Lentera
JURNAL ILMIAH KEPENDIDIKAN

The Role of the PARS Strategy in Enhancing Students' Reading Comprehension

Irpira, Hajjah Zulianti, Febriyanti
STKIP PGRI Bandar Lampung
irpira3112@gmail.com, hazaulie@gmail.com,
*febriyanti.pascaunila@gmail.com

How to cite (in APA Style): Irpira, I., Zulianti, H., Febriyanti, F. (2025). The Role of the PARS Strategy in Enhancing Students' Reading Comprehension. *LENTERA: Jurnal Ilmiah Kependidikan*, 18 (2), pp. 365-376.

Abstract: *This research aimed to improve the reading ability of eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 16 Bandar Lampung in the academic year 2024/2025 through the implementation of the PARS (Preview, Ask, Read, Summarize) strategy. The study was conducted using Classroom Action Research (CAR) consisting of two cycles, each comprising planning, acting, observing, and reflecting stages. The research subjects were 34 students from class XI. Data were collected through reading comprehension tests, observation sheets, and field notes. The results show a steady improvement in students' reading ability and classroom engagement. In cycle I, the average learning activity score is 33.05 and the mean test score is 58.52. In cycle II, the learning activity score increases to 37.52, the mean test score rises to 70.45 meeting the MCC. Therefore, these findings demonstrate that the PARS strategy effectively improves students' active participation and reading comprehension, and considered an effective instructional strategy.*
Keywords: *PARS Strategy, Reading Comprehension, Classroom Action Research*

INTRODUCTION

Students are required to read and understand various academic texts as part of their learning process. For eleventh-grade students, reading ability affects how well they understand learning materials across different subjects that involve complex ideas and information (Adora et al., 2024). Students who are able to comprehend texts can follow lessons more easily and complete academic tasks more effectively (Bachtiar, 2024). In contrast, students with limited reading ability often experience difficulties in processing information and expressing their

understanding, which may influence their academic performance (Grabe & Stoller, 2011; Bruggink et al., 2022).

In relation to this, reading has different purposes, and each purpose requires different strategies and levels of involvement (Hoover & Tunmer, 2020). Based on purpose and depth of engagement, reading can be categorized into two main types: extensive reading and intensive reading (Harmer, 2015; Waring & McLean, 2015). Extensive reading focuses on reading large amounts of text for general understanding and enjoyment, while intensive reading requires careful and detailed reading to understand specific information. To achieve good reading ability, students need regular practice and reading strategies that match their goals, the difficulty of the text, and their individual abilities (Grabe & Stoller, 2013).

However, despite these theoretical perspectives, reading literacy remains a challenge for many students in Indonesia. The 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) shows that Indonesian students' reading performance is still lower than that of students in many other countries (OECD, 2023). This condition reflects common problems in classroom learning, such as limited vocabulary, low interest in reading, and a lack of exposure to varied reading materials (Snow, 2002). At SMA Negeri 16 Bandar Lampung, preliminary observations show that eleventh-grade students tend to struggle with reading comprehension. Therefore, teaching reading involves guiding students to decode texts, interpret meaning, and understand ideas through structured and well-planned instruction (Roe et al., 2018).

In reading instruction, teachers are expected to apply various strategies to assist students develop comprehension skills. These strategies include scaffolding, modeling reading processes, and providing sufficient opportunities for practice (Roe et al., 2018). A balance between intensive and extensive reading activities is needed to support students gain both detailed understanding and broader reading experience (Arboleda et al., 2025). Vocabulary knowledge also roles as a major part in supporting comprehension, as limited vocabulary often makes it difficult for students to understand texts. In addition, reading lessons should include interactive activities and post-reading reflection to assist students think about what they have read and stay engaged in the learning process (Celce-Murcia, 2001). Reading comprehension itself involves several indicators, such as identifying main ideas, finding specific information, making inferences, understanding references, and interpreting vocabulary in context (Nuttall, 2005).

