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Teachers' Challenges in Testing Reading Comprehension for Middle School Learners

-The Case of Middle School Teachers at BBA-

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Dedication:

I dedicate this work to my beloved son Mehdi , my mother. Hamama and my lovely sisters Biba and Ahlem for the endless support during my ups and downs.

My dedication also goes to the best of all I have (My brother) for being there, texting me, and keeping up with me more thoroughly than others have.

Thank you for bringing yourselves into my life. My friends for the great encounter they have made.

Loubna.

I dedicate this work to my parents and all my family.

Asma.

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Abstract:

This study utilizes a quantitative approach to explore the specific difficulties middle school teachers face in testing reading comprehension and assess their perceptions of assessment effectiveness. The study involves 30 EFL middle school teachers and employs survey/questionnaire for data collection. Our analysis revealed that while a majority of teachers feel confident in their ability to design effective assessments, a significant portion still faces challenges. Additionally, The challenge of addressing diverse reading levels among middle school students It emphasizes that students in this age group demonstrate a broad spectrum of reading abilities, making it difficult to create assessments that are equally challenging for everyone. This process can be time-consuming and complex for teachers, as they must balance varying skill levels while ensuring that assessments are fair, effective, and support all students' learning progress.. The interest in alternative assessment methods indicates willingness among teachers to explore and implement new strategies that could provide a more comprehensive evaluation of student comprehension.

Keywords: Reading Comprehension, Testing, Strategies for teaching reading.

List of Abbreviations:

BBA: Bordj Bou Arréridj

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELLS: English language learners

MS: Middle School

RC: Reading Comprehension

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

STR: Strategies for teaching reading

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General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

Reading comprehension is a fundamental skill that plays a crucial role in academic success and lifelong learning. Reading comprehension involves continuously extracting and constructing meaning from the text (Furberg & Anderberg, 2012). As students transition into middle school, they face increasingly complex texts across various subjects, making effective reading comprehension essential. Consequently, teachers bear the responsibility of not only fostering this skill but also accurately assessing students' progress in understanding and analyzing written material.

The task of testing reading comprehension among middle school learners presents a unique set of challenges for educators. These challenges stem from various factors, including the diverse reading levels within a single classroom, the complexity of selecting appropriate texts, and the need to assess higher-order thinking skills beyond mere factual recall. Moreover, teachers must navigate the intricacies of designing questions that truly evaluate comprehension while accommodating different learning styles and addressing potential cultural and linguistic biases.

In recent years, the educational landscape has undergone significant changes, influenced by technological advancements and evolving pedagogical approaches. These changes have introduced new opportunities and challenges in assessing reading comprehension, requiring teachers to adapt their methods and incorporate innovative strategies. Additionally, the pressure of standardized testing and curriculum demands often constrains the time and resources available for comprehensive assessment practices.

This study aims to explore the multifaceted challenges faced by middle school teachers in testing reading comprehension. By focusing on the experiences and perspectives of these educators, we seek to gain insights into the practical

difficulties they encounter and the strategies they employ to overcome them. Understanding these challenges is crucial for developing more effective assessment tools, improving teacher training programs, and ultimately enhancing students' reading comprehension skills.

Through survey, this research will delve into the current practices, perceptions, and needs of middle school teachers regarding reading comprehension assessment. The findings of this study will contribute to the broader discourse on literacy education and provide valuable insights for policymakers, curriculum developers, and teacher educators. Ultimately, this research aims to support teachers in their efforts to accurately assess and improve reading comprehension among middle school learners, fostering a generation of skilled and confident readers.

Reading comprehension is a critical skill for academic success, particularly in middle school where students encounter increasingly complex texts across various subjects. As educators strive to enhance students' reading abilities, they face significant challenges in accurately assessing comprehension levels. This study focuses on the difficulties middle school teachers experience when testing reading comprehension, recognizing the unique developmental stage of adolescent learners and the evolving landscape of educational assessment.

