

TEACHING READING STRATEGIES USED BY ENGLISH TEACHERS

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Abstract:

This study addresses this by focusing on the reading strategies used by English teachers. The purpose of this study is to determine teachers' strategies in teaching reading and to identify which strategies are most and least frequently used by English teachers. This study used a qualitative approach. In the research design, the researcher used descriptive qualitative research, which attempts to reveal the teaching reading strategies used by English teachers. The instruments used in this study included questionnaires and observations. The results of this study indicate that there are two main strategies used by English teachers in teaching reading: Think Aloud and Scaffolding. The most frequently used strategy is Think Aloud, followed by Scaffolding.

Keywords: Reading Strategies, Teaching Reading, Reading Comprehension

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, research investigating the debate over the most effective reading strategies used by English teachers has ignited global education discourse. As educational policies continue to evolve, the strategies used by English teachers are under increasing scrutiny. This ongoing debate not only reflects broader pedagogical shifts but also highlights the critical role of teachers in shaping effective and adaptive reading instruction strategies. As researchers and educators continue to explore which strategies drive the most significant improvements in reading proficiency, it becomes increasingly clear that the context in which these strategies are used is very important.

In reading strategies, teachers can use various strategies to help students understand the reading text (Pandiangan et al., 2021). To effectively implement any teaching technique, educators must understand the principles and assumptions underlying each specific method. Creative teachers employ a variety of techniques to accommodate the diversity can be classified as teaching-related, and each has its own unique description or label. The fundamental aim of teaching strategies is to facilitate the application of diverse teaching methods and techniques. A key objective is to create a more interactive learning environment, integrating technology into the learning experience whenever possible and employing appropriate collaborative learning strategies.

Much literature has looked at reading strategies, and the results show that there are several strategies used by English teachers, such as scanning, skimming, active reading, speed reading, structure-proposition-evaluation, and survey-question-read-recite-review (Pandiangan et al., 2021). These studies indicate that teachers use a combination of strategies to help students develop strong English reading well. To the best of our understanding, previous research has primarily focused on reading strategies in senior high school. However, limited research exists on the reading strategies employed by Junior High School in Malang.

The aim of this research is to investigate teachers' strategies in teaching reading. This article also aims to identify which strategies are most and least frequently used by English teachers. This research offers a comprehensive understanding of the various strategies that can improve students' reading skills. The article seeks to empower teachers to implement and adapt various strategies effectively.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This research used a qualitative approach. In the research design, a researcher uses descriptive qualitative research, which attempts to reveal the teaching reading strategies used by English teachers. According to Moelong (2006), descriptive research is a research method that aims to describe and interpret objects as they exist. So, in this study, descriptive research was conducted to describe reading strategies systematically. On the other hand, a qualitative approach offers rich and in-depth data that reveals the personal significance of the participants' experiences (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

Setting and Participant

The subjects in this study was English teacher who teach in Junior High School. The object of this research is to examine teachers' strategies for learning to read at the junior high school level. To ensure the validity and relevance of the data collected, participants in this study were selected based on certain criteria. First, teachers have two years of experience teaching English at the junior high school to ensure participants have sufficient professional exposure to implement and reflect on teaching reading strategies. Secondly, participants were to have a minimum of a bachelor's degree in English education or a related field, which guaranteed they had basic knowledge of teaching methodologies. In addition, participants be able to answer the questionnaire and observations or other data collection methods used in this research process. Finally, preference was given to teachers who were known to use a variety of teaching reading strategies, such as scaffolding, think-aloud, reciprocal teaching, SQ3R, and QARs, to provide a comprehensive insight into the research topic. These criteria were set to engage participants who contribute meaningful and contextually relevant data on teaching reading strategies at the junior high school.

