



An analytical study of pedagogical decision-making in efl reading instruction: evidence from indonesian junior secondary classrooms

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Article Information	Abstract
Submitted: Feb 23, 2026 Revised: May 02, 2026 Accepted: May 28, 2026 Keywords Pedagogical Decision Making; EFL Reading Instruction; Reading Comprehension; Teaching Strategies; Qualitative Case Study.	Purpose: This study aims to examine teachers' pedagogical decision-making in selecting and implementing instructional strategies for teaching reading comprehension in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom at the junior secondary level. Method: This research employed a qualitative case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of classroom practices. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis involving one English teacher and seventh-grade students. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which included data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. To ensure the credibility of the findings, triangulation of data sources and techniques was applied. Findings: The results indicate that teachers' pedagogical decisions are manifested through the systematic use of instructional strategies across three stages: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. In the pre-reading stage, decisions focused on activating prior knowledge through brainstorming and vocabulary support. During the while-reading stage, strategies such as reading aloud, directed reading activities, and vocabulary identification were employed to enhance comprehension. In the post-reading stage, decisions emphasized evaluation through questioning, clarification, and reviewing activities. However, the findings also reveal that these decisions were still influenced by teacher-centered practices, including frequent reliance on translation and limited use of English as the primary instructional language. Significance: This study provides empirical insights into pedagogical decision-making in EFL reading instruction and highlights the importance of adopting more student-centered and interactive strategies to improve reading comprehension outcomes.

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is widely recognized as a fundamental component of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning because it enables learners to access and interpret written information effectively. In educational contexts, reading serves not only as a linguistic skill but also as a cognitive process that supports critical thinking and knowledge construction (Medranda-Morales et al., 2023; Sari & Prasetyo, 2021; Song et al., 2025; Van et al., 2022). Students at the junior secondary level are expected to develop the ability to understand texts, identify main ideas, and make inferences (Din, 2020; Ng et al., 2022; Smith et al., 2021). However, achieving these competencies requires the implementation of effective instructional strategies that support active engagement in the reading process. (Dursun & Aykan, 2025; Itow, 2020; Lakew et al., 2025). Effective reading instruction involves guiding students through structured learning stages, including pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities. These stages are designed to activate prior knowledge, support comprehension, and evaluate understanding. In practice, teachers are required to make instructional decisions that align with students' needs and classroom

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conditions. Therefore, pedagogical decision-making becomes a key factor in determining the success of reading instruction. Understanding how teachers approach reading instruction is essential for improving the quality of EFL learning outcomes.

Despite its importance, the teaching of reading comprehension in many EFL classrooms still encounters several challenges. Traditional teaching practices often rely on teacher-centered approaches, where students passively receive information from the teacher (Alam, 2023). Such practices limit students' opportunities to engage in meaningful interaction with texts. As a result, students frequently experience difficulties in understanding reading materials and applying comprehension strategies. Previous studies have shown that the use of varied instructional strategies can significantly improve reading comprehension and learner motivation (H. Li et al., 2022; J.-T. Li et al., 2024; McBreen & Savage, 2021; D. Yapp et al., 2023). Research on reading strategy instruction indicates that structured strategies can enhance students' ability to process and interpret texts effectively (Bogaerds-Hazenberg et al., 2021; Duke et al., 2021). In addition, meta-analytical findings have confirmed the positive impact of instructional strategies on reading achievement across EFL contexts (Chen et al., 2026; Wang et al., 2024; D. J. Yapp et al., 2021). However, the implementation of these strategies in real classroom settings is often inconsistent. Teachers may face constraints related to time, resources, and students' language proficiency levels. Consequently, the effectiveness of reading instruction depends not only on the strategies used but also on how teachers make decisions in applying them.

