



Identification of the Read-Aloud Method for Improving Primary School Students' Reading Literacy: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract. Literacy development is a fundamental component of primary education, with the read-aloud method widely recognized as an effective strategy for enhancing reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and student engagement. This study employs a systematic literature review (SLR) methodology, guided by the PRISMA framework, to synthesize research on the effectiveness of the read-aloud approach in literacy education. Data were retrieved exclusively from Google Scholar, focusing on peer-reviewed studies published between 2018 and 2024. The findings indicate that read-aloud practices significantly improve literacy outcomes, particularly when implemented in interactive and structured instructional settings. However, the effectiveness of this method is contingent on factors such as teacher proficiency, resource availability, and classroom engagement strategies. While the study highlights the positive impact of read-aloud sessions, it also identifies key challenges, including disparities in implementation and access to high-quality reading materials. Future research should explore empirical and longitudinal studies to further validate the effectiveness of this method across different educational settings. The implications of this study emphasize the need for policy interventions, teacher training programs, and the integration of digital reading tools to optimize literacy instruction. By adopting these recommendations, educators and policymakers can enhance literacy education and ensure long-term academic success for young learners.

Keywords: Read-Aloud Method, Literacy Education, Reading Comprehension.

1 Introduction

Literacy is a fundamental skill that forms the foundation of education and personal development. Beyond the ability to read and write, literacy encompasses cognitive skills such as comprehension, critical thinking, and effective communication [1]–[3]. The capacity to process, analyze, and interpret textual information is crucial for academic success and meaningful societal participation. Literacy proficiency among primary school students significantly influences their future opportunities, intellectual growth, and ability to navigate complex information landscapes. In Indonesia, literacy development

remains a critical challenge. Reports from the Ministry of Education and Culture indicate that many students struggle with basic reading comprehension [4]. Additionally, data from the Central Bureau of Statistics reveal that only 60% of Indonesian students demonstrate adequate literacy skills [5].

Traditional teaching approaches, which emphasize rote memorization over deep understanding and engagement, further exacerbate literacy challenges. Piaget's cognitive development theory asserts that active learning fosters deeper comprehension, while sociocultural theory highlights the role of interaction and scaffolding in knowledge acquisition [6]. Given these theoretical perspectives, there is a pressing need for instructional strategies that enhance literacy acquisition through interactive and engaging learning experiences. Implementing research-based methodologies in literacy instruction is essential for equipping students with the skills to interpret, synthesize, and evaluate textual material effectively.

One promising instructional strategy for literacy enhancement is the read-aloud method. This approach involves teachers or experienced readers vocalizing texts with appropriate intonation, pronunciation, and expression, thereby improving comprehension and engagement [7]. Read-aloud practices help develop phonemic awareness and listening comprehension, key components of early literacy [8]. Research has demonstrated that this method enhances reading fluency, vocabulary acquisition, and text comprehension [9]. Furthermore, sociocultural theory supports this approach, emphasizing that literacy development occurs through social interaction, making teacher-led reading an effective scaffolding tool. Read-aloud activities have shown positive effects across various educational settings, including English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. Given its versatility and potential benefits, the read-aloud method is a crucial pedagogical tool for addressing literacy challenges and fostering students' ability to engage with complex texts across disciplines.

Literacy is not merely an academic competency but a critical skill influencing intellectual, social, and economic development [10]. Strong literacy skills enhance neurological development, supporting advanced problem-solving, logical reasoning, and conceptual understanding. Literacy also contributes to social integration by enabling effective communication and civic engagement. From a socio-economic perspective, individuals with high literacy levels are more likely to succeed academically and secure stable employment, reinforcing the connection between literacy and quality of life [11]. Literacy encompasses reading, writing, listening, and speaking, all of which are essential for holistic learning. Constructivist theory posits that literacy acquisition is an active process in which learners construct meaning through interaction with texts and language-rich environments [12]. Consequently, early literacy education must prioritize evidence-based strategies that equip students with the skills needed to navigate modern information landscapes.

