

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY: APPLIED BUSINESS AND EDUCATION RESEARCH

2025, Vol. 6, No. 9, 4861 – 4877

<http://dx.doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.06.09.43>

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## Research Article

### Beyond Scores: Taiwanese EFL Learners' Perceptions and Experiences with Writing-Integrated Reading Instruction

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#### Article history:

Submission 15 June 2025

Revised 31 August 2025

Accepted 23 September 2025

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#### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate their experiences and attitudes towards various reading strategies following the decrease in EFL students' reading comprehension in Taiwan's senior high schools, as shown in the 2023 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) assessment results. Following an explanatory sequential mixed-methods approach, the study favors a qualitative phase that explores students' experiences in the three reading strategies, specifically writing tasks, which facilitate interaction with written texts and foster enhanced learning. The study aims to gain a deeper understanding of how students make sense of and engage with given tasks, including their thoughts, feelings, and subject-related challenges. By investigating these individual perceptions, the research aims to reveal the subtlety of their modes of understanding and pinpoint the elements that favor or inhibit comprehension growth.

**Keywords:** *EFL Reading Comprehension, Writing-to-Learn Strategies, Taiwanese High School Students, Mixed-Methods Research, Explanatory Sequential Design*

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#### Introduction

Taiwanese senior high school students face challenges with English reading comprehension, a crucial skill in our globalized world. Traditional teaching methods often fall short, prioritizing test performance over genuine understanding and failing to engage students deeply with texts. This study addresses that gap by investigating how specific writing activities can enhance reading comprehension.

The study's initial quantitative phase revealed that students who engaged in writing activities, such as summarizing and journaling, demonstrated statistically significant gains in reading comprehension compared to those in a traditional classroom setting. These findings suggest that an experiential, active approach to writing can be more effective than conventional instruction.

Building on these results, this study employs a qualitative research design to

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#### How to cite:

Maravilla, W. H. G. (2025). Beyond Scores: Taiwanese EFL Learners' Perceptions and Experiences with Writing-Integrated Reading Instruction. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research*. 6(9), 4861 – 4877. doi: 10.11594/ijmaber.06.09.43

investigate students' experiences and attitudes toward these reading strategies. It specifically focuses on their thoughts, emotions, and challenges, aiming to capture the intricate nature of their learning process. This qualitative component offers a detailed understanding of how students perceive these tasks and the factors that facilitate or hinder their comprehension.

By triangulating quantitative data on comprehension gains with qualitative insights into students' experiences and attitudes, this research provides a comprehensive, three-dimensional view of how to support Taiwanese EFL readers best. The ultimate goal is to propose an integrated reading comprehension model that combines successful strategies and learning styles, empowering students to become more confident and successful readers.

### ***Philosophical Assumptions***

The study's philosophical foundation is rooted in a constructivist ontology, which posits that reality, specifically students' experiences with reading comprehension strategies, is complex and socially constructed. Their individual learning experiences and perceptions shape students' understanding of the material. Epistemologically, the research holds that knowledge is gained by exploring these subjective experiences and how students interpret them. Axiologically, the study acknowledges

that the researcher's values influence the inquiry, underscoring the importance of reflexivity in interpreting findings. This qualitative design aims to provide a detailed description and interpretation of the participants' experiences with the reading strategies. Finally, the study's discourse style is persuasive, seeking to elevate the students' voices and perspectives by providing rich, detailed accounts to establish trustworthiness and credibility.

### ***Domain of Inquiry***

This research is based on the premise that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' experiences with reading strategies are both complex and socially constructed. It argues that comprehension is built through interactions within their learning environment and their own mental frameworks. The study seeks to gain knowledge by investigating these subjective experiences and the meanings that students assign to them. While acknowledging the influence of the researcher's values, the study maintains reflexivity to ensure proper interpretation of the findings. The qualitative approach provides an in-depth description and interpretation of the participants' experiences using the Idea Web technique. The study aims to effectively convey learners' perspectives through detailed reporting, thereby enhancing the credibility of the research.

## **Methodology**

### ***Design.***



*Figure 1. Explanatory Sequential Design Process (Qualitative).*

This research employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design. The research commenced with a quantitative phase, focusing on the direct investigation of the impact of reading strategies employed by

EFL students on their comprehension. This was followed by the qualitative phase, in which narrative inquiry was used to leverage the background of Constructivist Learning Theory (Vygotsky, 1978) as a lens through which to

unpack the students' experiences with these strategies in more detail. It will be a part of a multiple-case study along with Case A-Reading with Summary Writing, Case B-Reading with Journal Writing, and Case C-Reading with Oral Discussion. This was particularly useful as, through similar efficacy and missing data analyses, the researcher was able first to

determine the scale of the effect of the interventions, and second, to explore what specifically about these interventions influenced how students were learning, with the qualitative portion able to provide detailed, contextualized descriptions of the quantitative findings.

**Study Participants.**

*Table 1. Study Participants by Gender (Qualitative)*

Gender	Number
Male	9
Female	15
Total	24

*Note: The Table shows more female participants than male participants*

The participants in the qualitative phase of this research were 24 Taiwanese senior high school students, aged 18–19 years, attending a cram school in Taichung City. These participants were assigned to one of three groups composed of eight (8) members each: Reading with Summarizing, Reading with Journalizing, or Reading with Oral Discussion. These students were selected to provide detailed accounts of their experiences with the assigned reading strategies. The qualitative sampling strategy aimed to capture a range of perspectives, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the students' attitudes, challenges, and perceived benefits of each strategy.