Recent research has expanded the discussion of language teaching by incorporating broader perspectives such as teacher identity, teacher cognition, and pedagogical decision-making. Studies have shown that teaching is a complex process influenced by teachers' beliefs, experiences, and contextual factors (Gemink et al., 2021; Joram et al., 2020; Shahali & Halim, 2024). In particular, pedagogical decision-making has been identified as a critical aspect of instructional practice. Teachers are required to continuously make decisions regarding the selection, adaptation, and implementation of teaching strategies (Pak et al., 2020; Troussas et al., 2025). These decisions are influenced by classroom dynamics, student characteristics, and learning objectives (J. Li & Xue, 2023; Lu et al., 2022; Wolff et al., 2021). Moreover, emerging studies have explored how factors such as technology, emotions, and artificial intelligence can influence teachers' instructional decisions. While these studies provide valuable insights, they often focus on general teaching practices rather than specific instructional domains. In the context of reading comprehension, most studies emphasize the effectiveness of strategies without examining how they are implemented through decision-making processes. Furthermore, limited research has explored these issues at the junior secondary level in EFL settings. This indicates a gap in the literature regarding the integration of pedagogical decision-making and reading instruction.

A substantial body of research has examined the effectiveness of instructional strategies in enhancing EFL learners' reading comprehension, including studies on reading strategy instruction, self-efficacy, motivation, and critical reading ability (Chinpakdee & Gu, 2024; Fathi & Soleimani, 2020; H. Li et al., 2022; Mekuria et al., 2024). These studies consistently demonstrate that structured strategy instruction positively influences learners' reading outcomes, and meta-analytical evidence further confirms the significant

role of instructional strategies in improving comprehension across EFL contexts (J.-T. Li et al., 2024). In addition, recent research has broadened the focus to include teacher-related dimensions such as teacher identity, textbook adaptation, and classroom-based practices (Gong et al., 2022; Rathert & Cabaroğlu, 2022; Robb & Ewert, 2024), as well as emerging perspectives on pedagogical decision-making, teacher cognition, and the influence of contextual factors such as technology, emotions, and artificial intelligence on instructional practices (Derakhshan et al., 2026; Najjarpour & Salimi, 2024; Saeedian & Ghaderi, 2023; Zhao et al., 2022). However, despite these developments, existing studies tend to examine either the effectiveness of reading strategies or broader aspects of teacher cognition separately, with limited attention to how pedagogical decision-making is enacted in real classroom practices, particularly in the context of teaching reading comprehension at the junior secondary level in EFL settings. Therefore, there is a clear need for an in-depth qualitative investigation that integrates both perspectives by analyzing how teachers make, adapt, and implement pedagogical decisions across different stages of reading instruction within authentic classroom environments.

Based on the issues identified above, this study aims to analyze teachers' pedagogical decision-making in selecting and implementing instructional strategies for teaching reading comprehension in an EFL classroom at the junior secondary level. The study seeks to explore how teachers determine appropriate strategies to support students' comprehension during different stages of reading instruction. It also aims to examine how these strategies are applied in real classroom practices. By focusing on pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading stages, this study provides a structured analysis of instructional processes. In addition, the study investigates the factors that influence teachers' pedagogical decisions, including classroom conditions and student characteristics. The research adopts a qualitative approach to capture in-depth insights into teachers' practices. Through classroom observations, interviews, and document analysis, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of instructional decision-making. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of more effective and context-responsive teaching strategies. Furthermore, the study provides practical implications for teachers in improving reading instruction. Ultimately, this research aims to bridge the gap between theoretical frameworks and classroom implementation in EFL reading pedagogy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading comprehension is a central component of language learning in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts because it enables learners to extract meaning from written texts. It involves a complex interaction between linguistic knowledge, cognitive processing, and prior knowledge (Smith et al., 2021; Teng, 2020; Xia et al., 2023). Learners are expected not only to decode words but also to interpret ideas, infer meaning, and evaluate information critically (Horváthová & Nad'ová, 2021; Saenab et al., 2020). In EFL settings, reading comprehension becomes more challenging due to limited exposure to authentic language input (Namaziandost et al., 2022; Skiada, 2021). Students often struggle with vocabulary, grammatical structures, and unfamiliar cultural references (Toti & Hamid, 2022). These difficulties can hinder their ability to fully understand texts and engage in meaningful interpretation. Therefore, reading comprehension requires

systematic instructional support from teachers. Effective reading instruction must consider students' cognitive readiness and language proficiency levels (Le et al., 2024; Peng & Goodrich, 2020). It also requires structured activities that guide learners through different stages of reading. Consequently, understanding the nature of reading comprehension is essential for designing appropriate instructional strategies.

