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EXPLORING READING COMPREHENSION USING THINK-ALOUD PROTOCOLS IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL

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LAPORAN PROJEK SARJANA DIKEMUKAKAN BAGI MEMENUHI SEBAHAGIAN SYARAT UNTUK MEMPEROLEHI

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PENGAKUAN

Saya mengaku laporan projek sarjana ini adalah hasil kerja saya sendiri kecuali nukilan dan ringkasan yang setiap satunya saya jelaskan sumbernya

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work in this project paper is my own except for quotations and summaries which have been duly acknowledged.

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ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji penggunaan *Think-aloud* di sebuah kelas Tingkatan Empat. Ia digunakan untuk mengkaji bagaimana pelajar menggunakan strategi *Think-aloud* untuk meningkatkan tahap pemahaman mereka terhadap sesuatu petikan.Tiga orang peserta dipilih dari kelas Tingkatan Empat. Mereka kemudian didedahkan kepada strategi *Think-aloud.* Selepas itu, setiap daripada mereka diberikan sebuah petikan yang sesuai dengan tahap pembacaan mereka. Mereka kemudiannya disuruh membaca dan pada masa yang sama berfikir dan menyuarakan pemikiran mereka tentang pembacaan mereka. Sesi ini dirakamkan dan data diperoleh dan disalin semula. Peserta-peserta ini kemudian telah diminta untuk menceritakan semula isi penting petikan melalui *Retelling.* Selepas itu peserta-peserta di temuduga oleh penyelidik.

Berdasarkan data yang dikumpul melalui *Think-aloud*, ia memberi informasi tentang strategi pembacaan yang digunakan oleh peserta-peserta. Mereka menggunakan pelbagai strategi untuk memahami petikan dengan lebih baik. Oleh itu, dengan menyedarkan pelajar tentang strategi *Think-aloud,* mereka dapat mengetahui pelbagai strategi yang digunakan oleh pembaca yang baik untuk memahami sesuatu petikan.

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ABSTRACT

EXPLORING READING COMPREHENSION USING THINK-ALOUD PROTOCOLS IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL

The aim of this investigation is to study how think-aloud protocols are used in a Form Four reading comprehension class. It is to see how students use appropriate strategies to enhance their reading comprehension. Three participants, from a Form 4 class are selected. They are then exposed to think-loud protocols. Each of them is given an appropriate passage of the same level to read. They are then asked to read and think at the same time. This is to see how they verbalize their thoughts and feelings. This session is audio-taped and the data transcribed. These participants are then asked to retell through delayed retelling what they have understood from the passage. Later they are interviewed by the researcher.

Based on the data collected, this think-aloud protocols provides information on reading strategies. Also, based on the information obtained, participants use reading strategies to have a better understanding of the passage. Therefore by making them aware of this type of strategies that good readers engage in when they read a passage, we are providing the students an opportunity to become aware of the many strategies that good readers use in comprehending a passage.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

As we embark into the new century, understanding comprehension plays an important role to the teaching and learning of English education and forming student-centered environment in classroom. Current development in the field of teaching and learning of English in Malaysia compels teachers to choose the instructionally better alternative strategies in the teaching of English, generally in reading comprehension. Reading comprehension may be the most important skill for any student to acquire and is therefore an area of particular interest to educators. Without adequate comprehension skills, students are limited in their reading, analytical and occupational abilities. Too many, including the student's themselves, comprehension or "good reading" skills begin and end with simple decoding. It is thought that if students can 'read' and define the vocabulary they are reading, then they also comprehend what is read. However, true comprehension goes far beyond decoding.

True comprehension requires visualization of a text, predicting events in the text, making inferences about the text and clarifying what is not understood about the text in order to lead to higher level thought processes such as personally connecting with the text. According to Adamson (1993: 107), reading is the most important language skills for academic achievement followed by listening comprehension and then writing. This is consistent with Colliers's (1989: 521) suggestion that successful

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reading performance is a strong predictor of students' academic performance in the second language at the secondary and post secondary level. This is supported by (Sugirin, 1995) that "while reading comprehension presents particular challenges for English as a second or foreign language student, little is known about these students reading comprehension processes". This will hinder their pursuit of higher academic goals. Also, students need to enhance their academic performance. This can be done through reading.

Research has shown that good readers monitor their comprehension during reading. Keene & Zimmerman (1997) have stated that good readers know when the text they are reading to make sense, when it does not, what does not make sense and whether the unclear portion is critical to the overall text. Reluctant, beginning or low-skilled readers often do not have the ability to visualize, predict, inference or clarify what they are reading and so they do not truly comprehend what the text is or what it means. Too often, these readers do not understand that "good readers" go through a series of mental processes in order to comprehend the text in ways which the low-level readers never even imagined. Therefore, reading skills need to be enhanced so that these students become better readers. To become better readers, students need to know the strategies used in reading. As educators, it is our responsibility to use an appropriate strategy like think-aloud to attract students towards the process of reading comprehension. The main aspects are to enhance students understanding in the reading skills related to comprehension and also encourage them to communicate and explain what they understand. In addition, students can interact and apply the appropriate strategy in their process of reading comprehension. Therefore, as educators in this ever-changing world, we play an important role to fulfill the objectives of the English curriculum.

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Students, who are aware of the strategies in reading, will enhance their academic performance. This is why using Think-Aloud Protocol as a reading strategy is very important to improve reading comprehension. As educators, it is our job to show reluctant, beginning or low-skilled readers what these processes are and how they work in an attempt to boost the self-confidence and independence of these readers. Preparing texts for reading comprehension instruction and preparing students to read that text are important components of reading comprehension; however, the essence of reading comprehension begins only after students respond to the text in discussion, retelling, writing or acting out. Reading comprehension is to encourage students not only to state the right information, but even more importantly, to describe the thinking that resulted from the reading. One way to help students to say what it is they are thinking and why they are thinking such is for teachers to demonstrate or model these thinking aloud activities as they read a text, and then help their students learn to deploy these same strategies for thinking about a text on their own. In 1960-1980s, think aloud was viewed mainly as a research tool to investigate processes involved in thinking, problem solving, and reading comprehension. In 1980s, think aloud was viewed as a technique to model to students the strategies teachers use to comprehend text in order to help students improve thinking and reading comprehension. In 1990s, think aloud became accepted as an integral component of the process of constructing meaning within a social interaction.

This is why I have chosen think-aloud protocol as a reading strategy to improve reading comprehension in my study. In the past, researchers have proven that think-aloud as a reading strategy is very important in improving reading comprehension among students.

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1.2 Statement of the Problem

In my twenty years of teaching English to lower and upper secondary students in National Schools, I found many students struggling to cope with the requirements of the English syllabus especially mastering reading comprehension skills. I faced an arduous task in teaching my students comprehension especially reading and understanding a text. Most of the English teachers in secondary schools only rely on the traditional method to teach comprehension in classroom. For example, they only instruct the students to read a text and answer wh-questions based on the text given without emphasizing on students understanding about the text. They believe reading comprehension could not be taught with varies strategies. In a teacher-centered classroom, lessons are usually carried out without any involvement of students in instructionally based activities. This way hardly allows an opportunity for students to be creative and imaginative in their thinking and reasoning. This could be one of the reasons why students are passive in class. When students are not exposed to interesting strategies in reading comprehension, they will not be able to build conceptual understanding. They find it very boring and monotonous when the teacher enters the class and starts doing reading comprehension. The facial expression shown by the students says it all. Therefore, the students find reading comprehension difficult to comprehend because they lack reading skills and they show no interest in reading. As we know reading forms the basic knowledge of mastering a language.

In a typical reading comprehension class, the teachers do not know what exactly the students are doing. They might be looking at the text but we are not sure if they comprehend the text. They might be nodding their head as if they are reading but

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in actual fact they might be day dreaming. That is why it is important to know what they are thinking when they are reading a comprehension text.

Also, during reading comprehension lessons, I find that it is difficult to gauge whether students understand what they are reading. Although they are able to answer the comprehension questions, it does not mean that they are able to comprehend the text. They are able to answer the comprehension questions because of certain cue words. However, they are reluctant to think critically while reading the text and they do not use their background knowledge or other reading skills to comprehend the text. According to Paul Harvey,(2005,p.33), he says that a good reader needs to look at the interaction between the reader and the text and the skills the reader brings to the reading process. Alderson for example, (2000), says that:' at least part of the reading process probably involves the simultaneous and variable use of different and overlapping 'skills'.

During English reading comprehension lessons in classrooms, I found that the majority of my students do not monitor their reading. They tend to read for the sole purpose of answering the comprehension questions and not more than that. When a higher order questions are put forward to the students, they are not able answer correctly. Research has shown that good readers monitor their comprehension during reading.(Keene & Zimmerman 1997,p.43),have stated that good readers know when they are reading to make sense, when it does not, what does not make sense and whether the unclear the portion is critical to the overall text.

Another concern of this study is to find out whether students are able to use appropriate reading skills while reading a text. I found that most of the students are not exposed to the various reading skills and do not know how to make use of the

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reading skills effectively. Students often do not have the ability to visualize, predict, inference or clarify what they are reading and so they do not truly comprehend what the text is or what it means. Therefore, a reading strategy should be used in reading comprehension to monitor students' reading, Helping them to choose appropriate reading strategies which will enable them to comprehend the text while reading.

I have chosen the Think-Aloud strategy in my study to determine whether the strategy is appropriate and effective in enhancing students' comprehension skills. The main concern of this study is to explore whether the use of think-aloud protocols as a reading strategy will improve students' performance where reading comprehension is concerned.

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1.3 Rationale Of The Study

Reading is very much a two-way process between the reader and the text, and parts of this process may contribute to the inherent "difficulty" of a text. The interest in reading comprehension text among students in schools is very important because it helps the students to understand the text better and at the same time it makes teaching and learning process in the classroom to be interesting. Although there are many reading strategies that can be used when reading comprehension is concerned, a proper guide is needed to assist the students to choose the appropriate reading strategies in order to understand the text better. Research done on the implications of reading strategies and exposure of the reading strategies to educators are still lacking in Malaysia.

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A recent article in the Indianapolis Star by Doreen Nagle stated the fact that all children of all ages and even the adults benefit from reading and thinking aloud. Reading is an important activity for building knowledge and success. Ms. Nagle and The Commission on Reading suggested that there are many reasons why reading is very important to children. One of the reason is it strengthens the child's reading skills, vocabulary skills and writing skills too. A child who does not have the attention span to read for a long time can learn to pay attention longer by reading and thinking aloud This is because through reading and thinking at the same time promotes imagination by visualization of what a child reads.

The think-aloud strategy asks students to say out loud what they are thinking about when reading, solving math problems, or simply responding to questions posed by teachers or other students. Effective teachers think out loud on a regular basis to model this process for students. In this way, the teachers demonstrate practical ways of approaching difficult problems while bringing to the surface the complex thinking processes that underlie reading comprehension and other cognitively demanding tasks. Thinking out loud is an excellent way to teach how to comprehend a text and monitor comprehension while reading a difficult text book. Getting students into habit of thinking out loud enriches classroom discourse and gives teachers an important assessment and diagnostic tool.

The three things that are mainly focused in this study are the usage of think-aloud protocol as a reading strategy to improve reading comprehension among the Form Four students, the strategies used by the students when reading comprehension is concerned and whether they are aware and able to use the appropriate reading strategies when reading a comprehension text. The main aspect in this study is to

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identify whether the use of think-aloud protocols as a reading strategy improves reading comprehension among the Form Four students. It is hoped that the usage of think-aloud protocols as a reading strategy in a reading comprehension lesson would benefit the students of all ages as well as the educators. Furthermore, it is hoped that this reading strategy would kindle students' interest towards the comprehension lessons and change their negative perception or thoughts when reading comprehension is concerned. Therefore, students' performance in English subject can be enhanced especially in answering comprehension section.

1.4 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework for this study looks from a social constructivist standpoint. From a social constructivist Vygotsky's (1978, 1986) perspective, the children learn through interactions with their surrounding culture. This theory is also known as the socio-cultural perspective, which emphasizes on a child's cognitive development and adolescents. This theory states that children's cognitive development and adolescents is enhanced when they work in their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).To reach the ZPD, children need the help of the adults or more competent individuals to support or scaffold them as they are learning new things. According to Vygotsky's theory, children can do more with the help and guidance of an adult or other person who are more experienced than they can do by themselves. The ZPD defines skills and abilities that are in the process of developing.

The concept of ZPD and what the children can do with the help of adults or in collaboration with their peers was very relevant to the instructional design of the

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present study, which was one reason why a framework based on Vygotskian perspective, was considered appropriate. A crucial feature in the discussion of ZPD is the support or scaffold provided in the ZPD whereby the child or learner is guided towards his or her potential level of development. Researchers note that scaffolds are only useful within the student's ZPD where the student cannot proceed alone, but can proceed when scaffolding is provided (Rosenshine and Meister, 1998).

According to Vygotsky's theory, a child is seen as a social being that tends to learn from other people within a social context. The potential result of participating in a social situation involving reading and thinking about text they are reading are that individual students can draw upon the teacher and other students to help them construct not only an understanding of text ideas but also an understanding of what it means to read and think about texts (Kucan & Beck, 1997). In other words, the researcher's aim for the students to explore think-aloud protocols through a process of designing reading text.

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The researcher's goal is to generate a series of investigations, each of which should stimulate the students' thinking skills and require resolving a cognitive conflict. I hope this approach will allow the students to develop higher understanding of the text acquired in mastering their thinking skills and make the learning process like reading comprehension more dynamic and meaningful.