In order to respond to these instructional demands, the PARS (Preview, Ask, Read, Summarize) strategy offers a clear and step-by-step way to support students in reading activities (Anggraini, 2023). Strategy that addresses these needs is the PARS (Preview, Ask, Read, Summarize) strategy, a structured reading approach first introduced by Cheek and Creek in 1983. In the Preview stage, students examine the title, headings, and some features of the text to gain an initial understanding of the topic. In the Ask stage, students formulate questions based on the previewed

information to guide their reading focus. In the Read stage, students read the text carefully to find answers to their questions and identify important information. In the Summarize stage, students restate the main ideas of the text using their own words to demonstrate comprehension. In other words, this strategy guides students to preview the text, generate questions, read with purpose, and summarize information. The use of PARS is in line with the Merdeka Belajar curriculum, particularly its use on student-centered learning, active reading activities, and the development of independent learning habits, as students are guided to identify main ideas, understand references, determine supporting details, infer meaning, and comprehend vocabulary in context through systematic reading stages (Kemendikbud, 2020).

Several studies have supported this approach. Previous studies have shown positive results from the use of PARS. Nopia (2023) applied the PARS strategy to seventh-grade students at SMP Wahid Hasyim Malang and found improvements in students' reading skills. This study highlighted the adaptability of PARS in middle school contexts and its ability to foster structured engagement with texts, particularly for younger learners who require guided support in developing reading proficiency (Nopia, 2023). Similarly, Anggraini (2023) examined the use of PARS in teaching recount texts to secondary school students and reported positive outcomes. Anggraini's research focused on recount texts at the secondary school level, and the results of a paired sample t-test indicated significant improvements in students' reading comprehension.

However, unlike previous studies, this research not only focuses on the effect of the PARS strategy on students' reading comprehension but also examines students' responses toward its implementation in the classroom. This research aims to analyze the impact of the PARS strategy on improving the reading ability of eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 16 Bandar Lampung in the 2024/2025 academic year. In addition, this study seeks to analyze the improvement of students' learning activities during the reading lessons through the application of the PARS strategy in the classroom.

FRAME OF THEORY

Reading Concept

Reading refers to the process of understanding written language through decoding symbols, recognizing words, and constructing meaning by connecting textual information with prior knowledge (Grabe & Stoller, 2013). This process integrates basic skills such as decoding and higher-level skills including comprehension, inference, and critical thinking, which enable readers to interpret, evaluate, and analyze information in texts (Bruggink et al., 2022). Reading also serves functional, informational, and recreational purposes, each requiring different strategies and levels of engagement (Hoover & Tunmer, 2020). Therefore, reading proficiency is essential for academic success, cognitive development, and

meaningful participation in an information-based society (Hoover & Tunmer, 2020).

Achieving reading proficiency requires continuous practice and appropriate strategies that align with readers' goals, text difficulty, and individual abilities (Grabe & Stoller, 2013). Reading proficiency involves several core skills, namely decoding, comprehension, inference, and critical thinking. These skills allow learners to understand explicit information, interpret implicit meanings, and evaluate ideas within texts.

Reading skills play an important role in academic contexts, influencing how learners process information and respond to written materials (Adora et al., 2024; Grabe & Stoller, 2019). Vocabulary knowledge is closely related to reading comprehension, as limited vocabulary often hinders understanding and interpretation of texts (Arboleda et al., 2025; Hoover & Tunmer, 2020). Based on reading purposes, scholars classify reading into two main types: extensive and intensive reading (Nuttall, 2005; Harmer, 2015). Extensive reading focuses on reading large amounts of text for general understanding and enjoyment to improve fluency and vocabulary (Waring & McLean, 2015), while intensive reading emphasizes careful analysis of shorter texts to enhance comprehension, vocabulary, and grammatical accuracy, particularly in academic contexts (Harmer, 2015).

Teaching Reading

Teaching reading is a fundamental component of language instruction that guides students to recognize words, understand meanings, and follow ideas in written texts through structured learning processes (Roe et al., 2018). At the basic level, reading instruction emphasizes decoding and word recognition, while higher-level instruction focuses on inference, critical thinking, and summarizing information (Snow, 2002; Grabe & Stoller, 2019). Thus, teaching reading involves not only reading words but also understanding relationships among ideas.

Effective reading instruction requires appropriate teaching strategies such as scaffolding, modeling, and consistent practice to support students' skill development (Roe et al., 2018). Teachers are also expected to consider students' differing abilities by selecting reading materials that match their levels and interests. Reading instruction incorporates both intensive and extensive reading approaches to develop balanced reading skills (Grabe & Stoller, 2011). Additionally, vocabulary instruction plays a crucial role, as limited vocabulary often impedes comprehension; therefore, teachers may provide explicit instruction, context clues, and pre-reading activities (Grabe & Stoller, 2011).

