

## Teaching Strategy Used by Pre-Service Teachers in Teaching Reading Comprehension

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Received: April 20, 2026 | Revised: May 01, 2026 | Accepted: May 06, 2026

**Abstract.** This qualitative descriptive study investigated the teaching strategies of English reading comprehension implemented by pre-service teachers, the challenges they encounter, and their solutions. The research was conducted at SMKN 1 Godean and involved four pre-service teachers, namely Mr. A, Ms. A, Ms. M, and Ms. P, as respondents during their field teaching practice. Data were collected through observation for each teacher, and semi-structured interviews with four pre-service teachers. The data analysis followed a three-stage process, as proposed by Miles & Huberman (1994), namely data reduction, data display, and a final conclusion of the core findings. The first key finding identified the specific strategies employed: Mr. A utilized Scaffolding, Ms. A, implemented Active Reading, Ms. M used Collaborative Strategic Reading, and Ms. P employed Reciprocal Teaching. The second finding highlighted the challenges, such as students' limited vocabulary and engagement issues, and revealed how the teachers overcame them through targeted interventions like pronunciation practice, individual guidance, and text segmentation. Furthermore, Ms. A faced challenges in classroom management and overcame them by reviewing students' work, offering individual guidance, and keeping students engaged. Ms. M struggled to keep students focused on a long text, so she divided the text into smaller sections for discussion and modelled correct pronunciation. Ms. P faced challenges in student engagement, so she randomly selected students to participate and offered individual help to those who needed it. These findings are expected to serve as a valuable reference for educators in selecting effective strategies for teaching English reading.

**Keywords:** Teacher Strategy; Teaching English; Reading Class; Pre-Service Teacher

### INTRODUCTION

The growth of the English language as the world's most widely spoken has led to a significant increase in the demand for learning English (Shahbon, 2025; Sebayang *et al.*, 2025). Reading skill is the basic ability to be able to understand written information, both in academic and professional contexts. Smith *et al.* (2021) states that reading involves an interaction between skills, the reader's cognitive processes, and the linguistic characteristics of a text. The reading process involves an interaction between the reader and the text to obtain the information and message conveyed by the writer (Nussy & Pekpekay, 2024). In addition to reading activities, students can improve their language skills, which is great for students' intellectual development (Ayu *et al.*, 2017; Setyorini, *et al.*, 2023).

The most fundamental responsibility of schools is to teach students to read, as it affects most other academic achievement and is related to social, emotional, economic, and physical health (Moats, 2020). However, Ramadhianti, (2023), found out that students find some difficulties in comprehending English texts, namely difficulty in understanding complex vocabulary and sentence structures, difficulty in finding the main idea and

distinguishing it from supporting details, and understanding the cultural content. In addition, the lack of background knowledge and appropriate reading strategies also hinder students' reading comprehension. With the increasing number of scholarly manuscripts published each year, EFL learners have to read a lot and provide a particular time for reading several texts (Karim, 2022).

The professionalism of teachers and their creativity in teaching and adjusting the literacy style to suit the needs of the students are needed. Teachers need to update their knowledge and skills to improve students' learning outcomes (Karim, et al, 2025). Meanwhile, Kaycheng, (2016) confirms that the learning process is inseparable from the role of a teacher and how they behave creatively to be an example for their students. Therefore, teachers are required to think, design, and practice creatively in their teaching to improve their students' competencies (Nation, 2019). Furthermore, teachers must have a good plan in their teaching including reading comprehension. According to Kaka, (2022), teachers are required to not only prepare with one learning mode but also several learning models such as jigsaw methods, STAD, Think Pair-Share (pairing), and Cooperative-Integrated-Reading-Composition (CIRC).

Several studies into teaching strategies were conducted, for instance, Arwila, (2022), conducted a study to explore the strategies implemented by English teachers in teaching reading comprehension during online learning for seventh grade students at SMPN 2 Singaraja. The findings revealed that both teachers employed a question and answer strategy during online lessons. This approach guided students in interpreting the types of questions asked and locating the answers, as well as encouraging them to engage more deeply with the texts. Another relevant study was also conducted by Wulandari et al. (2022), who investigated the effectiveness of the Sharing Reading Literacy model in teaching negotiation text to grade 10 students at SMA Negeri 15 Padang. Her findings revealed that after implementing the Sharing Reading Literacy model, students' scores improved significantly. This interactive approach not only improves their reading comprehension but also increases their engagement and critical thinking.