2. Problem statement

Middle school teachers encounter numerous obstacles when attempting to effectively test reading comprehension. These challenges include addressing diverse reading levels within a single classroom, selecting appropriate texts, designing questions that truly assess understanding rather than mere recall, and balancing the need for comprehensive evaluation with time constraints and curriculum demands. Additionally, teachers must navigate the integration of technology in assessment practices and ensure cultural sensitivity in their testing

methods. This study aims to identify and analyze these challenges to inform better assessment strategies and support for educators. Therefore, we can pose the following problem:

What are the main challenges teachers face in testing reading comprehension for middle school learners?

3. Research questions:

The current research sought answers to the following questions:

- What specific challenges do middle school teachers at BBA face in testing reading comprehension? (to identify and describe the difficulties encountered by the teachers)
- How do teachers at BBA perceive the effectiveness of current reading comprehension assessments? (explores teachers' opinions on the tools and methods they currently use to assess reading comprehension).

4. Significance of the study

This research is significant for several reasons:

- It will provide valuable insights into the practical challenges faced by middle school teachers in assessing reading comprehension, potentially informing educational policy and curriculum development.
- The findings can contribute to the improvement of teacher training programs, ensuring that future educators are better prepared to address assessment challenges.
- By identifying effective strategies and innovative approaches, this study may help enhance the accuracy and efficiency of reading comprehension testing in middle schools.

- The research can contribute to the broader understanding of literacy education and assessment practices, potentially benefiting students' overall academic performance.
- The study's outcomes may assist in developing more tailored and effective support systems for both teachers and students in the realm of reading comprehension.
- To identify the primary challenges middle school teachers face when testing reading comprehension.
- To examine current assessment practices and their effectiveness in measuring students' reading comprehension.
- To explore teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding reading comprehension testing.
- To investigate the impact of technological advancements and diverse student populations on assessment methods.
- To develop recommendations for improving reading comprehension testing practices in middle schools.

5. Research Methodology :

The study adopts a quantitative approach, through the distribution of a questionnaire this approach, was chosen because it fits the focus of the study. The questionnaire data is examined quantitatively. Descriptive statistics are used to evaluate the questionnaire responses, which are then presented in tables showing numbers and percentages.

6. Instruments:

The main research tools are a questionnaire. The research will engage a sample of 30 Bordj Bou Arreridj middle school teachers by distributing of an electronic questionnaire, allowing a comprehensive understanding of teachers' challenges in testing reading comprehension for middle school learners. This approach, as outlined by Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2012), is chosen because it suits the study's

focus. The questionnaire data are examined quantitatively. Descriptive statistics are used to evaluate the questionnaire responses, which are then presented in tables showing numbers and percentages. These statistics are used to discuss the teachers' challenges in testing reading comprehension for middle school learners.