Student engagement is another important factor in teaching reading. Relevant texts and interactive activities such as group discussions and collaborative tasks enhance students' involvement and comprehension. Post-reading activities, including summarizing and discussing texts, help students reflect on content and strengthen understanding (Harmer, 2015).

PARS Strategy

The PARS (Preview, Ask, Read, Summarize) strategy is a structured reading approach designed to improve students' reading comprehension and engagement. Introduced by Cheek and Creek (1983), PARS was developed to help students read academic texts more effectively by dividing the reading process into four systematic stages (Cheek & Cheek, 1983; Nopia, 2023). This strategy encourages active interaction with texts and supports metacognitive awareness during reading.

PARS emphasizes active and purposeful reading by guiding students to focus on main ideas, monitor comprehension, and retain information effectively (Renaldi et al., 2025). It also promotes student participation through predicting, questioning, and summarizing activities, which support critical thinking and long-term reading habits (Ibrahim, 2023; Anggraini, 2023).

The stages of PARS include previewing the text to activate prior knowledge, asking questions to guide reading, reading carefully to identify key ideas, and summarizing to consolidate understanding. Through these stages, PARS helps students synthesize information, improve retention, and demonstrate comprehension.

In addition, PARS offers several instructional benefits. It helps students identify relevant information efficiently, promotes deeper understanding through active processing, increases motivation, and encourages active classroom participation. The repeated interaction with texts also supports memory development and learner independence.

Advantages of Using PARS Strategy

Despite curriculum demands, many students struggle with reading comprehension due to limited vocabulary and ineffective reading strategies (Sriwijaya & Anggraini, 2024). Research indicates that difficulties in sentence analysis and vocabulary interpretation hinder students' ability to understand texts meaningfully (Sriwijaya & Anggraini, 2024).

The PARS strategy addresses these challenges by providing a structured reading process that supports comprehension and engagement (Anggraini, 2023). PARS helps students obtain relevant information, facilitates clearer understanding through questioning and focused reading, increases interest in reading activities, supports information retention through summarization, and promotes active classroom participation by encouraging student-centered interaction.

METHOD

This research employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) using a combination of quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data were obtained from students' reading test scores, while qualitative data were collected through classroom observations and field notes describing students' engagement and

learning behavior during the instructional process (Aqib et al., 2011; Ary et al., 2010). CAR was selected because it focuses on solving instructional problems and improving teaching and learning processes through reflective classroom cycles (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988).

The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 16 Bandar Lampung. Preliminary observation was carried out from November 28 to December 2, 2024, while the implementation of the research took place from February to March 2025, followed by data analysis and revision of the findings. The subjects of this study were eleventh-grade students of SMA Negeri 16 Bandar Lampung in the academic year 2024/2025, consisting of 34 students (14 female and 20 male students). This class was selected to examine the effectiveness of the PARS (Preview, Ask, Read, Summarize) strategy in improving students' reading comprehension.

The CAR was conducted in two cycles, each consisting of four stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. In the planning stage, lesson plans based on the PARS strategy, teaching materials, observation sheets, field notes, and reading comprehension tests were prepared. During the acting stage, the PARS strategy was implemented by guiding students through the stages of Preview, Ask, Read, and Summarize. In the observing stage, students' participation, behavior, and engagement were recorded using observation sheets and field notes. The reflecting stage involved analyzing observation results and test scores to evaluate students' progress and to improve the teaching strategy in the next cycle.

Data were collected using test and non-test techniques. The test consisted of 50 multiple-choice questions designed to measure students' reading comprehension across five indicators: identifying main ideas, identifying supporting ideas, identifying references, making inferences, and recognizing vocabulary, with each indicator contributing equally to the total score. Non-test techniques included observation sheets and field notes used to document students' learning activities, classroom interaction, and responses to the implementation of the PARS strategy.

Data analysis employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data were derived from students' reading test scores and analyzed using individual and classical completeness. At SMA Negeri 16 Bandar Lampung, the Minimum Competency Criterion (MCC) for English in grade XI was set at 75.

Table 1. Criteria Result of Students' Learning Activities

No	Range Of Score	Category
1	>80	Excellent
2	7.50-7.99	High
3	7.00-7.49	Mid
4	6.00-6.99	Low

A student was considered successful if the score was equal to or higher than the MCC, while classical completeness was achieved if at least 75% of the students met the criterion. Qualitative data were analyzed descriptively based on observation

sheets and field notes to describe students' participation, engagement, and learning behavior during the implementation of the PARS strategy (Aqib et al., 2011).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) conducted in two cycles, each of which followed four stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The findings of the research are presented based on these two cycles, with each cycle including data derived from student observation sheets, field notes, and reading comprehension test results.