Instructional strategies play a crucial role in facilitating students' reading comprehension in EFL classrooms. These strategies refer to planned methods and techniques used by teachers to support learning processes. In reading instruction, strategies are often categorized into pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities (Lyu et al., 2026; Masharipova & Mizell, 2021). Pre-reading strategies aim to activate students' prior knowledge and prepare them for the text. While-reading strategies focus on helping students construct meaning during the reading process. Post-reading strategies are used to evaluate comprehension and reinforce understanding. Research has shown that the use of varied and structured strategies can significantly improve students' reading outcomes. Strategies such as brainstorming, predicting, summarizing, and questioning are commonly used in reading instruction (Englert & Mariage, 2020). These strategies encourage active participation and deeper engagement with texts. However, the effectiveness of these strategies depends on how they are implemented in classroom settings. Therefore, teachers must carefully select and adapt strategies based on instructional goals and student needs.

Pedagogical decision-making refers to the process by which teachers select, adapt, and implement instructional strategies in response to classroom conditions. It is a critical aspect of teaching that reflects teachers' professional knowledge, beliefs, and experiences (Farrell, 2020; Gorski & Dalton, 2020; Ketelhut et al., 2020). Teachers continuously make decisions regarding what to teach, how to teach, and how to respond to students' needs (Kalloo et al., 2020). These decisions are influenced by various factors, including curriculum requirements, student characteristics, and classroom dynamics. In language teaching, pedagogical decision-making plays a significant role in shaping instructional practices (Saeedian & Ghaderi, 2023; Tajeddin & Bolouri, 2023). Teachers must balance theoretical knowledge with practical considerations when designing lessons. Decision-making is not a linear process but rather a dynamic and context-dependent activity. It involves both conscious planning and spontaneous adjustments during teaching. Recent studies have emphasized the importance of understanding teachers' decision-making processes to improve instructional quality. Therefore, examining pedagogical decision-making provides valuable insights into how teaching strategies are applied in real classroom contexts.

Teacher cognition refers to the beliefs, knowledge, and thought processes that influence teachers' instructional practices. It encompasses how teachers perceive teaching, learning, and their roles in the classroom. Teacher cognition plays a fundamental role in shaping pedagogical decision-making. Teachers' beliefs about language learning can affect the strategies they choose and how they implement them. For example, teachers who believe in student-centered learning are more likely to use interactive and collaborative strategies. In contrast, teachers with traditional beliefs may rely on teacher-centered approaches. Classroom practices are therefore closely linked to teachers' cognitive

frameworks. Understanding teacher cognition helps explain variations in instructional practices across different contexts. It also highlights the importance of professional development in improving teaching quality. Furthermore, teacher cognition is influenced by contextual factors such as institutional policies and available resources. Thus, analyzing teacher cognition is essential for understanding how pedagogical decisions are made in EFL classrooms.

The integration of pedagogical decision-making and reading instruction represents an important area of research in EFL education. While previous studies have examined reading strategies and teacher cognition separately, fewer studies have explored how these aspects interact in classroom practice. Teaching reading comprehension requires teachers to make informed decisions at each stage of instruction. These decisions include selecting appropriate strategies, adapting materials, and responding to students' comprehension difficulties. Effective integration of decision-making and instructional strategies can enhance students' engagement and learning outcomes. However, challenges arise when teachers lack sufficient training or resources to implement varied strategies. In many cases, teachers rely on familiar methods rather than adapting to students' needs. This can limit the effectiveness of reading instruction and reduce opportunities for meaningful learning. Therefore, a deeper understanding of how pedagogical decisions are enacted in reading instruction is necessary. Such understanding can inform the development of more effective teaching practices. Consequently, this study seeks to contribute to this area by examining pedagogical decision-making in EFL reading classrooms.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative case study design to explore teachers' pedagogical decision-making in teaching reading comprehension within an EFL classroom. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of classroom practices and instructional processes. The case study design allowed the researcher to investigate the phenomenon within its real-life context. This design also enabled a detailed examination of how pedagogical decisions are made and implemented during classroom instruction. The focus was not on generalization but on obtaining rich and contextualized insights. The study emphasized the natural setting of the classroom without manipulating any variables. In addition, the qualitative design facilitated the exploration of participants' perspectives and experiences. The researcher acted as the primary instrument in collecting and interpreting the data. Therefore, the chosen design supported a comprehensive understanding of pedagogical practices. This approach is widely used in educational research to analyze complex teaching and learning processes.

