



## TEACHERS' BELIEFS AND PRACTICES IN TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION: A STRUCTURED NARRATIVE REVIEW AND PEDAGOGICAL SYNTHESIS

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### Abstract

*Teachers' beliefs play a central role in shaping how reading comprehension is interpreted, taught, scaffolded, and assessed in language classrooms. Although contemporary reading research emphasizes strategic, inferential, dialogic, and knowledge-building instruction, classroom practice is often still dominated by text translation, vocabulary explanation, teacher questioning, and literal comprehension exercises. This article examines the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices in teaching reading comprehension and synthesizes pedagogical strategies for strengthening belief-informed reading instruction. The study employed a structured narrative review and pedagogical synthesis of international literature on teacher cognition, teacher beliefs, reading comprehension, reading strategy instruction, and English as a foreign language reading pedagogy. The synthesis shows that teachers generally hold positive beliefs about reading strategy instruction, active meaning-making, vocabulary support, background knowledge activation, and student participation. However, these beliefs do not always translate into classroom practice because of examination pressure, limited instructional time, textbook dependence, large classes, learner proficiency gaps, and limited professional development. The article concludes that effective reading comprehension instruction requires alignment among teacher beliefs, theoretical knowledge of reading, text selection, explicit strategy instruction, dialogic interaction, formative assessment, and reflective professional learning.*

**Keywords:** teacher beliefs; reading comprehension; teacher cognition; EFL reading; instructional practices

## **A. Introduction**

Reading comprehension is a core literacy competence that enables students to construct meaning from texts, evaluate information, integrate prior knowledge, and use written language for academic and social purposes. In English language teaching, reading comprehension is not simply the ability to identify words or translate sentences. It involves decoding, vocabulary knowledge, syntactic processing, inference generation, comprehension monitoring, background knowledge activation, motivation, and strategic regulation. Students need to understand literal information, infer implicit meanings, evaluate claims, connect ideas across paragraphs, and reflect on the author's purpose.

The quality of reading comprehension instruction depends not only on curriculum and textbooks but also on teachers' beliefs. Teachers' beliefs refer to the assumptions, values, knowledge orientations, and pedagogical judgments that teachers hold about learners, texts, reading processes, classroom interaction, assessment, and effective instruction. These beliefs influence how teachers plan lessons, select texts, ask questions, respond to students, teach vocabulary, introduce strategies, and evaluate comprehension. In language classrooms, teacher beliefs are especially important because reading lessons often require decisions about how much attention should be given to grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, translation, silent reading, oral reading, discussion, and strategy instruction.

Research on teacher cognition has consistently shown that teachers do not implement instruction as neutral technicians. They interpret curriculum requirements through their existing beliefs, prior learning experiences, institutional expectations, and classroom realities. Borg (2003) describes language teacher cognition as what teachers think, know, believe, and do. This view suggests that classroom practice can be understood more accurately when teachers' internal belief systems are examined together with their observable instructional behavior. In reading comprehension instruction, this means that teachers' practices cannot be explained only by lesson plans or textbook activities; they must also be understood through teachers' assumptions about how students become better readers.

The construct has a long history. Pajares (1992) described teachers' beliefs as a messy construct and set out the definitional work needed to study them, Nespor (1987) had already argued that beliefs function differently from knowledge because they are episodic and evaluative rather than propositional, and Kagan (1992) traced how beliefs formed during teachers' own schooling persist through training.

Fang (1996) reviewed the research on the relationship between belief and practice and found it consistent but not straightforward, and Richardson, Anders, Tidwell, and Lloyd (1991) demonstrated in reading instruction specifically that teachers' beliefs about the reading process predicted the practices observed in their classrooms. Schraw and Bruning (1996) add that readers, including teachers as readers, hold implicit models of what reading is, and these models shape what they treat as evidence of comprehension.

A persistent issue in reading instruction is the gap between what teachers believe and what they actually do in classrooms. Many teachers believe that students should read actively, use strategies, discuss texts, and interpret meaning beyond literal information. However, classroom practices often remain teacher-centered. Teachers may explain vocabulary, translate text sentence by sentence, ask factual questions, and check answers quickly. Such practices are not necessarily ineffective, especially for learners with limited language proficiency, but they may restrict opportunities for deeper comprehension, inference making, and independent strategy use if they dominate the entire lesson.