**Data Gathering Instruments**

The semi-structured interviews and written feedback forms were used as the primary tools to collect qualitative data. Such interviews were semi-structured, providing the researcher with the opportunity to conduct open-ended, in-depth interviews that were flexible enough for students to voice their opinions, thoughts, and reflections on the role of reading strategies in their reading processes. The discussion guide consisted of seven questions to elicit in-depth narratives from respondents. The written feedback forms had been a formal mechanism for students to express their opinions. They provided a more systematic expression of their experiences,

complementing the interview data and ensuring that all participants had an opportunity to voice their opinions. The forms contained five questions, aimed at eliciting particular feedback about their experiences and attitudes towards the ir reading strategies.

**Data Gathering Procedures**

Data was collected qualitatively after the quantitative part of this study was completed. In particular, the written feedback forms were filled out by students the same day as the post-test, directly after its completion. The following day, students participated in a semi-structured interview, where they were prompted to elaborate on their application of the learned reading strategies. In these interviews, students provided detailed descriptions of their perspectives, obstacles, and recommendations for improvement. Considering that the feedback forms took place before the interviews, this order allowed the qualitative data to complement the quantitative results and provide a comprehensive understanding of pupils' subjective experiences.

**Data Analysis**

Narrative analysis was employed to analyze the qualitative components, including interview transcripts and written feedback. Analyses of these data involved a systematic

arrangement and interpretation of the students' narratives and reflections to identify cross-cutting themes, patterns, and individual perspectives. Initially, participants structured the data, after which transcripts and feedback forms were reviewed multiple times to gain an in-depth understanding of the data and form an overview. First, the codes were inductively created based on the data to reflect the core of the participants' experiences of using two reading strategies. Codes like these were added line by line to the data until emerging codes were reordered and combined to subsume larger categories. The themes were constructed and refined through iterative sense-making and connection-making with the coded data and recurring ideas. Its focus was to provide a detailed, in-depth description of what the students experienced when using specific reading strategies, in order to gain an understanding of their attitudes, perceptions of challenge, and the factors that affected their learning.

### ***Ethical Consideration***

The study was conducted according to the guidelines outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki (World Medical Association, 2013). Approval was obtained from the Research and Ethics Committee of the University of the Visayas, with Reference No. NP2024-427 dated January 24, 2025. The study involved Taiwanese EFL senior high school students aged 18–19 years who were enrolled in a cram school in Taichung City, Taiwan, and voluntarily participated in an online survey. Before completing the questionnaires, participants received an informed consent form detailing the study's purpose, procedures, risks and benefits, confidentiality measures, voluntary participation, and contact information. No financial incentives were offered for participation. The authors declared no conflicts of interest.

### **Results and Discussion**

The qualitative results of the present study are reported here as a series of in-depth case studies, each emphasizing one of the three learning strategy groups. For the sake of confidentiality, all student names in these case

studies are pseudonyms. These were the experiences and attitudes of a group of Taiwanese senior high school EFL students regarding various reading strategies. Case A: Reading with Summary Writing (RSW) In this case, we examine how students feel and experience summarizing source texts to assist their understanding. Case B, Reading Journal Writing (RJW), examines students' reactions to reflective journaling for enhanced material engagement. Finally, case C Reading with Oral Discussion (RWO) looks at the students' attitudes and experiences of enhancing RC by IC group discussion. It is hoped that the cases will depict the students' subjective experiences of the two interventions in a detailed and complex manner.

### ***Case A: Reading with Summary Writing (RSW)***

This case sheds light on the experiences and feelings of the students in Group A with the implementation of the RSW strategy. This process involved students summarizing portions of the article to help them better understand what they had read.

### ***Overview of Experiences***

Group A students, on the whole, have demonstrated a good experience with the RSW strategy. They found summarizing to be useful in aiding concentration on the most important parts and reducing the risk of losing themselves in the text, to better structure their thoughts, and to enhance comprehension and memory of the text. The formality of the task was an asset for this demographic, as it provided a tangible way for them to engage with the reading. Students appreciated the fact that summarizing had a clear goal to aim for, which made reading seem less daunting and more productive to them. They also discovered that summarizing enabled them to focus on the most important points in each article, making it easier to discuss the material with colleagues and instructors.

### ***Thematic Presentation of Findings***

The analysis in this section is derived from the feedback forms and semi-structured interview data by focusing on the experience of

students in Group A with the RSW. Organizing their responses into two main themes helped to discern better how the strategy in question influenced their reading comprehension and overall attitude about learning. These themes shed light on how they were involved in and viewed the process of summarizing in-service English as a Foreign Language (EFL) reading skills.

### ***Improved Focus and Organization***

The students reported that one good thing about summarizing was that it helped them to figure out and focus on the most important information in a text. "For me, summarization made me do the work of pulling out all the key points and organizing them in my head," Mia said. Grace's response also supports this, as saying the text aloud enables her to see the text differently. Those who perceived a summary, in other words, estimated no decrease in the volume of a text and revealed this number as all but zero, indicating that the summary helped them read with increased ownership and intention. The students were not merely passively reading; they were actively working to absorb and summarize the information. This strategy has helped structure their comprehension of the text by identifying the main ideas and then restating them.

Relating to Articles 1-4: Mia and Grace experienced positive affect similarly across the four articles. They mentioned that at the end of each article, the summarizing process became faster, meaning they were able to capture the main points more quickly. For example, Hannah explained that for articles three and four, she was able to "quickly catch onto the main idea to sum it up," which she attributed to her familiarity with the strategy. Students also explained this further during their interviews.

On being asked about the task, Lucas expressed that "Summarizing the task made me concentrate on what the essential things are in the article. I could not just skim them; I had to read them carefully and decide what I would include in my summary." Ava shared this feeling, adding, "At first it was kind of hard to decide what to put in the summary, but as we did more articles, it was easier just to choose

the main points." Several students also reported feeling more confident when asked whether summarizing tasks helped them better comprehend expository text. For instance, Mia expressed, "Yeah, I feel like summarizing makes me understand the article, so it makes my expository reading better. I think it helps a lot," Lucas said, "If you want to write a good summary, you have to get the main points."