The most recent study was carried out by Putra (2024) to examine the strategies used by EFL teachers in teaching reading comprehension at SMA Negeri 6 Metro. The results revealed that Teacher T1 used the think-aloud strategy for procedural texts, which helped engage students by verbalizing their thoughts while reading. This approach encourages creativity and active participation. These findings highlight the importance of customized strategies in improving students' reading comprehension.

Previous studies have extensively discussed reading strategies used by experienced teachers, but studies on pre-service teachers in vocational schools are still few in number. Additionally, few studies highlight the challenges in implementing reading strategies. The current study focuses more on the strategies and problems encountered by pre-service teachers when teaching reading comprehension and how they overcome these difficulties in vocational secondary schools. Meanwhile, the previous studies mostly examined the strategies used by in-house teachers at the junior high school level.

Based on the researchers' preliminary observation to the pre-service teachers' teaching practice at SMKN 1 Godean, we found out several teaching strategies applied, and among them applied differently in their class. Thus, the researchers are interested in exploring the teaching strategies implemented by the pre-service teachers, and further explore the challenges encountered in teaching reading comprehension at the SMK N 1 Godean and their way they overcome the problems. Through this study, researchers hope to

provide the benefits to both in-house teachers and pre-service students, including providing the model of teaching reading comprehension for EFL students in reading classes. Therefore, the research questions can be formulated as follows: 1) What are the pre-service teachers' strategies in teaching English Reading comprehension at SMK 1 Godean? 2) What challenges do the pre-service teachers encounter in teaching English reading comprehension and how to overcome these challenges?

## METHOD

### Research Design

This present study utilized qualitative descriptive design to obtain the qualitative data on pre-service teachers' teaching strategies, the challenges they encounter, and their solutions implemented by the pre-service teachers in teaching English reading comprehension.

### Research Setting and Respondents

The research was conducted at SMKN 1 Godean and involved four pre-service English teachers, namely Mr. A, Ms. A, Ms. M, and Ms. P, as respondents during their field teaching practice (PLP). The respondents were three female and one male pre-service teachers who participated in their field teaching practicum at SMKN 1 Godean. They are students from the English Language Education Study Program (ELESP) of Universitas Teknologi Yogyakarta.

### Research Instruments and Data Collecting Techniques

Classroom observation and semi-structured interview were used as the research instruments to obtain the data needed. To find out the challenges encountered, the researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with four pre-service teachers. Furthermore, in the observation session, the researchers utilized the observation checklist to assess the situation and state of the classroom. For the observation checklist, the researchers adapted the observation sheet from Thornbury, (2005) which was divided into 3 sessions, namely: Pre-activity, During-activity, and Post-activity, and modified the content according to the relevance of the study.

The classroom observation took 60 minutes and the researchers observed the reading class two meetings for each pre-service teacher. In addition, the semi-structured interviews were conducted for 25 minutes for each respondent. It aims to validate the results of observation, and to gather insights into their experiences. Besides, identify the challenges they encounter, and the solutions they provide. Furthermore, researchers used recording devices when conducting interviews so that the information obtained can be exactly what the respondents stated. This was done to prevent inaccurate information and strengthen existing data Magaldi *et al.*, (2020). The following is the classroom observation checklist used by the researchers:

**Table 1.** Observation Checklist

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION CHECKLIST				
Teaching Steps	Element of Observation	Yes	No	Description
Pre-Activity	a.			Greeting
	b.			Doing attendance
	c.			Pray together

<b>CLASSROOM OBSERVATION CHECKLIST</b>				
<b>Teaching Steps</b>	<b>Element of Observation</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>While Activity</b>	a.			Explaining materials
	b.			Reassuring and giving warning/appreciation
	c.			Asking question
	d.			Ice breaking
	e.			Strategy used by teacher:
	-			Scaffolding
	-			Think Aloud
	-			Reciprocal Teaching
	-			SQ3R
	-			QARs
	-			Skimming
	-			Scanning
	-			Active Reading
	-			Detailed Reading
<b>Post Activity</b>	-			Speed Reading
	-			Structure-Proposition-Evaluation
	-			Collaborative Strategic Reading
	a.			Review the materials
	b.			Checking if any question
	c.			Pray and closing the meeting

Apart from observation, the researchers conducted semi-structured interviews to collect the required data. The following is the checklist of semi-structured interviews used by the researchers in the interview sessions:

**Table 2.** Interview Checklist

<b>QUESTION OF SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW</b>	
<b>No</b>	<b>Question Items</b>
1	What did you do before starting a reading class?
2	What learning materials did you use in teaching reading?
3	What topics did you provide in teaching reading?
4	What media are used in teaching reading?
5	How are the steps in teaching reading?
6	What teaching strategies did you use in teaching reading?
7	Why did you use that teaching strategy in teaching reading?
8	How did you handle the situation when you had some difficulties in teaching reading?
9	How did you implement your teaching strategy conducted during the reading lesson?
10	What challenges did you encounter during the implementation of the teaching strategy in reading lessons?

