Reading Challenges Encountered by Learners and Teacher-Implemented Interventions: A Structured Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Reading proficiency remains a critical determinant of learners' academic success and long-term educational attainment. However, persistent difficulties in early reading acquisition continue to be reported across diverse educational contexts. This study provides a structured literature review examining the reading challenges encountered by learners and the instructional interventions implemented to address these difficulties. A systematic search of peer-reviewed studies was conducted across ERIC, Scopus, and Google Scholar. Using predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria, studies focusing on early and elementary-level learners were analyzed through thematic synthesis. The review identifies recurrent learner-level challenges, including deficits in phonological awareness, limited vocabulary development, decoding difficulties, and comprehension deficits. Contextual factors such as socio-economic disparities, multilingual environments, and limited instructional resources further compound these challenges. A systematic search of peer-reviewed studies was conducted across ERIC, Scopus, and Google Scholar. Using predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria, studies focusing on early and elementary-level learners were analyzed through thematic synthesis. The review identifies recurrent learner-level challenges, including deficits in phonological awareness, limited vocabulary development, decoding difficulties, and comprehension deficits. Contextual factors such as socio-economic disparities, multilingual environments, and limited instructional resources further compound these challenges. Findings indicate that evidence-based interventions particularly explicit phonics instruction, structured literacy approaches, differentiated instruction, formative assessment practices, and family engagement initiatives demonstrate positive effects on reading development when implemented systematically and consistently. However, variability in implementation fidelity and contextual adaptation influences intervention effectiveness. This review contributes to the field by integrating learner-level and contextual determinants within a consolidated analytical framework, highlighting gaps in research in low-resource and linguistically diverse settings. The study offers implications for literacy policy, teacher professional development, and future empirical investigations aimed at improving reading outcomes globally.

Keywords: *reading acquisition, literacy intervention, phonological awareness, structured literacy, educational research synthesis*

INTRODUCTION

Reading proficiency is widely recognized as a foundational competency upon which all other areas of learning depend. Beyond the mechanical ability to decode written symbols, reading involves constructing meaning, integrating prior knowledge, and engaging in critical interpretation of text. As noted by Snow (2002), reading comprehension reflects the interaction among the reader, the text, and the activity or purpose for reading. Early reading success has been consistently linked to long-term academic achievement, whereas early difficulties often result in cumulative educational disadvantage, a phenomenon described by Stanovich (1986) as the "Matthew Effect" in reading. Given its centrality to academic development, schools bear primary responsibility for ensuring that learners acquire essential literacy skills. Teachers play a pivotal role in facilitating reading development through evidence-based instructional practices, formative assessment, and targeted intervention. Foundational components of effective reading instruction include phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development, and comprehension strategies, as identified by the National Reading Panel (2000). Furthermore, early identification of reading difficulties and timely intervention are critical to preventing persistent literacy failure (Ehri, 2005). Despite decades of research in literacy education, a substantial proportion of learners continue to experience reading challenges. These difficulties arise from multifaceted and interacting factors, including deficits in phonological processing, limited vocabulary exposure, inadequate instructional support, socio-economic constraints, and linguistic diversity (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; National Reading Panel, 2000). Learners who fail to acquire foundational decoding and comprehension skills in early grades are at increased risk of long-term academic underachievement (Stanovich, 1986). Concerns regarding reading proficiency are particularly evident in large-scale international assessments. For instance, results from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Programmed for International Student Assessment (OECD, 2019) indicate that several countries, including the Philippines, have performed below the global average in reading literacy. Such findings highlight persistent systemic challenges and underscore the need for context-responsive and evidence-informed literacy interventions.