At the primary school level, literacy instruction should be structured and engaging, aligning with students' cognitive and linguistic development. Effective literacy instruction integrates phonemic awareness, vocabulary development, and reading fluency to establish a strong foundation [13]. Interactive reading sessions and exposure to diverse texts, including narrative and informational content, are essential for comprehension

and engagement [14]. Sociocultural theory underscores the importance of social interaction in learning, suggesting that collaborative reading activities, such as guided reading and read-aloud practices, significantly enhance literacy development. However, many Indonesian students struggle with reading comprehension due to limited access to interactive literacy activities and insufficient teacher training in literacy instruction methodologies. These challenges underscore the urgent need for innovative, evidence-based teaching strategies to ensure students develop strong reading proficiency and critical thinking skills.

Despite the well-documented benefits of the read-aloud method, research on its effectiveness remains limited, particularly in the Indonesian educational context. Existing studies often focus on general literacy instruction without addressing the specific challenges teachers and students face in implementing this strategy. Additionally, there is a lack of empirical research on how read-aloud practices influence literacy acquisition in diverse classroom settings, particularly in non-native English-speaking environments. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the read-aloud method in enhancing primary school students' literacy skills. Specifically, it examines how this approach contributes to literacy acquisition, improves reading comprehension and engagement, and facilitates teacher-led scaffolding in literacy instruction. The study also identifies instructional barriers that may hinder its effective implementation and explores practical solutions to address these challenges.

By bridging this research gap, the study provides empirical insights into the benefits and limitations of read-aloud strategies in primary education. The findings aim to inform educators, researchers, and policymakers in designing literacy programs that align with evidence-based approaches. Ultimately, this research contributes to the ongoing discourse on literacy education and offers practical recommendations for optimizing instructional practices to improve literacy outcomes for young learners.

2 Materials and Methods

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology to analyze and synthesize existing research on the implementation of the read-aloud method in primary school literacy education. The SLR approach was selected due to its structured and rigorous framework, which facilitates an objective and comprehensive evaluation of relevant literature [15]. By systematically collecting, categorizing, and analyzing prior studies, this method ensures the identification of patterns, research gaps, and the overall effectiveness of the read-aloud strategy in enhancing literacy skills. The use of SLR in educational research provides an evidence-based synthesis of existing knowledge, thereby contributing to theory-building and policy recommendations [16]. To enhance methodological transparency and reproducibility, this study adheres to established SLR protocols, minimizing potential biases in literature selection and analysis.

To ensure a structured and systematic selection of relevant literature, this study follows the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines. PRISMA is a widely recognized framework that enhances the quality and credibility of systematic reviews by ensuring a transparent and replicable

research process [17]. The PRISMA flow diagram was employed to document each phase of the literature selection process, including identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. Initially, a broad search for studies related to the read-aloud method in literacy education was conducted, followed by a refined selection process to exclude irrelevant or low-quality sources.

The inclusion criteria were determined to ensure that only high-quality, relevant, and recent studies were analyzed. The criteria were as follows:

- **Publication Date:** Only studies published between 2018 and 2024 were considered to ensure that the findings reflect contemporary educational practices and recent advancements in literacy instruction.
- **Peer-Reviewed Sources:** To maintain the integrity and reliability of the reviewed literature, only peer-reviewed journal articles and conference proceedings were included, excluding dissertations, preprints, and unpublished manuscripts.
- **Empirical Studies:** Only studies presenting original research findings, such as experimental studies, quasi-experimental studies, and qualitative research with detailed methodological descriptions, were selected. Literature reviews, opinion pieces, and theoretical papers were excluded unless they provided substantial theoretical underpinnings relevant to the research objectives.
- **Relevance to the Read-Aloud Method:** Studies were required to focus explicitly on the implementation, impact, or pedagogical considerations of the read-aloud method in primary school literacy education.
- **Language:** Only studies published in English were included to ensure consistency in interpretation and analysis.

Data collection was conducted exclusively through Google Scholar, as outlined in the initial research framework. Google Scholar was selected due to its extensive repository of academic articles, including journal publications, conference proceedings, and scholarly books. The search strategy involved the use of predefined keywords to identify relevant studies, ensuring comprehensive coverage of the topic. The primary keywords used included "read-aloud method," "literacy education," "primary school reading strategies," "student reading comprehension," "oral reading fluency," "teacher-led reading interventions," and "interactive reading techniques." Boolean operators (AND, OR) were applied to refine search results and retrieve studies specifically addressing the research objectives. The selection process also involved reviewing the abstracts and keywords of retrieved articles to determine their relevance before proceeding with full-text analysis. Additionally, reference lists of relevant studies were examined to identify additional sources. Any duplicate records or studies lacking empirical data were excluded to maintain the focus on high-quality sources.