QUESTION OF SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW	
No	Question Items
11	What methods did you use to evaluate students at the end of the lesson?
12	What follow-up actions did you take if the learning objectives have not been fully achieved?

### Data Analysis Techniques

The data obtained from both classroom observation and semi-structured interview were analysed qualitatively following a three-stage process, as proposed by Huberman *et al.*, (1994), namely data reduction, data display, and a final conclusion of the core findings. Furthermore, in data reduction, researchers arranged the data based on key themes. Researchers gathered more data and information and reviewed what is required with the support of more clear results. Meanwhile, in the data display stage, researchers presented data related to semi-structured interviews in the form of quotes from respondents' answers. In addition, the researchers analysed related topics and reference data as another source to confirm the research findings, and In the data conclusion stage, the researchers summarize the main findings.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Pre-service Teachers' Strategies in Teaching English Reading Comprehension the Results of Classroom Observation

Classroom observation of the teaching-learning process was carried out twice in each class for each pre-service teacher. The following is the detailed report of the classroom observation.

On Tuesday, July 30, 2024, the first observation of a pre-service teacher, Mr. A., took place in a Retail Business class. The observation followed a three-stage lesson structure, namely Pre-Activity: The lesson began with a standard opening, including a prayer, checking student attendance, and engaging students with stimulating questions before introducing the day's topic; While-Activities: This stage consisted of three parts: Mr. A. provided examples of texts and images, followed by questions; he explained the text's structure, linguistic elements, and function; and finally, he guided students as they created their own texts; Post-Activity: The lesson concluded with a summary of the material, a review of the learning process, and an overview of the next lesson's topic before ending with a prayer.

On Tuesday, August 6, 2024, the second observation of Mr. A.'s class took place, focusing on descriptive texts about famous people. The lesson followed a three-stage structure, namely Pre-Activity: The class began with a standard opening, including greetings, prayer, and an attendance check, followed by thought-provoking questions to engage students; While-Activities: Mr. A. provided examples of descriptive texts about famous people and had students identify key points. He then offered a framework for creating such texts, after which students worked in pairs to describe famous people to each other, applying the methods they had learned; Post-Activity: The lesson concluded with the teacher checking the students' work and reviewing the learning content before closing the class with a greeting.

On Monday, August 12, 2024, the first observation of pre-service teacher Ms. A. took place in an Accounting and Finance class. The lesson was structured in three stages, namely

Pre-Activity: Ms. A. opened the class with greetings, a prayer, and a warm check-in with the students, followed by light questions to ease them into the lesson; While-Activity: The main part of the lesson focused on descriptive texts. Ms. A. showed a video on the correct use of tenses, then verbally explained the concepts. Students were then instructed to write sentences using the correct tenses and engaged in a group discussion. Following this, they completed a quiz on the Quizziz platform and discussed any difficult vocabulary they encountered; Post-Activity: To conclude, Ms. A. summarized the key points of the lesson, outlined the plan for the next meeting, and closed the class with a prayer.

On Monday, August 19, 2024, the second observation of Ms. A. 's class focused on recount texts. The lesson followed a three-part structure, namely Pre-Activity: The class began with a standard opening, including greetings, a prayer, a check-in on the students' well-being, and an attendance check, followed by light questions to transition into the lesson; While-Activity: Ms. A. showed a video about recount texts, then verbally explained the concept and provided examples of different types. Students then worked in pairs to read a dialogue provided by the teacher. Afterward, they were assigned to individually create a personal recount video for presentation at the next meeting, Post-Activity: The lesson concluded with a review of the material covered and a reminder about the video assignment, before Ms. A. closed the class with a prayer.