1.5 Purpose of the Study

Generally, this study has three main aims. The main aims of this study are to (a)

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identify whether the use of think-aloud protocol as a reading strategy improves reading comprehension among Form Four student (b) identify the strategies used by the Form Four students when reading comprehension is concerned and (c) investigate whether Form Four students are aware and able to use the reading strategies in reading comprehension task.

1.6 Research Questions

Specifically, this study is carried out to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent does the think-aloud protocols provide information about reading strategies?
2. What type of strategies used by the students in a reading comprehension task?
3. Does the use of think-aloud protocols in a reading comprehension class improves reading?

1.7 Definition of Terms

Aware: practical knowledge and understanding of reading strategies that good readers use

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Protocol: guided instruction and training of using reading strategies from the teacher

Think-aloud: it is a strategy in which students verbalize their thoughts as they read a text. The students are to describe what they were thinking after a task has been completed or after a defined task has been completed. It is also defined as the verbalization of one's thoughts while engaged in a task. (Kucan and Beck, 1997).

1.8 Limitations of the Study

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1.8.1 Research Design

Limitations of the study are associated with the research design that has been chosen for this study. The research design chosen for this study is a case study and it has weaknesses that cannot be controlled. In this research, the techniques of data collection are retelling, observations and interviews. The way the data is collected, for example, the questions prepared for the interview shows weaknesses. A pretest and a post test would be more suitable for this study but for a case study research design, it is not applicable. Experimental design was not chosen because it might posses' weaknesses through the pre test and post test.

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1.8.2 Selection of Participants

The participants chosen for this study are the Form Four students of a secondary school in Kinta District II, Perak. The participants are selected based on their level of competency in English. Only three students were selected for this study and it represents a small number of Form Four students in Malaysia. Therefore, the findings of the study cannot be generalized to represent all the schools in Malaysia. The samples were chosen non-randomly and the results of the study only can be generalized for schools that have the same characteristics as the school chosen for the study. Weaknesses in the participants like reluctant to co-operate with the researcher and withdrew from participating in the study are things out of control faced by the researcher.

1.8.3 Logistic

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The researcher also faced logistic weaknesses like the environment of the school where the samples are less active in the afternoon and not committed during the interview sessions. The participants tend to feel bored and do not involve actively during the retelling and the interview session. The ability of the participants to think and attend to a task at the same time possesses limitations to this study. Some participants tend to have a short-term memory capacity for talking and attending the task at the same time.

During the tape recording session, the participants found it difficult to stop the cassette player each time they were thinking aloud. They tend to concentrate more on their role as a participant who is being tested by their teacher.

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1.8.4 Curriculum

Weaknesses of the English curriculum in the teaching and learning of comprehension lessons is also limited in this study. For example, when the researcher wanted to conduct the study, the school English teachers have not covered the content area of comprehension and students are not exposed to the reading strategies like think-aloud at all.

1.8.5 Research Scope

The researcher chose the reading comprehension to be studied in his study and the way used in the selection of this section is the delimitation of the study. The researcher has narrowed the research scope to the reading comprehension using silent strategy and think-aloud strategy only and the other reading strategies are not covered in this study. The researcher has controlled the reading strategies to think aloud protocols in this study.

1.8.6 Budget

The researcher has to control the budget for this study. A bigger budget would enable the researcher to do a more thorough research whereby more samples would be able to participate and more data would be available for analysis.

1.8.7 Relevant Literature

The related or relevant literatures chosen to be reviewed also possess delimitation for this study. Other relevant literatures which are more suitable for this study might be left out by the researcher.

1.8.8 The Reading Task

The task selected by the researcher might be chosen according to the samples level of

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achievement in the mid-year examination. The theme selected for this study in Environment and the topic is on Health. The researcher has delimited the theme and the topic for this study.

1.8.9 Time

The time limit for this study also possess a constraint as the duration allocated does not allow the researcher to conduct a more thorough study on the reading comprehension section.

1.8.10 Theory

The theory chosen for this study was constructivism and it may show its weaknesses and might not be relevant to this study. It is hoped that similar studies will be carried out in other parts of the world for developing further understanding in this area.

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1.9 Significance of the Study

The aim of this study is to identify whether the use of think-aloud protocols as a reading strategy improves comprehension among form Four students. This research is important especially for secondary school teachers. This is because the teachers will have the knowledge of think-aloud protocols as they carry out a reading comprehension lesson. They are able to apply the knowledge to enhance students understanding of a reading comprehension text. With the knowledge that they posses, they will be able to make the reading comprehension lesson more lively and interesting. The teacher becomes very creative in conducting lessons related to thinking skills. The reading comprehension lesson does not only focus on reading and

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decoding a text but involves students personally connecting themselves to the text. The teachers can design creative and challenging tasks which involves thinking skills.

By undertaking this research, I hope the teaching and learning process is classroom is more to student-centered. Through the use of think-aloud protocols as a reading strategy in reading comprehension, it is hoped that students become good readers where they are able to visualize a text, predict events in the text, make inferences about the text that will lead to a higher level of understanding a text. The reading comprehension lesson is not boring because students are actively engage in the thinking processes as they attempt to understand the text.

Studies on the exploration of think-aloud protocols in reading comprehension is lacking in Malaysia. It is therefore a necessary to conduct studies to gauge the exploration of think-aloud protocols in reading comprehension in enhancing students' performance in language classrooms among secondary school students. Other areas using think-aloud skills has been explored, generally in subjects like Mathematics and Science. In Mathematics and Science think –aloud provide opportunities for teachers to model how to explore mathematics text. This might include previewing a chapter by looking at titles, subtitles, graphic organizers, and pictures to get an overall view of what the chapter is going to be about. Therefore, it is utmost important that we help students to understand the thinking processes that will enable them to be a skilled reader.

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CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

The "Think Aloud" strategy is a teaching strategy which goes beyond teacher lecturing and is actually an exchange between teacher and student. First, the teacher demonstrates and encourages the use of Think Aloud and then passes off that skill to the reader. The goal is that the student will observe and adopt the Think Aloud strategy and use it on his/ her own in a variety of texts and in a variety of settings because it has given the student tangible results which he/ she can use.

Numerous studies have shown that thinking aloud while reading can help the students to improve their reading comprehension. . The theory is that this causes students to be less impulsive (Meichebaum & Asnarow, 1979). In a related study, where think –aloud improves comprehension (Anderson, 1999; Birch, 2002; Jimenez, 1997; Kamhi-Stein, 1998) identified that specific strategies facilitates comprehension. "The think-aloud strategy is a technique in which students verbalize their thoughts as they read and thus bring into open the strategies they are using to understand a text" (Oster 64). The idea is to engage the student into talking through their mental thoughts and processes, writing these things down so that the student is left with a record of what the text was about, what they think will happen, some key inferences they have made and the questions they have about the text. This will help them to comprehend the text in a meaningful way.

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Students must be taught cognitive and metacognitive strategies through think-aloud to comprehend texts. By doing this through think-aloud, ultimately, they are able to recognize the difference between reading the words and comprehending the text. These strategies are a crucial component of learning because it enables the learners to assess their level of comprehension and adjust their strategies for greater success. Students are able to facilitate comprehension through think-aloud where they are able to predict sentences, describe sentences or pictures, make analogies, verbalize confusion and model other strategies.

Reading strategies like think-aloud can improve students' comprehension and at the same time creates a student centered environment in language classroom where learning plays the most important role while the teacher plays the role as a guide in the classroom. This section will discuss the importance of reading and reading skills, cognitive and metacognitive strategies in think-aloud, think-aloud as a reading strategy and think-aloud in building comprehension.

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2.2 Importance of Reading and Reading Skills

Learning to read is an exciting time for students. While thrilled by students' emerging literacy and reading skills, many teachers are surprised to learn that reading is not automatic and that, regardless of family background, students require support in learning to read and developing strong reading skills. Most teachers forget that acquiring reading skills required skilled instruction (Angie Shiflet, 2006). This is supported by Robert Buckmaster (2005) who took a critical look at reading skills lessons in language classrooms and noted some serious deficiencies in the approach to

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texts in the classrooms. He found out that most of the teachers were helping students to cope with particular kind of texts in the classroom rather than helping them to develop their vocabulary and textual understanding so that the students can cope with real world texts. Therefore, teachers should use an appropriate approach when carrying out reading lessons in classrooms. They must focus more on developing the reading skills of the students by using different approaches that would enhance their reading skills.

Furthermore, students must develop their reading skills. This is because educational researchers have found that there is a strong correlation between reading and academic success. Pretorious,E. (2004). A student who is a good reader is more likely to do well in school and pass exams than a student who is a weak reader. Good readers can understand the individual sentences and the organizational structure of a piece of writing. They can comprehend ideas, follow arguments, and detect implications. They know most of the words in the text already, but they can also determine the meaning of many of the unfamiliar words from the context. Also, good readers can extract from the writing what is important for the particular task they are employed in and can do it quickly.

Educational researchers have also found a strong correlation between reading and vocabulary knowledge. Maleki & Zangani (2007) compared students who were proficient in the language with students less proficient. Result shows that students who are proficient are good readers. In other words, students who have a large vocabulary are usually good readers. This is not very surprising, since the best way to acquire a large vocabulary is to read extensively, and if you read extensively you are likely to be or become a good reader.

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Moreover, research has shown that good readers monitor their comprehension during reading. Keene & Zimmerman (1997) have stated that good readers know when the text they are reading to make sense, when it does not, what does not make sense and whether the unclear portion is critical to the overall text. This fact is supported by Eskey and Grabe (1988), learners need to practice a variety of different reading skills and vocabulary learning strategies if they are to maintain a high rate of success from graded text towards academic English.

According to Pretorious,E. (2004), research findings in applied linguistics and research consistently show a strong correlation between reading proficiency and academic success at all ages, from the primary school right through to university level : students who read a lot and who understand what they read usually attain good grades." Furthermore, good readers tended to maintain the meaning o the text in mind, read in large phrases, ignore unimportant vocabulary and had a positive self concept as a reader (Oxford and Crookall,1989).

On the other hand, reluctant, beginning or low-skilled readers often do not have the ability to visualize, predict, inference or clarify what they are reading and so they do not truly comprehend what the text is or what it means. Too often, these readers do not understand that "good readers" go through a series of mental processes in order to comprehend the text in ways which the low-level readers never even imagined (Keene & Zimmerman, 1997).

Hallaahan et.al (2002) said that students with reading disabilities fall behind very rapidly in nearly all nearly subjects. They are likely to develop negative concepts of themselves and lose any motivation to succeed that they may have had. They have limited access to the rich world found in books. At the same time, they

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failed to extract the main idea from the sentences, worked in short phrases, rarely skipped any unimportant words and had a negative self – concept (Oxford and Crookall, 1989)

Also, poor reading skills have become a reality for an alarming number of people. The $14 million National Adult Literacy Survey of 1993 found that even though most adults in this survey had finished high school, 96% of them could not read write and figure well enough to go to college. Even more to the point, 25% were plainly unable to read. Although some are inclined to say that these statistics are exaggerated, they nevertheless indicate that an alarming number of children have reading problems.

Reading is not merely a receptive process of picking up information from the page in a word-by-word manner (Grabe, 1991).Rather, it is a selective process and characterized as an active process of comprehending. Therefore, non-English-speaking readers find it important to employ reading strategies to read English texts more effectively. According to Grabe (1991), effective reading is rapid, purposeful, comprehending, flexible and gradually developing. So, reading is a very complex process, and this is what drives many researchers to attempt to understand and explain its process. Part of the process of understanding and explaining the process knows the strategies involved in reading. According to Oxford and Crookall (1989), strategies can be operationlized as learning techniques, behaviors, and problem – solving or study skills that enhance leaning more effectively and efficiently. In the light of second language learning, however, it is crucial to see the difference between strategies that enhance learning and strategies that improve comprehension. For this study, reading comprehension strategies are the main focus and are seen as

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comprehension processes that enable readers to construct meaning from the printed most effectively. In other words, those strategies show how readers tackle a reading task, how they interpret their reading and what they do when they do not comprehend. Brantmeier (2002) summarizes these strategies as follows:

"the strategies may involve skimming, scanning, guessing, recognizing cognates and word families, reading for meaning, predicting, activating general knowledge, making inferences, following references, and separating main ideas from supporting ideas"

Reading strategies can consist of evaluating content, such as agreeing or disagreeing, making an association with prior knowledge or experience, asking and answering questions, looking at the key words, using sentence structure analysis such as determining the subject, verb or object of the sentence, skipping and rereading (Almasi,2003; Sugirin,1999).

A number of studies have been conducted on the use of reading strategies by second language readers. In a qualitative study, Hosenfeld (1977) examined successful and unsuccessful readers to find out what types of cognitive operations they used to process written texts. In oral interview, the participants were asked to read a text and do think – aloud reports, i.e. they were directed to say in their first language whatever came to their minds while processing each sentence in the text. By doing so, the researcher could identify relationships between certain types of reading strategies and successful or unsuccessful second language readers. Specifically, the good readers tended to maintain the meaning of the text in mind, read in large phrases, ignore unimportant vocabulary and had a positive self-concept as a reader. The focus of this research was on the good readers and how good readers

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function when a reading task was given to them. The researcher was able to identify the strategies employed by the students and how successful they were in their reading task.