In response, educational institutions and governing bodies such as the Department of Education have implemented policies and programs aimed at strengthening foundational literacy skills. These include remedial reading initiatives, differentiated instruction, peer-assisted learning strategies, and structured literacy programs (Slavin et al., 2009). While numerous interventions have demonstrated effectiveness, their impact varies depending on implementation fidelity, teacher preparedness, resource availability, and contextual adaptation. Although existing studies have examined discrete aspects of reading difficulties and intervention strategies, there remains a need for an integrative synthesis that consolidates learner-level challenges and contextual determinants within a coherent analytical framework. Much of the literature is dispersed across varied educational settings, making it difficult for practitioners and policymakers to derive comprehensive guidance for practice. Moreover, gaps persist in understanding how instructional approaches function across linguistically diverse and low-resource contexts.

Given these considerations, synthesizing current empirical evidence is both timely and necessary. This study therefore undertakes a structured review of research on reading challenges experienced by learners and the instructional interventions used to address these difficulties. Specifically, it aims to: (1) identify recurring learner-level and contextual challenges in reading acquisition; (2) examine

evidence-based instructional interventions reported in the literature; (3) highlight research gaps and their implications for policy, teacher professional development, and future investigation; and (4) identify recommendations emerging from the research. By integrating findings across diverse contexts, this review seeks to contribute meaningfully to the ongoing discourse on improving literacy outcomes globally.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Foundational Perspectives on Reading Development

Reading development is widely recognized as a complex and multidimensional process shaped by cognitive, linguistic, instructional, and environmental factors. Foundational research identifies five essential components of effective reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (National Reading Panel (NRP), 2000). Deficits in any of these interrelated domains may hinder reading acquisition and result in persistent literacy difficulties. Similarly, Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998) emphasize that early weaknesses in phonological awareness and oral language competence are strong predictors of later reading failure, particularly in the absence of systematic instructional support.

The cumulative nature of reading development is further explained by Stanovich's (1986) "Matthew Effect," which postulates that learners who struggle in the early stages of reading tend to experience widening achievement gaps over time. Limited exposure to print reduces opportunities for vocabulary growth, background knowledge acquisition, and comprehension development, thereby reinforcing academic disadvantage. This theoretical perspective underscores the importance of early identification and targeted intervention. Supporting this view, Ehri (2005) argues that systematic and explicit instruction in word recognition and decoding is critical for developing automaticity, which in turn enables higher-order comprehension processes.

Socioeconomic and Linguistic Influences on Reading Achievement

Beyond cognitive factors, socioeconomic status (SES) and home literacy environments substantially influence literacy outcomes. Snow et al. (1998) note that children from low-income households often enter school with restricted vocabulary exposure and limited background knowledge, which negatively affects comprehension development. Without effective instructional scaffolding, these disparities may widen as learners progress through the grades.

Multilingual contexts introduce additional complexities. When learners are required to read in a second language, limited proficiency in the language of instruction can constrain decoding fluency and text comprehension (NRP, 2000). Such challenges are particularly evident in educational systems where linguistic diversity intersects with socioeconomic inequality. These contextual factors suggest that reading difficulties cannot be understood solely at the learner level but must also be examined within broader sociolinguistic and institutional frameworks.

Evidence from Large-Scale Assessments

Persistent literacy gaps are reflected in international and regional assessments. Results from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Programme for International Student

Assessment (OECD, 2019) indicate that several countries, including the Philippines, performed below the global average in reading literacy, with a substantial proportion of learners failing to reach minimum proficiency levels. Complementing these findings, the Southeast Asia Ministers of Education Organization's Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM, 2024) reported that many Grade 5 learners in the Philippines continue to demonstrate limited foundational reading skills.

These large-scale assessments point to systemic challenges in literacy instruction, including inequities linked to socioeconomic background, language exposure, and resource allocation. They reinforce the urgency of implementing sustained and context-responsive literacy interventions across grade levels.

Instructional Interventions and Evidence-Based Practices

A substantial body of research has examined instructional approaches designed to mitigate reading difficulties. The NRP (2000) concluded that explicit phonics instruction, guided oral reading to enhance fluency, and direct vocabulary instruction are effective components of reading programs. Slavin et al. (2009), in a best-evidence synthesis, reported that one-to-one tutoring, small-group instruction, and cooperative learning strategies significantly improve reading outcomes in elementary grades.