Participants

The participants of this study consisted of one English teacher and a group of seventh-grade students in a junior secondary school. The teacher was selected using purposive sampling due to her direct involvement in teaching reading comprehension. The selected teacher had experience in implementing various instructional strategies in the

classroom. The student participants were chosen to represent the learning context and classroom dynamics. The class consisted of students with diverse levels of English proficiency. This diversity provided a rich context for analyzing instructional practices. The participants were involved voluntarily and were informed about the purpose of the study. Ethical considerations were taken into account to ensure confidentiality and anonymity. The identities of participants were not disclosed in the reporting of findings. The selection of participants aimed to provide relevant and meaningful data for the study. Therefore, the participants were considered appropriate for exploring pedagogical decision-making in the classroom.

Instruments

Data were collected using three main instruments: classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Classroom observations were conducted to capture real-time teaching practices and interactions. The observations focused on how the teacher implemented instructional strategies during reading lessons. Field notes were used to record important events and instructional behaviors. In addition, video recordings were used to support the accuracy of observational data. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the teacher to explore her perspectives on pedagogical decision-making. The interview questions were designed to elicit detailed responses about strategy selection and implementation. Document analysis was conducted by examining lesson plans and instructional materials. These documents provided additional insights into planned teaching strategies. The combination of multiple data sources allowed for triangulation and increased data credibility. Therefore, the data collection process ensured a comprehensive understanding of the research phenomenon.

Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study followed a thematic analysis approach. The process began with data reduction, where relevant information was selected and organized. This step involved identifying key patterns related to pedagogical decision-making and instructional strategies. The next step was data display, in which the data were presented in a structured and systematic manner. This helped the researcher to interpret relationships between categories. The final step involved drawing conclusions based on the identified themes. The analysis focused on how pedagogical decisions were made and implemented across different stages of reading instruction. Coding techniques were applied to categorize the data into meaningful units. The researcher continuously compared data from different sources to ensure consistency. In addition, triangulation was used to validate the findings. This analytical process enabled a deeper understanding of the instructional practices observed in the classroom. Therefore, the data analysis approach ensured the reliability and credibility of the research findings.

Procedure

The research procedure was conducted in several stages to ensure systematic data collection and analysis. The first stage involved obtaining permission from the school and informing participants about the study. The second stage was preliminary observation to understand the classroom context. The third stage involved conducting classroom observations during reading instruction sessions. During this stage, the researcher

recorded teaching activities and interactions. The fourth stage involved conducting interviews with the teacher to gain deeper insights into pedagogical decision-making. The fifth stage included collecting relevant documents such as lesson plans and teaching materials. After data collection, the researcher organized and prepared the data for analysis. The data were then analyzed using thematic analysis techniques. The findings were interpreted based on patterns and themes identified in the data. Finally, conclusions were drawn to answer the research objectives. This systematic procedure ensured the validity and coherence of the research process.