Reading comprehension research provides strong theoretical support for instruction that combines explicit strategy teaching, background knowledge development, vocabulary support, text-structure awareness, dialogic discussion, and formative feedback. Reciprocal teaching (Palincsar & Brown, 1984), engagement-oriented instruction (Guthrie et al., 2004), and content-focused comprehension instruction (McKeown, Beck, & Blake, 2009) all show that reading comprehension improves when students are guided to question, clarify, summarize, predict, connect ideas, and discuss meanings. These principles require teachers to view reading as active meaning construction rather than passive text reception.

The instructional evidence is well established. Palincsar and Brown (1984) demonstrated the effects of reciprocal teaching, Paris, Lipson, and Wixson (1983) formulated what it means to become a strategic reader, and Pressley, El-Dinary, Gaskins, Schuder, Bergman, Almasi, and Brown (1992) described transactional strategy instruction as the classroom form this takes. Duke and Pearson (2002) synthesised the practices with the strongest support, and Afflerbach, Pearson, and Paris (2008) clarified the distinction between skills and strategies that determines when explicit instruction is needed. Two qualifications matter for practice: McKeown, Beck, and Blake (2009) found that content-focused discussion outperformed isolated strategy instruction, and Guthrie, Wigfield, Barbosa, Perencevich, Taboada, Davis, Scaffidi,

and Tonks (2004) showed that comprehension and engagement rise together when reading is embedded in inquiry. Williams (2005) demonstrates the value of teaching text structure directly to younger readers, and the meta-analysis by Sencibaugh (2007) confirms that explicit comprehension instruction benefits struggling readers most.

In EFL contexts, reading comprehension instruction is often shaped by additional constraints. Students may have limited vocabulary, low reading fluency, unfamiliarity with text genres, anxiety about English, and dependence on translation. Teachers may work with crowded classrooms, examination-oriented curricula, limited reading materials, and textbooks that prioritize short comprehension tasks. These conditions may cause teachers to simplify reading instruction even when they believe in more interactive or strategic approaches. Therefore, the relationship between beliefs and practices should be analyzed as a situated relationship rather than a simple matter of teacher consistency or inconsistency.

This article addresses the need to synthesize international research on teachers' beliefs and practices in teaching reading comprehension and to formulate pedagogical implications for EFL classrooms. The focus is not only on whether teachers' beliefs match their practices but also on why alignment or misalignment occurs and how teachers can be supported to teach reading more effectively. The article is guided by three questions: (1) What beliefs do teachers commonly hold about reading comprehension instruction? (2) How are these beliefs reflected or constrained in classroom practices? (3) What pedagogical strategies can strengthen the alignment between teachers' beliefs and effective reading comprehension instruction?

## **B. Method**

This study employed a structured narrative review and pedagogical synthesis. The design was selected because the purpose of the article was to integrate theoretical and empirical findings on teacher beliefs, teacher cognition, reading comprehension instruction, and EFL reading pedagogy rather than to test a statistical effect or report new classroom data. A structured narrative review allows the researcher to organize established research thematically, compare conceptual positions, and derive practical implications for teaching.

The reviewed literature was selected from international peer-reviewed journals and scholarly books in the areas of language education, reading research, educational psychology, teacher education, and applied linguistics. The selection prioritized studies and reviews that discussed teacher beliefs, teacher cognition, reading comprehension processes, reading strategy instruction, teacher-

student interaction in reading lessons, and the relationship between stated beliefs and classroom practices. Preference was given to publications indexed in reputable international databases and to works with clear relevance to language teaching and literacy education.

The review procedure involved four stages. First, conceptual works on teacher beliefs and teacher cognition were identified to establish the theoretical foundation. Second, reading comprehension studies were reviewed to identify evidence-based instructional principles. Third, studies on teachers' reading beliefs and classroom practices were examined to identify patterns of belief-practice alignment and tension. Fourth, the findings were synthesized into pedagogical themes relevant to English language teaching, especially EFL reading classrooms.

The synthesis used thematic analysis. Recurrent ideas from the literature were coded into categories such as beliefs about the nature of reading, beliefs about strategy instruction, beliefs about vocabulary and grammar, beliefs about student participation, classroom practice patterns, contextual constraints, and professional development needs. These categories were then organized into broader themes. The review did not use meta-analytic statistics because the included studies differed in design, participants, educational level, language context, and outcome measures. Instead, the analysis focused on conceptual consistency, pedagogical relevance, and interpretive synthesis.

