Without the correct pronunciation, sometimes in the classes, when we are given a chance to read in class, I am feeling shy, stammer, and stutter.*

As can be seen from the conversion above, students are facing difficulties with pronunciation where they encounter errors and mispronunciation. The connection between pronunciation and vocabulary acquisition is closely linked. The more we pronounce the words, the more students can remember the words and it will ultimately help in comprehension.

## **4.2.2 Lack of Facilities and Social Support**

### **4.2.2.1 Lack of Access to English Reading Materials in Rural Areas**

Another challenge is the lack of access to English reading material, especially in rural areas where schools have limited resources. Ghadamgahi and Ghafournia (2022) also mentioned that Iranian learners were found not to have access to English reading materials. Similarly, the participants shared they do not have access to books or other reading materials outside the

classroom, which affects their interest and motivation to read. They said they do not get suitable and fascinating reading resources which impacts their urge towards reading and reading performance. One of the participants says that

*“Hmmmm....especially since I live in a rural area where our schools have limited resources. We cannot access books or other reading materials outside the classroom, affecting our interest and motivation to read. In school, we have libraries to read but at home, we lack English books. We have online books but I prefer having hard copies”.*

It shows that when students do not find the available reading materials engaging or relevant to their lives, they may be less motivated to read. It is important to provide a wide variety of texts that cater to different interests and backgrounds.

#### **4.2.2.2 Many Illiterate Parents and Elders Live by an Oral Lore**

Home and family factors are another element that influences the reading of the learners. Family literacy is the first factor that impacts children's development. However, one of the participants in the interview mentioned parents are illiterate and they still have problems in valuing the reading of English texts. Likewise, it is relevant to (Rungswang & Kosashunhanan, 2021) who found that parents' absence of support and aid led to weak reading habits. Wangchuk et al. (2020) also state that Bhutan's society follows an oral culture and many illiterate parents and elders in their homes cannot understand the value of reading if it is not connected to school, religion, or daily tasks. The culture and society play a role in English learning in Bhutan. Though English is considered prestigious in Bhutan, on the other side some people view as a foreign language and lack value. In the same opinion, participants said

*For instance, my grandparents emphasise more in Dzongkha texts and they have a habit of telling stories orally and during gatherings. They perceive that our Dzongkha texts are also related to our religion, Buddhism and they value more than the Western texts. They think English is a foreign language. With such cultural preferences, beliefs, and oral culture prioritisation, they encourage us like me, to focus more on the national language to know more about local knowledge and information.*

It shows that the family environment influences the children's reading interests and accomplishments. Moreover, these factors play a crucial role in the child's development era and motivation to engaged in English texts. Thus, the interview's conservation states that this attitude in the home environment limits students' exposure to English reading outside the classroom, making it challenging for them to develop their reading skills.

#### **4.2.2.3 Lack of Motivation and Interest**

Students who have an interest in their roots towards what they do will be keener on learning. Anyone with a lack of enthusiasm and incuriosity in learning will always spot difficulties and barriers to understanding. Similarly, if the learners tend to read without showing any interest and paying attention, they will read half-heartedly and insincerely leading to unproductive (Dewi et al., 2014). Among the 7 participants, 3 students shared their lack of interest and willingness to read causing them to not really engage in English reading and mastering that particular skill. One of the participants shared that

*To share honestly, despite having resources and materials near me, unlike others, I lack a reading habit..... Uhm....I don't have an interest, and sometimes, I have to force myself to complete the assigned class readings.*

Another student also states that

*I rarely read English books because I am not interested like I have an interest in Dzongkha texts. From an early age, I am more into Dzongkha and can do this subject always better than English. It is not that I don't read, I read but not at the level I have in Dzongkha. I am trying my best so that I can make a habit of reading.*

Thus, the above two conversations present that the student's lack of interest in reading is caused by their absence of reading habits. It also shows that some learners are not having an urge or encouragement from within themselves to read despite having facilities and resources available nearby.

## **4.3 Section 2: Solutions to The Reading Challenges**

### **4.3.1 Employment of Various Reading Methods**

#### **4.3.1.1 Inferring the Meaning of the Words and Using Background**

##### **Knowledge**

Reading and comprehending is an action the readers make their meaning with the interaction of the text they are reading with the connection of the past information, knowledge, and information the reader gets from the texts. With that, the participants in the interview shared that whenever they encounter new words, rather than jumping to the dictionary, they try to infer meaning and make sense of what they are reading by linking it with their prior or background knowledge. All the participants shared the same opinion on inferring the meaning of new words with the connection with their previously encountered information. It is related to the findings of Wsay, (2021) that students in Afghanistan were also seen to be engaged in giving time

towards visuals, previewing titles, and employing their background knowledge for guessing and noting the key points. Thus, in this regard, one of the learners (interviewee) cited an example that

*For the new words, before I refer to the dictionary or ask for help, I first try to guess the meaning myself. I try to connect with the sentence and see if it tells. Also, the knowledge we learned before helps to understand the text better. For example, I read a book by Passu Diary. In his book, he has written a chapter that is similar to our culture and history. While reading, because since I have known a little about that particular topic, I got more interested and further helped in better understanding the topic that is discussed.*

It can be inferred that reading comprehension relies on the background or prior knowledge. It shows that learners with good general information allows them to perform better and comprehend well. But, learners with limited prior knowledge often struggle even with simple topics. Likewise, it is similar to what Mustafa and Barany (2023) highlighted that methods like employing prior information and recalling past knowledge are used by students the very