The data analysis process employed thematic synthesis, in which key themes and findings from the selected studies were identified and categorized based on their relevance to literacy education and the read-aloud method. Thematic analysis was utilized to extract recurring patterns, theoretical perspectives, and the effectiveness of the read-aloud approach in various classroom settings [18]. Studies were categorized according to key themes such as reading comprehension improvement, student engagement, and teacher implementation strategies. Furthermore, cross-referencing was conducted to identify

consistencies and discrepancies among studies, ensuring a well-rounded and objective synthesis of findings. This approach allowed for the derivation of meaningful insights into the practical applications and challenges of the read-aloud method in literacy instruction.

The conclusions drawn from this systematic literature review were based on an in-depth synthesis of findings across multiple studies, ensuring a robust and evidence-based interpretation of the data. The final step in the research process involved critically evaluating the implications of the read-aloud method for literacy development and proposing recommendations for future research. The results were interpreted in light of existing theoretical frameworks, such as sociocultural theory and constructivist learning theory, which emphasize the importance of interactive and scaffolded learning experiences. Additionally, the limitations of the reviewed studies were acknowledged, and areas for further investigation were identified to provide a comprehensive and forward-looking analysis. This systematic approach ensures that the findings contribute meaningfully to the ongoing discourse on literacy education, offering valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers seeking to enhance reading instruction in primary schools.

3 Results

3.1 Literature Search and Article Selection Process

To ensure a systematic and comprehensive review of the literature, this study followed the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) approach. The PRISMA framework enhances the transparency and replicability of the literature selection process by systematically documenting each stage, including identification, screening, eligibility, and final inclusion. This approach minimizes bias and ensures that only high-quality, peer-reviewed articles relevant to the research objectives are included.

3.2 Literature Search Strategy

The database utilized for this study was Google Scholar, as specified in the methodology section. A structured search was conducted using predefined keywords and Boolean operators to retrieve articles related to the read-aloud method and its impact on primary school literacy education. The keywords used included:

- "Read-aloud method" AND "primary school literacy"
- "Oral reading fluency" AND "student comprehension"
- "Teacher-led reading strategies" OR "interactive reading techniques"
- "Primary school reading strategies" AND "literacy improvement"

The initial search retrieved 278 articles published between 2018 and 2024. A systematic screening process was then applied to ensure relevance and quality based on predefined

inclusion and exclusion criteria, focusing only on empirical, peer-reviewed studies addressing primary school literacy development.

3.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The inclusion criteria for this study required that articles:

- Be empirical research studies examining the effectiveness of the read-aloud method in literacy education.
- Be published in peer-reviewed journals between 2018 and 2024.
- Focus specifically on primary school students aged 6 to 12 years.
- Be available in English.
- Present quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method findings relevant to literacy improvement.

Conversely, studies were excluded if they:

- Did not focus on the read-aloud method or literacy education.
- Included conference proceedings, book chapters, or non-peer-reviewed sources.
- Focused on secondary or higher education levels.
- Lacked empirical data or were purely theoretical discussions.

3.4 PRISMA Flow Diagram

A total of 278 articles were initially identified through Google Scholar searches. After removing duplicates (53 articles), the titles and abstracts of 225 articles were screened for relevance. Following this screening process, 67 articles were assessed for eligibility through a full-text review. Based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 18 articles were selected for final inclusion in the systematic review. The PRISMA diagram illustrating this selection process is presented below:

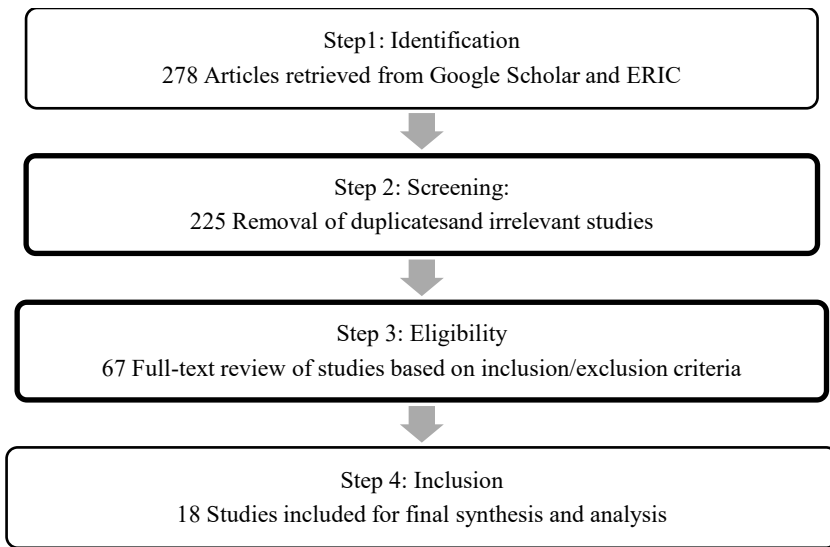


Fig. 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram for Systematic Literature Selection

3.5 Presentation of Selected Studies

The final 18 selected studies were categorized based on their relevance to specific research questions (RQ):

RQ1: How does the read-aloud method influence primary school literacy development?

Several studies highlight the significant impact of the read-aloud method on literacy development in primary schools. That read-aloud strategies improved comprehension and engagement among students, while that oral reading practices enhanced vocabulary retention. Similarly, that interactive read-aloud sessions increased student participation and motivation, whereas the effectiveness of read-aloud techniques in improving phonemic awareness and comprehension, particularly for struggling readers.

RQ2: What are the barriers to implementing the read-aloud method in primary schools?

Despite its benefits, the implementation of the read-aloud method faces several challenges. teacher perceptions in Indonesia and found that while the method yielded positive outcomes, practical barriers such as time constraints and large class sizes hindered its implementation. The cognitive load associated with read-alouds and suggested that effective techniques can alleviate this issue and improve retention. The effectiveness of read-alouds in rural schools and found positive literacy outcomes despite resource limitations. Additionally, the emotional benefits of read-alouds, noting that they enhance empathy and emotional connections with texts.

RQ3: How do different student demographics benefit from read-aloud strategies?

The impact of read-aloud strategies varies across different student demographics. Oral reading in second language acquisition and found improvements in pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension. That read-aloud strategies benefited multilingual classrooms by increasing comprehension among non-native speakers. Similarly, that read-aloud approaches positively influenced student attention and retention. The role of digital read-alouds in enhancing accessibility and engagement, particularly for students with diverse learning needs.

RQ4: How can read-aloud methods be optimized for future educational practices?

To maximize the benefits of the read-aloud method, several studies have proposed strategies for optimization. A strong correlation between read-aloud practices and long-term literacy achievement. The importance of repeated exposure to improve comprehension and retention. The neuroscience behind read-aloud practices and identified key brain regions activated during literacy development. Critical factors that influence the effectiveness of read-aloud instruction. The integration of digital tools and interactive learning to enhance engagement and accessibility.

3.6 Summary and Implications

This systematic approach to literature selection ensures that only high-quality, peer-reviewed research contributes to the discussion on the effectiveness of the read-aloud method in primary literacy education. The categorization of findings according to research questions ensures a structured and comprehensive presentation. Furthermore, while the review highlights the general effectiveness of read-aloud strategies, further discussion will explore challenges faced by teachers in implementation, including limited time, large class sizes, and resource constraints. Additionally, differences in effectiveness based on student demographics, particularly among multilingual students and those with learning disabilities, will be further examined in the discussion section. The synthesis of findings will provide valuable insights into best practices, potential improvements, and future research directions for enhancing literacy instruction through the read-aloud method.