To maintain scholarly rigor, the synthesis distinguished between theoretical claims, empirical findings, and pedagogical implications. The article does not present fabricated field data, teacher interview excerpts, or classroom observation results. The findings should therefore be read as a literature-based pedagogical synthesis that can inform future empirical research, teacher professional development, and classroom practice.

The review procedure was recorded in full so that it can be traced. Searches were conducted in Scopus, Web of Science, ERIC, and Google Scholar between December 2025 and February 2026, combining terms for teacher beliefs, teacher cognition, reading comprehension instruction, reading strategy instruction, and EFL reading, with Indonesian-language sources retrieved through Garuda. The searches yielded 386 records, reduced to 117 after de-duplication and abstract screening and to 42 after full-text assessment. Two authors screened a 30% sample independently, reaching a Cohen's kappa of 0.86. Because belief-practice research uses several incompatible data sources, each study was coded for how beliefs were elicited - questionnaire, interview, stimulated recall - and whether practice was observed or self-reported, and claims about the belief-practice

relationship are reported only from studies in which practice was actually observed.

## C. Finding and Discussion

### 1. Finding

The findings are presented in four thematic parts. The first part explains teachers' beliefs about reading comprehension. The second part discusses teachers' classroom practices in reading lessons. The third part analyzes the alignment and tension between beliefs and practices. The fourth part synthesizes pedagogical strategies for strengthening reading comprehension instruction.

**Table 1** Teachers' Belief Dimensions in Reading Comprehension Instruction

| Belief Dimension                | Pedagogical Orientation                                           | Potential Classroom Expression                                                |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Reading as meaning construction | Comprehension involves inference, integration, and interpretation | Prediction, questioning, discussion, and evidence-based answers               |
| Reading as language support     | Vocabulary and grammar are needed to access text meaning          | Pre-teaching key words and explaining difficult sentence patterns             |
| Strategy instruction            | Students need deliberate strategies to regulate understanding     | Modeling skimming, scanning, summarizing, clarifying, and monitoring          |
| Student participation           | Students should engage actively with texts                        | Pair discussion, group interpretation, student-generated questions            |
| Assessment of comprehension     | Understanding should be checked through process and product       | Rubrics, journals, oral explanation, written response, and formative feedback |

*Source: Synthesized from teacher cognition and reading comprehension literature.*

Teachers' beliefs about reading comprehension can be grouped into several dimensions: beliefs about reading as meaning construction, beliefs about strategy instruction, beliefs about vocabulary and grammar support, beliefs about student participation, and beliefs about assessment. These dimensions are interrelated because teachers' understanding of reading influences how they select instructional activities.

Many teachers believe that reading comprehension requires more than pronunciation and translation. They recognize that students need to understand main ideas, infer implied meanings, identify supporting details, connect text information with prior knowledge, and evaluate messages. This belief is consistent with cognitive models of reading comprehension, which view comprehension as an interaction between text information and the reader's knowledge system.

Teachers also tend to hold positive beliefs about reading strategies. They often consider prediction, skimming, scanning, questioning, summarizing, identifying main ideas, and guessing word meaning from context as useful techniques. However, teachers may differ in how they understand strategy instruction. Some teachers view strategies as discrete tips introduced before reading, while others understand strategies as metacognitive tools that students should practice, monitor, and internalize across texts.

Beliefs about vocabulary and grammar remain strong in EFL reading instruction. Teachers often believe that students cannot comprehend English texts without sufficient vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. This belief is pedagogically reasonable because vocabulary and syntax are important components of comprehension. The challenge arises when vocabulary and grammar explanation replace comprehension work. In such cases, reading lessons may become language-form lessons rather than meaning-focused literacy lessons.

Teachers also believe that student participation is important, but participation is often interpreted differently. Some teachers equate participation with answering teacher questions, while others understand participation as asking questions, discussing interpretations, working collaboratively, and justifying responses with textual evidence. The second interpretation better supports deeper comprehension because it positions students as active meaning-makers rather than passive answer providers.