### ***Enhanced Comprehension and Retention***

The students also reported that the strategy helped with comprehension and retention. Lucas, Ava, Ella, Mason, and Hannah said they could read better as a result of the strategy. This implies that summarizing made students focus more carefully on the texts and that this way of working subsequently facilitated comprehension. Choosing what to include in a summary and how to express it demands a full understanding of the source. It is this active reading through the material that probably accounts for a more thorough understanding.

Students reported an enhanced understanding and retention of the concept in their general comments and responses to specific questions. In their overall feedback, students like Lucas, Ava, Ella, Mason, and Hannah said that the summarizing activities assisted their reading. On a more direct level, Mia and Lucas both yielded positive responses when questioned directly about whether they cared about the knowledge of expository texts. While Mia thought that summarizing "makes you understand the article," Lucas stressed the importance of "getting the main points" to support summarizing. In addition, in response to a question that pertained to the usefulness of summarizing to enhance reading, Ella noted that "Summarizing made me remember more of the content. I think it is an effective way of learning." This suggested that the students were aware of the connection between their active cognitive processing of summarizing, understanding, and remembering the text content. Summarizing, by nature, causes readers to identify and select the most important pieces of information, which promotes a deeper level of processing and retention.

### **Summary of Attitudes**

Group A students, as a whole, had a positive perception of the RSW approach. This optimism is also clear from the way they answer attitude and interview questions.

### **Positive Attitudes**

The majority of those in Group A had favorable expectations of the RSW strategy. The girls I interviewed agreed with me that they liked the task, found it helpful for understanding what they read, and were fans. As Mia said, "I like the job. It is making me understand the articles better, and I also think it is a good way to enhance my reading." So did Hannah. This is a clear, positive indication of the attitude towards the summarization task.

**Enjoyment and Perceived Improvement:** The responses to the interviews favor this positive attitude. When asked if they liked the task, the majority of students in Group A answered 'yes'. For example, Grace said, "I liked summing because I thought I understood the article." Similarly, in response to the question of how summarizing helped their reading comprehension, Ella said, "Writing summaries helped me recall the information better. I think it is an effective way of learning."

Most students commented that they completed the task on time. In terms of the time it took to finish the summarizing task, most students wrote that they could complete it within the allotted time. "I could probably wrap up the summarizing in 15 minutes," Ava said, and Mia and Grace agreed. Lucas, for my part, it did take me longer, but "Sometimes it took me half an hour, for example, especially for the longer articles," Lucas explains.

### **Further Strategy Application Commitment**

The fact that they are prepared to keep playing the game is a strong indicator that they are maintaining a positive outlook. Ava, Mia, and Grace declared that they would use the summarizing strategy in the future. Ella was just as emphatic about it. This indicates that they perceived the strategy as useful and advantageous to integrate into their future reading activities.

**Future Use:** Students indicated in the interviews that they are willing to use

summarizing in the future. "I will use summarizing again. It is a useful way to ensure that I do understand what I am reading," said Lucas. Ava also agreed: "I think summarizing is a useful tool, and I will be using that tool when I am studying."

### **Occasional Negative Feedback**

Although students were mostly positive, there were a few brief moments of skepticism. Daniel disagreed with the statement, "The task I did is going to make my reading comprehension better," and Mason was "undecided" about whether he liked the task and whether it improved his reading comprehension of expository text. From this, the strategy was generally helpful for most students, although some were skeptical or less interested in it.

**Elements of Disagreement and Uncertainty:** Daniel stated that summarizing seemed repetitive to him and that he did not see that it made the information clearer to him. In contrast, Mason reported that he was uncertain whether summarizing was helping because he had difficulty consistently identifying the most important points. These remarks account for the lack of enthusiasm shown by these two participants for the summarizing task, compared to their classmates.

### **Case B: Reading with Journal Writing (RJW)**

The current study focuses on the experiences and attitudes of students from Group B who received instruction using the Reading with Journal Writing (RJW) strategy. This tactic included the reading response journal in which students wrote journal entries to ponder the reading and relate it to their ideas and experiences.

### **Overview of Experiences**

Students in Group B were more hesitant regarding the RJW strategy than Group A students, with some admitting that journal tasks enhanced cognitive engagement and facilitated personal reflection and expression. In contrast, others described journal topics as time-consuming and irrelevant to the acquisition of improved reading comprehension skills. Group B's experience of

journaling was different among subgroups of the group. Some students thought that associating the readings with their own lives was a great way to reinforce what they had read, and group members found that the connection process facilitated their understanding. They enjoyed having the chance to think and feel about the text.

However, a significant subset of the group had trouble with free-form journaling, telling me that this type of reflection seemed less formed than what they were used to in other types of reading processes. Many participants found the task less engaging due to the lack of structure, as they had to work from scratch to meet the researchers' goal of gathering authentic data. The repeated need to practice the reading comprehension strategy made the activity feel time-consuming and unrewarding. Some students expressed frustration over the absence of clear models or examples, which left them unsure about how to approach the task. Others noted that without immediate feedback, it was difficult to see their progress, which further decreased motivation.

### ***Thematic Presentation of Findings***

This section reports on qualitative data from the feedback forms and semi-structured interviews, detailing the experiences of students in Group B with the RJW strategy. Two major themes were identified through a close examination of their responses. These themes provide a more nuanced picture of how the students experienced RJW, encompassing not only the positive aspects but also the struggles they faced, thereby deepening our understanding of how RJW impacted reading comprehension and learning in general.