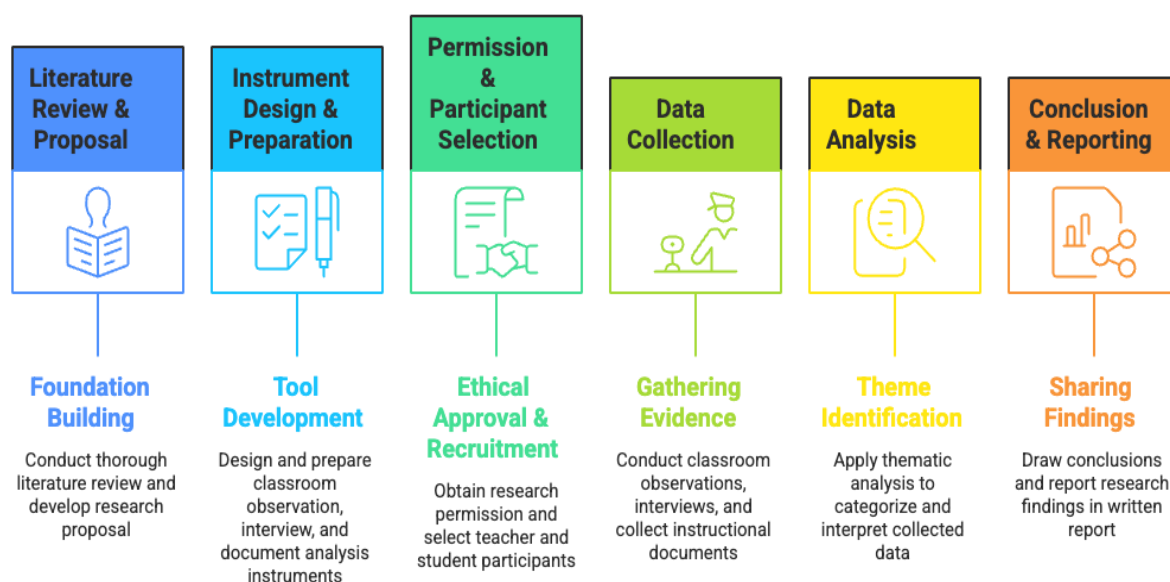


Figure 1. Research Procedure Flowchart

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The findings of this study provide a comprehensive description of teachers' pedagogical decision-making in the context of teaching reading comprehension in an EFL classroom. The analysis reveals that instructional practices are structured around three main stages: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. Each stage reflects specific pedagogical decisions that are influenced by instructional objectives, students' learning needs, and classroom dynamics. The teacher demonstrated an intentional effort to facilitate students' comprehension through the selection of varied strategies. These strategies were not applied randomly but were systematically organized to support different phases of the reading process. Furthermore, the findings indicate that pedagogical decision-making is both planned and adaptive in nature. While certain strategies were pre-designed in lesson planning, others emerged in response to students' immediate difficulties. This suggests that the teacher engaged in continuous decision-making throughout the instructional process. In addition, the findings highlight the interaction between strategy implementation and students' responses. Overall, the results underscore the central role of pedagogical decision-making in shaping reading instruction.

Pedagogical strategies in reading instruction

The results indicate that the teacher employed a range of instructional strategies that align with the three-stage reading framework. These strategies were categorized into pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities. Each stage served a distinct instructional purpose and reflected specific pedagogical considerations. The selection of strategies was influenced by the need to activate prior knowledge, support comprehension, and evaluate learning outcomes. The teacher demonstrated awareness of the importance of structuring reading activities to guide students progressively. The strategies identified in this study are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Instructional strategies across reading stages

Reading Stage	Strategies Employed
Pre-reading	Brainstorming, activating prior knowledge, dictionary use, discussing text types
While-reading	Reading aloud, directed reading activity, vocabulary identification, rereading, retelling
Post-reading	Questioning, clarification, reviewing, scanning for specific information

In the pre-reading stage, the teacher's pedagogical decisions were primarily oriented toward preparing students cognitively and linguistically before engaging with the text. The use of brainstorming allowed students to connect prior knowledge with the topic of the reading material. This strategy facilitated schema activation and encouraged students to participate actively in the learning process. In addition, discussing text types helped students understand the structure and purpose of the text. The teacher also encouraged the use of dictionaries to support vocabulary acquisition. This decision reflects the teacher's awareness of vocabulary as a key barrier to comprehension. By addressing vocabulary challenges early, the teacher aimed to reduce potential difficulties during the reading process. These strategies indicate a proactive approach to minimizing comprehension obstacles. Furthermore, the pre-reading stage served as a foundation for subsequent learning activities. The structured preparation suggests that the teacher carefully planned this phase to optimize students' readiness.

In the while-reading stage, the teacher focused on supporting students' comprehension through active engagement with the text. Reading aloud was used to model pronunciation and enhance students' familiarity with the text. This strategy also allowed the teacher to monitor students' reading performance. Directed reading activities were implemented to guide students' attention to key information. The teacher encouraged students to identify unfamiliar vocabulary and discuss meanings collaboratively. Rereading was used as a strategy to reinforce comprehension and clarify misunderstandings. In addition, retelling activities required students to reconstruct the content of the text in their own words. This strategy provided insight into students' level of understanding. The teacher's decisions during this stage were responsive to students' needs and comprehension levels. The emphasis on interaction and repetition indicates an effort to deepen understanding. Overall, the while-reading stage reflects a balance between teacher guidance and student participation.