8. Population and sample

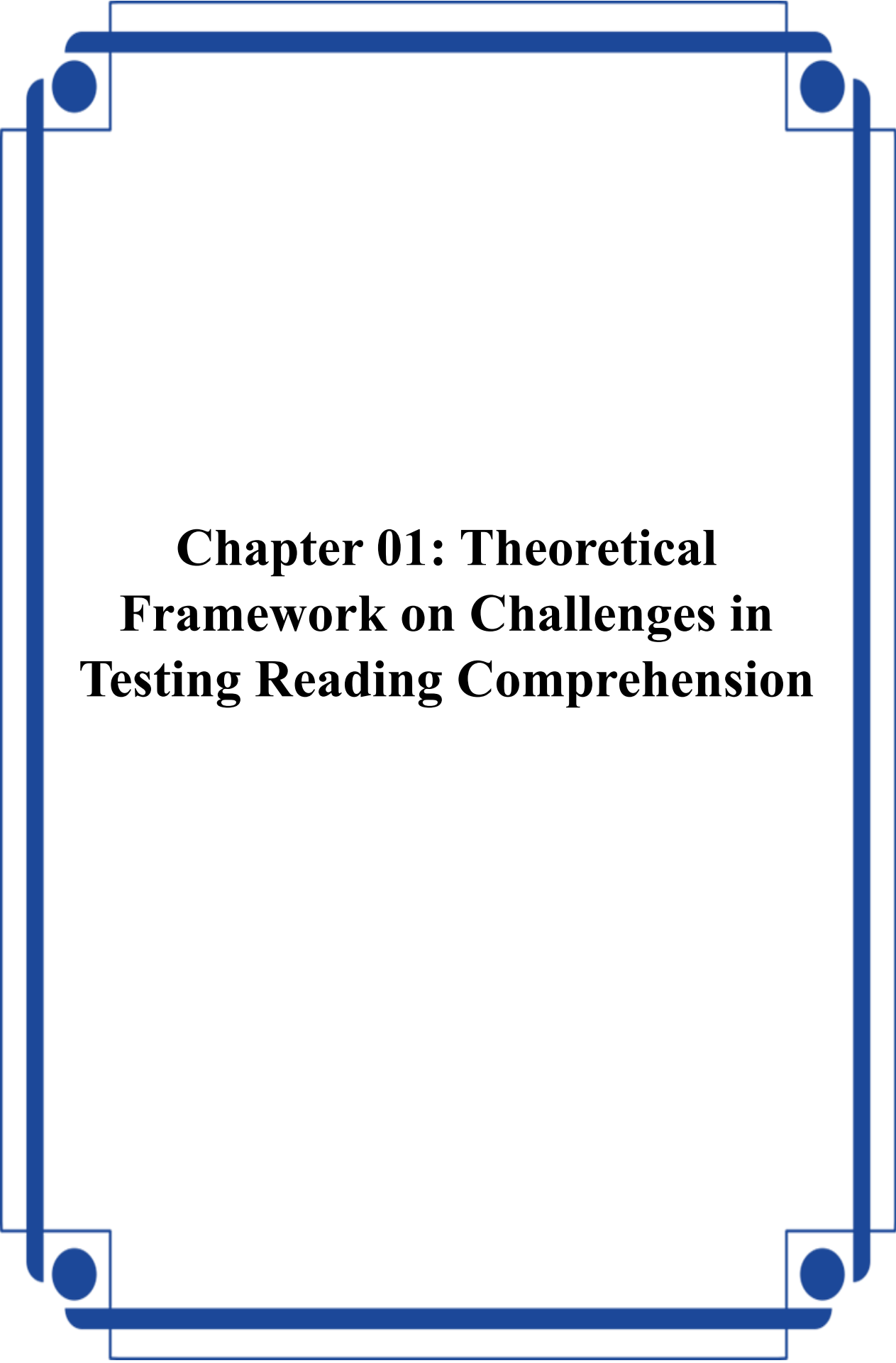
The entire population of the current study is middle school English teachers at Bordj Bou Arréridj. The target sample comprises of 30 middle school teachers in BBA, they were randomly selected, to explore the challenges they face in assessing reading comprehension among middle school students.

9. Structure of the Study:

The present study is divided into two chief chapters. Chapter one stands for the theoretical background of the variable, whilst the second chapter is dedicated mainly to the field work and the analysis of the findings.

The first chapter comprises four main sections: section one is concerned with the review of literature related to Challenges in Testing Reading Comprehension, including a set of its definitions, Understanding Reading and Comprehension, The second section is allocated to Instructional Strategies and Models, the third section focuses on everything related to assessing and testing Reading Comprehension, and the fourth section is dedicated to teacher Knowledge and Self-Efficacy

The second chapter covers three sections: the first section is allotted to the research methodology and instruments; the second section is concerned with the data analysis and discussion of the findings; while the last section is concerned with pedagogical implications. Besides, it draws on the limitations of the study and concludes with suggestions for further research.



**Chapter 01: Theoretical
Framework on Challenges in
Testing Reading Comprehension**

Introduction:

We will delve into the theoretical framework addressing the challenges of testing reading comprehension among middle school learners. This chapter will aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complexities involved in reading comprehension assessment and the various factors that influence it. By exploring key theories and models related to reading comprehension, instructional strategies, and assessment techniques, we will seek to uncover the difficulties educators face in accurately measuring students' comprehension skills. Additionally, it will examine the critical role of teacher knowledge and self-efficacy in overcoming these challenges. Through this analysis, we will lay the groundwork for identifying effective solutions and strategies to enhance the assessment of reading comprehension in educational settings.