### ***Value for Reflection and Personal Connection***

Some students enjoyed the time to question and relate to the text provided through the journal writing activities. For instance, Amelia wrote, "Journal writing was helpful to me in making connections between my life and the readings. I thought about the way the ideas in the text applied to my life, which made reading it even more worthwhile." Zoe also pointed out the reflective piece, saying the journals facilitated "stronger thinking about the

topics." These reflections also seem to indicate that, for these students, through journal writing, they were able to interact more personally and meaningfully with the text rather than remain at the surface level. Being able to connect the material to their lives meant they absorbed the information and had a greater understanding.

Experience with Articles 1-4: The use students made of the journal writing tasks differed across the articles. For example, Isabella related well to the first two articles but had difficulty with the last two articles. "It was a little difficult sometimes to have something to write in my journal for articles 3-4 because they were not as applicable to my life," she said. Zoe said she became gradually more relaxed with each article, which she said was due to becoming more familiar with the task. Students commented on their experiences with the journal writing tasks in their interview responses. Amelia explained, "Writing in the journal helped me to consider the way these things I was reading applied personally to me. It made the articles relevant." When questioned on whether their comprehension of expository text was enhanced, on account of the journal writing assignments, Zoe stated, "Yeah, I believe so. It caused me to read the text more deeply and therefore, to comprehend it in a much richer manner." However, Lily was unconvinced: "I am not sure that it added to my understanding of the articles, but I think it just made me think about it more."

### ***Time Consumption and Perceived Relevance***

Other students also commented on the amount of time devoted to journal writing and whether it was directly related to improving one's reading skills. Emma, for example, experienced that journal writing was "time-consuming" and did not necessarily in itself facilitate her comprehension of the expository texts. Lily shared the same sentiment, her face expressing distaste for the experience. These responses suggested that certain students viewed journal writing as an additional task that took time away from what they could otherwise be doing with the reading, such as learning vocabulary or determining main ideas.

They may also have found it difficult to articulate connections between the reflective dimensions of journal writing and the more conventional skills of reading comprehension, such as fact retrieval and answering comprehension questions.

**Difficulties Encountered:** Time-consuming and perceived relationship to reading comprehension were common themes in interview responses. "Every article I write, I find it hard to keep writing. I had to do it for a long time, and I was not sure if it was helping my reading." "If I read to write it down, won't that make my reading worse?" added Lily, "I would rather have devoted more time to vocabulary because I did not see how journal writing was going to make me a better reader."

During the time spent working on the task, Ryan observed that "The journal writing to me most of the time took more than 15 minutes per article. I just needed to have more time to think and to write down my thoughts." In contrast, Amelia said, "For most articles, I could wrap up the journal writing in 15 minutes."

### ***Summary of Attitudes***

Students in Group B exhibited varying attitudes towards the RJW strategy, experiencing different levels of success on the task.

### ***Mixed Attitudes***

This uncertainty is confirmed through responses to the attitude questions. For example, Amelia strongly agreed that she liked the task, that it helped her understand reading better, and that she would like to continue doing it. At the same time, Lily strongly disagreed with all of these statements, suggesting a strong negative attitude towards journal writing. However, Emma was still undecided about how the assignment had affected her ability to understand what she read and her desire to continue reading.

This is evidence of significant variation in students' perceptions of journal writing. Amelia's consistently positive outlook suggests that she found the activity enjoyable and beneficial for reading comprehension, and that she would consider building on the task for future learning. Her enthusiastic concurrence

reflects a sense of contentment and accomplishment that comes from writing in a journal. In contrast, Lily's complete disagreement on all measures indicated a strong dislike of the task, as it did not help her understand what she read, and she would not do it again. This negative attitude indicates that she perceived the activity as unproductive, unenjoyable, and inconsistent with her learning preferences. In contrast, Emma's evasive line also conveys a lack of conviction. Her hesitancy represents a neutral or uncertain position, likely as a result of poor comprehension of the cue's purpose or the task's relationship to her learning.

### ***Divergent Views on Enjoyment and Effectiveness***

It was unclear whether the students liked the journal writing assignment. Some, like Amelia, found it both engaging and valuable, while others, like Lily, found it clear she disliked it. Their judgments of the task's efficacy fall along these lines. While some teachers believed that journal writing helped with reading comprehension, others were ambivalent or disagreed outright.

**Enjoyment and Perceived Improvement:** This difference is further emphasized in the interviews. "I enjoyed the journal writing, it was a nice touch to think about the articles in that more personal way", said Amelia. Lily, on the other hand, said, "I did not like the journal writing. It felt like extra work." Emma's answer was more neutral: "It was all right. However, I do not know if it helped my reading."

**Reluctance to Continue:** The student's willingness to persist in the task also reinforces an ambivalent attitude. While some students will be open to the possibility of future journal writing, others will not. It appears that their perceived value and satisfaction with the task had an impact on their intention to reuse it.

**Future Use:** When asked if they would use writing in their journals again in the future, Amelia said, "Yes... I guess I think I will. It made me more connected to the material." However, Lily said, "No, I will never go back to using journal writing again." Emma was still uncertain when she said, "Dunno. It depends on what the reading is".



In short, the attitudes of Group B students toward journal writing were not uniformly positive or negative. Rather, they varied from strong credibility to negative credibility, and the rate of these experiences was based on their interpretation of their experiences.

### ***Case C: Reading with Oral Discussion (RWO)***

This case explores the perceptions and backgrounds of Group C students who used the Reading with Oral Discussion (RWO) routine. This strategy involved participating in a class discussion on reading to facilitate comprehension.