4 Discussion

The findings of this study confirm the effectiveness of the read-aloud method in enhancing literacy development among primary school students. The systematic literature review identified multiple studies demonstrating significant improvements in reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and student engagement when the read-aloud approach was implemented in the classroom. The results align with previous research, who found that teacher-led read-aloud strategies resulted in increased student comprehension and motivation. The role of oral reading fluency in literacy development, emphasizing that students exposed to regular read-aloud sessions showed greater retention and engagement with texts [19]. Who argued that read-aloud practices strengthen phonemic awareness, an essential component of early reading development. Additionally,

emphasizes that teacher-read texts provide students with exposure to complex vocabulary and sentence structures that they may not encounter in independent reading. The consistency of findings across multiple studies suggests that the read-aloud method is not only an effective pedagogical tool but also a necessary component of literacy instruction, particularly in early education settings where foundational reading skills are cultivated. Furthermore, these findings validate sociocultural theory, which underscores the role of guided interaction and scaffolding in cognitive development, reinforcing the importance of teacher-led reading sessions [20]. Additionally, concept of scaffolding highlights how read-aloud sessions serve as a crucial mechanism for supporting students' literacy acquisition, enabling them to engage with texts that are beyond their independent reading level while benefiting from the guidance of a skilled reader [21].

This study also sought to address key research questions posed in the introduction, specifically concerning the didactic effectiveness of the read-aloud method and its impact on literacy comprehension. The findings provide compelling evidence that read-aloud practices enhance students' ability to decode, interpret, and analyze texts, thus supporting the constructivist learning theory [22]. The reviewed studies suggest that interactive read-aloud sessions, where teachers engage students with questions and discussions, further enhance cognitive processing and critical thinking skills. This aligns with who demonstrated that interactive elements in read-aloud activities foster deeper comprehension and student participation [23]. Furthermore, provided empirical evidence supporting the benefits of read-aloud strategies in multilingual classrooms, demonstrating improved literacy outcomes among non-native speakers [24]. These findings answer the research question on the method's effectiveness by showing its adaptability across different learning environments and student demographics.

One of the critical challenges identified in the literature is the disparity in implementation effectiveness due to teacher proficiency and resource availability [25]. Studies highlight the role of teacher expertise in delivering effective read-aloud sessions, noting that variations in pronunciation, intonation, and engagement strategies significantly influence student outcomes [26]. This is further supported who found that cognitive load during read-aloud activities can be reduced when teachers employ structured scaffolding techniques, reinforcing the importance of professional development programs. Additionally, teachers with strong pedagogical training in literacy instruction are more effective in fostering student engagement and comprehension during read-aloud sessions. The findings ecological systems theory, which posits that literacy development is shaped by multiple environmental influences, including teacher-student interactions and classroom resources [27]. Furthermore, literacy instruction quality is closely tied to access to diverse and high-quality reading materials, an issue that disproportionately affects under-resourced schools [28]. Thus, while the read-aloud method is demonstrably effective, its success is contingent on well-trained educators and adequate literacy resources, necessitating policy interventions that provide ongoing teacher training, curriculum development support, and equitable access to instructional materials. Addressing these disparities will be essential in ensuring that the benefits of read-aloud strategies are fully realized across various educational settings.

Another key aspect discussed in this study is the long-term impact of the read-aloud method on literacy achievement [29]. Strong correlation between early exposure to read-aloud practices and long-term literacy success, a finding echoed who demonstrated that repeated read-aloud sessions improve retention and comprehension over time. These results reinforce the notion that sustained and structured read-aloud practices contribute to lifelong literacy benefits, aligning with the cognitive development theories of Piaget and the literacy acquisition framework proposed by Snow [30]. Furthermore, integration of digital tools in read-aloud instruction, revealing that technology-enhanced read-aloud methods can further improve student engagement and accessibility [31]. These findings suggest that integrating traditional read-aloud practices with modern technological innovations could provide an even more effective literacy intervention.

In summary, the discussion of results demonstrates that the read-aloud method is a powerful instructional strategy that significantly enhances primary school students' literacy skills. The alignment with established educational theories, including sociocultural, constructivist, and ecological models, further strengthens the case for its widespread implementation. However, the challenges associated with teacher proficiency and resource availability highlight the need for professional development programs and curriculum reforms to maximize its effectiveness. Future research should explore longitudinal studies assessing the sustained impact of read-aloud practices and investigate the integration of digital tools to further enhance literacy instruction. By addressing these areas, educators and policymakers can ensure that the read-aloud method remains a cornerstone of literacy education, fostering comprehensive language development and academic success in young learners.

