Challenges in Using Different Types of Reading Comprehension Activities in English Classes

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Abstract— This study aimed to explore the reading activities employed by English teachers in a public high school to enhance students' reading comprehension. A descriptive research design was employed, involving a survey of 35 English teachers selected through purposive sampling. This sought to identify the frequency and types of reading activities used by teachers, assess their perceived effectiveness, and understand the challenges encountered in implementing these activities. Results indicated that independent reading and guided reading were the most frequently employed strategies, both considered highly effective in improving student comprehension. Other reading activities such as reading aloud, group or paired reading, and shared reading were also commonly used, with varying levels of perceived effectiveness. The study identified several challenges faced by teachers, including diverse reading abilities among students, lack of resources, time constraints, and limited student engagement. These challenges were found to hinder the consistent and effective implementation of reading strategies. Despite these obstacles, teachers highlighted the importance of professional development and resource allocation to improve reading instruction. While independent and guided reading were the most effective strategies, addressing the challenges of resource limitations, time constraints, and diverse student needs is crucial for improving reading comprehension outcomes. Recommendations for enhancing reading instruction include providing teachers with targeted professional development, improving access to relevant and engaging reading materials, and allocating resources to support differentiated instruction. There is a need for systemic changes in teacher training and resource management to better support English teachers in their efforts to improve students' reading skills.

Keywords— reading instruction, reading comprehension, critical thinking, educational challenges, reading strategies, professional development.

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading is a foundational skill that serves as the cornerstone of academic success and lifelong learning. It enables learners to comprehend, analyze, and synthesize information, equipping them to meet the demands of modern education and the workplace. English teachers play a vital role in fostering reading comprehension, particularly in public high schools where resources and support may be limited. However, many students face challenges such as limited vocabulary, low motivation, and diverse skill levels, which complicate efforts to improve reading proficiency. Snow (2010) research has shown that limited vocabulary can significantly hinder students' ability to fully understand and engage with texts. Additionally, low motivation is a common barrier, with disengagement from reading often leading to poor academic outcomes Guthrie and Wigfield (2000). Moreover, the wide variation in students' reading abilities presents a further challenge, as teachers must address the diverse needs of learners, from struggling readers to those with more advanced skills Torgesen and Hudson, (2006).

Research highlights various strategies that have proven effective in enhancing reading comprehension. Pandiangan, Gaol, and Saragih (2021) emphasized that skimming, scanning, and summarizing allow students to actively engage with texts and improve retention. Safrianti (2020) noted the effectiveness of guided reading in fostering active engagement and connecting textual content to real-world applications. Nesmith (2023) further advocated for collaborative learning environments that promote critical thinking through group discussions and shared reading activities. However, the practical implementation of these strategies in resource-limited settings remains underexplored.

Teachers in public high schools face additional challenges, including large class sizes, time constraints, and inadequate access to engaging and culturally relevant materials. Fleming (2024) highlighted that resource shortages often limit teachers' ability to employ innovative strategies, while Kahneman (2022) noted that complex texts can overwhelm students with limited prior knowledge. Addressing these issues

requires a deeper understanding of how reading strategies are applied in underfunded schools and the specific challenges teachers encounter.

This study aimed to address these gaps by investigating the reading activities employed by English teachers in public high school. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following research questions: (1) What types of reading activities are commonly employed by English teachers? (2) How effective are these activities in enhancing students' reading comprehension? (3) What challenges do teachers face when implementing reading activities, and what resources or support do they need to overcome these challenges? The findings aim to inform educational stakeholders and guide interventions

II. METHODS

A descriptive research design was utilized to determine the reading activities used by English teachers in public high schools. The respondents were 35 English teachers selected through purposive sampling based on their active involvement in teaching reading comprehension. The participants in this study were fully informed about the purpose and procedures of the research. Their participation was voluntary in nature, and they were given the option to withdraw at any point without facing any negative consequences. Informed consent was obtained from the school head, who signed the consent form on behalf of the participants, confirming their understanding and agreement to the study. This ensured that the rights and confidentiality of the participants were respected throughout the research process.

An adapted revised survey questionnaire, Reading Strategies Employed by Senior High School English Teachers by Ligudon and Ildefonso (2022), was used in the study. To ensure accessibility and convenience, the survey was conducted online using Google Forms to avoid disruptions to classes.

Data analysis involved descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, percentages, and mean scores. Ethical considerations were strictly observed, with participants being informed about the study's purpose and assured of the confidentiality of their responses.

III. RESULTS

This section explored the analysis of the survey results that reveals critical insights into the reading practices employed by public high school English teachers, along with the challenges they face and the effectiveness of various activities. The frequency of reading activities implemented by teachers is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Frequency of Reading Activities

Frequency	Count	Percentage
Daily	22	62.2%
Weekly	13	37.8%

The results indicate that most teachers integrate reading activities daily (62.2%), highlighting their commitment to providing consistent reading practice. Weekly integration (37.8%) suggests that some teachers face constraints, such as time limitations or competing curricular demands.