### ***Overview of Experiences***

For the reading intervention Reading with Oral Discussion (RWO), the experiences of the students in Group C were diverse, unlike the positive results of the students in Group A. Some students said they liked being able to share their thoughts and discuss issues with their peers, but found that a small group of students would sometimes dominate discussions, which discouraged quieter students from participating. The interactive feature of the task was considered both a strength and a weakness based on the group dynamics. Others also found that oral interactions served as a site of peer learning and sharing of multiple perspectives, which deepened their comprehension of the text. Conversely, others find the experience engaging, reporting that they were able to speak only carefully during conversations that their more vocal peers dominated or that the discussions were superficial. This difference in experiences highlights the significant impact of personality and group organization on the effectiveness of oral discussion as a learning method.

### ***Thematic Presentation of Findings***

This section presents the qualitative data from the student feedback forms and the semi-structured interviews, which focused on the experiences of students in Group C, who used the Reading with Oral Discussion (RWO) strategy. With a view of their responses as a whole, two main themes emerged. These themes offer interesting insights into the

students' diverse perceptions of the RWO strategy and highlight its advantages in promoting interaction, as well as the challenges associated with participation dynamics, thereby enriching our understanding of its effectiveness in enhancing reading comprehension.

### ***Appreciation for Interaction and Shared Learning***

Students in Group C enjoyed the opportunity to engage with other students and discuss their thoughts about the reading. The conversations allowed them to listen to others' thinking and to understand more of the text. Olivia said, "I enjoyed hearing what other people thought about the article. It gave me a new way of looking at things." Emily also felt positively inclined, as she explained, "The discussion of the articles helped me understand the stories better." These responses indicate that, for some participants, the in-class discussion format provided an environment for collaborative learning in which they read together and learn from one another, constructing a working understanding of the text. The opportunity to express their thinking and have other students share their understanding through the students' own words helped these students clarify what they understood and identify the gaps in their knowledge.

### ***Concerning Participation and Depth***

However, other students in Group C worried about the oral discussion dynamics. Some felt that a few students spoke too much, which left other students with less space to share their thoughts. For example, Jack said, "It was hard to say anything sometimes because some people talked a lot." This was something Ethan related to: "I did not feel I could always express what I thought about things because I did not get a word in; in some groups, everyone seems to be talking at the same time." These comments highlight one of the limitations of the oral discussion approach: an uneven distribution of speaking time and participation. An uneven learning environment where some students do not feel heard due to the dominance of other students in the

conversation. Additionally, students felt that the conversations were not always rich in textual analysis.

Experience with Articles 1-4: The issues regarding participation and depth were different for each article. A few students reported that as they became familiar with the discussion format and the other group members, they became more focused when talking and were better able to make the discussion productive. Nevertheless, other students reported that the concerns persisted despite the intervention. For instance, Ethan mentioned that he felt more at ease participating in the discussions of the third and fourth articles as the collaboration dynamic developed, even though commenting on the first two articles was initially difficult for him. All four texts show Jack's preoccupations with dominant speakers, however. Regarding their expository text comprehension, when asked whether the oral discussion tasks helped them learn in any way, Emily explained, "This helped me understand the articles more completely." At the same time, Jack was more uncertain, noting, "I am not sure that just discussing the articles made me feel like I truly understood them."

### ***Time Constraints***

Some participants from Group C also reported that they had not been able to convey their thoughts completely within the given time frame. For example, Jack said, "I wish that we had more time to talk about each of the articles. I had many times when it felt like we were trying to rush through many things." This is an indication that the 15-minute time period may have frustrated some students about discussing more details.

### ***Summary of Attitudes***

Attitudes of students of Group C toward the RWO strategy were mixed. Although students enjoyed the chance to talk and share, issues related to uneven discussion participation and time to talk raise the question of whether the success of this approach depends strongly on group dynamics and the teacher's facilitation of a balanced and inclusive discussion.

### ***Mixed Attitudes***

The mixed feelings are even reflected in the replies to those attitude questions. In general, students like Emily and Olivia, who perceived that they liked this task and found it helpful for their reading comprehension, were consistent with students who disagreed, such as James and Jack. For example, James indicated that "I do not like the task I have done," and Jack was uncertain if the task helped enhance his reading comprehension of expository texts.

Enjoyment and Perception of Improvement: The discrepancies become even clearer in the responses provided in the interviews. "I liked the discussions b/c it was helpful to me to hear different perspectives," wrote Emily. "I did not always feel comfortable sharing my ideas," said Jack. This suggests that the enjoyment of the task was strongly related to the level of individual students' involvement in the group discussions. Likewise, while some students, such as Olivia, felt that the discussions helped them better understand the articles, others were more skeptical.

### ***Time Constraints***

Regarding the time, both Emily and Jack mentioned that they could finish within 15 minutes. However, Jack said, "I often did not quite have time to cover everything that I would have liked to have said at that time."

### ***Concerns about Future Use***

The students' mixed attitudes toward groups reflect a continued acceptance of the strategy. While some students may be willing to participate in oral discussions again, others were more timid. For instance, Jack wrote, "I do not know about doing this again. It depends on the group."

### ***Thematic Analysis***

Qualitative results from student responses on feedback forms and semi-structured interviews were examined to determine common themes among student experiences involving the three reading strategies of summarizing, journal writing, and oral discussion. It aims to extend beyond the single case studies and form a broader picture of the students' experience in all three groups. By

examining shared themes and patterns across participants' responses, we aim to provide information on the reasons for (or not) using the reading strategies and the implementation of those that exceeded or fell short of expectations. Ultimately, it is hoped that this study will provide a more in-depth and well-rounded understanding of how the aforementioned reading strategies impact EFL students' reading comprehension and learning.