2.3 Cognitive and Metacognitive Strategies in Reading

Reading skills play an important role in language classrooms where the students are expected to understand what they are reading. According to Brumfit (1980, p.3) reading is seen as an extremely complex activity involving a combination of perceptual, linguistic and cognitive abilities. Carrell (1998) stated that second language learners cannot perform at proficiency levels that they must so as to succeed without solid proficiency. Goodman (1998) on the other hand, defines proficient readers as "efficient and effective" because he believes that they can construct a meaning by means of assimilation, accommodation, and they do not make much effort to achieve effectiveness. He also describes reading as a psycholinguistic guessing game in which the reader reconstructs a message that has been coded by a writer as a graphic display.

2.3.1 Cognitive Strategies in Reading

A cognitive strategy plays an essential part in building comprehension among students. Teachers should find out the cognitive reading strategies used and ways to develop the cognitive reading strategies used by the students in order to continue their academic studies successfully and to get the most out of a text they read. Williams and Burden (1997) state that cognitive strategies in reading are seen as mental

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processes directly concerned with the processing of information in order to learn, that is for obtaining, storage, retrieval or use of information. In general, the students need to use all the processes when are using the cognitive strategies in a reading comprehension lesson to enhance their understanding on the text they are reading. Brown (1994) claims that the cognitive strategies are limited to specific learning tasks and it involve more direct manipulation of the learning material itself.

In general, studies in both L1 and L2 reading research provide a binary division of cognitive strategies as bottom-up and top-down. Goodman (1986, p.11) refers to the bottom up model as the "common sense notion" .In this approach, reading is meant to be a process of decoding, identifying letter, words, phrases and then sentences in order to get the meaning. The top-down model advocates "the selection of the fewest and most productive elements from a text so as to make sense of it" (Lynch & Hudson, 1991) and views the reading process as an active "psychological guessing game"(Carrell, 1998).Top down rejects the notion that identification of letters to form words, and the derivation of meaning from these words is an efficient reading. Top-down model assumes efficient reading requires the readers to make predictions and hypothesis about the text content by relating the new information to their prior knowledge and by using as few language clues as possible.

Top-down model is influenced by schema theory, which emphasizes the importance of the reader's background knowledge in the reading process (Carrell, 1998).According to this theory, so as to compare a text; readers make use of both the text and their background knowledge. Therefore, there is a link between the background knowledge of the reader and the text they are reading. On the other hand, interaction between the background knowledge and the text is essential for efficient

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reading. A variety of processes repeatedly occurs in the mind of the reader while reading (Aebersold and Field, 1998).

The findings of a research conducted by Ngan Phan on effective reading revealed that there was a positive contradiction on the use of cognitive strategies and thinking aloud during reading. Therefore, the students who have used some certain cognitive reading strategies helped them to solve problems when they read a text. The students used cognitive reading skills with think-aloud and were able to comprehend the text. Therefore, effective reading strategies may help learners in improving their reading proficiency so that they can read more effectively for their academic studies regardless of the type of text they are reading. These studies also provides the teachers with an opinion about the learners' reading strategies and think-aloud protocols which is suggested as a good methodology in spite of being time-consuming and difficult to analyze since they allow observation of both ongoing behavior and the mental pictures of the learners.

In helping the students to develop effective reading strategies, the first step a teacher must focus is to identify what strategies the students are already using and the think-aloud method can be used as a diagnostic tool to analyze students' strengths and weaknesses in reading comprehension since it reveals rich information about how readers carry out mental activity like think-aloud while reading (Block, 1986).The teachers should concentrate on the students' reading strategies and give a chance to understand and to evaluate better their own knowledge of what they are reading.

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2.3.2 Metacognitive Strategies in Reading

Metacognitive awareness plays an important role in achieving comprehension among learners. Metacognitive awareness in reading processes deals with the knowledge about the readers, the reading tasks they confront, and the reading strategies that they apply to solve tasks (Baker & Brown, (1984) (as cited in Shinghal, 2001).Several studies have been conducted to seek the relationship between metacognitive awareness and reading comprehension. The above research findings on reading strategies indicate that there are strong relationship between reading strategies and comprehension. Overall, good readers appear to use a wider of reading strategies than poor readers. As a result, detecting reading strategies used by readers when reading plays an essential part and the more reading strategies readers employed while reading, the better the comprehension. Therefore, it is obvious that there is strong interaction between think-aloud protocols and metacognitive strategies in a reading comprehension task. The more the students used the think-aloud protocols, the better they are in comprehending a text.

In addition, Taylor, Pearson, Peterson & Rodriquez (2003), conducted a study which investigated the effects of teaching thinking on students' reading achievement. The study focused on students reading and writing growth. It was found that teachers who emphasized thinking either through the questions they asked or the task they assigned, promoted greater reading growth. Based on this study, we can say that it is important to challenge the students' mental awareness by stimulating them to think 'out of the box. By using think-aloud strategies, teachers can guide students to master a reading comprehension text and at the same time students can be confident of the skills they have and become good readers.

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As we know, metacognitive are known as the strategies that function to monitor or regulate cognitive strategies. It involves thinking about the learning process, planning for learning, monitoring of comprehension or production while it is take place, and self-evaluation of learning after the language activity or task is completed (Skehen, 1993).According to Brown (1994), metacognitive strategies include "checking the outcome of any attempt to solve a problem, planning one's text move, monitoring the effectiveness of any attempted action, testing, revising and evaluating one's strategies for learning.'' In other words, metacognitive strategies are used to plan, monitor and regulate the reading as it occurs. Metacognitive strategies has strong linkage with think-aloud protocols where in both strategies, learners need to think while reading a text. Therefore, both the strategies are essential in reading and comprehending a text.

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2.4 Think-Aloud As a Reading Strategy

Think-aloud is a reading strategy where learners are to describe what they are thinking after a reading task has been completed or after a segment of a task has been completed. It is one way of obtaining external representation of cognitive behavior where learners describe what they are doing as they are doing it. It acts as a research tool to investigate processes involved in thinking, problem solving, and reading comprehension. Research evidence shows that students improve their comprehension when they use the think-aloud strategy. (Duke & Pearson, http://ed-http://ed-web3.educ.msu.edu/pearson/pdppaper/Duke/ndpdp.html).

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Numerous studies have been conducted on the use of think-aloud as a reading strategy. Block (1986) conducted a study to find out the effect of using strategies on reading comprehension. In Block's research, he compared the reading comprehension strategies used by native English speakers and English as a second language (ESL) student. The results showed that readers with higher comprehension scores integrated new information in the text with old information extracted main ideas from details referred to their background knowledge and focus on textual meanings as a whole. On the other hand, readers with low comprehension scores seldom did so. The study concluded that students who are native speakers and ESL students were able to make use of reading strategies effectively performed better than those who did not make use of the reading strategies. Therefore, the student's background does not play an important role in comprehending a reading text. It showed that to be a good reader, one must master the reading skills and use it effectively in reading comprehension.

AhmadAsraf (2004) did a research study on the strategies used by second language learners in responding to English texts. The case study compared good and average readers in their response to various question types. The results showed that both groups were able to use the same comprehension answering strategies. However, the good readers were more consistent because they use the think-aloud strategies more often and effectively. Although there are many reading strategies, the use of think-aloud as a reading strategy improves reading comprehension.

This is supported by Sugirin (1999) who used the multi-method study to explore the comprehension strategies of English as Foreign Language (EFL) readers. He found that the good readers tended to use think-aloud strategies in comprehending a text. He also identified the use of think-aloud strategies not only through think-aloud

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protocol analysis but various methods like retelling, reading comprehension test, in-depth interviews and casual observations. It is noted that good readers use think-aloud strategies and one of the effective ways of identifying the usage of think-aloud strategies was through observations and interviews. This can be applied by the teachers in classrooms to explore the comprehension strategies used by good and poor readers.

2.5 Think-Aloud In Building Comprehension

A vast amount of research has taken place concerning comprehension, but are we properly addressing comprehension strategies in our classrooms? Comprehension is an important element at all stages of literacy development (Taberski, 2000).Adams (1990) states that since comprehension is the objective of reading, those who are fluent are able to focus on meaning, hold more information in their working memory and incorporate their own background knowledge with what they have read. It is beneficial for students to understand how a text is structured as this understanding will aid their comprehension (Bolton, 2007). Dewitz and Dewitz (2003) cite research that indicates students need to predict, self-question, infer, summarize, visualize and monitor their own comprehension (Dole, 1991;Presley & Afflerbach, 1995).

Several studies have shown that thinking aloud while reading can be effective instructional technique in helping students to improve their reading comprehension. Goh Hock Seng (2007) has conducted a research study on the effects of think-aloud in a collaborative environment to improve comprehension of L2 texts. This article reports a study which examined the effects of combining think-aloud and

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collaborative discussion with the primary aim of improving reading comprehension. The researcher chose the quasi-experimental design and the participants were the ESL students in University Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI).The experimental group went through two aspects of treatment. The first treatment was training in think-aloud and the second treatment reading lessons where think-aloud and class discussion were instrumental in the instruction given. The results of this study shows that the students who have used the think-aloud protocols performed better in their reading comprehension tests compared to those who did not use the think-aloud protocols. This finding supports the use of think-aloud in building comprehension as advocated by Oster (2001) and provides further evidence on the benefits of an appropriate approach in a reading comprehension lesson.

Jeffrey D.Wilhelm (2006) presented a study guide for improving comprehension with think-aloud strategies. The contents of this study guide are seeing reading as a strategic knowledge visible and accessible to students, practices of a good reader and introducing general knowledge process think-alouds, using free-response and cued think-alouds to show the link between these processes, navigating meaning by using think-alouds to help readers monitor comprehension. Students involve actively through visualizing, emotional and verbal with the passage. There are new reading moves such as using think-alouds to teach students about texts types and text features, and using think-alouds for performance-based assessment. This book reflects on the guidance to the teachers on how to teach comprehension strategies in classroom, how often think-aloud is used to help the students to learn comprehension and provide the students an adequate opportunity to practice new comprehension strategies.

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Judith Gold & Akimi Gibson also used think-aloud technique to build comprehension in their article. This article praises the power of thinking out loud while reading to children as a way to highlight the strategies used thoughtful readers. This article focuses on three specific comprehension strategies: connecting books to children's own experience, connecting the books children are reading to other literature they have read and connecting what children are reading to universal concepts (Keene & Zimmermann, 1997).A small section of this article relates thinking aloud and modeling through how fluent the readers think about the text and solve problems as they read. Modeling encourages children to develop the "habits of mind" that a proficient reader employs. Therefore, the final thoughts of this article are to develop comprehension strategies through reading aloud, children must set up an environment of thinking aloud too. Thinking aloud also helps the children learn how to use comprehension strategies that are important when reading a text.

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2.6 Summary

Based on the research done on various aspects involving think-aloud protocols and the experiences by the educators as well as the students, they believe that the think-aloud protocols are essential in reading comprehension. Exploration on the think-protocols explains why certain assumptions on this reading strategy need to be proven officially. On the other hand, the exploration on think-aloud provides a better and dynamic understanding to the educators and students. It also creates an interesting learning environment which benefits the students and the educators as well. Think-aloud

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protocols provide an adequate opportunity to the students to visualize, think and investigate the text they are reading. It encourages the student to think more abstractly about the text they are reading and at the same time provides a better understanding towards the text they comprehending.

In general, findings from the previous researches indicates that students can build better understanding in comprehension through think-aloud protocols. They can improve their comprehension using effective strategies such as think-aloud and also perform better in their academic studies. Effective strategies like think-aloud enhance the quality of teaching and learning comprehension in classrooms. The summary of this research also emphasize on the importance of cognitive and metacognitive strategies in the English curriculum especially in reading comprehension. Teachers should focus on developing students cognitive and metacognitive skills through think-aloud as it promotes positive learning outcomes. Students find it challenging and become more interested in their studies as they are able to perform better in their academic studies.

Other than that, this research also focus on what educators especially teachers should do to guide poor readers to become better readers. We know the benefits of using think –aloud in reading comprehension it motivates the students to become better readers and at the same time it enables them to perform better in their academic studies. Therefore as educators, we should have appropriate pedagogical skills and subject matter knowledge to mould our students to become better readers.

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CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The main aims of this study are to (a) identify whether the use of think-aloud protocol as a reading strategy improves reading comprehension among Form Four students (b) identify the reading strategies used by the Form Four students when reading comprehension is concerned and (c) identify whether Form Four students are aware and able to use the appropriate reading strategies when reading a comprehension text.

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I propose to visit the school's Form Four English curriculum specifications by selecting a suitable interactive comprehension text based on the theme Health: the questions I wish to explore are:

1 To what extent does the think-aloud protocols provide information about reading strategies?

2` What type of strategies used by the students in a reading comprehension task?

3 Does the use of think-aloud protocols in a reading comprehension class Improves reading?

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This section explains the methodology that was used to conduct this study. It is divided into the following subsections :(1)research design;(2)location and participants;(3)instrumentation;(4)procedure and (5)data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The research design chosen for this study was a case study. A qualitative approach was used to analyze the data from the interviews. The researcher conducted a case study design to collect data from the Form Four students to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent does the think-aloud protocols provide information about reading strategies?
2. What type of strategies used by the students in a reading comprehension task?
3. Does the use of think-aloud protocols in a reading comprehension class improves reading?

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The variable identified for this study is the usage of think-aloud protocols in a reading comprehension classroom. A case study design with audio recording data, observations, retelling and personal interviews were used to describe the variable in this study. The case study design was chosen because the aims of this study were (a) to find out to what extent the use of think-aloud protocol provides information about reading strategies (b) identify the strategies used by the Form Four students where reading comprehension is concerned and (c) to know if think-aloud protocols

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improves reading in a reading comprehension class. It has been well established that the best method to describe the exploration of think-aloud protocols in a reading comprehension in detail is the case study design.