Within the Philippine context, recent systematic reviews indicate that comprehension-focused strategies such as reciprocal teaching, guided reading, and the use of graphic organizers yield positive effects when implemented consistently and with adequate teacher preparation (Lagdaan & Sevilla, 2025). These findings suggest that structured literacy approaches and strategy-based instruction remain central to improving reading performance.

Technological innovations have further expanded intervention possibilities. Saeed (2024), through meta-analytic analysis, found that technology-assisted reading interventions produce moderate positive effects for learners with reading difficulties, particularly when programs are interactive and individualized. Similarly, Esteban, Calang, and Pagador (2024) reported that integrating digital tools into reading instruction in Philippine classrooms enhances learner engagement and comprehension outcomes, if teachers receive sufficient professional training. These findings indicate that digital interventions can complement traditional instructional methods when thoughtfully implemented.

Implementation Challenges and Teacher Capacity

Despite the availability of empirically supported strategies, consistent and high-quality implementation remains a persistent challenge. Snow (2002) emphasizes that comprehension instruction must extend beyond decoding to include explicit strategy instruction that fosters active engagement with text. However, effective implementation requires sustained professional development, ongoing monitoring, and institutional support.

Policy initiatives led by the Department of Education have sought to strengthen early literacy programs and allocate targeted resources to schools with low reading performance. Recent policy discussions have also highlighted the need to support "transitioning readers" in intermediate grades, recognizing that literacy development extends beyond the early years. Nonetheless, variability in teacher

preparedness, instructional quality, and resource availability continues to influence intervention effectiveness.

Both foundational and contemporary literature converge on several key points. First, reading challenges are multifaceted, arising from cognitive, linguistic, and contextual determinants. Second, early and explicit instruction in foundational skills is critical for preventing cumulative academic disadvantage. Third, differentiated and sustained interventions including small-group instruction, strategy-based comprehension teaching, and technology-supported learning demonstrate positive effects when implemented with fidelity. Finally, systemic factors such as socioeconomic inequality, language diversity, and teacher capacity significantly shape literacy outcomes.

While extensive research documents discrete components of reading difficulty and intervention effectiveness, there remains a need for integrative synthesis that connects learner-level challenges with contextual and policy dimensions. Consolidating these strands of evidence provides a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms underlying reading difficulties and informs the design of context-responsive literacy initiatives in diverse educational settings.

METHODS

This study employed a structured literature review design to synthesize empirical research on reading challenges encountered by learners and the instructional interventions implemented to address these difficulties. A structured review was selected to ensure methodological transparency and replicability while allowing for thematic synthesis across diverse educational contexts. The review focused on identifying recurring learner-level and contextual challenges, as well as evidence-based instructional responses reported in peer-reviewed literature. A systematic search of electronic databases was conducted to identify published relevant studies. The primary databases searched included ERIC, Scopus, and Google Scholar, chosen for their extensive coverage of peer-reviewed educational research. Search terms were developed based on the key constructs of the study and combined using Boolean operators, including "reading challenges" or "reading difficulties," "reading acquisition" or "early literacy," "literacy intervention" or "reading intervention," "phonological awareness" or "decoding" or "reading comprehension," and "elementary learners" or "primary education." Additional searches were conducted to capture studies within multilingual and low-resource contexts, particularly in Southeast Asia. Reference lists of selected articles were also manually screened to identify additional relevant studies.

Studies were screened using predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure relevance and quality. Inclusion criteria were: (1) peer-reviewed empirical studies (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods), (2) focused on early childhood, elementary, or primary-level learners, (3) examined reading challenges, literacy development, or instructional interventions, and (4) written in English. Exclusion criteria included opinion papers, editorials, or non-peer-reviewed reports, studies focusing exclusively on secondary or tertiary education, articles without clear methodological description, and studies unrelated to reading or literacy development. Large-scale assessment reports were included selectively to provide contextual background on literacy performance trends.