### ***Varied Engagement and Motivation***

Students' engagement and motivation varied depending on the reading strategy employed. Some strategies encouraged active reading, while others led to passivity.

In Group A, the summary usage led to an increased level of engagement. Students such as Mia and Grace commented that summarizing helped them concentrate and organize their thoughts, indicating an active cognitive process. The task is structured, and having an explicit goal to create a summary motivates them. Mia said, "Summarizing what I was reading helped me to concentrate on the text that was most important to me and better organize my thoughts."

In contrast, the Group B Journal writing approach received a more mixed response. Although direct quotes from the texts they read prompted students like Amelia, who found the exercise to be soul-searching and connecting, to do so, others—including Emma and Lily—were less eager to spend time on what they considered a distant relation to comprehension. This suggests that an open-ended and reflective activity, such as writing a journal, may not be stimulating for everyone, especially those who are more accustomed to straightforward and task-based activities. Lily's comment, "I just did not get how writing in a journal was going to improve me as a reader. I wish we had dedicated more time to vocabulary," demonstrates this point.

The experience of Group C with oral discussion was also different, and participants' levels of involvement varied. For students like Olivia and Emily, the interactive nature of the conversations was a plus, and the opportunity to hear multiple viewpoints was a bonus. However, others, such as Jack and Ethan, were

more concerned about the inequality of participation, saying they were less engaged when they felt unable to take part in the conversation. This is well illustrated by Jack's comment that "At times it was difficult to get a word in edgeways, other people talked rather a lot".

The differences in engagement and motivation between the three groups illustrate that the format and content of reading strategies can significantly impact how much students are encouraged to reflect on their learning. Relatable, coherent, and interaction-based strategies are generally associated with increased engagement and motivation. Conversely, those perceived as lengthy, open-ended, and/or controlled by just a few individuals can result in disengagement and reduced effort. This aligns with the literature, which suggests that students who are given choice and perceive the relevance of reading material tend to be more motivated, engaged, and achieve better reading outcomes (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000; Sumalinog, 2018).

### ***The Importance of Structure and Clarity***

The clarity and organization of the reading strategies were also important in the students' perceptions. Strategies that were explicit, transparent, and clear procedures were favored in general, to avoid ambiguity and to provide students with a sense of accomplishment.

The summarizing strategy proved acceptable among group A members, possibly as a result of its clear structure. Summary is a specific mental operation: the identification of the main content and a succinct reformulation of it. Students like Mia and Grace emphasized that summarizing was helpful in terms of organization, implying that their reading was more structured or organized after using the strategy. Mia noted,

"Outlining the text meant I could concentrate on the important points, and I could develop my ideas logically."

The structured aspect of summarization supported students in carrying out the reading strategy in a systematic manner, leading to a perceived direction and purpose.

Group B's experience with journal writing as an alternative assignment suggests that unstructured writing may have its own set of challenges. Some students enjoyed the independence and flexibility of journal writing, while others found it unclear and time-consuming. Emma's mention that she felt that writing in a journal took up "time" and Lily's comment that "I did not see how writing in a journal was going to make me a better reader" indicate that these students faced challenges with the open-endedness of the task. Confusion and frustration resulting from the lack of a well-established process may have limited their ability to engage with the task.

Group C's experience with oral reflection also highlights the significance of being structured and clear, albeit in a divergent way. Although interactive in nature, the lack of explicit instructions on how to participate and the absence of turn-taking meant that some students felt left out or unable to contribute in a meaningful way. Jack's statement, "Sometimes it was hard to get a word in because some people talked a lot," highlights that structures need to be in place to enable fair participation and to prevent a few people from dominating the discussion.

### ***Time Factor***

Time considerations and time perception were also important factors influencing students' perceptions, particularly in relation to each approach. It was more probable that students liked methods that they believed they could effectively integrate into their study routines.

Group A stated that they were usually able to complete their summarizing assignments on time. Ava, Mia, and Grace said it would take them only 15 minutes to complete the summarizing exercise. However, Lucas said he sometimes found that he could not summarize quite as quickly as he was expected to. This indicates that, although the time required was practicable for most Group A students, it was part of the considerations that the students made in their evaluation of the strategy. Being able to complete the work promptly probably had a positive impact on my attitude toward summarizing.

The second group (Group B) that employed journal writing offered a contrasting view of time. One such question, posed by students such as Emma, was about the time involved in the task, noting that "It took much time" and she "was not sure how it was helping my reading". Ryan also told me that the journal writing for each piece usually took him more than 15 minutes to complete. Accordingly, the free-text nature of journal writing and the additional written responses that would be generated were considered time-consuming. This perception of time commitment led to these students having a negative attitude towards the method.

The oral discussion in Group C was time-limited. "It was hard to pack everything that I wanted to talk about in 15 minutes," Jack said, suggesting that the 15-minute limit on time in which to speak made it hard for students to thoroughly articulate their thoughts, resulting in a possible lack of in-depth debates. This suggests that students enjoyed the "live" communication; however, the 90-minute time restriction hurt the effectiveness of the activity for a portion of the students.

In general terms, these results suggest that time is a significant factor in students' identification of reading strategies. Time-saving, convenient measures are more likely to be accepted, whereas time-consuming measures are likely to be resisted or met with frustration. This underscores the importance for educators to be cautious of the time required of students to implement approaches and to choose/modify strategies that can be feasibly integrated within students' time and learning routines. This is also evidenced by the correlation between students' time management abilities and academic achievement, where competent students also have higher self-perceived self-efficacy in learning and becoming involved in their learning processes (Misra & Allen, 2012).

### ***Mixed Perceptions of Effectiveness***

Attitudes toward the effectiveness of various reading strategies for enhancing comprehension were mixed among the students. Some ways of planning directly led to

learning, while others did not seem to be that useful or powerful.