Result of First Cycle

Based on the post-test results of Cycle I, only a small number of students achieved the Minimum Competency Criterion (MCC). The percentage of students who did not meet the standard remained relatively high, indicating that students' reading comprehension had not improved optimally after the first implementation of the PARS strategy.

Table 2. Students achieved the Minimum Competency Criterion (MCC) Cycle I

No	MCC	Number of Students	Percentage	Criteria
1	≥75	6	17,64%	Passed
2	<75	28	82,35%	Failed

The reflection on the test result revealed that students' overall performance in reading comprehension had not met expectations. The average score was 62.94, which fell below the Minimum Completeness Criteria (MCC) of 75. Out of 34 students, only 6 students (17.64%) successfully passed the test, while 28 students (82.35%) failed to achieve the required standard. For more details, can be seen in the figure below:

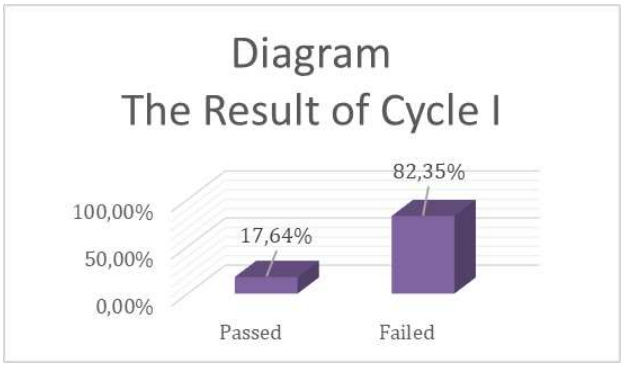

Figure 1.
PARS strategy in Cycle I

These results confirmed that the implementation of the PARS strategy in Cycle I had not yet been fully effective in improving students' comprehension abilities. This reveals that many students were still reluctant or unconfident in formulating questions and participating in neither discussion or individual. To address the problems found in Cycle I, several improvements were applied in Cycle

II. The lesson plan was revised to clarify and model each stage of the PARS strategy, supported by visual materials and simple motivational activities to improve students' engagement and confidence.

Result of Second Cycle

The post-test results of Cycle II showed a substantial improvement in students' reading comprehension. Most students achieved scores at or above the Minimum Competency Criterion (MCC), indicating that the instructional revisions and the more structured implementation of the PARS strategy were effective.

Table 3. Students achieved the Minimum Competency Criterion (MCC) Cycle I

No	MCC	Number of Students	Percentage	Criteria
1	≥75	27	79,41%	Passed
2	<75	7	20,58%	Failed

Based on the test results, there was a significant improvement compared to the previous cycle. Out of 34 students, 27 students (79.41%) achieved scores at or above the Minimum Competency Criteria (MCC) of 75, while only 7 students (20.58%) scored below.

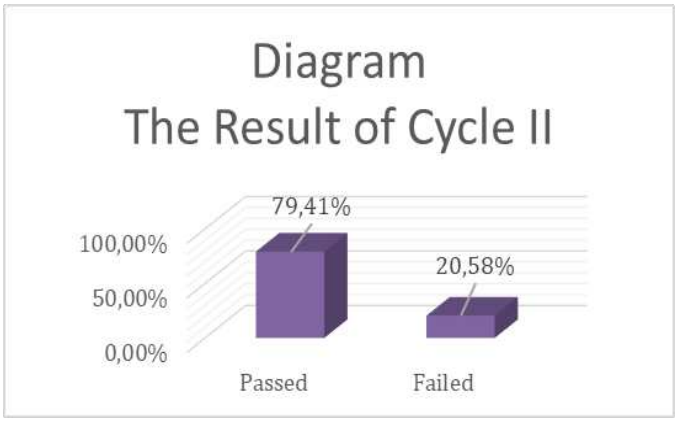

Figure 2.
PARS strategy in Cycle II

In the second cycle, the researcher revised the lesson plan and supporting learning materials based on the weaknesses and challenges identified in Cycle I. The improvements focused on optimizing the implementation of the Preview, Ask, Read, Summarize (PARS) strategy by increasing student engagement, especially during the Ask and Summarize stages, and by integrating more structured group discussion activities. After the application of the strategy in Cycle II, there was a noticeable shift. The average test score increased significantly to 77.64, and the number of students who passed the MCC rose to 27 students (79.41%), showing an overall improvement of 14.7 points in the mean and a 61.77% increase in the passing rate. The improvement observed in Cycle II aligns with previous studies

reporting that structured reading strategies support students in organizing comprehension processes (Anggraini, 2023).