The initial database search generated a broad pool of studies. Titles and abstracts were screened to remove duplicates and studies that did not meet the inclusion criteria. Full-text articles were then reviewed for eligibility, and studies that satisfied the criteria were retained for thematic analysis. Relevant information from each selected study was extracted, including author(s) and year of publication, country or educational context, research design and sample characteristics, identified reading challenges, description of intervention strategies, and reported outcomes. A thematic synthesis approach was employed to analyze the data, with findings coded and categorized into recurring themes, including cognitive and linguistic challenges, socioeconomic and contextual determinants, evidence-based instructional interventions, and implementation factors influencing effectiveness. Patterns, consistencies, and divergences across studies were examined to identify overarching trends and research gaps.

While efforts were made to ensure systematic selection and transparent procedures, this review is limited to studies published in English and indexed in the selected databases. Additionally, variations in research design, sample characteristics, and intervention duration across studies may affect comparability. Despite these limitations, the structured approach enhances the reliability and analytical coherence of the synthesis, providing a comprehensive understanding of reading challenges and effective instructional interventions in diverse educational settings.

RESULTS, THEMATIC FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Challenges Encountered by Learners in Learning How to Read

The literature indicates that learners encounter multiple, interrelated challenges in learning to read, which significantly influence their academic performance and literacy development. Empirical studies and meta-analyses consistently categorize these challenges into five primary areas: decoding, reading comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, and motivation or engagement. Understanding these domains is critical for designing effective instructional interventions and supporting struggling readers.

Decoding difficulties represent a foundational barrier to reading acquisition. Decoding, the ability to translate letters into sounds and recognize words, depends on phonological awareness and knowledge of letter-sound correspondences. Beginning readers often struggle with decoding due to underdeveloped phonological skills, limited exposure to print, or insufficient early literacy experiences (National Reading Panel (NRP), 2000; Bus, van IJzendoorn, & Pellegrini, 1995). Neurobiological factors, including dyslexia, can further impede word recognition and processing (Shaywitz & Shaywitz, 2008), illustrating that decoding challenges arise from both cognitive and experiential factors.

Reading comprehension difficulties often persist even when learners can decode words accurately. Challenges in comprehension arise from limited vocabulary, insufficient background knowledge, and ineffective strategy use (Snow, 2002). Vanguri et al. (2015) found that 61% of learners occasionally and 21% always skip difficult words, while 53% reported difficulty sustaining attention during reading, highlighting the cognitive complexity of constructing meaning from text. These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions that go beyond decoding to support understanding, retention, and inferential thinking.

Fluency issues further compound reading challenges. Fluency, characterized by reading speed, accuracy, and prosody, serves as a bridge between decoding and comprehension. Many learners read slowly, hesitate over unfamiliar words, or demonstrate inappropriate stress and intonation patterns, which interfere with understanding connected text. Vanguri et al. (2015) reported that 65% of students experienced nervousness when reading aloud due to pronunciation uncertainties, suggesting that fluency difficulties can negatively affect both reading performance and learner confidence.

Limited vocabulary knowledge also emerges as a major barrier. Learners with restricted word knowledge struggle to infer meaning, integrate information, and understand context, ultimately affecting comprehension (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2013; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Vocabulary deficits are particularly pronounced in learners who are non-native speakers or who have limited language exposure, emphasizing the importance of systematic vocabulary instruction in early literacy programs.

Motivation and engagement challenges further exacerbate reading difficulties. Low intrinsic interest or confidence in reading often results in reduced time spent practicing foundational skills, limiting opportunities for skill development (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). Anxiety associated with reading aloud can also contribute to disengagement (Vanguri et al., 2015), highlighting the interplay between cognitive and affective factors in literacy development.

Research also identifies distinct typologies of reading difficulties. Spear-Swerling (2015) classifies reading problems into specific word reading difficulties (SWRD), specific reading comprehension difficulties (SRCD), and mixed reading difficulties (MRD), reflecting that learners may experience isolated or overlapping challenges. Neurobiological reading disorders are also prevalent, with approximately 7% of children affected by a reading disorder and an estimated 20% of the population exhibiting dyslexia (Yacoub, 2025). These profiles underscore the need for differentiated instructional approaches tailored to the specific challenges of individual learners.