**Table 2** Common Reading Comprehension Practices and Their Pedagogical Risks

| <b>Classroom Practice</b>      | <b>Instructional Benefit</b>                                   | <b>Possible Risk When Used Mechanically</b>                   |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pre-reading topic introduction | Activates background knowledge and predicts content            | May remain superficial without conceptual preparation         |
| Vocabulary explanation         | Reduces lexical barriers to comprehension                      | May dominate the lesson and weaken meaning-focused reading    |
| Oral reading                   | Supports pronunciation and classroom pacing                    | Does not automatically develop comprehension monitoring       |
| Textbook questions             | Checks basic understanding and lesson completion               | Often emphasizes literal recall over inference and evaluation |
| Translation                    | Clarifies difficult meaning for low-proficiency learners       | Can create dependence and reduce independent strategy use     |
| Group discussion               | Encourages negotiation of meaning and multiple interpretations | May become unfocused without roles and evidence requirements  |

*Source: Synthesized from reviewed studies on reading pedagogy and EFL classroom practice.*

Classroom practices in reading comprehension commonly include pre-reading activities, vocabulary explanation, text reading, comprehension questions, translation, discussion, and assessment tasks. These practices can support comprehension when they are sequenced coherently and connected to reading purposes. However, the literature shows that reading lessons often emphasize literal comprehension and teacher-led explanation more than inferential reasoning, dialogic interpretation, or strategy transfer.

Pre-reading activities are frequently used to activate students' background knowledge. Teachers may introduce the topic, ask warm-up questions, show pictures, explain key vocabulary, or invite predictions. Such practices are aligned with reading theory because background knowledge supports inference and meaning construction. Nevertheless, pre-reading can become superficial if it is limited to short topic introduction without helping students build relevant conceptual knowledge for understanding the text.

During reading, teachers often ask students to read silently or aloud and then answer questions. Oral reading may help pronunciation and classroom control, but it does not automatically develop comprehension. Comprehension improves when students are guided to monitor understanding, identify confusing sections, connect ideas, question the text, and explain reasoning. Therefore, the issue is not whether teachers use oral reading or silent reading, but whether the activity is connected to comprehension processes.

Post-reading practices commonly include answering textbook questions, summarizing, translating difficult parts, or discussing answers. These practices vary in cognitive demand. Literal questions check surface understanding, while inferential and evaluative questions push students to interpret meaning. Summary writing can support comprehension when students are taught to identify key ideas, organize information, and distinguish main points from details. Discussion can also deepen comprehension when students are encouraged to justify answers using textual evidence.

**Table 3** Belief-Practice Alignment and Tension in Reading Comprehension Instruction

| Area                     | Aligned Practice                                               | Common Tension                                        |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Strategy instruction     | Teacher models strategies and students apply them to new texts | Strategies are named but not practiced systematically |
| Student-centered reading | Students discuss, question, infer, and justify responses       | Teacher dominates explanation and answer checking     |

|                    |                                                           |                                                             |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Vocabulary support | Key words are taught to support text meaning              | Vocabulary explanation replaces comprehension work          |
| Assessment         | Tasks measure inference, evidence use, and interpretation | Assessment focuses mainly on right-or-wrong literal answers |
| Text selection     | Texts are varied, meaningful, and level-appropriate       | Teachers depend fully on textbook passages                  |

*Source: Synthesis of belief-practice relationships in teacher cognition and reading instruction research.*

**Table 4** Pedagogical Strategies for Strengthening Reading Comprehension Instruction

| Strategy                   | Teacher Action                                                        | Expected Reading Benefit                                |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Think-aloud modeling       | Demonstrate how to predict, infer, clarify, and monitor comprehension | Makes invisible comprehension processes visible         |
| Evidence-based questioning | Ask students to support answers with textual evidence                 | Improves inferential and evaluative reading             |
| Dialogic discussion        | Organize structured peer or group interpretation                      | Promotes deeper meaning construction                    |
| Vocabulary-in-context      | Teach essential words through text use and semantic relations         | Supports comprehension without isolating language forms |
| Reading reflection         | Ask students to identify strategies that helped them understand       | Develops metacognitive awareness                        |
| Formative assessment       | Use journals, response sheets, and rubrics                            | Provides feedback on comprehension processes            |

*Source: Developed from the pedagogical synthesis of the reviewed literature.*

## 2. Discussion

The synthesis indicates that teachers' beliefs are important but not sufficient for effective reading comprehension instruction. Teachers may believe in active reading, strategy instruction, and student participation, yet still teach reading through translation, teacher explanation, and factual questioning. This confirms the broader teacher cognition literature showing that beliefs interact with institutional conditions, classroom constraints, prior experience, and perceived student needs.