In the post-reading stage, the teacher's decisions were directed toward evaluating comprehension and consolidating learning. Questioning strategies were used to assess students' understanding of the text. These questions ranged from literal comprehension to

more interpretative responses. The teacher also provided clarification and feedback to address students' misunderstandings. Reviewing activities were conducted to summarize key points of the lesson. In addition, scanning strategies were introduced to help students locate specific information efficiently. These activities reinforced students' comprehension skills and encouraged active recall. The teacher's approach in this stage demonstrates a focus on both assessment and reinforcement. By revisiting the content, the teacher ensured that students retained key information. This stage also allowed the teacher to identify areas that required further explanation. Consequently, the post-reading phase served as a critical component of the instructional process.

Implementation of pedagogical decision making

The implementation of pedagogical decision-making was evident throughout the instructional process. The teacher demonstrated a structured approach by consistently applying the three-stage reading framework. However, the findings indicate that decision-making was not solely predetermined but also adaptive. The teacher frequently adjusted strategies based on students' responses and comprehension difficulties. For instance, when students encountered challenges in understanding the text, the teacher resorted to translation as a supportive strategy. This indicates that the teacher prioritized comprehension over strict adherence to target language use. In addition, the teacher incorporated various instructional media, including printed materials, visual aids, and digital resources. These decisions reflect an effort to enhance student engagement and diversify learning experiences. However, the findings also reveal a limited use of English as the primary medium of instruction. This suggests that the teacher's decisions were influenced by students' language proficiency levels. Furthermore, traditional strategies such as reading aloud and question-and-answer sessions remained dominant. While effective in certain contexts, these strategies also indicate a partial reliance on teacher-centered practices. Overall, the findings highlight the complexity of pedagogical decision-making in real classroom settings.

Students' responses to instructional strategies

Students' responses to the implemented strategies were generally positive, as reflected in the questionnaire data. The majority of students perceived the teacher's instructional practices as effective in supporting their learning. Table 2 presents a detailed summary of students' perceptions across different aspects of teaching.

Table 2. Students' perceptions of teaching practices

Aspect Evaluated	Good (%)	Sometimes (%)	Never (%)
Teacher guidance	80%	20%	0%
Motivation during learning	80%	20%	0%
Classroom management	80%	20%	0%
Time management	80%	20%	0%
Teacher-student interaction	70%	30%	0%
Students' understanding	75%	25%	0%
Use of teaching methods	80%	20%	5%
Use of learning media	80%	15%	5%
Evaluation and feedback	70%	25%	5%

The data indicate that most students rated the teacher's guidance, motivation, and classroom management as good. This suggests that the teacher's instructional strategies were effective in creating a supportive learning environment. Students also reported a high level of satisfaction with the use of teaching methods and learning media. These findings highlight the importance of varied instructional approaches in enhancing student engagement. However, some students indicated that certain aspects, such as interaction and feedback, were only occasionally effective. This suggests that the implementation of strategies was not always consistent. The variation in responses may reflect differences in individual learning experiences. Despite these limitations, the overall trend indicates positive student perceptions. These results reinforce the role of pedagogical decision-making in shaping students' learning outcomes. Furthermore, the findings suggest that effective instructional decisions can enhance both comprehension and motivation. Therefore, students' responses provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of classroom practices.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that teachers employed a structured set of instructional strategies across pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading stages in teaching reading comprehension. This structured approach is consistent with widely accepted frameworks in reading pedagogy that emphasize staged instruction to support comprehension development. Previous studies have also highlighted the effectiveness of such staged strategies in improving students' reading performance and engagement. For instance, research on reading strategy instruction has shown that pre-reading activities such as brainstorming and schema activation can significantly enhance students' understanding of texts (Cho & Ma, 2020; Lele, 2026). Similarly, while-reading strategies such as reading aloud and guided reading have been reported to support comprehension monitoring. Post-reading strategies, including questioning and summarizing, have also been identified as effective in reinforcing learning outcomes. The findings of this study confirm that the integration of these strategies can create a coherent instructional process. However, unlike some previous studies that emphasize student-centered learning, the current findings reveal a partial reliance on teacher-centered practices. This indicates that while the teacher adopted established instructional frameworks, the implementation did not fully shift toward learner autonomy. Therefore, the findings both support and extend previous research by highlighting the complexity of strategy implementation in real classroom settings.