#### **4.3.1.2 Re-reading and Peer Reading Practices**

Re-reading and partner reading are also the most used methods by learners during reading. Re-reading is one of the greatest approaches to advancing comprehension skills. The re-reading method helps with vocabulary building, increasing reading fluency, and helping to become confident readers (Alghonaim, 2020). All the participants supported this method helping them while reading or even after reading the texts. For instance, one asserted that

*Especially, reading English books or texts are bit complicated, unlike our local books. Some contain long, complex sentences which I find very difficult to*



*understand just on reading for once. But when I do read again, I get familiar with or know the particular difficulty and then tend to get a lot better at the texts. After re-reading, it has a positive result helping to retain and remember some details and information.*

Likewise, students are also involved in partner or peer readings to overcome some challenges. Peer reading is an approach where the more skilled peer helps or monitors the other person who has difficulty reading. All seven interviewees shared that it was the most realistic and practical practice to grow and improve personally. The respondents gave an illustration that

*For example, in the class, our teachers let us do peer reading for the story reading. We work together to read a text. One friend takes on the role of the “reader” while the other takes on the role of the “listener”. For readers, it is a supportive environment to practice their reading skills, receive immediate feedback, and develop confidence in their abilities. For helpers, it is also an opportunity to practice their listening skills and reinforce their own reading skills. We switch this role and take turns in a repeated way and comment on the readings.*

From the above statement, it means re-reading always helps add some value to the readers with better retention, comprehension, and capturing of the essence of the book. Similarly, peer or partner reading strategies are another flexible and effective method as they help both parties become competent and advance comprehension skills and accuracy.

## 4.3.2 Teacher-Centered Strategies

### 4.3.2.1 Guided Reading Practices

An approach called guided reading was discussed which comprises teacher-led small-group instruction. According to reading proficiency, the students are organized, and the teacher offers support and direction as they go through a text. For students at the intermediate level who require assistance with reading comprehension, this method of teaching functions effectively (Apoko & Marcellinda, 2023). In the same manner, the participants discuss the involvement of teachers as a great instructional approach as they monitor actively when the students working in groups with a text which is difficult and challenging. They said teachers support and scaffold as they read the texts. This is relevant to Aldibs and Khalel (2022), who explored teachers employing reading techniques like pausing while reading and using the reading out-aloud method as more beneficial. For instance, one of the participants states,

*Our English teacher chooses the texts for us or for the groups we are working and he guides us to read the particular sections. When a new word is encountered, the teacher helps with the understanding or interpret the meaning of the word. Sometimes, when we read a story in class, he stops in the middle to ask questions or interprets us with complex sentences and expressions. So, such activities help in enhancing vocabulary, and building practice in comprehension, interpretation, and reading fluency.*

It can be concluded that guided reading practice is an opportunity for the reader to develop their own self-reading and independent reading. By guiding students explicitly by the teachers, and then modeling in real reading situations, teachers can help students become more confident and proficient readers.

### **4.3.2.2 Model Reading or Reading out Loud in the Class**

An additional strategy they point out is model reading or reading aloud. The participants mentioned that when teachers read aloud to them, they can model good reading habits, such as paying attention to punctuation, using the expression, and varying their reading pace. This helps them to develop their own reading skills and become more confident readers and to improve reading comprehension, fluency, and pronunciation. Thus, it is related to (Apoko & Marcellin, 2023) findings where the teacher-centered method is also applied where the teacher explains and demonstrates, and the learners just listen and the entire attention is towards the teacher. For example,

*when a teacher reads to us, they provide an opportunity for us to see and hear skilled reading behaviours. Through this high-level scaffolding, we get to begin to imitate and internalise the modeled reading strategies in shared reading and guided reading so that we the students can gradually experience success and read independently.*

Thus, it is relevant to what Apoko and Marcellinda (2023), stated when students read aloud to themselves or a partner, they can improve their fluency and pronunciation. By hearing themselves read out loud, they can identify areas where they may struggle and work on improving their skills in those areas.

## **4.4 Social Affective Strategies**

### **4.4.1 Pre-planning and Keeping Track**

Before starting to read, choosing the right material as per own interest and enjoyment is important. The texts chosen for reading should be at an individual level and comfortable with.

After selecting the book, there should be specific goals and aims; with that, the learners should be able to take good reading flow (Alghonaim, 2020). Even in the interview, the participants mentioned that they preplan before reading, and after starting reading, they said they are keeping track of and progress. The participants also highlighted that they engaged in different genres and varieties of readings like story books, newspapers, magazines, blogs, and histories.

For example,

*Particularly, I find myself a book that seems engaging and chooses the ones I feel more attracted to. I choose and explore different kinds of genres, for example, I am also interested in reading newspapers, histories, and magazines. When I am reading, I am an active reader. I plan for myself that I will complete and finish this chapter or page or paragraphs. I try to do what I plan and complete. While reading, I take notes like I write down new words, new information that engages me, and the ones I think I may need later.*

The statement informs that the moment the reader decides to read something else, planning and setting goals is important. At that same time, one must assess your level, and knowing the level, the right books must be chosen. While reading paying attention and active reading is crucial for consistency and building a habit of reading.

#### **4.4.2 Taking Breaks and Changing Surrounding Areas**

The setting is one of the most attention drivers of the reader. Many factors such as noise, space, light, and calmness affect the reader's focus, state, and response (Morni & Sahari, 2013). Thus, the interviewees shared that they prefer a place where they can't distract themselves and divert their attention, so they can concentrate fully on the book.