The techniques of data collection used in a case study design are through audio recording data, retelling, observations and personal interviews. The audio recording data, retelling, observations and interviews provided detailed information for this study. The participants of this study were the Form Four students of a secondary school in Perak and the participants were selected non-randomly from the population of Form Four students in that school. The participants were exposed to the think-aloud protocols during the reading comprehension lessons. At the end of the lessons, the participants were interviewed about the text they have read and the interview sessions were audio recorded and the data were transcribed.

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3.3 Location and Participants

This study was conducted in a secondary school in Perak. Although this school is located in the town area and is a B grade school, it is categorized as a rural area school because 65% of the students are from the rural areas, majority of the students in this school are Chinese and their economical background status are from the middle-class family. This school consists of four Form Four classes and it is compulsory for all the students to learn English (core subject).

The participants were drawn from the population of Form Four students. Even though the participants were selected non-randomly from the population, the Form

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Four students from the selected school are the representatives of Form four students in that school. The number of participants chosen for this study is three and they are about the same level of achievement and age. Among the participants, two students were male and one student was female. The participants were selected based on their level of achievement in their mid-year examination. Therefore, all the participants are equal in term of results. The differences among these participants are only in terms of race, gender and social background. Their parents' occupations range from government servants to businessmen and labourers.

3.4 Instrumentation

There were two research instruments used in this study. The first instrument was a task with comprehension text which was selected from the Form Four English text book. The second instrument used in this study was the personal interview questions prepared by the researcher to get feedback from the participants regarding the text they had read and the reading strategies used by the participants to comprehend the text.

3.4.1 Reading Comprehension Task

The first instrument in this study was a task which contains a comprehension passage chosen from the Form Four English text book designed by the Ministry Of Education. The theme of the text was chosen from the curriculum specifications of Form Four English. The theme that was selected for the study is Health because this theme is one the major theme focused in the syllabus. Therefore, the topic for the

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reading comprehension task is the heart. The length of the text chosen for this task is 550 words.

3.4.2 Personal Interview

The second instrument was the personal interview sessions between the researcher and the participants which were conducted after the reading tasks. The purpose of this interview was to identify to what extent participants have used the think- aloud protocols to comprehend the text they have read. The researcher had prepared fifteen interview questions which were used to gauge the participants understanding of the reading comprehension task.

3.4.3 Validity and Reliability of the Interview Questions

The fifteen interview questions prepared by the researcher in this study are based on the curriculum specification prepared by the Ministry Of Education. In order to identify the validity of the items, the researcher had given the interview questions to be checked by teachers who are experienced in teaching this subject for more than ten years.

3.5 Procedure

To conduct this research, the researcher conferred and sought permission from the principal of the school and the relevant administrators. The researcher had also informed the students in Form four about the purpose of this study and obtained approval from their parents and themselves. This was to ensure that there would be no complain on the different teaching method used by the researcher. To ensure that the

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participants understood fully what they here expected to do, the researcher asked the participants to rehearse and when they achieve an appropriate level of performance, the actual think-aloud started. The participants were selected based on their level of achievement in their mid –year examination. Three participants were drawn from the population of Form four students and the tasks that have been designed based on the syllabus were used to gather information for this study.

The three participants in this study were placed in a group and asked to think-aloud while reading the passage that has been prepared by the researcher. Each participant was placed in a quiet environment (library) and asked to read aloud the passage and think aloud as they read the passage. The other participants in the group were also asked to read aloud the passage and think aloud as they read the passage. The three subjects were asked to read aloud and verbalize their thoughts using a tape recorder. When subjects fell silent, they were prompted to think aloud or to elaborate on their thoughts as they attempt to make sense of the passage. The researcher played a role as the facilitator to encourage the samples to think as they were reading the passage.

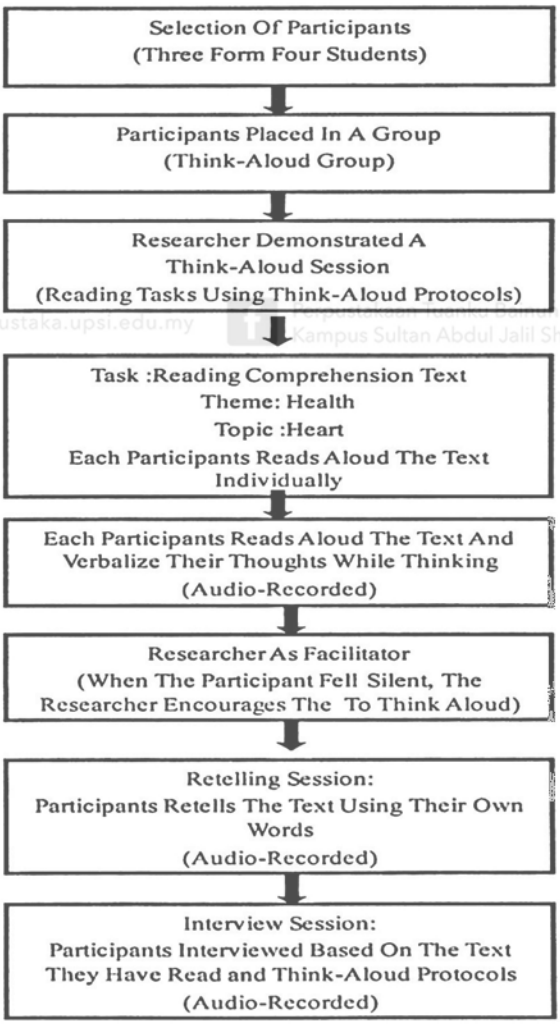
The audio recordings were the main source of data in the study. These data were then coded as to facilitate the analysis. Recorded think-aloud by the samples were transcribed and the protocols were then analyzed in order to find out whether the think-aloud protocols as a reading strategy improved comprehension of Form four students. It was also to find out the type of reading strategies used by the participants as well as to explore the information provided by the data collected. After a short pause, the participants were then asked to retell in their own words about the passage they have read. This session was also audio-taped.

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The three participants of this study were then interviewed based on the text they have read and the thinking strategies they had used. The researcher had prepared fifteen interview questions and a personal interview was carried out with each of the samples. The interview sessions with the participants were audio-taped. The interviews with the participants were recorded and transcribed. The overall procedure for this research is shown in Table 3.5.1.

Table 3.5.1: Framework Of The Research Procedure



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3.6 Data Analysis

The data collected during the observations of the reading sessions using think-aloud protocols and interviews was analyzed using a descriptive statistics. After the think aloud sessions were completed, the tape recordings were transcribed for analysis. The analysis took the form of coding each discrete verbalization in the transcript according to the type of thinking it exemplifies. The researcher then identifies the different types of thinking processes displayed in the think aloud. After coding each think aloud independently, the researcher used a common rubric to rate the strategies used by the participants. The list of strategies used by the participants during think-aloud sessions is shown in the form of a table. They were able to use strategies to elicit information from the passage. This was furthermore enhanced through the retelling where the students were able to state orally the content of the passage. In addition, through the personal interview session by the researcher, the participants were more confident in reading comprehension passages.

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CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss the data analysis that was obtained from the reading comprehension and interview sessions. This reading comprehension and interview sessions involved three participants from Form Four Science One. The reading sessions and the interview sessions were audio-recorded. The recording was the main source of the data. The recordings were transcribed and the protocols were then analyzed in order to identify the reading strategies of the participants.

The researcher identified the different types of thinking processes displayed in the think-aloud. After coding each think-aloud independently, a common rubric to rate the strategies used by the participants. The strategies are shown in the form of a table. Analyses of this individual reading comprehension session resulted in the identification of twenty-seven strategies overall for the three participants.

The findings of this research are presented with the interpretations and discussions in relation to the research questions to explore the usage of think-aloud protocols in reading comprehension class. The data obtained from the study conducted was analyzed using inferential statistics. In addition, this chapter will also discuss the analyses obtained from the interview sessions. The interview session was conducted after the participants had completed their retelling session.

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4.2 Reading Sessions

An individual reading session was conducted to all the three participants to obtain information on the usage of think-aloud protocols during retelling. The strategies used during this session are presented in the form of a table. They are listed according to the participants from the most popular strategies to the least popular strategies. Then, the overall strategies are listed according from the highest frequency to the lowest frequency in which the strategies were used.

Table 4.2.1 shows the strategies (descriptions and examples of the strategies) used by the first participant during the reading comprehension session.

Table 4.2.1

Strategies identified for the first participant during the reading comprehension session

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RANK	*STRATEGY TYPE*	*STRATEGY BEHAVIOR*	*FREQUENCY*	*%*
1.	Cognitive	Questioning	8	14.0
2.	Cognitive	Inferencing	7	12.3
3.	Cognitive	Agreeing	7	12.3
4.	Cognitive	Relating(to previous knowledge)	3	5.3
5	Cognitive	Elaborating(based on	3	5.3

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		previous knowledge)		
6.	Cognitive	Stating Comprehension	3	5.3
7.	Cognitive	Stating Opinion	3	5.3
8.	Cognitive	Relating Content to previous experience	3	5.3
9.	Cognitive	Paraphrasing	2	3.5
10.	Cognitive	Stating Lack of Understanding	2	3.5
11.	Cognitive	Reasoning	2	3.5
12.	Cognitive	Making Personal Decision	2	3.5
13.	Cognitive	Making Generalizations	2	3.5
14.	Cognitive	Understanding Content	1	1.8
15.	Cognitive	Predicting	1	1.8
16.	Cognitive	Making New Conclusion	1	1.8
17.	Cognitive	Stating Lack of Knowledge	1	1.8
18.	Cognitive	Confirming	1	1.8
19.	Cognitive	Emphasizing	1	1.8

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20.	Cognitive	Disagreeing	1	1.8
21.	Cognitive	Relating to Personal Likes and Dislikes	1	1.8
22.	Cognitive	Hypothesing	1	1.8
23.	Cognitive	Making Conclusion	1	1.8
		Total	57	100%

From table 4.2.1,the results showed that the first participant has used twenty-three strategies during the reading comprehension session .The highest frequency is shown by questioning which represents 14.0%.This is followed by inferencing and agreeing which represents 12.3% .The next strategies are relating to previous knowledge, elaborating(based on previous knowledge),stating comprehension, stating opinion and relating content to previous experience which represent 5.3%.The first participant has chosen strategies like making generalizations, paraphrasing, stating lack of knowledge, reasoning and making personal decision the same number of times during the reading comprehension session which represent 3.5% respectively..A series of strategies used by the participant to clarify the understanding of the reading comprehension text based on the selected theme.

However, this participant has used fewer thinking strategies like predicting, understanding content, making new conclusion, stating lack of knowledge, confirming, emphasizing, disagreeing, relating to personal like and dislike, hypothesing and making conclusion. These strategies are the least popular strategies used by the

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participant which overall represent only 1.8%.All in all, questioning is the most popular strategy used by the first participant. At the same time, this participant also has used the highest number of strategies compared to other participants during the reading comprehension sessions.

Table 4.2.2 shows the strategies (descriptions and examples of the strategies) used by the second participant during the reading comprehension session.

Table 4.2.2

Strategies identified for the second participant during the reading comprehension session

RANK	***STRATEGY TYPE***	***STRATEGY BEHAVIOR***	**FREQUENCY**	**%**
1.	Cognitive	Questioning	5	15.0
2.	Cognitive	Agreeing	5	15.0
3.	Cognitive	Relating to Previous Knowledge	4	12.1
4.	Cognitive	Stating Comprehension	4	12.1
5.	Cognitive	Understanding Content	3	9.1
6.	Cognitive	Inferencing	2	6.1
7.	Cognitive	Making Conclusion	2	6.1

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8.	Cognitive	Stating Lack of Understanding	1	3.0
9.	Cognitive	Elaborating(based on previous knowledge)	1	3.0
10.	Cognitive	Stating Opinion	1	3.0
11.	Cognitive	Making Personal Decision	1	3.0
12.	Cognitive	Expressing Confusion	1	3.0
13.	Cognitive	Clarifying	1	3.0
14.	Cognitive	Summarizing	1	3.0
15.	Cognitive	Making Resolution	1	3.0
		Total	64	100%

The second participant has used fifteen strategies which are repeated sixty-four times throughout the reading comprehension session. The highest frequency is showed by questioning and agreeing strategies which represent 15.0% respectively. The second highest frequency is shown by relating to previous knowledge and stating comprehension which represent 12.1% each. The next strategy is understanding content which represents 9.1%.This is followed by inferencing and making conclusions which represent 6.1% each. Stating lack of understanding,

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elaborating(based on previous knowledge),stating opinion, making personal decision, expressing confusion, clarifying, summarizing and making resolution showed the least number of frequencies which represent only 2% respectively. Overall, the participant has used the selected strategies sixty-four times in the reading comprehension session. The most popular strategy used by the second participant is questioning and agreeing which are used ten times throughout the reading comprehension session. The least popular strategies like stating lack of understanding, elaborating(based on previous knowledge),stating opinion, making personal decision, expressing confusion, clarifying, summarizing and making resolution are used only once by the participant.

Table 4.2.3 shows the strategies (descriptions and examples of the strategies) used by the third participant during the reading comprehension session.