Furthermore, this study provides important insights into the role of pedagogical decision-making in shaping instructional practices. While many previous studies have focused primarily on identifying effective strategies, fewer have examined how teachers make decisions regarding their use. The findings indicate that pedagogical decision-making is both planned and adaptive, reflecting a combination of pre-designed lesson structures and spontaneous adjustments. This aligns with research on teacher cognition, which suggests that instructional decisions are influenced by teachers' beliefs, experiences, and contextual awareness (Bakshi, 2023; Blackley et al., 2021; Wesely et al., 2024). In particular, the use of translation observed in this study reflects a pragmatic decision to address students' comprehension difficulties. Previous research has similarly reported

that teachers often adapt their instructional approaches based on students' proficiency levels (Hancock et al., 2023; Moradkhani & Rahimi, 2020). However, some studies argue that excessive reliance on translation may limit exposure to the target language. The current findings support this concern, as the limited use of English was identified as a constraint in the instructional process. At the same time, the teacher's decision to prioritize comprehension indicates a context-sensitive approach. This highlights the tension between pedagogical ideals and practical classroom realities.

In addition, the findings reveal that the implementation of instructional strategies was influenced by various contextual factors. These factors include students' language proficiency, classroom dynamics, and the availability of instructional resources. Previous studies have also emphasized the role of contextual variables in shaping teaching practices (Gemink et al., 2021; Oberle et al., 2020). For example, research on EFL classrooms has shown that teachers often modify strategies to accommodate students' needs and learning conditions. The use of visual media and digital tools in this study reflects an effort to enhance student engagement. This finding is consistent with recent research that highlights the benefits of integrating technology in language instruction. However, the extent of technology use in this study was limited, suggesting potential constraints in access or teacher familiarity. Moreover, the continued reliance on traditional strategies such as reading aloud indicates that innovation in teaching practices remains gradual. This observation aligns with studies that report a persistence of conventional methods in many EFL contexts. The findings also suggest that teachers balance innovation with practicality when making instructional decisions.

Another important finding of this study relates to students' responses to the implemented instructional strategies. The questionnaire data indicate that students generally perceived the teacher's strategies as effective and supportive. This finding is consistent with previous research that demonstrates a positive relationship between instructional strategies and student engagement. Students reported that the teacher's guidance, motivation, and use of varied methods contributed to their learning experience. This suggests that the teacher's pedagogical decisions had a direct impact on students' perceptions and participation. However, the data also reveal that some aspects of instruction were only occasionally effective. This variation may be attributed to differences in individual learning preferences and levels of understanding. Previous studies have similarly reported that students respond differently to instructional strategies based on their learning styles. The findings also indicate that while students benefited from structured instruction, there is still a need for more interactive and student-centered approaches. This aligns with research advocating for greater learner autonomy in language learning. Therefore, the study highlights the importance of aligning instructional strategies with students' diverse needs.

Overall, the findings of this study contribute to the existing literature by integrating the perspectives of instructional strategies and pedagogical decision-making in EFL reading instruction. While previous studies have often examined these aspects separately, this study demonstrates how they interact in real classroom practices. The results indicate that effective teaching involves not only the selection of appropriate strategies but also the ability to adapt them to specific contexts. This supports the view that teaching is a dynamic

and complex process. The study also highlights the importance of balancing theoretical frameworks with practical considerations. In particular, the findings suggest that pedagogical decision-making plays a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of instructional strategies. This insight extends previous research by providing a more nuanced understanding of teaching practices. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the need for professional development programs that enhance teachers' decision-making skills. Such programs can support teachers in implementing more effective and context-responsive strategies. Finally, the study suggests that future research should further explore the relationship between decision-making and instructional outcomes.