Research Instrument

This study employed two main instruments: a questionnaire and classroom observations. The questionnaire consisted of three sections: teacher demographics, the types and frequency of reading strategies used (e.g., scaffolding, think-aloud, reciprocal teaching, SQ3R, and QARs), and open-ended questions to explore effectiveness. To validate the questionnaire data, classroom observations were conducted using a checklist focusing on the implementation of each strategy. This included indicators such as teacher support in scaffolding, modeling thought processes in think-aloud, and structured roles in reciprocal teaching. The combined use of these instruments ensured comprehensive and reliable data to answer the research questions.

Data Collection

Data were collected using two main instruments: an open-ended questionnaire and classroom observations. The questionnaire explored teachers' experiences, perspectives, and use of reading strategies, allowing for rich, detailed responses. To complement this, classroom observations were conducted using a checklist based on strategies such as scaffolding, think-aloud, reciprocal teaching, SQ3R, and QARs. This triangulation approach provided both teachers' insights and direct evidence of strategy implementation, ensuring more valid and comprehensive findings.

Data Analysis

The researcher used "thematic analysis" described by Braun and Clarke (2014) to examine the data. The initial step is to reread it several times to gain a deeper understanding of the information. The purpose of this step was to analyze participants' descriptions of the strategies used by English teachers in teaching reading. Then, was that a thorough understanding of the data has been achieved, coding has been performed, and patterns relating to the topic being investigated have been discovered. The next step in identifying emerging themes was to collect or group comparable statements. The final stage involves grouping topics based on what makes the interviewees motivated and what their strategies are for English teaching.

In analyzing the observation data, the author first read and understood all the field observation notes. Each finding from the observation was coded based on relevant themes, such as teacher strategies, student responses, and the context of reading activities. Furthermore, the author categorized the patterns that emerged, such as the dominant reading strategies used by teachers, how teachers activate students in reading, and the obstacles that arise in the reading learning process. These findings were then tabulated and compared with the theory reviewed in chapter two. This process is done interactively to ensure that the interpretation of the data is in accordance with the original context and in-depth.

Table 1. The Report of Thematic Analysis

No	Open Coding	Axial Coding	Selective Coding
1.	Think Aloud strategy, Scaffolding, Developing comprehension skills, Modeling thought process, Breaking down difficult words, Making connections, Asking questions	Implementation of reading strategies	Effectiveness of the Think Aloud strategy in improving reading comprehension
2.	Building confidence, encouraging independence, Interactive reading, Critical reading, Student engagement	Building confidence and independence	Enhancing students' comprehension and critical thinking skills
3.	Challenges in engagement, Complex texts, Readable content, Exciting stories, Futuristic story (Monica with a Flying Car)	Overcoming challenges in implementing reading strategies	Addressing challenges in reading strategy implementation
4.	Improving comprehension skills, increasing motivation, developing independence, and creating engaging content	Impact of Think Aloud on student motivation and engagement	Enhancing student engagement and motivation through interactive strategies

FINDINGS

Teaching Reading Strategies Used by English Teachers

Based on the results of the data analysis, it was found that English teachers use several strategies in teaching reading. The most frequently used strategy is Think Aloud, followed by Scaffolding. Teachers apply Think Aloud to show the thinking process when

reading, such as making predictions, connecting ideas, and asking questions. In addition, the Scaffolding strategy is done by modeling ways of thinking, providing gradual guidance, and encouraging the use of independent strategies.

The Think Aloud strategy involves verbalizing thoughts while reading to make mental processes visible to students. Teachers often model how to approach complex texts by predicting content, making connections between ideas, and asking questions to encourage critical thinking.

Excerpt 1

“Monica pressed the button, and her car lifted off the ground, soaring into the sky,” and the teacher said, “Wow, that’s interesting! Usually, cars stay on the road, but Monica’s car can fly. It shows advanced technology. I wonder how it works using electricity, propellers, or anti-gravity technology? Let’s keep reading to find out”

By thinking aloud in this way, the teacher models how skilled readers process information, make predictions and draw conclusions. This strategy makes reading interactive and helps students develop better comprehension skills by internalizing these processes. Meanwhile, the Scaffolding strategy complements Think Aloud by providing structured support. Teachers guide students step by step, initially offering more help and gradually reducing it as students gain confidence and proficiency. Scaffolding can include modeling how to approach complex words, providing context clues, and guiding students in forming connections between the next and prior knowledge.