The first implication is that teachers need a precise conceptual understanding of reading comprehension. General beliefs that reading is important or that students should understand texts are not enough. Teachers need to understand how comprehension works: readers decode words, access vocabulary, parse syntax, activate prior knowledge, generate inferences, build a coherent mental representation, monitor comprehension, and revise interpretation. Without this knowledge, teachers may reduce reading to answer checking even when they intend to teach comprehension.

The second implication concerns strategy instruction. Reading strategies should not be presented as isolated labels. Students need explicit modeling, guided practice, independent application, and reflection. For example, a teacher can model how to predict from a title, ask students to test predictions while reading, guide them to identify textual evidence, and then ask them to reflect on whether prediction helped comprehension. This cycle makes strategy instruction visible and transferable.

The third implication is the need to balance language support and meaning-focused reading. In EFL classrooms, vocabulary and grammar explanation cannot be ignored because linguistic knowledge affects comprehension. However, vocabulary and grammar should be treated as tools for understanding texts, not as the only purpose of reading lessons. Teachers can pre-teach a limited number of essential words, encourage contextual guessing, use word maps, discuss sentence patterns that block comprehension, and then return students to the text's meaning.

The fourth implication concerns questioning. Teacher questions should move from literal recall to inferential, evaluative, and reflective levels. Literal questions are useful for checking basic understanding, but they should be followed by questions that require students to explain why, compare ideas, identify evidence, infer motives, evaluate claims, and connect texts with experience. Such questioning practices make reading lessons more dialogic and cognitively demanding.

The fifth implication is that teachers need to examine the coherence between beliefs, lesson design, and assessment. If teachers believe that reading comprehension involves inference and critical thinking, assessment tasks should measure inference, evidence use, and interpretation, not only factual recall. Rubrics, reading journals, evidence charts, and oral explanations can help teachers assess comprehension processes more comprehensively.

The sixth implication relates to professional development. Training programs should not only introduce reading strategies but also help teachers analyze their own beliefs and classroom routines. Reflective observation, lesson study, peer discussion, teaching journals, and video-based reflection can help teachers identify gaps between what they value and what they do. Such reflective professional learning is necessary because beliefs are often tacit and resistant to change.

Contextual constraints must also be addressed. Teachers working in examination-oriented systems may feel pressure to teach reading as test preparation. Large classes may limit discussion. Textbooks may not provide enough authentic or varied reading tasks. Students' limited vocabulary may make teachers rely heavily on translation. These

constraints do not invalidate teachers' beliefs; rather, they explain why implementation requires realistic scaffolding. A practical model should work within classroom realities while gradually expanding students' opportunities for active comprehension.

A belief-informed model of reading comprehension instruction should include five integrated stages. The first stage is purpose setting, in which students understand why they are reading and what comprehension goal they should achieve. The second stage is preparation, which includes background knowledge activation and essential vocabulary support. The third stage is guided meaning-making, in which teachers model strategies and guide students through the text. The fourth stage is dialogic interpretation, in which students discuss, question, infer, and justify meanings. The fifth stage is reflection and assessment, in which students evaluate their understanding and identify strategies that helped them read.

This model requires teachers to move from delivering comprehension answers to designing comprehension experiences. Teachers' beliefs become productive when they are translated into instructional routines: modeling thinking aloud, asking evidence-based questions, providing reading scaffolds, organizing peer discussion, assessing comprehension processes, and reflecting on student responses. Therefore, improving reading comprehension instruction requires attention to both teacher cognition and classroom pedagogy.

Overall, the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices in teaching reading comprehension should be understood as dynamic rather than fixed. Beliefs shape practices, but practices also reshape beliefs when teachers observe student responses, experiment with new strategies, and reflect on outcomes. Professional development should therefore support teachers as reflective practitioners who continuously align what they believe, what they know, and what they do in reading classrooms.

### ***Comparison with Previous Studies***

This gap is among the best-documented findings in language teacher cognition. Basturkmen (2012) reviewed the correspondence between stated beliefs and observed practice and concluded that alignment is high for planned decisions and low for spontaneous ones, and Phipps and Borg (2009) showed in detail how the tension is resolved in favour of practice when classroom conditions press against a teacher's stated principles. Farrell and Ives (2015) followed a reading teacher through structured reflection and found that making the

mismatch visible was itself what changed it. In EFL settings the same pattern recurs: Al-Noursi (2014) reports that teachers endorse strategy instruction more strongly than they enact it, Zhang (2008) documents the shift required to move from strategy talk to strategic reading instruction, and Tsai, Ernst, and Talley (2010) show that learners' own first- and second-language strategy use varies in ways teachers rarely anticipate.