Discussion

According to the percentage comparison above, there was a significant improvement in students' reading achievement from Cycle I to Cycle II. The percentage of students meeting the MCC increased from 17.64% to 79.41%, which means there was a gain of 61.77% in classical achievement. The drastic reduction in failure rate, from 82.35% to 20.58%, also reinforces the effectiveness of the applied strategy. This substantial improvement supports the conclusion that the PARS (Preview, Ask, Read, Summarize) strategy had a positive effect on students' reading comprehension. The strategy allowed students to gradually build understanding through structured steps, which helped them perform better during the post-test of Cycle II.

1. **Students Learning Activity**

The implementation of the PARS (Preview, Ask, Read, Summarize) strategy showed gradual changes in students' learning activities across the two research cycles. In Cycle I, students' participation was still limited, especially during the "Ask" stage, as most of them hesitated to raise questions or respond without teacher prompts. In addition, classroom interaction remained low and students depended heavily on teacher guidance when working with the reading texts, indicating that active involvement had not yet been fully developed.

In Cycle II, however, students displayed higher engagement and more active participation during the learning process. As they became more familiar with the structured steps of the PARS strategy, students began to approach reading tasks more confidently and systematically. They showed greater initiative in previewing texts, identifying main ideas, and participating in questioning and discussion activities. Moreover, peer interaction increased, as students were more willing to collaborate in understanding and summarizing the texts.

These behavioral changes were supported by the results of the observation sheets. The mean score of students' learning activity increased from 6.61 in Cycle I, which was categorized as "Fair," to 7.50 in Cycle II, categorized as "Good" based on Aqib et al.'s (2011) criteria. Therefore, the increase in observation scores indicates that the PARS strategy contributed to improved student participation and engagement during reading lessons.

2. **Students Reading Ability**

The implementation of the PARS (Preview, Ask, Read, Summarize) strategy resulted in clear progress in students' reading comprehension across the two cycles. In Cycle I, most students still experienced difficulty in understanding narrative texts, which was reflected in the low-test results. The mean score reached only 62.94, and merely 6 out of 34 students (17.64%) achieved the Minimum

Competency Criterion (MCC) of 75. These results indicate that students struggled with identifying main ideas, making inferences, and summarizing texts. However, after the strategy was applied more consistently in Cycle II, students' performance increased. The mean score rose to 77.64, and 27 students (79.41%) met the MCC, showing a substantial improvement in both average achievement and mastery level.

This improvement can be explained by the structured stages of the PARS strategy, which guided students through the reading process in a systematic manner. As students became familiar with previewing texts, asking questions, reading purposefully, and summarizing ideas, they showed better control in answering comprehension questions. In addition, students demonstrated progress in writing summaries. While summaries in Cycle I were mostly copied from the text or teacher examples, those produced in Cycle II showed better paraphrasing and clearer understanding of the content. This change indicates that students were able to process information more deeply and express ideas using their own words.

Furthermore, changes were observed not only in test scores but also in students' test-taking behavior. In Cycle I, some students answered questions inaccurately or relied on others, reflecting limited understanding and confidence. In contrast, students in Cycle II responded with clearer structure and more relevant answers, particularly in inference and interpretation questions. As a result, the performance gap among students decreased, since a larger proportion of the class reached the competency standard. Therefore, the findings show that the PARS strategy supported students in developing better comprehension skills and more independent reading practices in narrative text learning.

CONCLUSION

After implementing the PARS (Preview, Ask, Read, Summarize) strategy in the classroom, it can be concluded that this instructional method significantly improved both students' learning activities and reading ability. The research was conducted through two cycles with various treatments and assessments. The findings from observation sheets, field notes, and test results indicate notable improvements in students' classroom engagement and comprehension performance. The improvements were evident not only in students' scores but also in their participation and behavior during the lessons.

The implementation of the PARS strategy facilitated students' ability to interact with the reading material more effectively. It encouraged them to actively preview the topic, formulate questions, read texts attentively, and create summaries. In the first cycle, the average learning activity score was 33.05 and the average test score was 58.52. In contrast, by the end of cycle II, those figures increased to 37.52 for learning activities and 70.45 for test scores. This upward trend demonstrates that the PARS strategy helped students become more engaged and improved their critical reading comprehension.