Section 01: Understanding Reading and Comprehension

Teachers act as mediators between students, the texts they read, and the authors of those texts. This mediation involves helping students understand the meanings and moral lessons embedded within the texts. Teachers are portrayed as crucial figures who guide students through the comprehension process, transferring not just information but also deeper understandings and ethical insights from the texts to their students. The paragraph underscores that this role of the teacher is essential in fostering comprehensive reading skills and encouraging critical engagement with the material among students.

1.1 Reading:

The native language is defined as the first language learned by individuals, often from birth, and used within their community. TEFL, on the other hand, refers to the teaching of English to students whose primary language is different, typically in their home country's educational system or through private institutions. Teachers in TEFL settings are typically native English speakers, although non-native speakers proficient in English can also fulfill this role. Learning basic jargon is essential for those interested in teaching English effectively, highlighting the importance of understanding teaching methods and techniques for improving reading skills (Ardianti & athers, 2021, p. 104).

Anderson et al. (1985) define reading as the process of extracting meaning from written materials, requiring the coordination of multiple sources of information.

Wixson, Peters, Weber, and Roeber (1987) describe reading as a process of making sense that involves the reader's prior knowledge, the information in the text, and the reading environment. Grabe (1991, cited in Alyousef 2005) views reading as an interactive process between the reader and the text, leading to reading fluency, involving linguistic or systems knowledge (bottom-up processing) and schematic knowledge (top-down processing). Pourhosein Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011) state that the main purpose of reading is to extract the intended message from the text as envisioned by the writer. In summary, reading is a multifaceted process involving the reader's knowledge, text information, and the context in which reading occurs, requiring both bottom-up and top-down processing to achieve the primary goal of understanding the writer's intended message (Dang & Thai Cong Dan, 2022, p. 220).

Reading is a uniquely human experience that enables communication with distant others. To read and comprehend a text is described as initiating an intellectual, emotional, aesthetic, and social process. Drawing from the constructivist paradigm, Eleanor Duckworth's (1987) phrase "the having of wonderful ideas" emphasizes learning as a journey marked by moments of discovery. These moments occur when previously unknown or unclear concepts gain new meaning or relevance for the learner. Importantly, this notion of discovery is personal and not necessarily about creating something new for society but about achieving novel insights and understanding for the individual learner (VANDER, 2012, p. 5).

Reading is a crucial component of learning English, yet many students struggle with it. Improving reading outcomes is vital across various domains of study. According to Hamra (2010), reading for meaning involves understanding texts through several metacognitive strategies, such as clarifying the purpose of reading, identifying key aspects of a message, focusing on the main content, monitoring comprehension, engaging in self-questioning to ensure goals are met,

and taking corrective action when comprehension issues arise. Additionally, Brown (2004) highlights the importance of accurately assessing language abilities, particularly reading comprehension, which can be done through multiple-choice questions, short answer items, true/false questions, and cloze tests (Dang & Thai Cong Dan, 2022, p. 217).

Overall, reading comprehension is crucial for measuring both general language abilities and specific reading skills.

Tarigan (1957) underscores reading as not only a vital source of information but also a way to solidify and expand one's ideas and language knowledge within any academic setting. River (1968) describes reading as a fluent process where readers integrate information from the text with their own background knowledge to construct meaning. Ricard (1998) elaborates further, defining reading as a complex mental process where readers consciously and unconsciously employ strategies to interpret the intended meaning of the author based on textual data and their prior knowledge. Additionally, according to Grellet, reading is an active skill involving continuous engagement such as guessing, predicting, checking, and self-questioning. This definition highlights the dynamic nature of reading, where readers actively participate in making sense of the text (Ardianti & others, 2021, p. 105).

Overall, these definitions collectively underscore reading as an essential skill that students must master, integral not only for acquiring information but also for developing comprehension, critical thinking, and language proficiency.

Reading is an activity that involves both physical and mental processes working together. Ahuja and Ahuja (2007) explained that reading engages sensory and mental processes because it uses both the eyes and the mind simultaneously. Nunan (2005) supported this by stating that reading involves making sense of and deriving meaning from printed words. As readers' eyes move across the text, their brains process and interpret the ideas and knowledge they encounter. Reading is

an active process where readers engage with written language to obtain information and knowledge, as Grellet (2010) also noted. This active engagement involves strategies such as guessing, predicting, checking, and self-questioning, making reading an interactive process. Sabouri (2016) emphasized that readers construct a meaningful understanding of a text by using these strategies, which enhances the effectiveness of reading (Furberg & Anderberg, 2012, p. 41).