*Sometimes, surrounding us also disturbs me in reading. I change my surroundings to somewhere where I can read peacefully without disturbances. In the class during the breaks and lunch breaks, it is very noisy, so I go to the library which is quiet and I spend my time reading in there. If I have incomplete readings for my classes, I do read textbooks and if I don't have readings on my subject, I select any interesting books from the library. For example, in the library corner, it is very quiet and comfortable to spend my one-hour reading newspapers or books which are print books.*

On the other hand, reading should not feel like a chore or task, if you do so, it is essential to take breaks or pause. It not only helps from the health point of view but also boosts energy. On this point, four respondents state that continuing reading without any breaks is unproductive and they also shared it is also impossible as they are losing focus and energy. For instance,

*Reading books depends on my mood and sometimes, continuing reading also makes me tired.....mmmmm While reading, I feel bored, and sleepy and tend to lose my attention, and that time I take breaks. I don't set a time for my break and let myself unfold naturally and I don't force myself to. During the break, sometimes, I dive into other books to refresh myself. Taking breaks helps me regain my interest and activeness in my physical to read books. For instance, if I am at home, I watch movies and scroll phones, and if in class, I gossip and interact with my friends.*

Hence, it highlights that the environment in which a reader tends to engage in reading is the most important so that the reader can minimise distractions and increase engagement towards reading. Likewise, giving breaks and recess is also critical for readers to regain motivation and interest.

## **4.4 Section 3: Perspectives on The Reading Strategies Students Use in The Classrooms and Beyond.**

### **4.4.1 In the Classrooms**

#### **4.4.1.1 Structured and Organised Learning with Varieties of Strategies**

The participants highlighted that in the classroom, they get to engage in or read with different new methods like teacher-centered practices and modern practices like peer, guided, and model approaches. They also mentioned that they engage in active discussions and practice expressing their ideas and opinions. They are so able to their social and emotive skills. Involvement in many activities with peers and teachers helps to meet the diverse learning needs of students, including those who may struggle with reading and those with different learning styles. Thus, such mixed activities foster a positive environment and make classes interesting. According to Vygotsky's theory (as cited in Muhamad et al., 2019), learning is a social process; classrooms represent social places. So, here struggling readers can interact with friends and reinforce together. To cite an example,

*Especially in my or our English classes, we get to engage in or read with different new methods. We get to practice guided reading by the teachers, other formal assessment activities, and interactive practices with peers. We get instant help and support from our friends and teachers. For instance, there is always a reward like acquiring more vocabulary, building grammar, and better comprehension. With such activities, we get positive vibes and interests and effective structured learning.*

So, here the scaffolding plays a key role where the more knowledgeable ones support other students, and thus, such an effective reading method utilised, further makes organised and well-structured learning.

#### **4.4.2 Beyond the Class**

##### **4.4.2.1 Increases the Student's Motivation for the English Program**

##### **Through Self-Autonomy Learning and Exposure**

The participants in the interview stated that the different and new strategies from the classroom, especially from the English class helped them grow individually and self-learn. They said they can read with their interest and reading abilities. They also said that, when they are exposed to a variety of reading strategies, they are also able to overcome some difficulties with self independently. With the use of social affective strategies, they help them to do better reading and motivate them to maintain a reading habit. They said that beyond the classrooms, with such a base, they can perform better in reading with self-directed and individualised strategies. The students also mentioned that reading provides them with confidence, a sense of achievement, and self-assurance to take part in other activities and real-life situations. For instance,

*When we are given more into different reading strategies, it helps to grow individually and self-independent learning. I am also able to select books that match my style and rate. With such freedom, it motivates us to take part with more interest in reading. Further, when we are into more reading, we get more confidence become optimistic, and take part in other English or literary activities. For example, it motivates us to take part in school and classroom*

*English literary activities like spelling competitions, and quiz competitions for our inter-class's competitions.*

It can be inferred that by reading and indulging in various reading methods, students are exposed to a variety of knowledge and independent gates to different areas. Beyond classroom activities, they acquire great content of knowledge, and a blend of knowledge and individual choices makes them more flexible and practical in every decision.



## **Chapter 5**

### **Conclusion**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

Reading English, particularly for the Bhutanese is one of the national concerns and issues. It involves complex stands and students encounter various difficulties and different aspects or factors contributing ranging from linguistics to social factors. Thus, the researcher explored the reading challenges secondary Bhutanese students face while reading English texts, solutions to the challenges, and lastly, the perspectives on the reading strategies they use in the classrooms and beyond. To fulfill the objectives of the study, the following set of research questions have been developed:

1. What challenges do students face while reading English?
2. How do they overcome the challenges of English reading?
3. What are their perspectives regarding the reading approaches used in English classrooms and beyond?

#### **5.2 Contribution of the Study**

The study explored how English teachers in Bhutan teach reading to the Secondary level students. The study also explored the challenges associated with English reading with the students, how they overcome those problems, and what students think about the English reading methods they employ in and beyond the classrooms. Thus, the study can be helpful for English language teachers in Bhutan and any ESOL context as a reference source to enhance

students' ability to comprehend English texts. Further, the study offers various implications in the diverse aspects as follows:

### **5.2.1 Implications for Knowledge**

Several studies have been published on reading in general, but there is hardly any articles conducted particularly on English reading in Bhutan. Thus, the current study attempts to fill the gap of knowledge regarding English reading challenges among secondary-level Bhutanese students. Also, explored how they overcome those challenges, and what they think about reading strategies used in English classrooms and beyond. The study can help to assess the country's educational culture in terms of English reading and by addressing the challenges and learners' perspectives can help to make more effective and necessary modifications. Lastly, the study can also serve as an additional source of guidance or reference for any future researchers.