3.1 Types of Reading Activities

The types of reading activities employed by teachers are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Types of Reading Activities Employed

Types of Reading Activities Employed	Frequency Count	Percentage
Guided Reading	18	48.6%
Shared Reading	17	45.9%
Independent Reading	30	81.1%
Reading Aloud	29	78.4%
Group or Paired Reading	19	51.4%
Literature Circles	7	18.9%
Digital or Online Reading Activities	15	40.5%
Skimming and Scanning Exercise	12	32.4%

It is shown in the above table that Independent Reading (81.1%) is the most common activity, likely due to its adaptability across various student skill levels and its ability to promote autonomy.

Reading Aloud (78.4%) follows closely, highlighting its role in improving fluency and comprehension while fostering engagement. Less frequently used methods, such as Literature Circles (18.9%) and Digital/Online Reading Activities (40.5%), may point to resource limitations or a lack of training in utilizing these strategies effectively. The significant use of Group or Paired Reading (51.4%) indicates an emphasis on collaborative learning, allowing students to engage in peer-supported reading tasks

3.2. Perception of Reading Activities

Teachers rated the effectiveness of various reading activities, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. *Perception of Reading Activities*

Activity	Mean Score
Guided Reading	4.5
Shared Reading	4.3
Independent Reading	4.4
Reading Aloud	4.3
Literature Circles	4.0
Group or paired reading	4.2
Digital or Online reading activities	4.1
Skimming and Scanning Exercises	4.0

Activities like Guided Reading (4.5) and Independent Reading (4.4) are rated as highly effective, demonstrating that structured and individualized approaches are particularly valued in improving students' reading comprehension. Shared Reading (4.3) and Reading Aloud (4.3) are similarly effective, showcasing their importance in providing a shared learning experience that encourages active participation. Activities such as Literature Circles (4.0) and Skimming and Scanning Exercises (4.0) received lower ratings, possibly due to the challenges in implementation or their perceived relevance to the curriculum.

3.3. Challenges Faced by Teachers

The challenges identified are presented in Table 4:

Table 4. *Challenges in Reading Instruction*

Challenges	Frequency count	Percentage
Lack of resources	30	81.1%
Time constraints	25	67.6%
Diverse reading difficulties	32	86.5%
Limited student engagement	20	54.1%

The overwhelming majority of teachers reported diverse reading levels (86.5%) as a challenge, underscoring the difficulty of addressing the wide range of student abilities in a single classroom. Lack of resources (81.1%) and time constraints (67.6%) further hinder the effective implementation of reading activities, suggesting a need for additional funding, materials, and professional development. Limited student engagement (54.1%) indicates that some students struggle to connect with traditional or current reading activities, requiring more engaging and relatable content.

IV. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide important insights into the reading activities employed by English teachers in public high schools and highlight both the effectiveness and challenges of these practices. The emphasis on independent reading (81.1%) and guided reading (48.6%) underscores the teachers' focus on fostering autonomy and structured support in students' reading practices. Independent reading, as noted in previous research, is particularly beneficial as it promotes self-regulation and allows students to engage with texts at their own pace.

This practice is aligned with findings from Pandiangan, Gaol, and Saragih (2021), who pointed out that reading activities that allow for individual exploration can enhance retention and comprehension as students are more likely to engage deeply with content that interests them. Moreover, guided reading, where teachers provide focused instruction to smaller groups, was highly rated for its effectiveness in improving comprehension. Safrianti (2020) also emphasized that this activity allows for scaffolding, where the teacher's support gradually diminishes as students gain confidence and competence, leading to more sustainable reading skills development.

The reading aloud activity (78.4%) also received high usage rates among teachers, which is consistent with its recognized value in building fluency and comprehension, particularly in contexts where oral proficiency and pronunciation may need reinforcement. According to Nesmith (2023), shared reading experiences, such as reading aloud, foster collaborative learning and provide a platform for critical thinking and interaction among students.

Despite the clear advantages, Literature Circles and Digital/Online Reading Activities (18.9% and 40.5%, respectively) were less commonly used, which could be attributed to resource limitations and insufficient teacher training in integrating these activities into the curriculum. Studies such as Fleming (2024) suggest that the lack of access to adequate technology and relevant digital tools can impede the implementation of such innovative strategies.

The results also reveal that diverse reading difficulties (86.5%) represent the most significant challenge faced

by teachers. This finding is supported by Kahneman (2022), who discusses how cognitive load can be a barrier when students are confronted with complex texts that they are not equipped to understand due to limited prior knowledge. Teachers struggle with addressing the varying abilities within a single classroom, with some students facing reading difficulties due to limited vocabulary, low motivation, or a lack of foundational skills. This situation requires differentiated instruction, where teachers can tailor their approaches to the specific needs of each student. However, time constraints (67.6%) and lack of resources (81.1%) exacerbate the problem, limiting the ability of teachers to employ such individualized methods consistently. These findings suggest that professional development and resource enhancement are vital to addressing the disparities in student reading abilities.