On Tuesday, August 13, 2024, the first observation of pre-service teacher Ms. M. took place in a Visual Communication Design class. The lesson was structured in three stages, focusing on descriptive texts, namely Pre-Activity: Ms. M. opened the class with a prayer and checked attendance. She then engaged students with stimulating questions before introducing the lesson's topic; While-Activities: The main part of the lesson consisted of three activities. First, students watched a video about descriptive texts and completed a corresponding worksheet. Second, Ms. M. explained the structure, linguistic elements, and functions of descriptive texts. Third, she guided students as they created sentences based on pictures presented in a slideshow; Post-Activity: The lesson concluded with a summary of the material and a final prayer.

On Tuesday, August 20, 2024, the second observation of Ms. M. 's class focused on descriptive texts about places. The lesson followed a three-stage structure, namely Pre-Activity: The class began with a standard opening, including greetings, a prayer, an attendance check, and stimulating questions to engage students; While-Activity: Students worked in pairs to analyse two descriptive texts about places. They were tasked with identifying the structure, purpose, and linguistic elements of each text. Afterward, each pair wrote their own descriptive text and presented it to the class; Post-Activity: The lesson concluded with Ms. M. checking the students' work and conducting a brief review before closing the class with a greeting.

On Wednesday, August 14, 2024, the first observation of pre-service teacher Ms. P. took place in an Accounting and Institutional Finance class. The lesson was structured in three parts and focused on personal recount texts, namely Pre-Activity: Ms. P. opened the class with a prayer, checked in on the students' well-being, and took attendance. She then engaged students with stimulating questions before introducing the day's topic; While-Activities: Ms. P. showed a video about personal recount texts and provided a brief oral explanation. Students then worked in pairs to read a dialogue sheet and were individually assigned to create and record a personal recount text for a video; Post-Activity: The lesson concluded with a review of the material and a reminder about the assignment before Ms. P. closed the class with a prayer.

On Wednesday, August 21, 2024, the second observation of Ms. P. 's class focused on recount texts. The lesson followed a three-stage structure, namely Pre-Activity: The class began with a standard opening, including greetings, a prayer, a check-in on the students' well-being, and an attendance check, followed by stimulating questions; While-Activities: Ms. P. used a PowerPoint presentation to explain the definition, purpose, and language elements of recount texts. She provided examples through biographies and everyday life scenarios. Students and the teacher then worked together to identify different types of recount texts. Afterward, students were given a worksheet with jumbled sentences and tasked with arranging them into the correct structure; Post-Activity: The lesson concluded with a brief review and a reminder about the assignment before Ms. P. closed the class with a greeting.

### **The Results of Interview**

Apart from classroom observation, the researchers also conducted semi-structured interviews to confirm the data that had been collected during the observation. Twelve interview question items were asked to the four respondents. The first respondent, Mr A, addressed his thoughts on the first interview question, as seen in excerpt 1:

"Before starting the class, we open the class with a prayer, continue to check the attendance of students and we give a sparking question before starting the material to provoke students' attention to the topic to be discussed." (Mr. A).

Mr. A stated that the material used in his class was descriptive text. This indicates that his teaching approach focused on delivering descriptive text content to students. *"For the material itself used in my (teacher) class there is descriptive text"* (Mr. A)

The topic used in Mr. A's class was descriptive text, with a focus on describing a person. This indicates that the topic chosen aimed to help students understand how to describe individuals in detail. Mr A states "The topic I (teacher) used for the descriptive text was about a person" (Mr. A).

The media used in Mr. A's class included PowerPoint presentations, website links for accessing the material, and a whiteboard. The PowerPoint was utilized to present key points visually, while the website links provided additional resources for students. Meanwhile, the whiteboard was used to give more detailed explanations and clarify important aspects of the lesson. In the learning process, learners are guided gradually from reading the sample text together, analysing the content, structure, and function of the text, to finally being able to compose the description text independently. This approach allows them to understand the material more purposefully and systematically. Such a strategy is known as Scaffolding, where the teacher provides gradually decreasing support until learners can learn independently. It can be seen in excerpt 2 as follows:

"For the learning strategy used scaffolding, so the students are given material while I (teacher) still guide them, we read examples of text together and try to analyse, then given an explanation of the structure, function, until students can later compose description text independently" (Mr. A)

Mr. A explained that the implementation of the strategies used in learning helps students to understand the material more easily. By seeing the sample text and getting an explanation of its structure, function, and linguistic elements, students can focus more on learning. In addition, this strategy also allows teachers to monitor students' progress. It can be seen in excerpt 3 as follows:

"The implementation of this strategy is quite helpful for me (teacher) in ensuring that

students can understand the material I (teacher) convey by showing examples of texts and then explaining the structure, function, linguistic elements, and so on. In addition, it can also monitor their progress while learning. If there are difficulties, students will usually ask, and I (teacher) can guide them to better understand the content of the text." (Mr. A)

Mr. A explained that if the learning objectives have not been achieved, then a re-explanation will be given. If in the evaluation the results still do not meet the target, remedial will be given at the next meeting. Mr A states *"Usually if the learning objectives have not been achieved, a re-explanation will be given, then for example in the evaluation it is not achieved, I (teacher) give remediation at the next meeting"* (Mr. A).