### **5.2.2 Implications for Pedagogy**

Reading is the primary step in learning any skills in English and these skills are important for the comprehension of any written texts. Thus, the outcome of this study will help the English teachers in Bhutan to implement appropriate reading tasks in their classrooms. With the opinions of learners on reading strategies, teachers can gain insights and they will either make adjustments or keep its essence. Moreover, the curriculum designers and planners will be further benefitted from this study to diversify the curriculum and develop it as per students' needs. Also, the reading strategies implemented or found in Bhutan can be associated with the other ESOL countries.

### **5.2.3 Implications for Theories**

The procedural conceptual framework has been adapted from the challenges readers face (Kasim and Raisha (2017), Singh's (2014), schemata strategies (Carrell's (1984)) and Vijaya's (2012), socio-affective strategies used during reading. Further, the researcher has added a perspective of students regarding the reading strategies they used in classrooms and beyond. Hence, with the employment of the framework, the researcher interviewed secondary-level Bhutanese students to identify the problems in English readings and the solutions they took to overcome their challenges. The researcher has also examined and gathered the participants' views on the effectiveness of various reading strategies used in English classrooms and beyond. With the combination of the framework, the researcher was to keep track of and enrich the body information of the study. Moreover, the researcher was able to sufficiently convince the gap of knowledge regarding English reading challenges among secondary-level Bhutanese students, the solutions to these challenges, and the perspectives on reading strategies they use in English classrooms and beyond.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

The researcher wants to make a few recommendations regarding the above findings and discussions,

- For learners in areas with insufficient materials, planners or teachers need to focus on and create alternative options to encourage and motivate students to read.
- In the schools, the teacher should encourage learners to keep track of the new vocabulary by journaling or creating journals.

- To reinforce students, the teacher should play online videos and recorded sessions on for the pronunciation learning and speakings.
- The parents and teachers should remind the learners to read more English materials apart from the subject texts/academic texts.
- The ESL students should be encouraged to use their own independent and self-centered reading strategies within and outside the classrooms.
- The future researchers can also focus on other levels like primary, higher, and college levels in the same studies as the researcher has done on Bhutanese Secondary-level students.
- The researcher has conducted on reading skills and further research can be conducted on other skills like speaking, writing, and other strands.
- The administration should monitor how the teachers teach the reading strategies in their classrooms.

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## Appendix A

### Letter of Consent for Participants

Dear Concern,

I am Tshoki Wangmo, pursuing an undergraduate program at BRAC University, Bangladesh in the Department of English and Humanities, majoring in ELT and Applied Linguistics. As part of my department's undergraduate program and requirement, I am writing a thesis titled, **“Exploring Different Teaching Approaches of English Reading in Bhutanese Secondary Schools”**. The main objective of the research is to explore and delve into the challenges associated with English reading with the students, how they overcome those problems, and what students think about the English reading methods they employ in and beyond the classrooms. Thus, for this purpose, I am writing to request your consent to participate and contribute to this research.

Therefore, the concern is required to stand for an interview which will be taken online through Google Meet. Further, I will be recording the interview, however, I ensure these recordings will be used solely for research purposes. Note that participation in this study does not involve any risks as the data collected will be kept confidential and anonymous. So, if the concern decides to participate in this study, please sign and return the attached consent form at your earliest convenience. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns about this study.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Tshoki Wangmo

BRAC University

## Consent Form

Please read the following statements and tick the boxes on the right.

I have understood the information clearly and what the study will be taken for.	
I have agreed to an interview with a volunteer.	
Since I will be anonymised, I consented to recording the videos and audio.	
Later the researcher has permission to call or email me for any clarifications or further information.	

.....

Name

.....

Signature

Date

Phone no

Email Address:

## Appendix B

### Interview Questions for Participants

Interview Questions	Background	R1	R2	R3
Can you kindly share your class and education qualifications?	X			
Medium of instruction?	X			
Do you read books? (English readings) how do you enjoy?	X			
What and how were you inspired to read English texts?	X			
Does your school support English reading? How?	X			
Do you take coaching and tuition for better reading comprehension?	X			
Can you share your parent's professional? (please don't mind, okay)	X			
Do you encounter some difficulties while reading English texts?		X		
What aspects are challenging: grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary (cite examples, instances, problems, vocabulary learned recently)		X		
What about other factors you face? If any) Could you explain it separately?		X		
How do the challenges mentioned affect your understanding of the texts?		X		
Okay, then how do you deal or overcome with the challenges? The one you mentioned.			X	
Thanks, I assume you are getting help too, right? So, do you ask for help from your friends, elders, and teachers while reading? How does it help?			X	
Do you use any outside materials to support your English readings? (dictionary, internet, google etc)			X	
Do you sometimes encounter frustrations, and lack of interest while reading?			X	



Well, how do you manage such emotions or feelings?			X	
Does understanding of different text genres help you in better English reading? How?			X	
What type of English reading task or exercises do you enjoy most in the class?				X
How effective are the mentioned strategies do you find in the classrooms?				X
How do the strategies used in the English classes help you in other readings beyond the class?				X
Do you have any suggestions you want to make? The way English reading is taught, what would it be?				X

## Appendix C

### Notational Conventions of the Interview Transcript

	<b>Notation</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
1	DU	Discourse Unit
2	I	Interviewer
3	Uhh/Ummm	Hedging in speech
4	.....	Long pause
5	[ ]	Laugh
6	Ohhh	Positive Expression
7	DU BOK19	refers to secondary school student Boktom's DU number 19