The Most Often Used Teaching Reading Strategies

Based on the questionnaire results show that the most frequently used strategy is Think Aloud, followed by Scaffolding. Teachers consider Think Aloud effective in making the process visible to students so that students can understand how to think while reading. In addition, Scaffolding helps students overcome reading difficulties gradually. By providing examples, directions, and support, students feel more confident in understanding the reading. In addition, teachers tend to use interesting and contextualized texts to keep students motivated. This method proves to be very beneficial when analyzing complicated or unfamiliar texts, as it encourages students to actively engage with the material.

Excerpt 2

I often use Think Aloud because it helps students understand how to think while reading. I model my thought process by breaking down difficult words, making connections, and asking questions. This strategy makes reading more interactive and helps students develop better comprehension skills. Over time, I encourage them to practice thinking aloud on their own to build confidence and independence in reading.

Think Aloud is a teaching strategy where teachers verbally express their thought process while reading a text aloud to students. This method helps students understand how proficient readers make sense of complex texts. By modeling how to parse difficult words, make connections, predict outcomes, and ask questions, teachers demonstrate effective

reading comprehension techniques. During a Think Aloud session, teachers pause to explain how they parse a challenging word, connect to prior knowledge, or ask questions about the meaning of the text. This interactive approach not only makes reading more engaging but also builds students' metacognitive skills, allowing them to internalize these strategies. Over time, students are encouraged to practice thinking aloud independently or in small groups. This gradual release of responsibility fosters self-confidence and empowers students to navigate the text more independently, ultimately improving their reading comprehension and critical thinking skills.

On the other hand, Scaffolding plays an important role in helping students gradually develop autonomy in reading. Teachers start by modeling the strategy themselves and then encourage students to practice independently. By offering guided practice before moving on to independent tasks, students build confidence in applying the strategy themselves. Teachers also choose contextually relevant and interesting texts to maintain motivation. Furthermore, teachers prefer to use interesting and relevant texts, such as futuristic stories, to keep students engaged. For example, narratives like "Monica with a Flying Car" captivate students' imagination while allowing them to exercise critical thinking and comprehension. This combination of engaging content and the use of interactive strategies contributes to better learning outcomes.

DISCUSSIONS

Based on the results of thematic data analysis using Braun and Clarke's model, this study found that English teachers predominantly use two main strategies in teaching reading: Think Aloud and Scaffolding. These strategies are used to improve students' reading comprehension, encourage critical thinking, and gradually build students' independence as readers. The Think Aloud strategy is the strategy most often applied by teachers in the classroom. This strategy involves verbalizing the thinking process while reading the text. As stated by Vacca & Vacca (1999), Think Aloud allows teachers to model the mental operations used by skilled readers, including making predictions, forming inferences, asking questions, and drawing conclusions. This approach is in line with Paris et al. (1991), who emphasize that reading strategies are cognitive and metacognitive tools. Think Aloud has both functions: showing students how to manage their thinking (metacognitive), and helping them understand the text through prediction, clarification, and questioning (cognitive).

According to Anderson (1999), such explicit modeling helps students internalize the strategies used by proficient readers. Verbalization allows students to see how to navigate unfamiliar vocabulary, understand context, and construct meaning. Furthermore, it encourages active engagement, which is essential for building reading comprehension and critical thinking skills. This finding was consistent with previous research. For example, Diana et al. (2022) found that students showed improved reading comprehension after being taught using interactive strategies such as Think Aloud. They concluded that making students aware of the process of understanding text (metacognition) contributes significantly to their comprehension skills. This finding is consistent with previous research. For example, Diana et al. (2022) found that students showed improved reading comprehension after being taught using interactive strategies such as Think Aloud. They concluded that making students aware

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Scaffolding is the second most frequently used strategy. Scaffolding refers to the support that teachers provide to help students work on tasks that they may not be able to do independently. This is in line with Vacca & Vacca (1999), who describe scaffolding as a method of gradually transferring responsibility to learners. In the context of this study, teachers help students read by: Modeling how to identify key ideas or unfamiliar words, providing clues or questions to encourage deeper thinking, providing context clues, and guiding connections between prior knowledge and the text. This strategy supports the view of Paris et al. (1991) that strategy use is a developmental process. Initially, learners rely on external guidance; over time, they become more independent.