Overall, the literature demonstrates that reading challenges are multifaceted and interdependent, encompassing cognitive, linguistic, affective, and environmental dimensions. Beginning readers face barriers in decoding, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, and motivation, which are often compounded by language barriers or learning disabilities such as dyslexia. These findings suggest that effective literacy interventions must be comprehensive, evidence-based, and responsive to both foundational skill development and learner engagement to improve reading outcomes.

Interventions Implemented by Teachers to Address Reading Challenges

A comprehensive review of the literature demonstrates that teachers play a central role in addressing the multifaceted challenges learners encounter in acquiring reading proficiency. Effective reading interventions are consistently characterized as explicit, systematic, cumulative, evidence-based, and responsive to individual learner needs (National Reading Panel (NRP), 2000; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). Contemporary research further emphasizes structured literacy, teacher expertise, and alignment with cognitive science principles (Castles, Rastle, & Nation, 2018; Petscher et al., 2020). Across studies, teacher-implemented interventions are primarily targeted in five domains: decoding, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, and motivation, with specialized strategies required for learners with dyslexia.

Decoding difficulties, often rooted in weak phonological awareness and limited letter-sound knowledge, are among the most frequently reported challenges in beginning readers. Systematic phonics instruction significantly improves word recognition and spelling outcomes (NRP, 2000), and structured phonics approaches have been shown to produce measurable gains in early reading development (Ehri, Nunes, Stahl, & Willows, 2007). Recent studies affirm that cumulative, explicit phonics instruction grounded in structured literacy principles yields superior outcomes compared to less systematic methods (Castles et al., 2018; Petscher et al., 2020). Teachers implement these strategies through sequenced phonics lessons, guided corrective feedback, and decodable texts that allow learners to apply newly acquired skills in controlled contexts. Multisensory instructional techniques integrating visual, auditory, and kinesthetic modalities are widely recommended to reinforce phonological processing, particularly for struggling readers (Birsh, 2011). Teacher knowledge in phonology, orthography, and language structure is also critical, with research indicating that well-prepared educators are more likely to produce significant reading gains (Moats, 2020).

Fluency, the bridge between decoding and comprehension, is addressed through repeated and guided oral reading practices. Repeated reading of familiar texts improves automaticity, rate, and accuracy, while paired reading provides modeling of appropriate pacing and expression (NRP, 2000; Rasinski, 2010). Performance-based activities such as Reader's Theater enhance prosody, engagement, and confidence. Contemporary studies suggest that digital reading supports and audio-assisted tools, when strategically integrated with teacher guidance, can further enhance fluency and motivation (Kim, 2020). Teachers employ repeated readings, scaffolded oral practice, modeling, and performance activities to strengthen automatic word recognition and expressive reading, which in turn supports comprehension.

Reading comprehension instruction has evolved to emphasize active, strategic, and knowledge-dependent processing. Effective comprehension teaching includes explicit strategy instruction, such as questioning, summarizing, and monitoring understanding, alongside activating prior knowledge and fostering metacognitive awareness (Duke & Pearson, 2002; Pressley, 2000). Structured strategy instruction, use of graphic organizers, and explicit teaching of text structures such as cause–effect or compare-contrast patterns promote deeper processing, retention, and meaningful integration of information (Meyer, Brandt, & Bluth, 1980; Duke & Cartwright, 2021; Cervetti & Hiebert, 2019).

Vocabulary development, a robust predictor of reading comprehension, is addressed through wide reading, direct instruction of high-utility and academic vocabulary, and teaching word-learning strategies including context clues and morphological analysis (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998; Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2013; Nagy & Townsend, 2012). Systematic vocabulary instruction integrated into content learning is most effective, enabling learners to develop independent word-learning skills and expand comprehension capacity (Wright & Cervetti, 2020).

