

An Analysis Of Teachers' Strategy In Teaching Reading Comprehension Of Senior High School At Kecamatan Dampelas

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to find the strategies used by English teachers in teaching reading comprehension at senior high schools and to identify the most frequently used strategies. This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design, collecting data through questionnaires and interviews with 4 English teachers. The results showed that teachers used various strategies in teaching reading comprehension, and scaffolding, QARs, monitoring comprehension, and memorizing were the most frequently used strategies. These strategies were highly effective in helping students understand reading texts and improving their reading abilities. This study also revealed that scaffolding and QARs strategies enabled teachers to provide appropriate assistance and support to students who did not understand reading texts, allowing students to better comprehend the texts. The findings of this study were expected to be used as a reference for English teachers in developing effective reading comprehension teaching strategies.

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1. Introduction

Reading comprehension is one of the most important skills that students need to succeed, especially in learning English as a foreign language (EFL). Reading is not just about reading words on a page but understanding the meaning, making connections, and thinking critically about what is read (Grabe, 2009; Nation, 2022; Aswad et al., 2019). In Indonesian senior high schools, English is a compulsory subject, and students are expected to understand many types of texts, including descriptive, narrative, recount, and expository texts. However, many students still struggle to understand English reading texts (Fitriani et al., 2022; Rahman et al., 2019; Prihandoko et al., 2019).

One reason why reading comprehension is difficult for EFL learners is because of limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge. According to Nation (2022), students often cannot understand the meaning of texts because they do not know enough words or how sentences are structured. This makes it hard for them to find the main ideas, make inferences, or connect the information they read with their own knowledge (McNamara, 2021). Furthermore, many students read English only in class and have little chance to practice outside school (Hapsari et al., 2023; Yaumi et al., 2023; Youngsun et al., 2024). This situation makes it even more challenging for students to become skilled readers.

Teachers play a very important role in helping students improve their reading comprehension skills. Teachers need to choose good strategies that can help students understand texts better. Many researchers have found that using specific teaching strategies can help students overcome their difficulties. For example, Grabe and Stoller (2013) explain that teaching strategies like predicting, questioning, summarizing, and clarifying can help students become more active and independent readers. These strategies help students to think about what they read and check if they understand it.

One effective strategy is scaffolding. Scaffolding means that the teacher gives help to students when they are learning something new and slowly reduces the help as students become more capable (Walqui, 2006; Reiss, 2021). In reading lessons, scaffolding can include activities like giving background knowledge, discussing new vocabulary before reading, or guiding students with questions while reading. Scaffolding has been shown to improve students' reading comprehension because it helps them connect new information with what they already know (Fitriani et al., 2022; Andini et al., 2026).

Another popular strategy is the Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) technique. Raphael and Au (2005) explain that QAR teaches students to identify different types of questions, such as questions where the answer is found directly in

the text, or questions where they have to think and connect ideas. This technique helps students become more skilled at finding information and thinking critically about what they read (McKeown et al., 2009). Studies have shown that QAR can improve students' reading comprehension skills significantly (Rahmawati et al., 2023).

Besides scaffolding and QAR, other strategies like monitoring comprehension and using mnemonic or memorizing techniques are also used by teachers. Monitoring comprehension means that students learn to check themselves while reading to see if they understand the text. When they notice confusion, they can try to re-read, look up words, or ask for help (McNamara, 2021). Memorizing techniques help students remember important vocabulary and language structures that they often find in texts (Nation, 2022). These strategies support students in building confidence and understanding reading materials better.

However, even though teachers know about many strategies, they often face challenges in applying them effectively. Large class sizes, different levels of students' abilities, and limited time in class can make it difficult for teachers to use interactive methods (Fitriani et al., 2022). Sometimes, teachers still focus on translating texts or drilling vocabulary because these methods are faster and easier to manage in big classes, even though they might not be the best for developing real reading skills (Rahmawati et al., 2023).

In Indonesia, the government has encouraged teachers to apply student-centered approaches as part of the Merdeka Belajar (Independent Learning) policy (Kemdikbudristek, 2022). This policy supports creative and flexible learning methods and encourages teachers to help students become independent learners. Teaching reading comprehension fits well into this vision because it requires teachers to involve students actively in understanding texts. However, research shows that many teachers are still adjusting to these new expectations and need more training and resources to apply effective strategies in their classes (Hapsari et al., 2023; Ko et al., 2025; Said et al., 2021).