The summary technique was found to be effective in enhancing reading comprehension across Group A. Students reported that summarizing helped them concentrate on significant information, prioritize their thoughts, and recall information, which in turn improved their understanding. For instance, Mia noted, "I found that the summary could help me focus on the key information," and "The summary could make me more structured". "Summarizing was useful because it would help me remember the material better," Ella said.

The attitude toward Journal Writing among students shows that there were a variety of attitudes toward journal writing among participants in Group B. Although reading experiences can be related to one's literal experience, as in the case of Amelia—making the inferences made in the text a part of the student's own words, and thus, meaningful—for others, as for Emma, this was more diffuse in terms of its effect on improving reading comprehension. "I did not know if it helped my reading," Emma said. Lily was not even slightly receptive and declared that she did not see how writing in a journal was going to help me read better. This suggests that some students did not see a connection between reading skills and journal writing in a traditional sense.

Also in Group C, students differed in their opinions on the benefits of oral discussion. Students like Olivia and Emily were glad to hear other views and found that discussions helped them better understand the articles. Jack was not so sure, though: "I do not know how much discussing the articles helped me understand them more". This suggests that, although some students found the interactive and discussion-based aspects of the lecture approach helpful for understanding, not all were as convinced of its impact on their reading.

These divergent views on whether the strategies work are an example of the subjective nature of student reading experiences. School and college students' beliefs about the effectiveness of particular strategies for celebrating learning may be a significant predictor of motivation and

expectations. Moreover, of course, it is worth emphasizing that this empathy is not necessarily confirmed by pedagogical evidence.

Quantitative results reveal that when tasks are integrated into the EFL classroom (i.e., summarizing and journal writing), they can significantly improve their reading comprehension over traditional oral discussion methods. The qualitative results confirm this as well, wherein participants reported that it was specifically the clear structure of summarizing that seemed to result in the positive experiences they generally had with summarizing. Simultaneously, journaling triggered mixed comments on its perceived relevance and time requirement. The conversation was valued for its interactive features, but there were concerns about unequal participation. These results demonstrate the need to enrich EFL reading through diversified writing tasks. Attention should be paid to the amount of task structure, clarity, and time, as well as students' different preferences and learning styles, to encourage them to be more involved and improve their reading comprehension. This underscores the significance of student-centered practices that take into account the varied needs and views of students in organizing and implementing reading education (Brown et al., 2023). The results also correspond with recent studies in the L2 reading field that have underscored the importance of student agency and autonomy on L2 readers' successful reading behaviors and positive attitudes toward reading (Smith & Kim, 2024).

### ***Limitations of the Study***

Although the current study contributes to our understanding of EFL students' reading strategy use, we should bear in mind its limitations. The first limitation is the sample size of 24 high school students from only one cram school in Taichung City, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to other settings, including public schools, private schools, and students residing in different regions. Moreover, the subjects of the present study were learning English as a second language. They did not use it in a pedagogical

context that might generalize the results to students in immersion programs. Additionally, the varying levels of proficiency among students in the cram school, ranging from moderate to high proficiency levels, may limit the generalizability of the current findings to students with low English proficiency. Secondly, the use of interview and feedback forms-based self-report data in the study is likely to be vulnerable to social desirability bias, where participants may respond in a way they think will be viewed more favorably. Finally, the qualitative phase sought to offer rich and nuanced portraits of students' experiences, yet concentrating on three particular reading strategies (summarizing, journal writing, and oral discussion) meant that other potentially effective strategies were

not investigated, thereby restricting the generalizability of the findings.

**Reading Comprehension Enhancement Model**

The researcher proposes a model incorporating the "Idea Web Strategy" as its central framework to enhance reading comprehension among Taiwanese Senior High School EFL students. This model encourages students to actively organize and connect key ideas while reading, fostering more profound understanding and engagement with texts. Building upon this foundation, the Reading Comprehension Enhancement model offers a comprehensive approach that further enhances reading comprehension and caters to diverse learning styles.

Table 2 Reading Comprehension Enhancement Model with Idea Web Strategy and Writing Strategies

Component	Description	Strategies and Activities	Teacher's Role	Student's Role
Student-Centered Learning	Focus on active learning and student engagement. Encourage collaboration and peer learning. Provide opportunities for student choice and autonomy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Group projects and discussions.</li><li>- Student-led presentations.</li><li>- Choice of reading materials.</li><li>- Self-directed learning activities.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Facilitator, guide, and resource provider.</li><li>- Create a supportive and collaborative learning environment.</li><li>- Offer differentiated instruction and support.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Active participant in the learning process.</li><li>- Take ownership of their learning.</li><li>- Collaborate with peers.</li><li>- Seek out challenges and support.</li></ul>
Fostering a Love for Reading	Create a positive and supportive reading environment. Offer a variety of engaging reading materials. Promote extensive reading for pleasure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Classroom library with diverse genres and topics.</li><li>- Reading aloud and shared reading experiences.</li><li>- Book talks and recommendations.</li><li>- Independent reading time.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Create a welcoming and comfortable reading space.</li><li>- Model enthusiasm for reading.</li><li>- Provide access to a variety of reading materials.</li><li>- Encourage student choice and autonomy in reading.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Explore different genres and authors.</li><li>- Share their reading experiences with others.</li><li>- Develop a habit of reading for pleasure.</li></ul>
Equipping Students	Teach explicit reading strategies,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Explicit instruction and modeling</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Explicitly teach</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Learn and apply new reading</li></ul>