Motivation and engagement are recognized as critical contributors to reading success. Providing learner choice, establishing achievable reading goals, incorporating collaborative activities, and integrating technology strategically enhance intrinsic motivation and sustained engagement (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000; Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008; Kim, 2020). Literacy-rich classroom environments that include independent reading time, book discussions, and supportive peer interaction further encourage consistent practice and positive attitudes toward reading.

For learners with dyslexia, structured, systematic, and multisensory instruction aligned with structured literacy principles is essential (International Dyslexia Association (IDA), 2019). Orton–Gillingham–based approaches, emphasizing phonics, morphology, and sequential language instruction, have demonstrated positive outcomes for word-level reading skills (Ritchey & Goeke, 2006). Intensive programs such as Lindamood-Bell, which target phonemic awareness, symbol imagery, and comprehension, also improve outcomes for students with severe reading difficulties (Torgesen et al., 2001). Assistive technologies, including text-to-speech software, audiobooks, and speech-to-text applications, provide essential support, enabling learners to access grade-level content while foundational skills are developed (Edyburn, 2013).

Overall, the literature converges on the conclusion that reading difficulties are multifaceted and require coordinated, comprehensive instructional responses. Successful interventions share common features: explicit and systematic instruction, cumulative skill progression, integration of foundational and higher-order processes, continuous assessment, strong teacher content knowledge, and targeted support for learners with disabilities. Sustained and well-executed implementation of these evidence-based practices significantly improves literacy outcomes and reduces long-term reading disparities across diverse learner populations.

Synthesis and Implications

The review of literature demonstrates that reading difficulties among learners are complex, multidimensional, and interconnected, encompassing cognitive, linguistic, affective, and contextual factors. Beginning readers face challenges in decoding, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, and motivation, often compounded by language barriers, limited early literacy exposure, and neurobiological conditions such as dyslexia. These challenges interact in ways that can impede reading development, reduce learner confidence, and contribute to long-term academic disparities (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Stanovich, 1986; Vanguri et al., 2015).

Corresponding evidence on interventions highlights the critical role of teachers in addressing these challenges. Systematic and explicit instruction in phonics, repeated and guided practice for fluency, strategy-based comprehension instruction, vocabulary development, and motivational scaffolds have all been shown to improve literacy outcomes across diverse learner populations (NRP, 2000; Rasinski, 2010; Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2013). For learners with dyslexia or severe reading difficulties, structured, multisensory approaches such as Orton–Gillingham and intensive programs like Lindamood-Bell, complemented by assistive technology, provide targeted support that fosters access to grade-level content while foundational skills are developed (Ritchey & Goeke, 2006; Edyburn, 2013). The effectiveness of these interventions is strongly influenced by teacher expertise, sustained implementation, and alignment with evidence-based practices.

Synthesizing the literature reveals several overarching principles. First, reading instruction must be comprehensive, addressing both foundational skills and higher-order processes in an integrated manner. Isolated interventions targeting only one domain such as decoding or comprehension are unlikely to produce sustained gains. Second, instruction must be systematic and explicit, progressing from simple to complex skills while providing repeated practice and corrective feedback. Third, interventions must be responsive

to learner diversity, considering cognitive, linguistic, and socioemotional factors, including language proficiency, prior knowledge, and motivation. Finally, teacher preparation, continuous professional development, and access to resources including digital tools are essential for effective implementation and long-term success.

The synthesis underscores that reading challenges and interventions are mutually informative: understanding the nature and prevalence of specific difficulties enables teachers to select, sequence, and differentiate instructional strategies effectively. Decoding difficulties necessitate structured phonics instruction; fluency gaps call for guided repeated reading; comprehension deficits require explicit strategy instruction; vocabulary limitations demand both direct and incidental learning; and motivational challenges require learner-centered and engaging approaches. Collectively, these strategies highlight a coordinated, evidence-informed response to the multifaceted nature of reading development.