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Table 4.2.3

Strategies identified for the third participant during the reading comprehension session

RANK	*STRATEGY TYPE*	*STRATEGY BEHAVIOR*	*FREQUENCY*	%
1.	Cognitive	Questioning	14	33.3
2.	Cognitive	Stating Lack of Knowledge	7	16.7
3.	Cognitive	Relating to Previous Knowledge	5	11.9

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4.	Cognitive	Making Personal Decision	4	9.5
5	Cognitive	Understanding Content	3	7.0
6.	Cognitive	Stating Comprehension	2	4.8
7.	Cognitive	Relating to the Text Information	2	4.8
8.	Cognitive	Making Generalizations	1	2.4
9.	Cognitive	Inferencing	1	2.4
10.	Cognitive	Paraphrasing	1	2.4
11.	Cognitive	Agreeing	1	2.4
12.	Cognitive	Expressing Confusion	1	2.4
		Total	42	100%

The third participant used the least number of strategies during the reading comprehension session. This participant has used twelve strategies throughout the reading comprehension session. The participant only relied on limited reading strategies like questioning, stating lack of knowledge, relating to previous knowledge, making personal decision, understanding content, stating comprehension, relating to the text information, making generalizations inferencing, paraphrasing, agreeing and

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expressing confusion. Among these strategies, questioning showed the highest frequency. The third participant has applied this strategy fourteen times in the reading comprehension session which represents 33.3%.The second highest strategy was stating lack of knowledge which represents 16.7%.The participant has used the stating lack of knowledge strategy seven times throughout the reading comprehension session.

The third highest strategy is relating to previous knowledge which represents11.9% and this strategy is repeated five times throughout the reading session. This is followed by the fourth strategy, making personal decision which represents 9.5% and this strategy is repeated four times during the reading comprehension session. The next strategy is understanding content which represents 7% and this strategy is repeated three times. Stating comprehension and relating to the text information are the strategies repeated twice during the reading comprehension task and the percentages are 4.8 respectively. Lastly, the strategies that are less used by the third participant are making generalizations, inferencing, paraphrasing, agreeing and expressing confusion which are repeated only once and represent only 2.4% compared to the other strategies. Overall, this participant has used all the strategies listed in the table forty-two times in the reading comprehension session.

Table 4.2.4 shows the overall strategies (descriptions and examples of the strategies) used by the all the three participants during the reading comprehension session.

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Table 4.2.4

Strategies identified for all three participants during the reading comprehension session

RANK	*STRATEGY TYPE*	*STRATEGY BEHAVIOR*	*FREQUENCY*	*%*
1.	Cognitive	Questioning	27	20.4
2.	Cognitive	Agreeing	13	9.8
3.	Cognitive	Relating to Previous Knowledge	12	9.0
4.	Cognitive	Inferencing	10	7.5
5.	Cognitive	Stating Comprehension	9	6.8
6.	Cognitive	Stating Lack of Knowledge	8	6.0
7.	Cognitive	Understanding Content	7	5.3
8.	Cognitive	Making Personal Decision	7	5.3
9.	Cognitive	Elaborating(based on Previous Knowledge)	4	3.0
10.	Cognitive	Stating Opinion	4	3.0

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11.	Cognitive	Relating Content to Previous Knowledge	4	3.0
12.	Cognitive	Paraphrasing	3	2.3
13.	Cognitive	Stating Lack of Understanding	3	2.3
14.	Cognitive	Making Conclusion	3	2.3
15.	Cognitive	Making Generalizations	3	2.3
16.	Cognitive	Reasoning	2	1.5
17.	Cognitive	Expressing Confusion	2	1.5
18.	Cognitive	Predicting	1	0.8
19.	Cognitive	Making New Conclusion	1	0.8
20.	Cognitive	Confirming	1	0.8
21.	Cognitive	Disagreeing	1	0.8
22.	Cognitive	Hypothesing	1	0.8
23.	Cognitive	Clarifying	1	0.8
24.	Cognitive	Summarizing	1	0.8
25.	Cognitive	Making Resolution	1	0.8

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26.	Cognitive	Relating to Personal Like/Dislike	1	0.8
27.	Cognitive	Relating text to Personal Experience	1	0.8
		Total	132	100%

All the participants have used a series of cognitive thinking strategies throughout the reading comprehension task. There are twenty-seven types of cognitive thinking strategies used during the reading sessions. The most popular type of thinking strategies among the participants is questioning which shows the highest frequency. This strategy is repeated the most number of times that is twenty-seven times and is represented by 20.4% compared to the other strategies. It is obvious that all the participants have used this questioning strategy which enables them to query on something they are not familiar with. This strategy is quite common among learners when they are exposed to new things in their lives. At the same time, the learners get an opportunity to explore and gain knowledge through the interaction and assistance from an experienced teacher.

The second highest cognitive thinking strategy which is widely used by the participants is agreeing which represents 9.8% overall. As a total frequency, this strategy is repeated thirteen times by all the participants throughout the reading comprehension task. Most of the participants agreed with the facts they learned from the passage and they tend to accept the statement that is relevant to the passage during

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the reading session. Basically, the participants have known the key words related to the passage they have read during the task. The third highest cognitive thinking strategy used by the participants is relating to previous knowledge which shows 9.0% compared to the other strategies. Overall, this strategy has been used twelve times throughout the three reading task sessions. From here, it is clear that the participants are able to relate the passage they were reading to their previous knowledge. It is because the passage selected for the reading task was on heart and the participants said that they have learned about this topic before.

Cognitive thinking strategy like inferencing is also widely used by the participants which represents 7.5% and this strategy is the fourth highest compared to the overall strategies in the list. The participants have used this strategy ten times and at the same time, they are capable of making inference based on the passage given to them during the reading task session. As time goes by, the participants are able to use this strategy to enhance their thinking skills in future. This is followed by stating comprehension strategy which showed 6.8% overall and the participants are able to comprehend the passage. Although all the participants are able to comprehend the text, there are certain instances whereby they faced difficulty in understanding and knowing some words and phrases found in the passage. This could be seen in the findings of the study where stating lack of knowledge strategy showed 5.7% and it is ranked sixth in Table 4.2.4.At the same time, stating lack of understanding strategy falls in the twelfth position and it is represented by 2.3% as well as this strategy is repeated three times throughout the reading tasks.

Besides the common cognitive strategies used during the think-aloud session, there are also other important strategies which are used less by the participants.

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Among them, are reasoning and expressing confusion strategies which show 1.5%.. Relating text to personal experience is the least strategies used in this research by the participants.

4.3.Personal Interviews

The researcher conducted a personal interview with the three participants who were involved in the reading comprehension task. The researchers interviewed the students after the reading comprehension and the retelling session were completed. The interview sessions were held after the participants had time to relax. The interview sessions were audio-recorded and transcribed. Below is the transcribed version of the interview sessions.

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4.3.1 Personal Interview with Participant 1

Based on the personal interview which was carried out after the retelling session, participant 1 found the text easy to comprehend as the participant had the knowledge about the topic. The participant was able to relate to his previous knowledge when reading the reading comprehension text. The participant was able to think and read at the same time. The participant did not face any problem during the think-aloud session. The participant was able to imagine and think about the content of the text during the reading comprehension session. Even though the participant

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seemed to understand the text, the participant did encounter several difficult words and phrases.

When faced with difficulty in understanding the difficult words and phrases, the thinking aloud helped the participant to understand the text better. The participant also imagined about the content in the text and related it to his previous knowledge. This was done so that the participant would understand the text better. The think aloud did not confuse and disturb the participant's thoughts but it helped the participant. The participant also realized that thinking about the text and visualizing about it could make the participant understand the text better. In addition, based on the retelling which was carried out after the reading comprehension task, the participant managed to relate the main ideas easily.

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4.3.2 Personal Interview with Participant 2

The second personal interview was carried out right after the retelling session. The second participant said that the text was easy to comprehend as the participant had learnt about the topic earlier. At the same time, the participant said that there were difficult words which could not be understood easily. The participant managed to overcome this difficult situation by think back and understanding the sentences.

The participant revert to the sentences that were difficult able to understand. The participant did have some problems in reading and thinking at the same time. The participant found the text easy as the participant had knowledge about the text. The participant said that the think-aloud did not confuse or disturb his thoughts. In actual fact, it helped the participant to recall about the contents of the reading

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comprehension text. Furthermore, in the retelling session, the participant managed to retell the main ideas of the reading comprehension task.

4.3.3 Personal Interview with Participant 3

The third personal interview was carried out after the think-aloud and retelling session. The participant found the text easy but at the same time there were some difficult words to comprehend. Also, the participant found it difficult to read and think at the same time. The participant found it hard to read the comprehension text and concentrate at the same time. This could be due to the fact that the participant had not enough exposure to the think-aloud instructions. The participant said that when reading and thinking at the same time, it helped the participant to understand the text better. The participant said that the think-aloud did not confuse or disturb the participant's thoughts. The participant was able to understand and make conclusion through the think-aloud. However, through the retelling session, the participant was not able to retell all the main ideas of the reading comprehension text.

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CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on the discussions about the findings of the research on the exploration of the think-aloud protocols among Form Four students in a reading comprehension task..The findings of the results are summarized according to the data obtained from the research. Generally, this study has three main aims. The main aims of this study were to (a) identify whether the use of think-aloud protocol as a reading strategy improves reading comprehension among Form Four students,(b)identify the strategies used by the Form Four students where reading comprehension is concerned and (c)investigate whether Form Four students are aware and able to use the reading strategies in a reading comprehension task.

Specifically, this research is carried out to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent does the think-aloud protocols provide information about reading strategies?
2. What type of strategies used by the students in a reading comprehension task?
3. Does the use of think-aloud protocols in a reading comprehension class

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improves reading?

The research design chosen for this study is a case study which was conducted to three Form Four students in a secondary school in Kinta District II. A qualitative approach was used to analyze the findings of the study. The researcher conducted a case study design to collect data from the Form Four students to answer the research questions. Majority of the students in this school are Chinese and their economical background status are from the middle-class family. The researcher have selected three participants from the Form Four population and placed them in the think-aloud group. All the participants were exposed to the think-aloud protocols in a reading comprehension lesson. The researcher has prepared a reading task based on the theme, Health and the topic chosen was about The Heart for each of the participant. The participants were required to read the passage on heart while think-aloud during the reading comprehension session.

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There were two research instruments used in this study. The first instrument was a task with comprehension passage which was selected from the Form Four English text book. The second instrument used in this study was the interview questions prepared by the researcher to get feedback from the participants regarding the passage they have read and the type cognitive thinking strategies used by the participants to comprehend the passage. The two instruments were used to collect data in exploring the benefits of think-aloud protocols in a reading comprehension task. The findings from the reading task conducted to each of the participants were audio-recorded and transcribed. The results were presented in the form of table which consist the types of cognitive thinking skills used by all the participants. The percentages which represented the type of cognitive thinking used by all the

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participants were calculated and compared.

The second part was the interview sessions between the researcher and all the three participants. All the participants were interviewed individually to get feedback on the usage of think-aloud protocols during the reading task session. The participants were asked fifteen questions based on the passage they have read by the researcher throughout the session. The interview sessions were observed, audio-recorded and transcribed. The data obtained from the two sessions were gathered and analyzed by using descriptive statistics. The frequencies and percentages were calculated for each of the participant based on the cognitive thinking skills used by them and compared overall to state clearly the outcome of the research.

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5.2 Summary of the Findings

Based on the analyses of the findings, this research has successfully explored the usage of think-aloud protocols among Form Four students in a reading comprehension task. The data obtained from the reading task and the interview sessions have been analyses thoroughly in Chapter Four. The findings of the research during the two sessions is stated clearly in Table 4.2.1, Table 4.2.2, Table 4.2.3 and Table 4.2.4.These tables will be used to answer all the research questions.

Specifically, the first research question intends to answer to what extent think-aloud provides information on the reading strategies. Through the data obtained, the participants used many types of cognitive thinking strategies mainly questioning, agreeing and relating to previous knowledge. The most popular strategy among the

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participants was questioning because this strategy is commonly used in the reading comprehension passages found in the Form Four English textbook designed by the Ministry of Education. All in all, there are sixteen chapters in the Form Four English textbook. Each chapter has a reading passage followed by a set of comprehension questions. These comprehension questions emphasizes on Wh-questions which represents 82.1% compared to the other types of strategies like reasoning ,explaining, describing and identifying.

Basically, from the analyses of the findings of the study, the participants used various types of strategies during the reading task session. This can be seen from the data collected through the reading task sessions and when the researcher interviewed the participants. From the overall analyze of the data, the researcher concluded that the participants used various types of cognitive strategies during the reading task session. This can be seen from table 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.3 and 4.2.4 which prove that the participants are exposed to many types of reading strategies and they are able to use the strategies effectively throughout the reading task. This is shown in the excerpts below:

Text: The fat blocks the arteries so blood is not able to flow through them. A blood clot is formed and this is very dangerous.

Think Aloud: okay.... When fat blocks the arteries, the blood cannot flow. dangerous also.

Data Analysis: ***Paraphrasing / Making generalizations***

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Text: The heart also does not receive enough oxygen or nutrients because there is not enough blood supplied to it.

Think Aloud: Ooohhh... if I have this angina, so my heart won't receive enough oxygen and my brain also won't work.