Ms. A, the second respondent, started checking the condition of the class first, then continued by reading prayers and checking the presence of students in the class. Ms. A also asked questions before getting into the material to provoke students' attention and initial knowledge. This can be seen in excerpt 4 as follows:

"Before starting class, of course, I (teacher) check the condition of the students first, then I open by reading prayers and taking attendance. After that, I (teacher) give students sparking questions first so that students can be interested because students have to guess what they will learn that day." (Ms. A)

Ms. A explained that in the first meeting, the descriptive text material focused on the topic of describing a person, with an example that was closer to the students' interests, namely describing an idol they liked. As for the recount text, he used students' personal experiences as the learning topic. It can be seen in excerpt 5 as follows:

"For the descriptive text in the first meeting, I (teacher) used the topic of describing someone, so it was more about describing idols that my students like. For the recount text, I used students' personal experiences" (Ms. A)

Ms. A explained that learning to read descriptive and recount texts is not much different. The media used for both text types can be videos or PPTs, which help students understand the material visually. In addition, for core exercises, he uses learning platforms such as Quizziz or Wordwall, which allow students to be more active in doing practice questions and improve their understanding. Ms. A' addressed the issues, as seen in excerpt 6, as follows:

"Learning to read descriptive text and recount text is actually the same, the media is still sometimes in the form of videos, sometimes also using PPT. Then for the core exercises using learning platforms such as quizzes or Wordwall." (Ms. A).

In her lesson, Ms. A used the Active Reading strategy which is used to help students understand the text deeply through active engagement in reading. Ms. A explained that in understanding descriptive texts, students learn together by reading, analysing and translating vocabulary that they find difficult. They also look for the main idea of the text, such as about their idols. A similar approach is applied in recount texts, where students remain focused on analysing difficult vocabulary to understand the content of the text better. Ms. A, explained it through excerpt 7, as follows:

"For descriptive text, we use Active Reading, we will learn together by reading together, analysing together, for example, there is vocabulary that they find difficult, so we translate it first, then find the main idea of the text about the idol, if for the recount, it's actually not much different, both analyze difficult vocabulary too." (Ms. A).

Ms. A prioritizes discussion so that students are actively involved in learning. She

does not only explain the material in a one-way manner, but also encourages students to participate in understanding the text. In this way, students have the opportunity to exchange opinions, ask questions, and analyse the content of the reading together, so that their understanding of the text becomes deeper. It can be seen in excerpt 8, as follows:

“As for the implementation, it is the same, we have more discussions with students so it's not just one-way, from the teacher explaining and then it's done, but we also involve students, so we discuss with students.” (Ms. A)

Ms. M, the third pre-service teacher, started the class by praying together. This was done to create a calmer, more focused atmosphere for the students. After that, she also has a special strategy to help students enrich their vocabulary before getting into the main material. In teaching descriptive text, Ms. M chooses topics that are close to students' lives and easy to understand. She focuses on the description of places, especially historical places, to make students more interested in learning.

To support learning, Ms. M utilizes various media to make the material easier for students to understand. She uses technological devices and printed materials as teaching aids. Ms. M states that “...the media used are laptops, LCD projectors, cell phones and HVS paper.” (Ms. M).

In teaching descriptive text, Ms. M started by displaying a sample text using a projector. Students were given time to read and understand the content of the text before receiving the printed copy. After that, one of the students was asked to read the text, then they discussed it together. Ms. M's explanation can be seen in excerpt 9:

“The first step I took was to display an example of descriptive text on the board using a projector. Students are given time to read and understand the text. After that, I (teacher) distributed the printed text and asked one of the students to read it. Then, we discuss the content of the text together.” (Ms. M)

After discussing the text together, Ms. M applied the Collaborative Strategic Reading. In this strategy, students work in groups to analyse the text and understand its structure. After that, they shared the results of the discussion through presentations. This strategy helped students understand the text better through cooperation and discussion. Ms. M's explanation can be seen in excerpt 10, as follows:

“The strategy is Collaborative Strategic Reading, so I (teacher) make a group task to analyse the text, understand how the text structure is, then after that they share the results of their work during the presentation.” (Ms. M)

Ms. M chose the Collaborative Strategic Reading because she thinks it is suitable for learning reading texts. According to her, this strategy aims to help students develop their reading comprehension effectively. This issue can be seen in excerpt 11, as follows:

“Because I (teacher) think this strategy is suitable for learning text types such as reading. Because the purpose of the learning strategy is to help students develop their reading comprehension skills effectively.” (Ms. M).