Because of these challenges, it is essential to gain a clear understanding of the strategies that English teachers use when teaching reading comprehension. This includes identifying the types of strategies commonly applied in the classroom and determining which strategies are used most frequently. Understanding teachers' instructional practices can provide valuable insights into how reading comprehension is currently taught in real classroom settings. This information can help schools identify areas where teachers may need additional support or guidance. Furthermore, policymakers can use these findings to design more targeted professional development programs that focus on effective reading strategies. Schools can also provide appropriate materials and learning resources to help teachers apply these strategies more successfully in their classrooms.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the strategies used by English teachers in teaching reading comprehension in senior high schools and to identify the strategies most frequently used in practice. The study also seeks to understand how teachers perceive the effectiveness of these strategies and what challenges they face in applying them. By exploring these aspects, the research hopes to contribute useful information that can help improve English reading instruction in Indonesian high schools and support students in becoming skilled and independent readers.

2. Methodology

This study applied a descriptive qualitative research design to explore and describe the strategies used by English teachers in teaching reading comprehension at high schools. A qualitative approach was chosen because it enables the researcher to understand teaching practices in depth, without manipulating variables, as suggested by Creswell and Poth (2018). The study involved four English teachers from senior high schools, selected purposively for their teaching experience and willingness to share insights.

Data collection used two instruments: questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire was designed to identify various reading comprehension strategies and their frequency of use, while interviews allowed deeper exploration of teachers' experiences, challenges, and perceptions. Ethical considerations such as informed consent and confidentiality were maintained throughout the research process.

Data analysis followed Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's (2014) interactive model, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Questionnaire data were summarized in tables and charts, while interview data were analyzed thematically and presented through excerpts. Triangulation ensured the validity and reliability of findings, providing a comprehensive picture of reading comprehension teaching strategies used in the classroom.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Result

This research aimed to explore the strategies used by English teachers in teaching reading comprehension at senior high schools and to identify the most frequently employed strategies. Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews with four teachers actively involved in teaching reading comprehension.

3.1.1 Findings from Questionnaires

The questionnaire data revealed that teachers implemented a variety of strategies to support students' reading comprehension. Table 1 summarizes the strategies reported by each teacher:

Table 1. Strategies Used by Teachers in Teaching Reading Comprehension

| No | Strategy | Teacher 1 | Teacher 2 | Teacher 3 | Teacher 4 |
|----|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1 | Scaffolding | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 2 | Think Aloud | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 3 | Reciprocal Teaching | No | Yes | Yes | No |
| 4 | SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review) | No | Yes | Yes | No |
| 5 | Question-Answer Relationship (QARs) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 6 | Monitoring Comprehension | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 7 | Recognizing Story Structure | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| 8 | Graphic and Semantic Organizers | No | Yes | No | No |
| 9 | Memorizing | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 10 | Game | No | Yes | Yes | No |

Table 1 shows that all four teachers consistently reported using four main strategies: scaffolding, Question-Answer Relationships (QARs), monitoring comprehension, and memorizing. This indicates that these strategies are the most widely applied and trusted by teachers in helping students understand reading texts.

Scaffolding was frequently mentioned as a way to support students who struggle with understanding the reading material. QARs were used to guide students in distinguishing different types of questions and finding answers in the text. Monitoring comprehension allowed teachers to check and ensure that students truly understood what they read. Memorizing was also commonly used, mainly to help students remember new vocabulary and important information from the texts.

Meanwhile, strategies like Think Aloud, Reciprocal Teaching, SQ3R, Recognizing Story Structure, Graphic Organizers, and Games were used less consistently across teachers. Some teachers found these methods helpful for specific purposes, such as making lessons more engaging or helping students process the text more deeply, but they were not applied by all teachers in every class.

Overall, the data suggest that while teachers employ various strategies, they tend to rely most on methods that provide direct support and structured guidance to help students improve their reading comprehension skills.

3.1.2 Findings from Interviews

To gain deeper insights into how these strategies were implemented in practice, interviews were conducted with the four teachers. The interviews corroborated the questionnaire findings, revealing teachers' rationales and practical experiences using these strategies in the classroom. Notable excerpts from the interviews include:

– **Teacher 1:**

"I used scaffolding strategy to help students who did not understand the reading text."

- **Teacher 2:**
“I used think aloud strategy to help students understand difficult words and reciprocal teaching to help students understand the reading text more deeply.”
- **Teacher 3:**
“I used scaffolding and think aloud strategies to help students understand the reading text.”
- **Teacher 4:**
“I used scaffolding, think aloud, QARs, monitoring comprehension, and memorizing strategies to help students understand the reading text.”

These responses illustrate that scaffolding was particularly valued for supporting students who struggled to comprehend texts independently. Teachers also highlighted the effectiveness of QARs in training students to differentiate between different types of questions and locate information efficiently. Think aloud and reciprocal teaching were used to model reading processes and deepen understanding, while memorizing was applied to reinforce vocabulary and important text elements.