## Appendix D

### Sample Interview Transcription of Student (Bok)

DU	Participants	Questions and Answers	Coding
1	I	Can you kindly share your class and education qualifications?	
2	Bok	Ohhh....Hellooo...sister [].....I am currently in 8th grade	
3	I	Medium of instruction?	
4	Bo	English	
5	I	Do you read books? (English readings) how do you enjoy it?	
6	Bok	Yes....yesss... I do read English books to refresh my mind sometimes after homework or tasks work and during free hours. In my opinion, in order to understand about the feelings and the things that sentient beings and animals are experiencing in this world by reading novels and books of stories written by wise authors.	
7	I	What and how were you inspired to read English texts?	
8	Bok	.....It is my interest..Ummm...I like reading English texts. When I see someone speaking or talking so good in English, I also like to be like them. So, I read books to speak like them.....[][][]	
9	I	Do you take coaching and tuition for better reading comprehension?	
10	Bok	Ummmm...to be honest since I spent my days or vaction mostly in my village, I don't take any coaching or tuition. Even there is online, I can't afford as it consume too much of data. Sometimes, I buy books and sometimes directly read from google when i am at home. School is the only place where i can read available and satisfied.	
11	I	Does your school support English reading? How?	
12	Bok	Yes, my school supports in reading English books/novels. They encourage us to read English books as well as Dzongkha to improve pronunciation, grammar and spelling etc...As being a student from rural areas where we can't meet with expenses of buying those reading materials, they advise and encourage us to get help from	

		our school library where there are available of english books/novels from the easy ones to the hardest. ....All students need to be treated equally so, ummmmm.....sometimes they also conduct sudden test like reading assessment, spelling/Grammer test and many more. From there on, thay had seen improvement in us at English.	
13	I	Do you encounter some difficulties while reading English texts?	
14	Bok	Yes...yyess.....at the beginning, I had encountered some difficulties while reading uhhhhh....mmmm.....includes all things like meaning, understanding, and all. Being a child from a rural area, I had seen very much improvement as I had practiced reading English books and textbooks by getting help from the library.	
15	I	What aspects are challenging: grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary (cite examples, instances, problems, vocabulary learned recently)	
16	Bok	Yes... I do face difficulties in vocabulary. For example, during this break, hmmmmm....I had recently read a book and I got stuck in the word "Epiphany" which I didn't understand anything about. It makes me lose understanding of the meaning of the chapter I am reading. Also, sometimes while the teacher lets us read, pronouncing some words is also difficult.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Gap in the vocabulary</li> <li>*Pronunciation difficulty</li> <li>*Lacking to make a connection</li> </ul>
17	I	How to do you overcome the mention difficulties regards to reading?	
18	Bok	for example, if I don't get the specific paragraph from the text, I read again and again, and it helps to get deep meaning and understand well. For the new words, before I refer the dictionary or ask for help, I first try to guess the meaning myself. I try to connect with the sentence and see if it really tells. Also, the knowledge we learned before helps to understand the text better. For example, I read a book Passu Diary. In his book, he has written a chapter that is similar to our culture and history. While reading, because I knew a little about that particular topic, I got more interested and further understood more. Also same like that, if I meet with the words I know already, I immediately, understand the text and meaning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Redo reading</li> <li>*Use to visualise</li> <li>*Try guessing the meaning of the words</li> <li>*Use background knowledge</li> </ul>

19	I	What about other factors you face? If any, could you explain it separately?	
20	Bok	The other factors that we face are, as a learner from poor rural areas, though we are curious and feel eager to read english books/novels to come up with improvement at the end, there are lack of support from parents and teachers. Uhhhhh.....some may not be interested in reading as focusing more on other things...ummm like reading in Dzongkha texts. As I am living in a rural area, .....ummmmm....I do not get many English books from our community or school as they have no source of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Lack of interest</li> <li>*Lack of access to English reading materials in rural areas</li> <li>*Follows an oral culture, and many illiterate parents and elders</li> </ul>
21	I	Then, how do you overcome those difficulties?	
22	Bok	,.....uhhhhhh like I use outside materials like dictionary and Google in order to get the concept and meaning of the word that I don't understand while reading books. Also, to get extra or informations about the words, I refer google. Also, uhhh.....I do ask for help from my friends, elders, and especially from the teachers. In class, we do partner readings, helping reading by teacher. I seek help from them as they manage their time for us understanding our situation, and they encourage, show the tips, ways and help us to solve our problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Peer reading</li> <li>*Model reading or reading outloud in the class</li> <li>*Guided reading</li> <li>*Online help</li> </ul>
23	I	Do you sometimes encounter frustrations, and lack of interest while reading? How do you manage such emotions?	
24	Bok	Sometimes, ummmmmmm.....I encounter lack of interest while reading when I get stuck in between the words while reading text and also when I don't understand what the text is talking about. I try to forget and push away those things which distract my mind losing interest in reading, so I practise more and learn through this way by getting helps from others. Mmmmmmm..... I change areas to read sometimes I go to library since it is silent and quiet. While reading I take notes and keep on track. I take books that I like only and I make myself that I will finish to this page and paragraphs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Pre-planning</li> <li>*Keeping track and focused</li> <li>*Taking breaks and change surrounding areas.</li> </ul>