Scaffolding allows teachers to provide a temporary structure that is gradually dismantled as students gain mastery. This allows students to move from dependence to independence, which was evident in the class studied. Scaffolding is also implemented through interactive questioning. In addition, teachers select texts that are contextually interesting and relevant to students' lives or imaginations, such as futuristic narratives like "Monica with a Flying Car". Such text not only captures students' interest but also provides opportunities for rich comprehension activities.

This finding is in line with Wibowo et al. (2020), who identified nine reading strategies used by teachers, including prediction, questioning, and summarizing components that are closely related to Think Aloud and Scaffolding. Their research emphasized that the choice of strategies should be aligned with learning objectives and students' needs, which supports the current research's conclusion that contextual strategies such as Think Aloud and Scaffolding are practical and impactful for junior high school students. However, this study extends previous research by focusing on the junior high school environment in Malang, where the curriculum and students' needs may be different from senior high schools, as observed in Pandiangan et al. (2021). This study emphasizes the importance of adapting strategies to students' level of development, interest, and language competence. The use of Think Aloud and Scaffolding strategies reflects a powerful, interactive, and student-centered approach to reading instruction. These strategies, which are based on established reading theories and supported by previous research, not only improve comprehension but also foster metacognitive awareness.

Based on the analysis of the questionnaire and observation data, the reading teaching strategies most frequently used by English teachers are Think Aloud and Scaffolding. These two strategies are dominant due to their effectiveness in facilitating students' comprehension and their adaptability to the learning environment in Junior High School. Think Aloud was reported as the most frequently applied strategy. This approach allows teachers to model how proficient readers' cognitive process text. By verbalizing their thoughts, teachers make visible the internal processes involved in comprehension, such as predicting, questioning, and connecting ideas within and outside the text.

This finding is in line with Anderson (1999), who asserts that reading is not only a mechanical process but also a strategic and interactive process. Through Think Aloud, teachers help students understand how to be strategic readers by making their metacognitive reading behaviors and improving their ability to monitor their comprehension. Furthermore, Paris et al. (1991) explain that metacognitive strategies are essential for effective reading, especially for learners who are still developing their reading skills. Think Aloud directly supports this development by encouraging awareness of the reading process itself. It helps students identify when comprehension breaks down and what strategies can be used to correct it.

Scaffolding was also found to be used frequently, often in conjunction with Think Aloud. In the context of reading instruction, scaffolding involves providing support to students through structured guidance, which is gradually reduced as the learner gains confidence and competence. According to Vacca & Vacca (1999), scaffolding is particularly important in the early stages of learning as it provides a framework for students to engage with new content. In reading instruction, this support can take many forms, such as helping students decipher difficult vocabulary, guiding them in making inferences, and helping them connect new information with prior knowledge. The gradual release of responsibility allows students to become independent readers over time.

In addition to the cognitive and pedagogical advantages of these strategies, Think Aloud and Scaffolding also bring substantial affective and social benefits. Students who were initially shy or hesitant to participate became more involved in classroom discussions after being exposed to Think Aloud activities. The strategy helped demystify the reading process, showing students that confusion and re-reading are natural parts of understanding a text. This reduced anxiety and fostered a growth mindset around reading. Similarly, Scaffolding was found to be particularly helpful for students with low confidence or limited vocabulary. Teachers noted that these students gradually became more active participants, especially when paired with visual aids or contextual cues. The use of guided support also allowed students of different proficiency levels to progress together, which contributes to a more inclusive classroom environment.