The recapitulation of the findings shows that PARS was successful in enhancing students' outcomes. In cycle I, only 6 students (17.64%) passed the test based on the minimum competency criteria (MCC = 75). In cycle II, the number rose to 27 students (79.41%), reflecting a 61.77% increase. Furthermore, learning activities in cycle I received an average score of 6.61, categorized as "Fair," while in cycle II, the average score was 7.5, classified as "Good." Therefore, it is evident that the PARS strategy can be a practical and effective approach to fostering both behavioral and cognitive aspects of reading instruction in high school classrooms.

DAFTAR PUSTAKA

Adora, R. M., Aguilar, J. P., Arsua, E., Asis, M. A. S., Pereja, M. I. E., Reyes, J., & Tolentino, J. C. P. (2024). *Reading comprehension and students' academic performance in English. International Journal of Science and Research Archive*, **11**(02), 1240–1247. https://doi.org/10.30574/ijsra.2024.11.2.0523

Anggraini, B. (2023). *Using PARS strategy to improve secondary school students' reading comprehension*. Didascein: Journal of English Education, 4(1), 44–51. https://doi.org/10.52333/djoee.v4i1.78

Aqib, Z., Syaodih, E., Haryani, A. N., & Hufad, A. (2011). *Penelitian tindakan kelas*. Bandung: Yrama Widya.

Arboleda, G. G., Rivadeneira Zambrano, M. A., Camacho Castillo, L. A., & Coutinho dos Santos, J. (2025). *Achieving reading comprehension through integrated vocabulary instruction*. *Research, Society and Development*, 11(11), Article 33528. https://doi.org/10.33448/rsd-v11i11.33528

Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., Sorensen, C. K., & Razavieh, A. (2010). *Introduction to research in education* (8th ed.). Wadsworth.

Bachtiar, A. H. (2024). *The impact of collaborative strategic reading and cognitive style on students' reading comprehension in senior high school. Jurnal Pedagogi dan Pembelajaran*, **7**(3), 381–392. https://doi.org/10.23887/jp2.v7i3.75435

Bruggink, M., Swart, N., Van der Lee, A., & Seegers, E. (2022). *Putting PIRLS to use in classrooms across the globe: Evidence-based contributions for teaching reading comprehension in a multilingual context*. Springer.

Celce-Murcia, M. (2001). *Teaching English as a second or foreign language (3rd ed.)*. Heinle & Heinle.

Grabe, W., & Stoller, F. L. (2019). *Teaching and researching reading* (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Harmer, J. (2015). *The practice of English language teaching*. Pearson.

Hoover, W. A., & Tunmer, W. E. (2020). *The cognitive foundations of reading and its acquisition: A framework with applications connecting teaching and learning*. Springer.

Ibrahim, N. (2023). *PARS (Preview, Ask, Read, and Summarize) strategy in reading comprehension.* Journal of English Education, 9(2). https://doi.org/10.30606/jee.v9i2.2361

Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan (Kemendikbud). (2020). *Kajian akademik: Kurikulum Merdeka*. Kemendikbud.

Nopia, R. A. (2023). *Using the Preview, Ask Question, Read, and Summarize (PARS) strategy to improve reading skills of seventh-grade students at SMP*

Wahid Hasyim Malang. Jurnal Penelitian, Pendidikan, dan Pembelajaran, 18(6).

Nuttall, C. (2005). *Teaching reading skills in a foreign language*. Macmillan.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2023). *PISA 2022 results: Factsheets - Indonesia*. OECD.

Renaldi, L. M., Rofiqoh, R., Wahyudin, W., & Kamaruddin, A. (2025). *Improving reading comprehension of the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 4 Palu through the use of Preview, Ask Question, Read and Summarize (PARS) strategy.* Datokarama English Education Journal, 6(1), 51–59. https://doi.org/10.24239/dee.v6i1.112

Roe, B., Smith, S. H., & Kolodziej, N. J. (2018). *Teaching reading in today's elementary schools*. Cengage Learning.

Snow, C. E. (2002). *Reading for understanding: Toward an R&D program in reading comprehension*. RAND Corporation.

Sriwijaya, F. B., & Anggraini, H. W. (2024). Challenges faced by eleventh-grade students in reading English texts. *AL-MUADDIB: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Kependidikan*, 7(4). https://doi.org/10.46773/muaddib.v7i4.2166