Data Analysis: ***Inferencing/Understanding/Elaborating (based on previous knowledge)***

Furthermore, during the interview session, the first participant said that think-aloud strategy guided the participant to understand the whole concept of the passage about the heart. The participant also said the passage was easy to comprehend because the participant was able to imagine about the content of the passage and the think-aloud helped the participant to understand the passage. This is supported by Jeffrey D. Wilhelm (2006) who said that think-aloud protocols are also inexact reproductions of a person's actual thinking about reading and no one can thoroughly or accurately capture all of what he sees in his mind's eye. For these reasons, a think-aloud has been described as providing information about what a person is thinking while reading. From here, we can conclude that think-aloud protocols provide information which is very useful to learners and educators. The learners can make use of the strategies in think-aloud to comprehend the passage better whereas the educators can use this information found in think-aloud protocols to enhance their teaching. The educators can guide and lead the students in comprehending a passage effectively.

Based on the second research question that is to identify type of strategies used by the students in a reading comprehension task, the findings showed that the participants are aware of various types of reading strategies. Through the analysis of the data obtained, the participants used cognitive thinking strategies

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throughout the reading comprehension task. They were able to use strategies to comprehend the passage better. At the same time, the participants were able to relate and the content of the passage to the think-aloud protocols like questioning, agreeing, relating to previous knowledge and inferencing. When the participants face difficulties in comprehending certain words and phrases while reading the passage, they tend to question themselves in order to get a better understanding of the passage. For example, the first participant used the questioning strategy eight times which showed the highest frequency compared with the other strategies. This is shown in the excerpts below:

> Text :and may explain why only a small number of people suffer from heart diseases in the Mediterranean area, where garlic is used in many of their dishes.
>
> Think Aloud:How can they eat that dish? Garlic it smells…it make our breath sting..

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Data Analysis:***Questioning/ Stating Opinion/ Reasoning***

> Text :Saffron is a rare and expensive spice that lowers blood pressure. It is a spice commonly used in Spain, and this may explain why fewer people in Spain suffer from heart disease than elsewhere in Europe.
>
> Think Aloud :Saffron? Is it the red stripe and the long kind of flower, right?

Data Analysis:***Questioning/Hypothesizing/Relating(based on previous knowledge)***

Based on the excerpts above, the participants tend to question to find out more information regarding the content of the passage during the reading session task. The findings of the research show that used think-aloud strategies to explore the reading comprehension task which enables the participants to have a better understanding of the passage. Other than questioning, the participant used other cognitive strategies such as relating to previous knowledge in the reading comprehension as shown in the

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excerpts above. From here, we can conclude that the participants used various types of cognitive strategies to explore the reading comprehension task.

This is supported by Brantmeier (2004) and Spires & Donley (1998) who state that the use of think-aloud strategies like prior knowledge aids reading comprehension for a good reader. Chen and Graves (1995) state that background knowledge shows positive effect on learners reading comprehension where the learners are able to make connections between the content of passage they are reading to their previous knowledge.

The findings gathered from the reading task and interview session revealed that all the three participants did not employ certain strategies effectively. Although all the participants involved in this research were aware of the cognitive strategies found in think-aloud protocols, they did not use the metacognitive strategies which play an essential part in achieving comprehension. This could be due to the fact that they were unaware of the metacognitive strategies. This could also be that the participants were not exposed enough or they do not have the appropriate knowledge of the metacognitive strategies. From the data gathered, it is obvious that none of the participants used the metacognitive strategies like planning, monitoring, regulating and evaluating which involves higher level of thinking and understanding.

This is followed by the third research question which intends to find out whether the use think-aloud protocols in a reading comprehension task improves reading among students. Based on the findings collected during the reading comprehension task and personal interview sessions, think-aloud improves reading among learners. This can be seen in the excerpts below:

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Text: Another effect of narrow arteries is angina, or heart pain. The heart also does not receive enough oxygen or nutrients because there is not enough blood supplied to it.

Think Aloud: So, that's another word for heart pain.

Data Analysis: Clarifying/***Stating comprehension/ Relating (to previous knowledge)***

Text : Some people who have an unhealthy heart suffer from atherosclerosis.

Think Aloud : This is the disease that blood can't reach the brain, right?

Data Analysis: ***Questioning / Inferencing / Relating (to previous knowlwdge)***

The participants were able to relate the cognitive skills stated above such as clarifying, stating comprehension, relating to previous knowledge, questioning and inferencing to the passage they are reading in order to improve their reading. From the interview sessions, the researcher found that the participants stated that the think-aloud strategies assisted them in the reading comprehension task. When they use the think-aloud strategies during the reading task, they were able to answer the researcher's questions regarding the passage they have read. At the same time, the participants feel that they are improving their reading skills and more confident in their reading. The researcher noticed that think-aloud strategies boost the participants' confidence towards reading.

Based on the data analysis, the participants showed that they were able to comprehend the passage by using the strategies like questioning and paraphrasing, agreeing and relating to previous knowledge. They were able to understand the

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passage better while using this type of cognitive strategies. This was further enhanced with the retelling where the students were able to retell the main ideas of the passage. This was followed by the personal interview sessions where the participants demonstrated that they understood better when using the cognitive reading strategies. They were able to say that they made use of strategies when reading the comprehension passage.

This is further supported by research evidence by Baumann, Seifert-Kessell & Jones (1992) who concluded that think-aloud instructions was highly effective in helping students acquire a broad range of strategies to enhance understanding of text and to deal with comprehension difficulties. Also Roger Farr and Jenny Corner (2004) pointed out that by using think-aloud strategies, we can help students to read and build their comprehension.

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Therefore, the researcher concluded that the exploration of think-aloud protocols among students will improve their reading and enhance their interest towards reading comprehension task. If the students are exposed with various cognitive strategies in think-aloud, they will be able to comprehend a passage more effectively and meaningfully. The educators should emphasize the cognitive strategies during the teaching and learning of English especially reading comprehension to the students. The good students will expand their knowledge in reading comprehension whereas the weaker ones will improve their reading skills to be a better reader.

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5.3 Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to explore the think-aloud protocols in a reading comprehension task. The main focuses of this study are to (a) find out to what extent does the think-aloud protocols provide information about reading strategies?(b) identify the strategies used by the Form Four students when reading comprehension is concerned and (c) identify whether the use of think-aloud protocol as a reading strategy improves reading comprehension among Form Four student. It is hoped that the exploration of the think-aloud protocols in a reading comprehension becomes a useful tool to students.

Based on the findings, think-aloud provides a lot of information regarding strategies where students can use the appropriate strategies to enhance their comprehension. It is also important to train the students on how to carry out think-aloud on their own. This type of training and practices is to ensure that students are able to do the think-aloud since it is not something that a student would be familiar with. The teacher can act as a facilitator during think-aloud session or model the think-aloud session. It will be a meaningful experience as it can produce a lot of verbal data that the teacher can use to resolve and overcome comprehension problems.

Furthermore, in this think-aloud session with the students, we know that good readers use strategies to have a better understanding of a reading text. They are able to comprehend the text and get the gist of the text by employing various strategies.Moreover, when the thinking procedures are used in this situation, reading strategies identified not only revealed individuals efforts in comprehending a text but also what sort of concerted effort were made by the students in their attempt to

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overcome various obstacles to comprehension. In addition, students who have been exposed to think-aloud protocols verbalize their thoughts differently from students who have not been exposed to think-aloud. Moreover, by using think-aloud as a strategy, it shows how the students use it efficiently in getting meaning out of the text. Besides, by verbalizing their thoughts and feelings, students are able to identify which part of the text that causes the most problem. This could be an advantage for the teacher where the teacher would be able to identify proper strategies to overcome these problems.

Although, the main limitation is that it seems unnatural to most users to think aloud when reading and the task could feel harder to perform but different case studies has shown that the verbalization could lead to an increase in performance from the test users (Berry and Broadbent 1990) Another limitation that some content to have is that we have limited short-term memory capacity for talking and attending at the same time (Stratman & Hamp-Lyons 1994 cited in Branch 2000; Wilson 1994). Hence the ability for some people to work through an activity and talk at the same time may be reduced. Indeed, this is sometimes seen during the think-aloud session, when participants fall silent during activity completion. But we must remain clear on what the think-aloud data is capable of measuring. We know that it is aimed at uncovering thought processes.

In conclusion, think aloud provides a lot of information regarding reading strategies where students can use the appropriate strategies to enhance their comprehension. It is also important to train the students on how to carry out think aloud on their own. This type of training and practices is to ensure that students are able to do the think-aloud since it is not something that a reader would be familiar

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with. The teacher can act as a facilitator during think aloud session or model the think-aloud session. It will be a meaningful experience as it can produce a lot of verbal data that the teacher can use to resolve and overcome comprehension problems.

5.4 Pedagogical Implications

The findings of the study offer several pedagogical implications for reading lessons in comprehension context. First, the think-aloud method provides teachers with an excellent means to evaluate students' comprehension processes and makes their strengths and weaknesses visible and thus allows them to help students adjust their strategies. Second, especially readers with lower level language proficiency might benefit from an instructional procedure such as where they learn to monitor their comprehension and use their background knowledge with the help of a teacher who models the steps of the instructional process, and where they discuss their strategies while reading the text. Raising students' awareness about when, where, and how to use reading strategies obviously can make them "strategic" readers (Paris, Lipson, & Wixon, 1983).

As a result of the discussions with the students, it is found that the selection of the texts should be based on learners' interests and background knowledge. Moreover, based on the experience of the researchers during the present study, the students relate better to text that interest them and text that they are familiar with. Therefore to develop their reading skills which will lead them to be proficient readers, the main

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consideration factor should be the text or reading materials. This would enhance reading lessons and the process may result in a dynamic classroom environment where students enjoy reading the texts which would lead to interaction and learning.

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DATA ANALYSIS

TOPIC : HEART

PARTICIPANT 1

Text : The heart of the average person beats about 72 times a minute.

Think Aloud : Wahhh!!! That's quite fast.

Data Analysis : ***Making Generalisations***

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Text : It pumps nearly 14000 liters' of blood a day.

Think Aloud : That's quite a lot of blood flowing in my body.

Data Analysis : ***Inferencing***

Text : These are amazing statistics which show how hard the human heart has to work..It is, therefore, important for everyone to have a healthy heart.

Think Aloud : Do I have a healthy heart? Okay, when I read this I will know.

Data Analysis : ***Questioning / Predicting***

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Text : Some people who have an unhealthy heart suffer from atherosclerosis.

Think Aloud : This is the disease that blood can't reach the brain, right?

Data Analysis : ***Questioning / Inferencing / Relating(to previous knowlwdge)***

Text : This disease happens because the walls of the arteries become thick of fat.

Think Aloud : It will ……(.pause)

Data Analysis : ***Questioning***

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Text : The fat blocks the arteries so blood is not able to flow through them. A blood clot is formed and this is very dangerous.

Think Aloud : okay…. When fat blocks the arteries, the blood cannot flow. dangerous also.

Data Analysis : ***Paraphrasing / Making generalisations***

Text : Another effect of narrow arteries is angina, or heart pain.

Think Aloud : okay, need to look back at the dictionary… okay, no problem.

Data Analysis: ***Stating lack of understanding***

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Text : The heart also does not receive enough oxygen or nutrients because there is not enough blood supplied to it.

Think Aloud : Ooohhh… if I have this angina, so my heart won't receive enough oxygen and my brain also won't work.

Data Analysis: ***Inferencing/Understanding/Elaborating (based on previous knowledge)***

Text : When we exercise, run or when we are suddenly frightened by something, we get palpitations, which refer to a fast or irregular heartbeat.

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Think Aloud : Aaahhh… this is the thing I always scared…

Data Analysis : ***Relating content to previous experience***

Text : This is quite common and not dangerous.

Think Aloud : Of course, it's not dangerous

Data Analysis: ***Agreeing***

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Text : However, when palpitations happen too often or for a long period of time, it may be a sign of heart disease.

Think Aloud : oohhh… it's not dangerous…then palpitations happens for a long time, It's dangerous for you.

Data analysis : ***Inferencing(from text content) / Making new conclusion***

Text : This is especially true if the sufferer also has chest pains.

Think Aloud : Ooohhh… okay ..okay..right…if have chest pain, that's means the chances are high.

Data Analysis : ***Stating comprehension / Inferencing***

Text : In Malaysia, heart disease is one of the biggest killers.

Think Aloud : Of course, look at the food they eat which contains excess fat, excess carbohydrate…

Data Analysis : ***Agreeing/ Relating(to previous knowledge)***

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Text : The government, hospitals, patients and their families spend millions of ringgit on the treatment of heart disease.

Think Aloud : It's total waste of money. If they take care of their heart properly, they don't need to spend so much of money, you know. It's their fault.

Data Analysis : ***Inferencing / Agreeing(based on previous knowledge) / Reasoning***

Text : It, therefore, makes sense to prevent the disease before it becomes serious.

Think Aloud : Yes….. prevention is better than cure.

Data Analysis : ***Agreeing / Paraphrasing***

Text : In order to do this, it is important to strengthen the heart.

Think Aloud : How to strengthen our heart aaahhh?

Data Analysis : ***Questioning / Stating lack of knowledge***

Text : We can make the heart stronger in many ways, such as by eating in a healthy way and lowering stress levels.

Think Aloud : Eating in healthy way is I can but stress level have to try really hard

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because schools provide excessive stress for us… really… real excessive stress actually.

Data Analysis : ***Relating text to personal experience***

Text : We also ask a qualified doctor for an advice and take medications for heart problems.

Think Aloud : Yes, everyone should do this you know actually you can't…. some of them you know just ignore… don't care about the pain, they think it's normal chest pain which actually can lead to severe heart problem.

Data Analysis : ***Agreeing / Elaborating(based on previous experience)***

Text : We can also keep our heart healthy with natural health boosters.

Think Aloud : herbs…. Is it? Ya,herbs.

Data Analysis : ***Questioning / Confirming***

Text : One of the best boosters is cayenne.