24	I	How do the challenges mentioned affect your understanding of the texts?	
25	Bok	From the mentioned challenges, we face many difficulties mostly in vocabulary and don't get even a concept and meaning of the text given though it may be easy for us. So, it makes it difficult to understand the overall meaning.	
26	I	How effective are the mentioned strategies like help from friends, teachers, and outside materials? Which do you use mostly?	
27	Bok	Almost most of the strategies I mentioned are effective. Mostly, I used the strategy in which I got help from teachers.	
28	I	Okay. further, does understanding of different text genres help you in better English reading? How?	
29	Bok	Understanding different genres help me in better English reading by taking out different ideas, skills, ways and many more. Ummm...again different genres entertains differently and it gives different purpose.	*More exposure and practice
30	I	What type of English reading task or exercises do you enjoy most in the class?	
31	Bok	The type of English reading task or exercise that I enjoy mostly in the class is reading assessment and reading log because through this way, .....ummmmm.....we get confidence to read more or deliver some kind of speech in the publics.	
32	I	How do the strategies used in the English classes help you in the class?	
33	Bok	So..... we get to enjoy different methods. Moreover, in the classes, when we have effective reading method utilised, it further makes organised and well-structured learning. In the classes, we get instant help and support from our friends and teachers. For instance, when we do a effective and well reading, students also take it serous and in return there is always a reward like reading speed, acquire more vocabs etc. when we do serous reading, we get positive vibes and interests as we get to take part in different and new reading methods.	*Structured and organized learning *Collective and collaboration activities.
34	I	What about beyond the classes, how does it help?	

35	Bok	The strategies used in the English class help me in other reading beyond the class. ....With the ways and skills got in the English classes, I can also use in and get a concept in other subjects/classes in such activities...sometimes what I learnt can be shared and help them in pronouncing the words.	*Self-autonomy learning and exposure *Increases the student's motivation to the English program
36	I	Do you have any suggestions you want to make? The way English reading is taught, what would it be?	
37	Bok	ummmmm..... []..... I don't have any suggestions to make as those already given are the most helpful ones to me. uhhhhhh.....I just want to say that ummmm.... if schools can continue to make more time for students especially to read English texts.	

## Appendix E

### Sample of Inter-coding Template of Student (Bok)

#### RQ1. What challenges do students face while reading English?

Interview Question  (1)	Subordinate keyword of question  (2)	Subordinate main point from conversation  (3)	Elaborated examples from verbal evidence to support the subordinate main point  (4)	Occurrence of main idea transferred into the form as keyword (s)  (5)	Frequency of occurrence  (6)	Ordering of discourse unit  (7)
Do you encounter some difficulties while reading English texts?	*Challenges *English reading texts	*Unfamiliar Vocabulary *Pronunciation *Not understanding	"I do face difficulties in vocabulary. For example, during this break, hmmmmmm.....I had recently read a book and I got stuck in the word "Epiphany" which I didn't understand anything about it".	*Gap in the vocabulary *Mispronouncing the word *Lacking to make connections or visualise. *Not understanding	1 1 1 1	DU16 DU16 DU16 DU16
How about other factors apart from the above aspects?	*Other challenges or difficulties *English reading	*Lack of interest/ motivation	"Personally, despite english as an international and important communicative language, I have more interest in our Dzongkha language. Mmmm.....I think that's why I have low interest in reading English texts".	*Less interest in reading/ motivation	2	DU20



		<p>*Lack of access to English reading materials in rural areas</p>	<p>“Hmmmmm.... especially since I am staying in rural areas where our school has limited resources. We do not have access to books or other reading materials outside the classroom, which can affect our interest and motivation to read”.</p>	<p>*Difficult to cope with without enough materials.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>DU20</p>
		<p>*Follows an oral culture, and many illiterate parents and elders</p>	<p>“In our community, people follow an oral culture, and many illiterate parents and elders in the homes cannot understand the value of reading if it is not connected to school, religion, or daily tasks. So, our parents encourage us the children to focus more on the national language with such perceptions and beliefs. This attitude limits the exposure to English reading outside the classroom, making it challenging to develop reading skills”.</p>	<p>*Difficult in concentrating without help</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>DU20</p>

**RQ2. How do they overcome the challenges of English reading?**

<b>Interview Question (1)</b>	<b>Subordinate keyword of question (2)</b>	<b>Subordinate main point from conversation (3)</b>	<b>Elaborated examples from verbal evidence to support the subordinate main point (4)</b>	<b>Occurrence of main idea transferred into the form as key word (s) (5)</b>	<b>Frequency of occurrence (6)</b>	<b>Ordering of discourse unit (7)</b>
How to do you overcome the mention difficulties regards to reading?	*over-coming the difficulties  *Reading English texts	*Re- reading	“Reading English is difficult as the word contains different pronunciations and meanings. Therefore, for example, if I don't get the specific paragraph from the text, I read again and again, and it helps to get deep meaning and understand well”.	*Using different methods to cope with readings	1	DU18
		*Try guessing the meaning of the words	“While reading English, firstly there is difficult vocabulary and I even don't know how to pronounce it. For the new words, before I refer to the dictionary or ask for help, I first try to guess the meaning myself. I try to connect with the sentence and see if it really tells”.	*Inferring the meaning	1	DU18
		*Use background knowledge	“Also, the knowledge we learned before helps to understand the text better. For example, I read a book “Passu Diary”. In	*Use my past knowledge	1	DU18

			his book, he has written a chapter that is similar to our culture and history. While reading, because I have known a little on that particular topic, I got more interested and further understood more. Also same like that, if I meet with the words I knew already, immediately, I understand the text and meaning”.			
Okay, I assume you are getting help too, right? So, do you ask for help from your friends, elders, and teachers while reading? How does it help?	*over-coming the difficulties  *Reading English texts	*Peer reading	“For example, in the class we do peer reading. There is two students, typically of different abilities, work together to read a text. One student takes on the role of the “reader” while the other takes on the role of the “helper” or “listener”. For readers, it provides a safe and supportive environment to practice their reading skills, receive immediate feedback, and develop confidence in their abilities. For helpers, it provides an opportunity to practice their listening skills and reinforce their own reading skills. So, here struggling readers can interact with friends and reinforce together”.	*Asking help from friends	1	DU22
		*Model reading or reading outloud in the class	“In the classes, teachers model reading to us. When teachers read aloud to us, we can model good reading habits, such as paying attention to punctuation, using	*Help by teachers	1	DU22