Component	Description	Strategies and Activities	Teacher's Role	Student's Role
<b>Students with Effective Reading Strategies</b>	such as idea webs and the SSQ method. Provide opportunities for students to practice and apply these strategies. Please encourage students to reflect on their reading process and identify their strengths and weaknesses.	of reading strategies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Guided practice and application of strategies.</li><li>- Think-aloud activities.</li><li>- Metacognitive reflection and self-assessment.</li></ul>	and model reading strategies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Provide scaffolding and support.</li><li>- Offer opportunities for practice and application.</li><li>- Encourage reflection and self-assessment.</li></ul>	strategies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Practice and refine their use of strategies.</li><li>- Reflect on their reading process and identify areas for improvement.</li></ul>
<b>Idea Web Strategy Implementation</b>	Integrate the Idea Web Strategy into reading comprehension lessons using RSW and/or RJW writing tasks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Provide clear instructions and guidelines for completing writing tasks.</li><li>- Offer graphic organizers</li><li>- Encourage collaboration and peer feedback.</li><li>- Provide opportunities for students to share their work and reflect on their learning.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Guide and support students in using the Idea Web Strategy.</li><li>- Provide feedback and scaffolding as needed.</li><li>- Facilitate discussions and reflection.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Actively engage with the Idea Web Strategy.</li><li>- Complete writing tasks and reflect on their learning.</li><li>- Collaborate with peers and share their work.</li></ul>

*Note: The table represents the Reading Comprehension Enhancement Model, which integrates the Idea Web strategy and writing tasks to enhance the reading comprehension of EFL students.*

The Reading Comprehension Enhancement Model, described in Table 2, provides a logistical continuum on which the enhancement of EFL learners' comprehension takes place in student-centered learning and the strategic integration of the Idea Web approach. This model goes beyond the traditional drill and drill approach by making student engagement more active, developing an authentic appreciation for reading, and providing students with tools they can use to understand a variety of texts. It demonstrates the significance of fostering a supportive and cooperative classroom setting in which students are in control of their learning, supported in making decisions about their learning, and encouraged to discuss their

reading strategies. The metacognitive focus of the model, including self-assessment, enables learners to do more than grasp new strategies – it allows them to understand how these strategies work together to enhance comprehension.

The application of the Idea Web Strategy in practice within this model, especially via RSW and RJW tasks, should result in substantial increases in text interaction by students.' From RSW, we learn to have students boil down paragraphs to key information, which can facilitate their recognition of main ideas and integration across texts, and, as demonstrated experimentally, can lead to significantly increased understanding. Meanwhile, RJW encourages a self-centered and reflective

reception, while students relate to the textual content with their background knowledge, which leads to more in-depth and nuanced comprehension. The cyclic nature of the model (as indicated by its name, "repeat and improve") suggests that, as an ongoing process, it should be used to inform, renew, and challenge pedagogical practices that reflect and are responsive to the ever-changing contexts and needs of EFL learners in Taiwan. This finding is consistent with evidence that flexible pedagogic approaches, which can be adapted to the demands of different educational settings, are crucial for achieving productive learning processes (Brown et al., 2023).

## Conclusion

The qualitative results of the study provide a detailed and nuanced view of what Taiwanese senior high school EFL students have to say about different reading strategies. Although the effectiveness of writing-integrated practices was quantitatively demonstrated, the underlying patterns and reasons for these outcomes became apparent, elucidating a more complex interface of cognitive, affective, and social factors that influenced learning. The clarity, structure, and relevance of a strategy to improving reading comprehension were found to have a strong effect on students' engagement and motivation to use it. For example, the structured nature of summarizing in Group A resulted in some participants feeling more concentrated and having achieved something. In contrast, the less structured nature of the journal writing in Group B resulted in many students considering this activity time-consuming or less directly related. In the same manner, the relative strength of oral discussion in Group C was due largely to successful group dynamics and balanced participation. Together, these findings underscore that the effectiveness of a reading strategy is based not only on its cognitive load, but also on how students themselves subjectively experience and perceive the task.

Lastly, this qualitative inquiry underscores the urgent need for student-centered pedagogies in EFL reading instruction.

Through prioritizing learner diversity and autonomy, providing clear direction and structure, and nuanced consideration of time management in task design, teachers can create more positive affective experiences that support and encourage deeper engagement and more effective reading practices. Lessons learned from students' feedback and reflections provided direction on how to construct teaching methods that fit the learner, rather than a band-aid approach. Such a dual perspective, where quantitative effectiveness is qualitatively experienced, provides a solid basis for constructing a good reading comprehension enhancement model—genuine empowerment, not merely imitative reasoning—for senior high school EFL students in Taiwan.

## Recommendations

EFL teachers are encouraged to implement the Idea Web Strategy in their reading instruction, particularly in cram school settings. This approach incorporates writing tasks such as summarizing and journaling, which have been shown to enhance students' comprehension, engagement, and reflection. By adopting this strategy, educators can create more dynamic and student-centered learning environments that cater to diverse learning styles and promote a deeper understanding of expository texts.

Educational institutions and policymakers should develop guidelines and allocate resources to support the integration of innovative reading strategies, such as the Idea Web Strategy, into EFL curricula. This includes providing teachers with professional development opportunities, access to relevant materials, and ongoing support to effectively implement these strategies in their classrooms. Furthermore, policies should emphasize the importance of incorporating qualitative assessments, such as student feedback forms and interviews, to gain a deeper understanding of students' learning experiences and attitudes toward various instructional approaches.

Future research should explore the long-term impact of the Idea Web Strategy on EFL learners' reading comprehension and investigate its effectiveness across different



grade levels, educational settings (including public, private, and international schools), and cultural contexts. Additionally, researchers could examine the potential benefits of combining the Idea Web Strategy with other instructional approaches or technologies to enhance EFL reading instruction further.

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