In the evaluation session conducted after the lesson, Ms. M conducted a reflection at the end of the session. She asks the students if there were any difficulties during the learning, if there was any part of the material that was unclear, or if they have any suggestions or anything else to say.

The fourth pre-service teacher, Ms. P, also gave her opinion on what was done in opening the class. In starting the lesson, Ms. P always starts with greetings, and then prayer if the class takes place in the morning. After that, she asked opening questions, such as asking how the students are doing, then took attendance. Next, she reviewed the previous

material and gave an overview of what will be learned that day. The following is an explanation from Ms. P regarding the initial steps in learning, as seen in excerpt 12 as follows:

“When I (teacher) open the class, I greet the students and continue with prayer if the class is in the morning. Then, after greetings, I (teacher) ask opening questions, such as asking how the students are, and after that roll call. Next, review the material from the last meeting, and tell them what we will learn today.” (Ms. P).

In the interview session, Ms. P, explained the different types of texts used in reading instruction. She mentioned that students were introduced to several types of texts, including biographies, autobiographies and personal experiences. In addition to the selection of text types, Ms. P also explained about the media and methods used in learning. The material was delivered through a presentation using PPT from a laptop. The PPT was used to explain the material, including the definition, structure, and linguistic features of the text. After that, students practiced writing using their respective exercise books. Ms. P explain it in excerpt 13 as follows:

“The media uses PPT from a laptop, the same is for discussing the material, presentation of the material, explanation, definition, structure, linguistic elements, then after that for the students, then they practice in writing using their respective exercise books.” (Ms. P)

Ms. P also explained the steps in teaching reading activities in class. In the first meeting, she randomly assigned students to read the text aloud. Some students read per sentence, while others read per paragraph. However, in the next meeting, students read individually with the given text. Ms P’s explanation can be seen in excerpt 14 as follows:

“Randomly appoint one of the students to read. For the first meeting I (teacher) appointed randomly, so they read aloud, some per sentence and some per paragraph but for the other reading (second meeting) they read individually (I (teacher) gave them the text).” (Ms. P).

In explaining the implementation of the reading strategy, Ms. P started by giving instructions and explaining the material to the students. She explains various aspects of the text, such as definition, purpose, structure, and linguistic elements. After that, students were asked to read the three types of texts used in the lesson. Her explanation can be seen in excerpt 15 as follows:

“The implementation starts with instructions and explanation of the material, including the definition, purpose, structure, and linguistic elements. After that, students read three types of autobiographical, biographical, and recount texts about experiences. Some students are randomly selected to read aloud, while the rest read individually or in the form of pair work.” (Ms. P).

To ensure students understand the materials, Ms. P provided remediation if learning objectives have not been achieved. If a whole class is having difficulty, the material is repeated and deepened before re-evaluation. However, if only a few students needed remediation, she used an individual approach to identify their difficulties, such as in understanding certain linguistic elements.

## **The Challenges the English Pre-Service Teachers Encountered, and the Way They Settled the Problems**

### **The Results of Semi-Structured Interview**

These pre-service teachers implement various strategies adapted to the conditions

and characteristics of each class they teach, aiming to create a conducive learning environment. By considering each class's specific needs and challenges, they tried to choose the right approach so that learning activities can run smoothly, interactively, and effectively.

In his interview, Mr. A stated that to help students overcome reading difficulties, he utilized a step-by-step approach. He assisted students with pronunciation through practice and repetition. When students struggle to understand a text, he explains its meaning gradually to aid comprehension. Additionally, to address vocabulary limitations, he engaged students in discussions and exercises to help them better grasp new words. Mr. A's explanation, can be seen in excerpt 16 as follows:

"...so, to deal with the students' difficulties, I (guru) help them with pronunciation practice and repetition. Then, if they are confused about understanding the text, we explain the meaning gradually. For vocabulary that is lacking, we invite them to discuss and practice so that they understand better later." (Mr. A).