			<p>the expression, and their reading pace. This helps students develop our reading skills and become more confident readers. when students read aloud to themselves or to a partner, they can improve their fluency and pronunciation. By hearing themselves read out loud, they can identify areas where they may struggle and work on improving their skills in those areas”.</p>			
		*Guided reading	<p>“While we work in small groups on material, when an unfamiliar word appears, the instructor either tells us the word or assists in decoding the word. During the story, the teacher stops at certain points and questions the student to determine or guide comprehension. This helps build practice in comprehension, decoding, intake word vocabulary, and oral reading”.</p>	*Teacher center practice	1	DU22
Well, you said that you face a lack of interest and	*over-coming the difficulties *Reading English texts	*Pre-planning	<p>“Particularly, I find myself a book that seems engaging and chooses the ones I feel more attracted to. I choose and explore different kinds of genres, for example, I am also interested in reading newspapers, histories, and magazines”.</p>	*Choosing the right texts and planning well	1	DU24

frustration s. How do you manage such emotions?	*Keeping track and focused	<p>“When I am reading, I am an active reader. I plan for myself that I will complete and finish up to this chapter or page or paragraphs. I try to do what I plan and complete. While reading, I take notes like I write down new words, new information which engages me, and the ones I think I may need later”.</p>	*Active reading	1	DU24
	*Taking breaks and change surrounding areas.	<p>“Sometimes, the surroundings around us also disturb me in reading. I change my surroundings to somewhere where I can read peacefully without disturbances. In the class during the breaks and lunch breaks, it is very noisy, so I go to library which is quite and I spend my time reading in there. Sometimes, continues reading also makes me tired and I tend to distract my focus. That time, I take breaks and I don’t force myself if I am not feeling like to read. For instance, if I am in home, I watch moves and scrolls phones and if in the class, I gossip and interacts with my friends”.</p>	*Breaks and interval	1	DU24

**RQ3. What are their perspectives on the reading approaches used in English classrooms and beyond?**

<b>Interview Question (1)</b>	<b>Subordinate keyword of question (2)</b>	<b>Subordinate main point from conversation (3)</b>	<b>Elaborated examples from verbal evidence to support the subordinate main point (4)</b>	<b>Occurrence of main idea transferred into the form as key word (s) (5)</b>	<b>Frequency of occurrence (6)</b>	<b>Ordering of discourse unit (7)</b>
Can you share your opinions on the reading strategies used in the classroom?	*Opinions on the effectiveness on reading strategies in the classrooms	<b>Classroom</b> *Varieties of strategies	“Especially in my or our English classes, we get to engage in or read with different new methods. Students we also get to involve in various types of instruction which it helps students to suit learning in their way. For example, I like independent reading but some of my friends like peer reading. So, we get to enjoy different methods”.	*New ideas on different reading methods	1	DU33
	*English readings	*Structured and organized learning	“Moreover, in the classes, when we have effective reading method utilised, it further makes organised and well-structured learning. In the classes, we get instant help and support from our friends and teachers. For instance, when we do an effective and well reading, students also take it serious and in return there is always a reward like reading speed, acquire more vocabs etc. when we do serious reading, we get positive vibes and interests as we get to take part in different and new reading methods”.	*The classes with structured learning.	1	DU33

		*Collective and Collabo-ration activities.	“For instance, by working in small groups, students engage in active discussions and practice expressing their ideas and opinions in English. We are also able to build our social and emotive skills. We involve in many activities with peers and teachers which helps to meet the diverse learning needs of students, including those who may struggle with reading, and those with different learning styles. So, scaffolding plays a key role where other students will be supported by the more knowledgeable ones”.	*More interesting activities with friends	1	DU33
Okay, what about the beyond classroom ?what are your views on that?	*Opinions on the effectiveness on reading strategies beyond class  *English readings	<b>Beyond</b>  *Self-auto-nomy learning and exposure	“The different and new strategies I got from the classroom, especially from the English class helped me in growing myself individually and self-learning. I like to do independent reading where I am further encouraged to select books that match my interests and reading abilities. Thus, I can practice my reading with my own style and rate”.	*Self-leaning and exposure	1	DU35

		*Increases the student's motivation to the English program	“Also, when we are given more into different reading strategies, it helps to grow individually and self-independent learning. So, when we have freedom, it motivates us to take part with more interest in reading. Further, when we are into more reading, we get more love towards reading and to take part in other English or literary activities. For example, it motivates us to take part in school and classroom English literary activities by building confidence”.	*Increases interest and motivates in more reading and related programs.	1	DU35
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## Appendix F