Think Aloud : Cayenne….cayenne …okay…need to look into dictionary too. What kind of herbs is this?

Data Analysis : ***Questioning / Stating lack of understanding***

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Text :Cayenne helps to make the heart stronger, the blood flow better and also clears the arteries. If we want to test whether or not this herb really works, we can take some and we will see our face turn red, indicating that blood circulation is good.

Think Aloud : Heart....oohhh...it clears the arteries. Maybe it filters the out dated food. That's what I think so.

Data Analysis : **Stating comprehension/ Inferencing**

Text : The ancient Greeks and Romans used the hawthorn flower as a wedding bouquet because, for them, it was a symbol of joy and hope. Today, it is used as medicine for the heart. The berries of the hawthorn lower blood pressure while the flowers make the heart stronger. This herb also helps to ease chest pains. It can be taken as hawthorn tea made from its flowers and berries.

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.Think Aloud : Hmmmmm.....

Data Analysis : ***No comment***

Text : Even easier to take is garlic.

Think Aloud : Garlic..... I hate garlic. I will never take garlic. Never.....

Data Analysis : ***Emphasizing/ Stating opinion***

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Text : Garlic is wonderful for keeping the heart healthy.

Think Aloud : I don't think so.

Data Analysis : ***Disagreeing***

Text : It has been used for a long time to prevent heart diseases. Was used by the ancient Greeks and Romans as a remedy for illness,…..

Think Aloud : Ooohhh… I see

Data Analysis : ***Stating comprehension / Agreeing***

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Text : and may explain why only a small number of people suffer from heart diseases in the Mediterranean area, where garlic is used in many of their dishes.

Think Aloud : How can they eat that dish? Garlic it smells…it make our breath sting..

Data Analysis : ***Questioning/ Stating Opinion/ Reasoning***

Text : This kitchen ingredient reduces high blood pressure and cholesterol and helps blood circulation.

Think Aloud : I will suggest this to my father.

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Data Analysis : ***Making personal decision(based on text information)***

Text : It is surely one of the easiest boosters to take as it is a common ingredient found in most kitchens.

Think Aloud : okay… I will try taking garlic… I can.

Data Analysis : ***Making personal decision(based on text information)***

Text : A common spice found in every kitchen is black pepper, which helps to improve blood circulation.

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Think Aloud : Yes, my favorite…

Data Analysis : ***Agreeing/ Relating to personal likes and dislikes***

Text : Saffron is a rare and expensive spice that lowers blood pressure. It is a spice commonly used in Spain, and this may explain why fewer people in Spain suffer from heart disease than elsewhere in Europe.

Think Aloud : Saffron? Is it the red stripe and the long kind of flower, right?

Data Analysis: ***Questioning / Hypothesizing / Relating (based on previous knowldge)***

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Text : People have used natural health boosters for hundred of years, and recent studies show that they contain active ingredients that can be used to treat heart disease.

Think Aloud : Ya…actually only modern treatment doesn't helps, herbal treatment contributes more actually from my point of view, what I believe. Yes…I really think so and I also must really …u know…. Eat the balance food and all Malaysians should…because we Malaysians…especially Eastern people, we eat a lot of food where contains spices and its not a remedy actually….u know..it can kill us actually….okay..heart disease …heart is really…need to be careful of our heart…everyone especially Malaysians. Thank you.

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Data Analysis : ***Elaborating / Stating Opinion/ Making conclusion / Relating text (to previous knowledge)***

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DATA ANALYSIS

TOPIC : HEART

PARTICIPANT 2

Text : The heart of the average person beats about 72 times a minute. It pumps nearly 14000 liters' of blood a day.

Think Aloud : Woww....14,000

Data Analysis : ***Stating comprehension***

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Text : These are amazing statistics which show how hard the human heart has to work.

Think Aloud : Yes, it's indeed. It has to work really hard.

Data Analysis : ***Agreeing/ Inferencing***

Text : It is, therefore, important for everyone to have a healthy heart.

Think Aloud : Ya, I agree.

Data Analysis : ***Agreeing***

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Text : Some people who have an unhealthy heart suffer from atherosclerosis.

Think Aloud : What's that suppose to mean? I just ask my science teacher, then.

Data Analysis : ***Expressing Confusion / Questioning***

Text : This disease happens because the walls of the arteries become thick of fat. The fat blocks the arteries so blood is not able to flow through them.

Think Aloud : Ooohhh…. I see

Data Analysis : ***Stating Comprehension***

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Text : The fat blocks the arteries so blood is not able to flow through them. blood clot is formed and this is very dangerous

Think Aloud : Is it?

Data Analysis : ***Questioning***

Text : Another effect of narrow arteries is angina, or heart pain. The heart also does not receive enough oxygen or nutrients because there is not enough blood supplied to it.

Think Aloud : So, that's another word for heart pain.

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Data Analysis : ***Clarifying/ Stating comprehension/ Relating(to previous knowledge)***

Text : When we exercise, run or when we are suddenly frightened by something, we get palpitations, which refer to a fast or irregular heartbeat. This is quite common and not dangerous.

Think Aloud : That's good.

Data Analysis : ***Understanding content***

Text : However, when palpitations happen too often or for a long period of time, it may be a sign of heart disease. This is especially true if the sufferer also has chest pains.

Think Aloud : That's not good.

Data Analysis : ***Understanding content***

Text : In Malaysia, heart disease is one of the biggest killers.

Think Aloud : Ya….indeed.

Data Analysis : ***Agreeing***

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Text : The government, hospitals, patients and their families spend millions of ringgit on the treatment of heart disease. It, therefore, makes sense to prevent the disease before it becomes serious. In order to do this, it is important to strengthen the heart.

Think Aloud : Yes, I guess so.

Data Analysis : ***Agreeing***

Text : We can make the heart stronger in many ways, such as by eating in a healthy way and lowering stress levels. We also ask a qualified doctor for advice and take medications for heart problems.

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Think Aloud : I think its better you go for balance diets and exercise.

Data Analysis : ***Stating opinion***

Text : We can also keep our heart healthy with natural health boosters. One Of the best boosters is cayenne.

Think Aloud : Cayenne? I just refer to the dictionary then.

Data Analysis : ***Questioning/ Stating lack of understanding***

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Text : Cayenne helps to make the heart stronger, the blood flow better and also clears the arteries. If we want to test whether or not this herb really works, we can take some and we will see our face turn red, indicating that blood circulation is good.

Think Aloud : I will try it some day.

Data Analysis : ***Making personal decision(based on text information)***

Text : The ancient Greeks and Romans used the hawthorn flower as a wedding bouquet because, for them, it was a symbol of joy and hope.

Think Aloud : Oooooohhhh……

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Data Analysis : ***No comment***

Text : Today, it is used as medicine for the heart. The berries of the hawthorn lower blood pressure while the flowers make the heart stronger. This herb also helps to ease chest pains. It can be taken as hawthorn tea, made from its flowers and berries.

Think Aloud : I see. So, hawthorn flower can be used as a medicine for the heart. That's quite interesting.

Data Analysis : ***Stating comprehension / Making conclusion / Summarizing***

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Text : Even easier to take is garlic. Garlic is wonderful for keeping the heart healthy.

Think Aloud : So, that's why my mom ask me always to eat garlic.

Data Analysis : ***Understanding content / Relating(to previous knowledge)***

Text :It has been used for a long time to prevent heart diseases. It was used by the ancient Greeks and Romans as a remedy for illness, and may explain why only a small number of people suffer from heart diseases in the Mediterranean area, where garlic is used in many of their dishes. This kitchen ingredient reduces high blood pressure and cholesterol and helps blood circulation.

Think Aloud :Wowww!!! Garlic is indeed good for health. I should consume more of garlic.

Data Analysis : ***Making conclusion/ Making resolution(based on text content)***

Text : It is surely one of the easiest boosters to take as it is a common ingredient found in most kitchens.

Think Aloud : Ya…that's true.

Data Analysis : ***Agreeing / Relating (to previous knowledge)***

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Text : A common spice found in every kitchen is black pepper, which helps to improve blood circulation. Saffron is a rare and expensive spice that lowers blood pressure. It is a spice commonly used in Spain, and this may explain why fewer people in Spain suffer from heart disease than elsewhere in Europe.

Think Aloud : Saffron? I have heard about it. Ya....

Data Analysis : ***Questioning / Relating(to previous knowledge)***

Text : People have used natural health boosters for hundred of years, and recent studies show that they contain active ingredients that can be used to treat heart disease. It is high time that we find out more about how these natural ingredients can help improve our health.

Think Aloud : Hundred of years? Yes... natural ingredients are really good for our health and diseases so that we can live longer.

Data Analysis : ***Questioning/ Inferencing/ Elaborating(based on content)***

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DATA ANALYSIS

TOPIC : HEART

PARTICIPANT 3

Text : The heart of the average person beats about 72 times a minute.

Think Aloud : Woww....72 times a minute! I thought only 60 times a minute. Let me continue.

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Data Analysis : ***Stating comprehension / Relating(to previous knowledge)***

Text : It pumps nearly 14000 liters' of blood a day. These are amazing statistics which show how hard the human heart has to work. : It is, therefore, important for everyone to have a healthy heart.

Think Aloud : 14,000? Wow, that's fantastic. I don't know that my heart work so hard a day.

Data Analysi : ***Questioning/ Understanding Content / Relating(to previous knowledge)***

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Text : Some people who have an unhealthy heart suffer from atherosclerosis.

Think Aloud : Wooowww…a new word for me. Let me check the dictionary later.

Data Analysis : ***Stating lack of knowledge***

Text : This disease happens because the walls of the arteries become thick of fat.

Think Aloud : So, the walls of arteries can be covered of fat?

Data Analysis : ***Questioning / Relating(to previous knowledge)***

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Text : The fat blocks the arteries so blood is not able to flow through them. A blood clot is formed and this is very dangerous.

Think Aloud : A blood clot? What is that?

Data Analysis : ***Questioning / Stating lack of knowledge***

Text : Another effect of narrow arteries is angina, or heart pain. The heart also does not receive enough oxygen or nutrients because there is not enough blood supplied to it.

Think Aloud : Ooohhh…so our heart need blood to perform better.

Data Analysis : ***Inferencing / Understanding content***

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Text : When we exercise, run or when we are suddenly frightened by something, we get palpitations, which refer to a fast or irregular heartbeat.

Think Aloud : Another new word……So, that the meaning of palpitations.

Data Analysis : ***Relating (based on the content)/Understanding content***

Text : This is quite common and not dangerous. However, when palpitations happen too often or for a long period of time, it may be a sign of heart disease. This is especially true if the sufferer also has chest pains.

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Think Aloud : Wowww…. I think I should be aware of symptoms so that I will not get the heart attack..

Data Analysis : ***Making personal decision(based on text information)***

Text : In Malaysia, heart disease is one of the biggest killers.

Think Aloud : Wowww….This is an interesting fact for me.

Data Analysis : ***Relating(based on text information)***

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Text : The government, hospitals, patients and their families spend millions of ringgit on the treatment of heart disease.

Think Aloud : Wowww…so, all this while the hospitals has spent a lot of money to treat the disease.

Data Analysis : ***Making generalisations / Agreeing***

Text : It, therefore, makes sense to prevent the disease before it becomes serious. In order to do this, it is important to strengthen the heart.

Think Aloud : Hmmmm…..how do we strengthen our heart?

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Data Analysis : ***Questioning***

Text : We can make the heart stronger in many ways, such as by eating in a healthy way and lowering stress levels. We also ask a qualified doctor for advice and take medications for heart problems.

Think Aloud : Hmmmm… I think I should take this step to prevent heart attack.

Data Analysis : ***Making pesonal decision(based on text information)***

Text : We can also keep our heart healthy with natural health boosters.

Think Aloud : What is natural health boosters?

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Data Analysis ***: Questioning***

Text : One of the best boosters is cayenne.

Think Aloud : Cayenne? What is it? Never mind, let me continue.

Data Analysis : ***Questioning/Stating lack of knowledge***

Text : Cayenne helps to make the heart stronger, the blood flow better and also clears the arteries. If we want to test whether or not this herb really works, ...

Think Aloud : Ooohhh…I know Cayenne is a herb… it's a herb which can help us which can help the blood to flow better and also to clear our arteries.

Data Analysis : ***Stating comprehension / Relating(based on the content)***

Text : we can take some and we will see our face turn red, indicating that blood circulation is good.

Think Aloud : Hmmmm…. Maybe I should try this at home but is there any easier way for me?

Data Analysis : ***Questioning/ Making personal decision(based on text information)***

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Text : The ancient Greeks and Romans used the hawthorn flower as a wedding bouquet because, for them, it was a symbol of joy and hope. Today, it is used as medicine for the heart. The berries of the hawthorn lower blood pressure while the flowers make the heart stronger. This herb also helps to ease chest pains. It can be taken as hawthorn tea made from its flowers and berries.

Think Aloud :Hmmm…. What is hawthorn flowers? I never heard of it before. Never mind, let me continue.

Data Analysis : ***Questioning/ Stating lack of knowledge***

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Text : Even easier to take is garlic. Garlic is wonderful for keeping the heart healthy.

Think Aloud : Garlic? Ya… I can find garlic at my home.

Data Analysis : ***Questioning/Relating (to previous knowledge)***

Text : Garlic is wonderful for keeping the heart healthy.

Think Aloud : I didn't know that. Wowww… this is an interesting and new fact for me.

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Data Analysis : ***Stating lack of knowledge / Relating(based on text information)***

Text : It has been used for a long time to prevent heart diseases.