Similarly, Ms. M also focused on improving students' reading and comprehension skills. She helped students who struggle with pronunciation by repeating the correct way to read words and asking them to follow along. To enhance understanding, she divided the text into sections and discussed it with students to ensure they grasp the meaning. She explains this issue in excerpt 17, as follows:

"The difficulties they experience may be the way of reading and not understanding the context of the reading. So if there are students who might still be wrong or missing, I (teacher) will repeat it and tell them the correct one. Then I (teacher) asked the students to follow me." (Ms. M)

When discussing the challenges of implementing reading strategies, Mr. A highlighted that students often struggle with pronunciation, limited vocabulary, and difficulties in understanding the text. As a result, teachers need to explain materials in greater detail to help students grasp the content more effectively. This situation is addressed by Mr. A in excerpt 18, as follows:

"For the challenges, as mentioned earlier, it is about how students pronounce a word, then word recognition is also still lacking, and also they tend to still not understand the content of the text, the purpose of the text itself, and the teacher must explain in more detail about the material." (Mr. A)

Similarly, Ms. M noted that one of the biggest challenges is maintaining students' engagement, especially when dealing with long texts. She observed that students tend to get bored, which makes comprehension even more difficult. She states that "*What I (teacher) see is that the obstacle is that students may feel bored quickly because sometimes they have to understand a text whose content is quite long.*" (Ms. M).

In discussing challenges, Ms. A pointed out that classroom management is a major issue. With students having different personalities and learning behaviors, some are attentive while others are easily distracted or disruptive. This variety makes it difficult to maintain focus in the classroom. Ms. A, addressed this problems in excerpt 19:

"Maybe it's more about class management, because there are many different forms of students, student characters, so yes, sometimes there is noise, sometimes there are those who pay attention, sometimes there are also those whose focus is lost, that's the difficulty." (Ms. A)

Ms. P also highlighted student cooperation as a key challenge. Some students refused to participate, even when given options like reading aloud voluntarily. To address this, she

often has to randomly select students to ensure engagement in the lesson. Ms. P, addressed this issue in excerpt 20:

“The challenge is that some students are less cooperative, don't want to think, and refuse instructions. For example, if I (teacher) give them the choice to read, no one wants to. So, whether I want to or not, I (teacher) end up appointing them randomly so that there are still those who participate.” (Ms. P).

## DISCUSSION

Based on the classroom observation conducted twice for each pre-service teacher, it was found out that some of the strategies used by each pre-service teacher when teaching in reading classes were varied. For instance, the first pre-service teacher, Mr. A, used the Scaffolding strategy consistently across both observations. This approach involved providing gradual guidance through stages such as text examples, explanations of text structures, and collaborative activities before allowing students to work independently. This strategy is in line with Marni (2022) who states that collaborative activities may encourage students to share insights on the text with their peers.

The second pre-service teacher, Ms. A, employed both the Reciprocal Teaching and Active Reading strategies. Reciprocal Teaching was applied through joint discussions with students, focusing on tenses, vocabulary, and text analysis. Active Reading was used when students read and interacted with recount texts, applying their understanding to create their own personal recounts. The ability to read leads learners to gain information quickly (Fitria, 2023), and reading plays a crucial role in the education process (Suhud *et al.*, 2024; Wati *et al.*, (2018; Amin, (2022).

The third pre-service teacher, Ms. M, implemented both the Scaffolding, and Reciprocal Teaching strategies. Scaffolding was used in the first observation with gradual assistance through videos, worksheets, and sentence formation, while Reciprocal Teaching was used in group activities, where students analyzed and presented descriptive texts collaboratively. Susini, (2021) stated that the ability to read leads a person to be able to obtain information quickly from various media, especially in today's life.

Meanwhile, the fourth pre-service teacher, Ms. P, applied Scaffolding and Active Reading strategies. Scaffolding was used to guide students through the stages of understanding personal recount texts, while Active Reading was employed when students actively engaged in analysing and reorganizing recount text structures. Sarjan *et al.*, (2017), state that through the Scaffolding strategy, students were able to develop their ideas in a way that was understandable to them. Meanwhile, Madolimovich, (2022), confirms that reading is a process in which learners understand the big picture from the text. Overall, these strategies allowed each teacher to support students at various stages of their learning, with some overlap in the application of scaffolding and interactive methods like Reciprocal Teaching and Active Reading

The results of a semi-structured interview revealed that the challenges pre-service teachers encountered when teaching reading classes, for instance, the first pre-service teacher, Mr. A, had challenges when his students had difficulty in pronunciation, limited vocabulary, and their difficulty in understanding reading. As a result, the teacher has to explain the material in more detail so that students can more easily understand the content of the reading. To help students overcome reading difficulties, Mr. A used a step-by-step approach. He helped students with pronunciation through practice and repetition. When students have difficulty understanding a text, he explains the meaning gradually to help

comprehension. In addition, to address vocabulary limitations, he engaged students in discussions and exercises to help them understand new words better.