Another key benefit of these strategies is their alignment with student-centered and active learning models encouraged by the curriculum. This curriculum promotes learner autonomy, collaborative learning, and critical thinking. Think Aloud and Scaffolding fit naturally within this framework, allowing teachers to design reading lessons that are both interactive and reflective. Furthermore, these strategies are remarkably flexible and adaptable. They can be applied across a range of text types—narrative, expository, descriptive—and are suitable for different classroom formats, including individual, pair, or group work. Unlike some approaches that depend on expensive technology or materials, Think Aloud and Scaffolding rely primarily on teacher initiative and pedagogical design, which makes them sustainable and practical, especially in schools with limited resources.

These strategies also lend themselves well to formative assessment. During Think Aloud sessions, teachers can assess students' comprehension in real-time by listening to their predictions, questions, or explanations. Similarly, scaffolding allows for observation of how

much support students need at each stage of reading, enabling teachers to tailor instruction to individual needs. This dynamic feedback loop strengthens teaching effectiveness and supports more personalized learning. The combined use of Think Aloud and Scaffolding helps bridge the gap between language acquisition and content understanding. While many junior high school students may still struggle with English grammar or vocabulary, these strategies allow them to engage with meaningful content by reducing linguistic barriers. As a result, students are able to not only understand what they read but also reflect on it, connect it with their own experiences, and develop deeper insights.

In addition to their cognitive and metacognitive benefits, Think Aloud and Scaffolding also promote a collaborative learning environment. Students often begin to imitate the modeling done by the teacher, verbalizing their own thoughts while reading or helping their peers through discussions. This peer-to-peer interaction not only reinforces understanding but also develops communication skills, which are essential in language learning. Furthermore, these strategies reduce reading anxiety because students feel guided rather than pressured to understand texts on their own. The structured support from the teacher builds students' confidence and makes reading a more enjoyable experience. These benefits are particularly valuable at the junior high school level, where students are still building both language competence and learning confidence. The frequent use of Think Aloud and Scaffolding can also be attributed to their practicality in classroom implementation. These strategies do not require sophisticated materials and can be seamlessly integrated into any reading activity. Moreover, these strategies are versatile for different types of text and can be adapted to students with different proficiency levels.

Both strategies also encourage students' engagement. Through interactive teaching, students become more involved in the learning process, which contributes to a more meaningful reading experience. Teachers can maintain students' attention and motivation while supporting comprehension skills. This finding is consistent with the findings of Diana et al. (2022), who found that the implementation of explicit reading strategies such as Think Aloud significantly improved students' reading comprehension and participation in class. Similarly, Wibowo et al. (2020) observed that the use of several reading strategies, including prediction and summarizing, which are elements of Think Aloud and Scaffolding, contributed positively to students' comprehension of the text. The current study complements this literature by focusing on the Junior High School environment, where students are at a critical stage in developing independent reading habits. The consistency of findings across studies highlights the continued relevance and effectiveness of these strategies. Think Aloud and Scaffolding are the reading strategies most commonly used by English teachers in Junior High School because they are proven to be effective and easy to integrate into classroom learning. These strategies support the cognitive and metacognitive aspects of reading and are aligned with students' developmental stages and curriculum objectives. Its widespread use demonstrates its value in fostering reading comprehension, engagement, and independence among learners.

CONCLUSIONS

Think Aloud proves highly effective in guiding students to understand how reading is more than decoding words; it is a thinking process. By verbalizing their thoughts, teachers demonstrate how readers engage with a text, such as by predicting, questioning, clarifying, and drawing connections. This strategy not only models good reading habits but also develops students' metacognitive skills. Think Aloud fosters active, reflective readers who can monitor their own understanding and adjust their strategies when confusion arises.

Scaffolding provides a gradual and structured support system for students. At the beginning stages of reading, teachers provide clear guidance, vocabulary help, and comprehension cues. As students gain more confidence, this support is gradually reduced, helping them build independence. Scaffolding bridges the gap between students' current ability and the expected reading outcomes. It shows that learning to read effectively is a developmental process that benefits from personalized, step-by-step assistance.

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