Implications for research, policy, and practice emerge from this synthesis. For researchers, continued examination of integrated, context-responsive interventions is warranted, particularly in multilingual or low-resource settings. Policymakers should prioritize early literacy initiatives, teacher training, and equitable access to instructional materials and technology. For educators, systematic assessment of learners' strengths and difficulties, combined with implementation of evidence-based interventions, can reduce reading disparities and foster enduring literacy development. By bridging the gap between identified challenges and targeted interventions, this review provides a comprehensive framework to guide educational practice and policy toward ensuring that all learners achieve reading proficiency.

Recommendations Emerged from the Research

Based on the synthesis of literature on reading challenges and evidence-based interventions, several actionable recommendations are proposed for educators, parents, and policymakers to improve reading outcomes among learners. The findings underscore that reading difficulties are multifaceted, encompassing decoding, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, motivation, and, in some cases, neurobiological disorders such as dyslexia. Addressing these challenges requires systematic, targeted, and individualized instructional approaches, supported by sustained teacher expertise and parental involvement.

Teachers are encouraged to implement explicit and systematic phonics instruction to strengthen decoding skills and word recognition, particularly for beginning readers (National Reading Panel (NRP), 2000). Guided practice with decodable texts should reinforce these skills and support accuracy in reading (Ehri, Nunes, Stahl, & Willows, 2007). Structured literacy approaches that are multisensory and sequential can further enhance phonological processing, particularly for struggling readers (Birsh, 2011). To improve fluency and automaticity, teachers should employ repeated reading, paired reading, and performance-based activities such as Reader's Theater (Rasinski, 2010). The strategic use of digital tools and interactive platforms can complement these practices by enhancing engagement and motivation, particularly for learners who struggle with conventional classroom methods (Kim, 2020).

For comprehension, teachers should provide explicit strategy instruction, including activating prior knowledge, questioning, summarizing, and metacognitive monitoring (Duke & Pearson, 2002). Instruction in text structures such as cause–effect, compare–contrast, and problem-solution can further support learners

in organizing information and constructing meaning (Meyer, Brandt, & Bluth, 1980). Vocabulary development should be addressed both intentionally and contextually, through morphological analysis, context clue strategies, and wide reading across diverse texts to support incidental vocabulary growth and strengthen comprehension (Nagy & Townsend, 2012; Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998).

Motivation and engagement are critical for sustained reading development. Teachers should provide choice in reading materials, establish achievable goals, and create literacy-rich classroom environments that foster intrinsic interest and persistence (Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2008; Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). Introducing Received Pronunciation (RP) as a standardized model can help learners develop clearer articulation and improve confidence in oral reading (Vanguri et al., 2015).

For learners with dyslexia or severe reading difficulties, structured, explicit, and cumulative instruction aligned with evidence-based approaches such as Orton–Gillingham is recommended (International Dyslexia Association (IDA), 2019; Ritchey & Goeke, 2006). Assistive technologies, including text-to-speech software, audiobooks, and speech-to-text applications, can further support learners in accessing grade-level content while foundational skills are developed (Edyburn, 2013).

Parental involvement is equally important. Parents should be informed about their child's progress and attendance, provided with strategies to support reading at home, and given access to age-appropriate materials for independent practice (Azuela et al., 2023). Regular communication between teachers and parents, including collaborative planning of individualized support, enhances learning continuity and reinforces the interventions implemented in the classroom.

Finally, schools should prioritize early identification and continuous progress monitoring to tailor interventions to learners' specific needs and ensure timely support (Petscher et al., 2020). By integrating these evidence-based strategies across multiple domains: decoding, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, motivation, and dyslexia support; educators can provide comprehensive, responsive, and sustained instruction that addresses both the cognitive and affective dimensions of reading development, thereby improving literacy outcomes for all learners.

CONCLUSION

Reading challenges are multifaceted, involving cognitive, linguistic, motivational, and environmental factors. The synthesis of literature demonstrates that effective teacher-implemented interventions are explicit, systematic, and evidence-based, targeting decoding, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, and engagement. Early identification, structured literacy approaches, digital integration, and active parental involvement are key to improving reading outcomes. By adopting these evidence-based practices, educators can significantly enhance literacy development and reduce long-term disparities in reading proficiency.

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