3.2 Discussion

This study set out to identify and analyze the strategies English teachers employ to teach reading comprehension at senior high schools and to determine which strategies are used most frequently. The results from both questionnaires and interviews reveal valuable insights into teachers’ pedagogical practices and highlight the approaches they consider most effective in supporting students’ reading skills.

The data demonstrate that teachers utilize a variety of instructional strategies, reflecting their awareness of the diverse challenges students face when engaging with English texts. Notably, four strategies emerged as the most consistently used across all participants: scaffolding, Question-Answer Relationships (QARs), monitoring comprehension, and memorizing. The universal adoption of these methods underscores their perceived effectiveness in the classroom context.

Scaffolding was highlighted as a crucial strategy, with all teachers emphasizing its role in assisting students who struggle with independent reading comprehension. Through scaffolding, teachers provide temporary support—such as guiding questions, summaries, or explanations—that enables students to gradually build their skills and confidence. This aligns with Vygotsky’s (1978) concept of the Zone of Proximal Development, which emphasizes that learners benefit from instructional support that bridges the gap between what they can do alone and what they can achieve with guidance.

The frequent use of QARs indicates teachers’ focus on helping students distinguish between different types of questions and locate relevant information in the text. This strategy trains students to approach texts more strategically, which is vital for improving reading comprehension, especially when dealing with complex academic texts. As Duke et al. (2021) note, teaching students to recognize question types fosters deeper engagement and more purposeful reading.

Monitoring comprehension also emerged as a significant strategy, reflecting teachers’ efforts to cultivate students’ metacognitive awareness during reading. Encouraging students to check their understanding, identify confusing parts, and use strategies to clarify meaning helps prevent superficial reading and promotes deeper comprehension (Afflerbach et al., 2015). Teachers’ emphasis on monitoring comprehension suggests a commitment to nurturing independent and reflective readers.

The inclusion of memorizing as a frequently used strategy is noteworthy. While memorization may sometimes be criticized for encouraging rote learning, in the context of foreign language reading, memorizing vocabulary, phrases, or key textual structures can be beneficial. As Nation (2013) argues, a strong vocabulary base supports fluency and comprehension, allowing students to focus more on meaning rather than decoding individual words.

Beyond these four dominant strategies, the study also revealed variation in the use of methods such as Think Aloud, Reciprocal Teaching, SQ3R, Recognizing Story Structure, Graphic and Semantic Organizers, and Games. These strategies were adopted selectively by teachers, often depending on specific classroom contexts, students’ needs, and lesson objectives. For instance, Think Aloud and Reciprocal Teaching were praised for modeling cognitive processes and making invisible reading strategies visible to students, thus helping them understand how skilled readers approach texts (McKeown et al., 2018).

Despite differences in their preferred strategies, all teachers shared the same main goal, which was to improve students' reading comprehension and build their confidence in working with English texts. Teachers consistently emphasized the importance of helping students understand texts more effectively rather than focusing only on test results. They also aimed to encourage students to become more active and confident readers in the classroom. To strengthen the credibility of the study, data from questionnaires were combined with data from interviews. This triangulation allowed the researcher to compare and confirm information from different sources.

Overall, this study highlights that English teachers at senior high schools are proactive in employing diverse and effective strategies to support reading comprehension. Their reliance on scaffolding, QARs, monitoring comprehension, and memorizing reflects a thoughtful approach to addressing students' reading challenges and promoting success. Future professional development could focus on deepening teachers' knowledge of these strategies and exploring innovative ways to integrate less commonly used methods, thereby enriching classroom practices and further supporting students' reading development.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of this research, it was concluded that scaffolding, QARs, monitoring comprehension, and memorizing were effective strategies in teaching reading comprehension at high schools. The results of this research showed that teachers used various strategies in teaching reading comprehension, and scaffolding and QARs were the most frequently used strategies by teachers. These strategies were very effective in helping students understand the reading text and improving their reading ability.

This research also showed that scaffolding strategy allowed teachers to provide appropriate assistance and support to students who did not understand the reading text, so that students were able to understand the reading text better. Meanwhile, QARs strategy allowed students to understand the relationship between questions and answers, so that they were able to understand the reading text better.

Therefore, teachers were able to use these strategies to help students understand the reading text better and improve their reading ability. Additionally, this research also showed that other strategies such as SQ3R and repeated reading could have been additional references for the development of reading comprehension teaching strategies in the future. Overall, this research showed that scaffolding, QARs, monitoring comprehension, and memorizing were effective strategies that could be used by teachers to help students understand the reading text and improve their reading ability.

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