Think Aloud : I didn't know that.

Data Analysis : ***Stating lack of knowledge***

Text : It was used by the ancient Greeks and Romans as a remedy for illness, and may explain why only a small number of people suffer from heart diseases in the Mediterranean area, where garlic is used in many of their dishes. This kitchen ingredient reduces high blood pressure and cholesterol and helps blood circulation.

Think Aloud : Woowww… Greeks and Romans use garlic in their dishes?

Data Analysis : ***Questioning/***

Text : It is surely one of the easiest boosters to take as it is a common ingredient found in most kitchens.

Think Aloud : I can ask my mother to prepare some garlic dishes for me to keep my heart healthy.

Data Analysis : ***Making personal decision(based on text information)***

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Text : A common spice found in every kitchen is black pepper, which helps to improve blood circulation.

Think Aloud : What? Black pepper? Black pepper also can help…..

Data Analysis : ***Questioning / Expressing Confusion***

Text : Saffron is a rare and expensive spice that lowers blood pressure. It is a spice commonly used in Spain, and this may explain why fewer people in Spain suffer from heart disease than elsewhere in Europe.

Think Aloud : What is a saffron? I will check in the dictionary.

Data Analysis : ***Questioning/ Stating lack of knowledge***

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Text : People have used natural health boosters for hundred of years, and recent studies show that they contain active ingredients that can be used to treat heart disease.

Think Aloud : Oohhh… is that so?

Data Analysis : ***Questioning***

Text : It is high time that we find out more about how these natural ingredients can help improve our health.

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Think Aloud : Hmmm.... Based on this what I have study now, we can take many precautions to keep our heart healthy.

Data Analysis ***:Relating (to previous knowledge) / Understanding Content***

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PARTICIPANT 1 - RETELLING

Okay... from the passage just now...aaahh...I got to know that ...woowww...actually that's a lot of heart disease actually...I just knew a few....i didn't know ....aaaahhh..i mean heart disease ahhhh....can cost fortune actually to treat it actually aaahhh... and I was amazed by the fact that our heart pumps 14,000 litres of a day...ooohhh...that's...that's..really a lot.... U know....we look like as if that just a body contains 14,000 of blood? Oh...that's great...god is great...and our heart beats 70 times...72 time per minute...its really fast...that's really fast. Aaahh...I heard that babies....their heart beats more faster than us. Maybe 102 times...who knows and I also knew that heart diseases are really dangerous and there is a specific disease's name atherosclerosis or something aahhh...I know this disease will not allowed blood to be transferred to the brain and aaahhh..it will kill our nerves and and ...I also ...the most gon.... and the most eristic I knew...our hearts can be blocked by fat. It's ...it's very new thing actually...I m learning.

Aaahhh... its more than aahh...I would say better ...it's better learning than reading because I just knew now and I also knew...got to know that herbal treatment u know..herbal remedies such as garlic, saffron, black pepper and what flower is that?...hawthorn flower...ya..if I', not mistaken..yaaa. ...hawthorn flower .and...what cayenne...cayenne ...If I'm not mistaken can help to reduce the pressure and cure disease...ya truly actually..not only medical u know....i mean modern medications helps but herbal medications contribute a lot actually and I also knew that treating heart diseases by going to hospital and treatment and all those bypasses really can cost us a fortune. So, we have to take care of our heart. Garlic...ya...I forgot about garlic

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just now...yes garlic..i hate garlic...although it gives out a foul that...it's a good herb...it has to be consumed because it's known to cure heart disease and I also know that over palpitations can cause chest pain which is also known as a heart disease and maybe...maybe although who run much they face this kind of problem...maybe...not me because I don't like to exercise and saffron...ya..saffron, black pepper ... These are the herbs that help to cure heart disease and prevent heart disease and aaaahhh.. now newly...I also got to know that newly that the scientists found that herbal medications is also better and safer without any side effects to cure heart disease and I realized that our heart is really important actually because without ..actually..this is the one and only organ that helps us alive...okay. Although we need oxygen but we need oxygen to flow through out our body and heart does it actually with the oxi... hemoglobin with all those kind of stuff. It's great...u know about our heart actually. Yaaa...it's really valuable thing...valuable organ....it's valuable than anything because you can't live without it actually when heart stops to pump then..you are no more. So, bottom of the point is I hate garlic...but I need to take garlic to prevent heart disease and I also knew that our heart is our ....u know...major organ in our body and I also ....aaah...I also know about the Greeks and Romans...yaa...actually ...actually they are very famous medicators last time actually. So, overall I knew that our heart is very important thing and we need to take care of it as a miser...we need to be a miser to take care of it actually. Thank you very much.

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RETELLING

PARTICIPANT 2

Our heart beats about 72 times a day/a minute. It pumps about 14,000 liters a day. Well, heart disease is mainly cause by blocked arteries by fat, the walls of arteries become thick and fat its blocks blood circulation which causes heart disease. Malaysia is the most common country with its...where it's ....the population has the most heart disease problems. They spend a lot in treatment, medicine and cure for the heart disease. So, most of the time natural herbs are used to treat this heart disease such as hawthorn flowers and berries. It is used by Greek and Romans long time ago to treat heart diseases. Not only hawthorn flowers and berries but also garlic..is the most common heart diseases...the most common thing we can use to treat heart disease. We should consume more garlic so that our ....so that it can help for more easy blood circulation. Also we can ....also it about using black pepper and saffron. So, natural herbs are really helpful in heart disease and so that because they are good treatment for heart disease.

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RETELLING

PARTICIPANT 3

This text is about our heart. How to keep our heart healthy and how to prevent heart diseases. For example, taking garlic can prevent heart diseases. This is an interesting fact and simple food which I didn't take notice before this and how hospitals has spend a lot of money to prevent heart diseases. How our hearts beats and how we should take our food so that we can keep our heart healthy. So, based on this text I have learnt that heart is an important organ for human. They pump blood to our body. Therefore, everyone of us should keep their heart healthy so that we would not get any heart diseases and risk our life.

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Interview

Participant 1

Teacher : Good morning

Participant : Good morning, sir

Teacher : I'm going to ask you some questions regarding the text that you have read.

Participant : Okay, sir

Teacher : Do you think the text was easy?

Participant : Yes

Teacher : Why do you think it was easy?

Participant : Because it's about heart disease. It's very common issue among us...especially Malaysians...so it was quite easy for me to understand the text.

Teacher : Did you find it difficult to read and think at the same time?

Participant : No, sir

Teacher : Why you say so?

Participant : Because as far as I know, I imagine... when I read I thought the facts which which was related to the heart disease. So, I didn't find it very difficult actually.

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Teacher : Did you encounter any difficult words or phrases?

Participant : Yes, sir

Teacher : Did the thinking help you to understand the text better?

Participant : Yes, of course

Teacher : How did it help you to understand the text better?

Participant : It makes me understand better.... I imagined...okay... you keep the thinking aside...I imagined....okay ...just say I was reading about the causes of heart disease and I imagine that so it makes me ...it was easier to understand the whole concept about it.

Teacher : My next question....

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Participant : Okay

Teacher : Whenever you stop thinking when reading the text... did the think aloud helped you to understand the text better?

Participant : Yes

Teacher : Next question....Did the think aloud confused and disturbed your thoughts?

Participant : No, I don't think so.

Teacher : Okay... my last question....do you think thinking aloud will help students to understand a text better?

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Participant : Of course

Teacher : Why do you said so?

Participant : It's because when they read a text, if they just read plainly, they won't understand, they won't get the concept of the text when they think and when they visualize what's going on. Maybe they can get...they catch up what's on, they are reading and they can get more.

Teacher : Thank you!

Participant : Thank you, sir.

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Interview

Participant 2

Teacher : Good morning

Participant : Good morning, sir

Teacher : I'm going to ask you a few questions regarding the text that you have read.

Participant : Okay, sir

Teacher : Do you think the text was easy?

Participant : Ya.

Teacher : Why do you say it was easy?

Participant : Because it's about....it's about general knowledge...it's about heart and Its disease, the effects and the causes and everything. So, as a Form 4 student, I think it's easy to understand and I have learnt it in science all these things.

Teacher : Did you find it difficult to read and think at the same time?

Participant : A bit.

Teacher :What are the problems that you encountered reading and thinking at the same time

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Participant : Aaahhh....encountered with some of ...some new words which I don't know what's .....what it means...so, it took me time to think back and understand the line.

Teacher :Another question...when you were reading and at the same time you were thinking, did you face any problem...reading and thinking at the same time?

Participant : No

Teacher : Did the thinking help you to understand the text better?

Participant : Yes

Teacher : How...how did it help you to understand the text better?

Participant : Because I can relate with own experience and think about it so that I can understand it better.

Teacher : Whenever you stop to think, did the think aloud helped you to understand the text better?

Participant : Yes

Teacher : Did the think aloud confused or disturbed your thoughts?

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Participant : Hmmm…not really…because it helped me to understand but sometimes I may forgot what…what I have read before I think aloud.

Teacher : Last question…Do you think thinking aloud will help students to understand a text better?

Participant : Yes, because when they think about something they will more understand than they just read and putting aside.

Teacher : Okay, thank you very much.

Participant : Thank you, sir

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Interview

Participant 3

Teacher : Good afternoon

Participant : Good afternoon, sir

Teacher : I'm going to ask you a few questions regarding the text that you have read

Participant :Okay, sir

Teacher :Do you think the text was easy?

Participant : It was easy but there are some….a few difficult words which I have never encountered before.

Teacher :Why did you say it's quite difficult?

Participant :Because I'm not used to it …..used to the words…it was new.

Teacher :Did you find it difficult to read and think at the same time?

Participant :No

Teacher :Did you encounter any the problems reading and thinking at the same time?

Participant :Yes

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Teacher :What were the problems?

Participant :It's hard… hard to concentrate when you are thinking at the same time.

Teacher :What do you do when you encountered difficult words and phrases?

Participant :Firstly, I would ask my teacher or my friends. If they do not know the answer then I will search for the dictionary.

Teacher :I repeat the question. This is when you were reading the text and you come across difficult words and phrases. So, what do you do?

Participant :I will think of another word in case the words that I can understand the words and line better.

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Teacher :Okay, good. Did the thinking help you to understand the text better?

Participant :Yes

Teacher :How did it help you?

Participant :When I was thinking and reading at the same time I got the information,this will help me to understand the passage better.

Teacher : My next question….Whenever you stop to think, did the think aloud helped you to understand the text better?

Participant : Yes, by doing so I can understand every line better before I go to the

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next line.

Teacher : Did the think aloud confused or disturbed your thoughts?

Participant : No, I don't

Teacher : My last question....do you think thinking aloud will help students to understand a text better?

Participant : Yes

Teacher : Why?

Participant :By thinking, you will able to understand and make conclusion from the passage and this help to understand the text better.

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Teacher :Okay...thank you very much...you can go to your class.

Participant :Thank you.

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THE READING TEXT

The heart of the average person beats about 72 times a minute. It pumps nearly 14000 liters' of blood a day. These are amazing statistics which show how hard the human heart has to work. It is, therefore, important for everyone to have a healthy heart.

Some people who have an unhealthy heart suffer from atherosclerosis. This disease happens because the walls of the arteries become thick of fat. The fat blocks the arteries so blood is not able to flow through them. A blood clot is formed and this is very dangerous. The heart also does not receive enough oxygen or nutrients because there is not enough blood supplied to it.

When we exercise, run or when we are suddenly frightened by something, we get palpitations, which refer to a fast or irregular heartbeat. This is quite common and not dangerous. However, when palpitations happen too often or for a long period of time, it may be a sign of heart disease. This is especially true if the sufferer also has chest pains.

In Malaysia, heart disease is one of the biggest killers. The government, hospitals, patients and their families spend millions of ringgit on the treatment of heart disease. It, therefore, makes sense to prevent the disease before it becomes serious. In order to do this, it is important to strengthen the heart. We can make the heart stronger in many ways, such as by eating in a healthy way and lowering stress levels. We also ask a qualified doctor for advice and take medications for heart problems.

We can also keep our heart healthy with natural health boosters. One of the best boosters is cayenne. Cayenne helps to make the heart stronger, the blood flow better

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and also clears the arteries. If we want to test whether or not this herb really works, we can take some and we will see our face turn red, indicating that blood circulation is good.

The ancient Greeks and Romans used the hawthorn flower as a wedding bouquet because, for them, it was a symbol of joy and hope. Today, it is used as medicine for the heart. The berries of the hawthorn lower blood pressure while the flowers make the heart stronger. This herb also helps to ease chest pains. It can be taken as hawthorn tea made from its flowers and berries.

Even easier to take is garlic. Garlic is wonderful for keeping the heart healthy. It has been used for a long time to prevent heart diseases. It was used by the ancient Greeks and Romans as a remedy for illness, and may explain why only a small number of people suffer from heart diseases in the Mediterranean area, where garlic is used in many of their dishes. This kitchen ingredient reduces high blood pressure and cholesterol and helps blood circulation. It is surely one of the easiest boosters to take as it is a common ingredient found in most kitchens.

A common spice found in every kitchen is black pepper, which helps to improve blood circulation. Saffron is a rare and expensive spice that lowers blood pressure. It is a spice commonly used in Spain, and this may explain why fewer people in Spain suffer from heart disease than elsewhere in Europe.

People have used natural health boosters for hundred of years, and recent studies show that they contain active ingredients that can be used to treat heart disease. It is high time that we find out more about how these natural ingredients can help improve our health.

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