### Theme Generation Sample

#### RQ1. What challenges do students face while reading English?

Interview Question 1. Do you encounter some difficulties while reading English texts?							
Peeeaaa	Bok	Kin	Jam	Ugy	Cho	San	Themes
While reading, there are new words that I can't understand. Also, the same word has a different meaning. Further, facing difficulty in pronouncing the word.	When I read, I do not understand the new words. Sentences are also difficult to comprehend with long sentences.	affects my overall understanding of the text as I cannot pronounce the new words correctly or understand what the text is trying to tell us.	I sometimes encounter some difficulties where the words are hard to pronounce and understand. it is hard for me to pronounce words and I am not understanding.	we are facing a difficulty that is vocabulary and pronunciation difficulty.	For pronunciation, I need help pronouncing the bombastic words. Sometimes, even if the books are up to our level, some words are unfamiliar and contain complex sentences.	While reading, sometimes the sentences and the words are too hard to understand	<b>Linguistic and Content Difficulties</b> *Unfamiliar Vocabulary and not comprehending. Pronunciation difficulty *Not understanding

**Interview Question 2. How about other factors apart from the above aspects?**

Peeeaaa	Bok	Kin	Jam	Ugy	Cho	San	Themes
In school, we have libraries to read and, in the home, though I can read online, I lack interest because I am more connected to social media at home.	In our society, people follow an oral culture, and many illiterate parents and elders in their homes cannot understand the value of reading if it is not connected to school, religion, or daily tasks. Also, we don't get many English books from our community or school.	As I am living in the village, we don't have a books store like in Thimphu (city and also my parents are not educated and they don't encourage such readings.	I do not have factors affecting my reading. Sometimes, I don't feel like reading even though I have English texts.	to read there is no book available for me and maybe, for others even though they have books available in their store they will not be having a good time. I lose my interest and motivation to read and so I skip readings.	sometimes I force myself. I lack a reading habit. I don't have interest in readings.	From an early age, my grandparents encouraged me to read Dzongkha since they consider it close to Buddhism. So, I am more into Dzongkha. To be honest, I rarely read English books because I am not interested. I like Dzongkha texts.	<p><b>Lack of Facilities and Social Support</b></p> <p>*Lack of access to English reading materials in rural areas</p> <p>*Many illiterate parents and elders and follow an oral culture.</p> <p>*Lack of interest/ motivation</p>

## Appendix G

### Rating for Students' Interview by Rater 1

Please respond to the following themes by choosing "Agree" or "Disagree". The comment section also allows you to suggest new themes.

#### RQ1. What challenges do students face while reading English?

IQ1.1 Do you encounter some difficulties while reading English texts?						
Theme	Main ideas	Dis-course unit	Verbal support	Inter-Rater		Comments/ Suggestions
				Agree	Dis-agree	
<b>*Linguistic Difficulties</b>	*Unfamiliar Vocabulary and not comprehending	Bok 16	"I do face difficulties in vocabulary. For example, during this break, hmmmmmm....I had recently read a book and got stuck on the word 'Epiphany' which I didn't understand anything about".	/		
	*Pronunciation difficulty.	Bok 16	"For pronunciation, I need help pronouncing the bombastic words."	/		
<b>*Content difficulties</b>	*More complex sentences and varieties of expressions	Kin 14	"Sometimes, even if the books are up to our level, some words are unfamiliar and contain complex sentences and expressions".	/		

<b>RQ1.2. How about other factors apart from the above aspects?</b>						
<b>*Social Challenges</b>	*Lack of interest/motivation	Ugy 19	“I lack a reading habit and I don’t have an interest. Sometimes I force myself to read”.		/	
	*Lack of access to English reading materials in rural areas	Bok 20	“Hmmmmm...especially since I live in a rural area where our schools have limited resources. We cannot access books or other reading materials outside the classroom, affecting our interest and motivation to read”.	/		
	* Many illiterate parents and elders live by an oral lore/culture	Bok 20	“Many illiterate parents and elders in the home and only understand the value of reading if it is connected to school, religion, or daily tasks”.	/		
<b>RQ2. How do they overcome the challenges of English reading?</b>						
<b>RQ2.1 How do you overcome the mentioned difficulties regarding English reading?</b>						
<b>Employment of various reading methods</b>	*Inferring and using background knowledge	Bok 18	“For example, for the new words, before I refer to the dictionary or ask for help, I first try to guess the meaning myself. I try to connect with the sentence and see if it tells. Also, the knowledge we learned before helps to understand the text better”.	/		
		Cho 20	“Sometimes, I also do re-reading when I can’t catch up. It helps to get deeper	/		

			meaning which I did not get in the first reading”.			
<b>RQ2.2. Okay, I assume you are getting help too, right? What about the social help you get while reading? How does it help?</b>						
<b>Instruction-based practices</b>	*Re-reading	Bok 18	“Uhhhhhh... if I don't get a specific paragraph from the text, I read it again and again, and it helps to get deep meaning and understand it well.	/		
<b>Various teacher-centered practices</b>	*Getting help from knowledgeable people	San 21	“Getting help from other knowledgeable people is the most helpful. I get to know the unknown words and meanings. We do group reading, and guided reading monitored by our teachers. So, doing all helps me in reading English texts”.	/		
	*Group reading					
	*Teacher Monitoring					
	*Guided reading					

### Inter-Rater Reliability Calculation for Students' Interviews

	<b>Percentage of agreement</b> <b>(Total number of agreement/Total number of responses) x100</b>
<b>Inter-Rater</b>	(9/10) x100 = 90%

## Appendix H

### Member Checking Sample



## Appendix I

### Audit Trail of the Study

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Records</b>
3/02/2024	Introduction and topic confirmation with the Supervisor	First Zoom meeting with the Supervisor
26/06/2024 to 12/07/2024	Interviews	Google Meeting
17/07/2024	Transcribing interviews	The interview was conducted in the local dialect and the recorded interviews were transcribed in English
25/08/2024	Member checking and incorporating the feedback of the participants	Email
14/09/2024	Inter-rater reliability checking by rater	Zoom Meeting