Ms. A faced challenges in identifying students' difficulties and managing the classroom. With students having different learning abilities and behaviours, some struggle with understanding the material, while others get easily distracted or make noise. To overcome these challenges, she reviews students' assessments or assignments to identify their difficulties. Then, she asked them directly and provided individual guidance to help them. Additionally, she maintained classroom order by managing different student behaviours and keeping them engaged in learning.

Another pre-service teacher, Ms. M faced challenges in keeping students engaged, especially when dealing with long texts, as they tend to get bored easily. This lack of interest makes comprehension more difficult. To overcome this challenge, she helps students improve their reading and comprehension skills by repeating the correct pronunciation and asking them to follow along. She also breaks down the text into sections and discusses it with students to ensure they understand the meaning.

Meanwhile, Ms. P faced challenges with student cooperation, as some students refused to participate, even when given the option to read aloud voluntarily. To overcome this challenge, she randomly selected students to ensure engagement in the lesson. Additionally, she took an individualized approach by interacting with students personally. After giving instructions, she observes for a few minutes before going around the class, checking in with students one by one, and asking if they need help. This method ensures that every student receives the assistance they require

## CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that pre-service teachers employed a variety of strategies to teach English reading comprehension, primarily aligning with a three-stage model: Pre-Activity, While-Activity, and Post-Activity. Key strategies observed included Scaffolding, where teachers provided decreasing support as students progressed; Active Reading, which involved students actively engaging with texts through translation and analysis; Collaborative Strategic Reading, where students worked in groups to analyse texts; and Reciprocal Teaching, which fostered peer-to-peer support and reciprocal learning. However, pre-service teachers faced significant challenges, including students' difficulties with pronunciation, limited vocabulary, and a lack of motivation or engagement, particularly with longer texts. They addressed these challenges by providing direct instruction, repeating correct pronunciation, and using gradual explanations. Some also used a personalized approach, offering one-on-one guidance to students struggling with specific concepts.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations are designed to help EFL teachers, pre-service teachers, and future researchers build on the strategies and findings from this study. EFL teachers, first need to integrate technology purposefully: while the pre-service teachers used technology like videos and PPTs, consider using interactive platforms like Quizziz or Wordwall not just for exercises, but for pre-reading activities to build vocabulary and for post-reading assessments to check comprehension in a more engaging way. Second, prioritize vocabulary building: the research highlights limited vocabulary as a major challenge. Implement consistent, low-stakes vocabulary activities, such as daily "word of the day"

exercises or using digital flashcard apps. This can make vocabulary acquisition a continuous process rather than a one-time event. Third, encourage peer-to-peer learning: The reciprocal Teaching and Collaborative Strategic Reading strategies were effective. Expand on this by creating structured peer-to-peer activities where students can teach each other, summarize texts, or predict what comes next. This can help overcome student disengagement and build confidence

For pre-service Teachers, it is important to first, vary your strategies: while the three-stage model is a solid framework, the findings suggest a need for flexibility. Practice adapting your strategies based on student needs. For example, if students are disengaged, a short, fast-paced game might be more effective than a lengthy group discussion. Second, adopt a personalized approach: the research shows the value of a personalized approach. Develop skills in diagnosing individual student difficulties. This might involve keeping a simple log of common errors or having quick, informal check-ins with students to see where they're struggling.

For Future Researchers, first, we recommend investigating the impact of specific strategies: this study identified several strategies, but future research could delve deeper. Consider a quantitative study that compares the effectiveness of one strategy (e.g., Scaffolding) against another (e.g., Collaborative Strategic Reading) on student comprehension scores. Second, explore student perspectives in depth: the current research focuses heavily on the pre-service teachers' perspectives. Future studies could include focus groups or student interviews to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences, what strategies they find most helpful, and their specific challenges beyond what teachers observe. Third, examine the role of teacher training: Given that the participants are pre-service teachers, future research could explore the connection between their university training and their classroom practices.

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