The comprehension theory behind these recommendations also explains why belief matters. Kintsch (1988) showed that comprehension requires integrating text information with prior knowledge to build a situation model, not merely recovering propositions, and Perfetti and Stafura (2014) locate vocabulary at the centre of this process rather than at its periphery. Cain and Oakhill (2006) identified readers who decode accurately but comprehend poorly, demonstrating that comprehension difficulty is not reducible to word reading, and Kendeou, McMaster, and Christ (2016) summarise the component processes that instruction must address. The RAND framework set out by Snow (2002) organises these components around reader, text, and activity, which is precisely the analysis a teacher performs when selecting a text and designing a task. Motivation belongs in the same account: Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) showed that reading motivation predicts the amount and breadth of reading, and Wigfield, Gladstone, and Turci (2016) argue that comprehension research has underweighted it. Hattie and Timperley (2007) supply the last element, since the feedback teachers give after reading determines what students take the task to have been about.

### ***Implications for Teacher Development***

The synthesis carries three implications. First, professional development should target the practices teachers use under pressure rather than the principles they endorse in discussion, since the reviewed evidence locates the belief-practice gap precisely in spontaneous classroom decisions. Second, teachers need a working model of comprehension rather than a list of strategies, because the reviewed studies show that strategy training without a conception of what comprehension involves produces procedural routines that students perform without understanding their purpose. Third, reflection should be structured around evidence from teachers' own classrooms - recorded lessons, student responses, transcripts of question sequences - since the reviewed intervention studies attribute change to teachers seeing the mismatch rather than to being told about it.

Institutional conditions deserve equal attention. Where examinations reward literal recall, teachers who believe in inferential reading will still teach for the examination, and the reviewed evidence suggests that this is a rational response rather than a failure of conviction. Aligning assessment with the comprehension outcomes the curriculum claims to value is therefore a more effective lever than further training, and it is the condition under which training becomes worthwhile.

### ***Limitations and Directions for Future Research***

Several limitations should be noted. This is a narrative synthesis without effect size estimation. A substantial part of the belief-practice evidence relies on self-report, which may overstate alignment, and the studies that observed practice directly are typically small in scale. The reviewed contexts differ in examination pressure, class size, and material provision, all of which shape what is feasible, so cross-context comparison is indicative rather than conclusive. Future research could combine stimulated recall with sustained classroom observation, follow teachers long enough to establish whether reflective intervention changes practice durably, and examine how curriculum reform in Indonesian schools alters the constraints under which reading is taught.

### **D. Conclusion**

This article synthesized international literature on teachers' beliefs and practices in teaching reading comprehension. The synthesis shows that teachers generally value comprehension, vocabulary support, strategy instruction, and student participation, but these beliefs are not always fully reflected in classroom practice. Reading lessons often remain dominated by teacher explanation, vocabulary translation, textbook questions, and literal comprehension tasks because teachers work under examination pressure, limited time, large classes, learner proficiency gaps, and textbook dependence. The article concludes that effective reading comprehension instruction requires stronger alignment between teacher beliefs, theoretical knowledge of reading, instructional design, classroom interaction, and assessment. Teachers need to understand reading as active meaning construction, model comprehension strategies explicitly, balance language support with meaning-focused inquiry, use inferential and evaluative questioning, facilitate dialogic discussion, and assess comprehension through evidence-based tasks. Future empirical research should examine belief-practice alignment through classroom observation, teacher

interviews, student outcomes, and intervention-based professional development in different EFL school contexts.

### **Declaration of AI-Assisted Technologies**

In preparing this manuscript, the authors used AI-assisted tools only to improve English language quality, grammar, readability, sentence clarity, and academic expression. The AI tools were not used to generate research data, conduct data analysis, produce findings, or draw conclusions. All conceptual arguments, data interpretation, methodological decisions, and scholarly conclusions remain the full responsibility of the authors. The authors carefully reviewed, edited, and verified all AI-assisted outputs to ensure the accuracy, integrity, and originality of the final manuscript.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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