Implication

The findings of this study have several important implications for both pedagogical practice and future research in EFL reading instruction. First, the study highlights the central role of pedagogical decision-making in determining the effectiveness of instructional strategies, suggesting that teacher training programs should place greater emphasis on developing teachers' decision-making skills. Second, the structured use of pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading stages indicates that systematic instructional design remains essential in supporting students' comprehension development. Third, the findings suggest that teachers need to move beyond procedural implementation of strategies and focus on adaptive decision-making that responds to students' needs in real time. Fourth, the observed reliance on translation as a support mechanism implies the need for balanced approaches that maintain comprehension while gradually increasing exposure to the target language. Fifth, the integration of instructional media, although present, indicates potential for further development, particularly in leveraging digital tools to enhance engagement and comprehension. Sixth, the results emphasize the importance of fostering more student-centered learning environments to promote active participation and learner autonomy. Seventh, the variation in students' responses suggests that differentiated instruction should be considered to accommodate diverse learning needs. Eighth, the study also implies that teachers should engage in reflective practices to evaluate and improve their instructional decisions. Ninth, at the institutional level, support systems such as professional development and resource availability are necessary to facilitate effective teaching practices. Tenth, the findings contribute to the theoretical understanding of how pedagogical decision-making operates within real classroom contexts. Eleventh, the study provides a foundation for future research to further investigate the relationship between decision-making processes and learning outcomes. Finally, these implications collectively underscore the need for a more integrated and context-sensitive approach to teaching reading comprehension in EFL classrooms.

Limitation and Suggestion for Further Research

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the study was conducted in a single classroom with one teacher, which limits the generalizability of the results to broader educational contexts. Second, the use of a qualitative case study design focused on in-depth understanding rather than statistical generalization. Third, the findings were influenced by the specific classroom environment, including students' proficiency levels and institutional conditions. Fourth, the data collection relied primarily on observation, interviews, and documentation, which may be

subject to researcher interpretation. Fifth, the limited duration of data collection may not fully capture the variability of instructional practices over time. Sixth, the study did not include comparative analysis across multiple teachers or schools, which could provide a more comprehensive perspective. Seventh, students' responses were measured through questionnaires, which may not fully reflect their actual learning experiences. Eighth, the study focused primarily on reading instruction and did not explore its integration with other language skills. Ninth, the influence of external factors such as curriculum demands and assessment systems was not examined in depth. Tenth, the study did not quantitatively measure the impact of pedagogical decision-making on students' learning outcomes. Eleventh, future research is recommended to involve multiple participants across different educational settings to enhance generalizability. Finally, further studies should integrate mixed-method approaches to provide both qualitative insights and quantitative evidence regarding the effectiveness of pedagogical decision-making in EFL classrooms.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that pedagogical decision-making plays a central role in shaping the effectiveness of reading comprehension instruction in EFL classrooms. The findings demonstrate that the teacher employed a structured set of strategies organized into pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading stages to support students' comprehension. These strategies were not only systematically planned but also adaptively implemented based on classroom conditions and students' needs. The study reveals that pedagogical decisions are influenced by multiple factors, including students' proficiency levels, instructional goals, and available resources. While the use of varied strategies contributed to students' engagement and understanding, the implementation remained partially influenced by teacher-centered practices. In particular, the reliance on translation and limited use of English as the medium of instruction indicate a pragmatic yet constrained approach to teaching. The findings also highlight that students generally responded positively to the instructional strategies, although some inconsistencies in effectiveness were observed. This suggests that pedagogical decision-making requires continuous reflection and adjustment to optimize learning outcomes. Furthermore, the study emphasizes that effective reading instruction involves not only the selection of appropriate strategies but also the ability to implement them contextually. The integration of pedagogical decision-making with instructional strategies provides a more comprehensive understanding of classroom practices. Overall, this study contributes to the literature by bridging the gap between theoretical frameworks and practical implementation in EFL reading instruction. Finally, it underscores the importance of developing adaptive, student-centered, and context-sensitive teaching approaches to enhance reading comprehension outcomes.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

AH : Conceptualization, research design, instrument development, data collection, data analysis, and drafting the original manuscript.

R : Supervision, theoretical framework development, and critical revision of the manuscript for important intellectual content.

ZAR : Data validation, interpretation of findings, manuscript editing, and final review to ensure coherence and academic quality.

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