Another challenge that emerged is limited student engagement (54.1%), which points to the need for more dynamic and relevant reading materials. Kahneman (2022) argues that the success of reading instruction heavily depends on the ability of the teacher to connect the material to the students' experiences and interests. If students cannot see the relevance of the content to their lives, they are less likely to engage with it meaningfully. In this regard, teachers in public high schools may need additional training in selecting culturally relevant, engaging, and diverse reading materials that resonate with their students.

While the study identifies a variety of effective reading strategies employed by English teachers in public high schools, it also highlights substantial challenges that hinder their successful implementation. Independent and guided reading are highly effective and favored strategies, but factors such as large class sizes, resource limitations, and diverse student needs must be addressed for these strategies to reach their full potential. Additionally, teachers must be supported with adequate training, access to appropriate resources, and time to refine their pedagogical approaches. Interventions at both the policy and community levels are essential to support teachers in overcoming these barriers and improving the reading proficiency of students.

V. CONCLUSION

This study underscores the dedication and resourcefulness of English teachers in public high schools as they strive to enhance students' reading skills, despite significant constraints. Through the

investigation of reading activities employed by teachers, it has been established that independent reading and guided reading are the most frequently utilized and highly effective strategies for improving reading comprehension. These strategies are aligned with existing literature, which highlights the importance of fostering both autonomy and structured support in reading instruction. Independent reading allows students to develop critical thinking skills and encourages a love for reading, while guided reading provides the scaffolding necessary for students to understand and engage with texts at their individual levels.

However, the study also illuminates key challenges that hinder the full implementation of these strategies. The diverse reading levels within classrooms, which affect the ability to cater to each student's needs, emerged as the most significant challenge. Teachers in public high schools often face a wide range of reading abilities among their students, making it difficult to provide individualized instruction. This challenge is compounded by time constraints, which limit the ability of teachers to employ differentiated teaching methods and address the unique needs of each student. As Kahneman (2022) discusses, the cognitive load required to process complex texts can overwhelm students with limited prior knowledge, further complicating comprehension efforts. These barriers point to the urgent need for differentiated instruction—an approach that tailors teaching strategies to meet the diverse needs of students. In this context, teachers must be supported in their professional development, enabling them to acquire the skills necessary to implement these methods effectively.

Additionally, the lack of resources was identified as another significant obstacle. With limited access to quality reading materials, digital tools, and classroom support, teachers often find themselves constrained in their ability to provide engaging and diverse content. As Fleming (2024) argues, the availability of culturally relevant and engaging reading materials is crucial in promoting student interest and improving engagement. Teachers who lack the resources to access such materials may struggle to maintain student motivation, especially in the context of diverse learner needs.

Moreover, limited student engagement emerged as a challenge, which can be attributed to a disconnect between the reading materials provided and the interests of the students. As Kahneman (2022) notes, students are

less likely to engage with content that does not resonate with their lived experiences or that seems irrelevant to their lives. This indicates a need for more relevant and diverse reading materials that reflect the cultural and socio-economic backgrounds of students. Providing students with materials that align with their interests and real-world experiences can foster a more meaningful connection to reading, ultimately improving comprehension and motivation.

Despite these challenges, the study also offers solutions and strategies to improve reading instruction. The findings suggest that professional development should be prioritized, equipping teachers with the tools to effectively manage diverse reading abilities in their classrooms. Ongoing training can help educators incorporate differentiated reading instruction and collaborative learning methods, which have shown to be effective in other educational contexts. Furthermore, a focus on resource allocation is critical ensuring that teachers have access to appropriate reading materials, digital tools, and support networks will empower them to implement effective reading strategies. Policy makers and educational administrators should advocate for the allocation of sufficient resources, both in terms of physical materials and funding for teacher training, to ensure that all students have access to high-quality reading instruction.

While the current state of reading instruction in public high schools presents several challenges, it is clear that the dedication of teachers to improving reading comprehension is unwavering. By addressing the challenges of resource limitations, time constraints, and student engagement, educational stakeholders can support teachers in overcoming these barriers. Curriculum adjustments, professional development, and improved resource allocation will be key in creating an environment where students can thrive in their reading comprehension. Ultimately, such efforts will contribute to a more equitable educational experience for all students, enabling them to become proficient readers and lifelong learners.

To realize these improvements, it is crucial that educational leaders, policymakers, and communities work collaboratively to create systemic change. A concerted effort to provide resources, support, and targeted interventions will help ensure that all students, regardless of their background or learning abilities, can develop strong reading skills, laying the foundation for academic success and personal growth.

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