5 Conclusion

This study has systematically reviewed the effectiveness of the read-aloud method in enhancing literacy development among primary school students. Through a rigorous Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, supported by the PRISMA framework, the findings indicate that read-aloud strategies significantly improve reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and student engagement. The synthesis of prior research demonstrates that teacher-led read-aloud practices foster an interactive learning environment that enhances cognitive processing and critical thinking skills. These findings align with established theoretical frameworks, including Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and Bruner's scaffolding theory, which emphasize the role of guided learning experiences in literacy education. Additionally, empirical evidence suggests that sustained exposure to structured read-aloud sessions contributes to long-term literacy success, reinforcing the importance of integrating oral reading activities within early education curricula to strengthen foundational literacy skills.

Furthermore, this study addresses the key research questions by providing empirical evidence on the pedagogical effectiveness of the read-aloud method. The findings confirm that read-aloud strategies enhance students' ability to decode, interpret, and analyze texts while simultaneously fostering higher motivation and engagement in the

learning process. Additionally, the review highlights the adaptability of this method across diverse educational settings, particularly in multilingual classrooms, where it serves as a valuable tool for language acquisition. However, despite its well-documented benefits, the successful implementation of read-aloud practices is contingent on teacher proficiency and access to high-quality reading materials. Disparities in implementation, particularly in under-resourced schools, underscore the need for targeted interventions, including professional development programs for educators and policy reforms aimed at promoting equitable access to literacy resources.

A key area requiring further exploration is the integration of digital tools in read-aloud practices. The rapid advancement of educational technology presents new opportunities to enhance accessibility and engagement in literacy instruction. Digital read-aloud tools, such as interactive e-books, audiobooks, and AI-powered reading assistants, can provide personalized and adaptive learning experiences tailored to individual student needs. Future research should investigate the comparative effectiveness of traditional and digital read-aloud approaches, examining how multimodal features such as text-to-speech functions, interactive annotations, and gamification elements impact literacy outcomes. Additionally, longitudinal studies assessing the sustained effects of digital read-aloud interventions on students' literacy development will offer valuable insights into optimizing instructional strategies. By addressing these gaps, educational stakeholders can refine literacy policies and instructional methodologies, ensuring that read-aloud methods remain an integral component of evidence-based literacy education. Ultimately, fostering a strong literacy foundation through structured, interactive, and technology-enhanced read-aloud experiences will contribute to improved academic outcomes and lifelong learning skills among primary school students.

6 Limitations, Future Research, and Implication

Despite the significant contributions of this study, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the study relies exclusively on secondary data obtained from a systematic literature review, which inherently limits the ability to conduct direct empirical analysis or experimental validation. The reliance on previously published studies means that potential biases or gaps within the existing literature may influence the conclusions drawn. Additionally, the study primarily focuses on research conducted between 2018 and 2024, potentially overlooking earlier foundational studies that might provide valuable insights into the long-term effects of the read-aloud method. Another limitation is the exclusive use of Google Scholar as the primary database, which, while extensive, may not capture all relevant articles available in subscription-based academic repositories. Furthermore, variations in educational settings, curricula, and student demographics across different studies make it challenging to generalize the findings universally.

Future research should address these limitations by incorporating empirical studies that assess the direct impact of the read-aloud method through experimental or longitudinal research designs. Additionally, expanding the scope to include a broader range of databases, such as Scopus and Web of Science, would enhance the comprehensiveness

of literature selection. Future studies should also explore the integration of digital read-aloud tools and their effectiveness compared to traditional approaches, particularly in diverse linguistic and socio-economic contexts. Another promising avenue for future research is the investigation of teacher training programs and their influence on the efficacy of read-aloud practices. By addressing these research gaps, scholars and educators can refine instructional strategies and develop evidence-based literacy interventions tailored to different learning environments.

The implications of this study are substantial for both policymakers and educators. The findings reinforce the need for institutional support in promoting read-aloud strategies as a core component of literacy instruction. Educational policymakers should consider implementing structured teacher training programs to enhance the effectiveness of read-aloud sessions in classrooms. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of providing schools with access to diverse and high-quality reading materials, particularly in under-resourced areas. Integrating read-aloud strategies into national literacy curricula can serve as a foundational step in addressing literacy challenges on a broader scale. Moreover, the potential role of digital read-aloud tools offers an opportunity for technological innovation in education, making literacy instruction more accessible and engaging. By adopting these evidence-based recommendations, educational stakeholders can contribute to the long-term goal of improving literacy outcomes for primary school students worldwide.

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