Therefore, reading is not just about vocalizing written text but also about identifying and comprehending it by connecting it to the reader's preexisting knowledge.

Richard and Renandya (2002) define reading as the meaningful interpretation of written or printed verbal symbols. This definition is supported by Linse and Nunan (1957), who state that reading is a fluent process where readers combine information from a text with their own background knowledge to build meaning. Reading requires the reader to focus attention on the reading material and integrate previously acquired knowledge and skills to understand what someone else has written. This means that reading is a set of skills involving making sense of and deriving meaning from printed words and comprehending the content (Ardianti & others, 2021, p. 106).

Walker (2000) highlights reading as a cognitive activity requiring active participation, while Grabe & Stoller (2002) suggest that proficient readers seamlessly combine and coordinate various abilities, making reading appear effortless and enjoyable. The passage asserts that reading should be an inspiring and transformative experience, incorporating enjoyable activities to engage readers. When readers successfully comprehend the writer's messages, it leads to a transformative experience, enhancing their understanding and personal growth (Wardani & others, 2024, p. 16). This emphasizes the crucial role of reading for students in fulfilling diverse purposes and needs. It describes reading as an active, cognitive process where readers switch between information sources, develop

meanings and strategies, monitor their understanding, and reflect on their responses within a social context. This active engagement is essential for gaining understanding and reflecting on what has been read.

Reading goes beyond merely identifying letters, words, and sentences to comprehend the text. According to Nunan (2003), reading is a unified process where readers combine the information they encounter in the text with their background knowledge to create meaning. This process involves using prior knowledge to predict what comes next and understanding how new information connects to what they already know (Wardani & others, 2024, pp. 16-17). Enhancing these skills will help students improve their comprehension and understanding of English texts.

1.2 Defining Comprehension:

According to Brown (2000), comprehension involves generating meaning from various sources, such as directly observing phenomena, reading, interpreting signs, cartoons, and paintings, listening to lectures or discussions, and viewing films. Comprehension is described as the process of building connections between what the reader already knows and new information. It is an evolving process that starts even before a book is opened, changes as the material are read, and continue to evolve after the reading is completed (Ardianti & others, 2021, p. 106). Comprehension involves constructing meaning from printed material through an interactive process that combines prior knowledge with new information. This developmental aspect of comprehension is further enhanced when children discuss and interact with others about the material after reading it. This interaction helps deepen their understanding and solidify their grasp of the content.

Effective comprehension involves learners interpreting, integrating, critiquing, inferring, analyzing, connecting, and evaluating ideas in texts. They work to

understand the text beyond the word level, aiming to grasp the overall meaning and derive multiple interpretations, both individually and collectively. Successful comprehension leaves learners with a sense of satisfaction from understanding the text's meaning, according to the NSW Department of Education and Training (2010)(Ardianti & others, 2021, p. 107).

Students face difficulties in comprehending English texts, because English is not their first language. Several factors contribute to these challenges, including limited vocabulary, which hinders their ability to understand the text. Additionally, recognizing words slowly and struggling with longer texts disrupts the process of making sense of the content, as noted by Snow (2013)(Wardani & others, 2024, p. 17). This implies that comprehension is the most crucial aspect of reading; merely going through the words without understanding their meaning renders the activity pointless.

1.3 Reading comprehension:

In the 1950s, influenced by behavioral psychology, reading was viewed narrowly as a process of stimulus and response. This theory led to educational practices focused on breaking down reading into discrete sub skills like identifying main ideas or sequencing events. Teaching materials such as basal readers were heavily scripted and structured, aiming to provide practice in these identified skills. Critics argue that this approach, driven by commercial publishers, contributed to a "deskilling of teachers" by assuming they lacked the necessary expertise to teach reading without such structured materials. This perspective reduced teachers' professional autonomy and authority in the classroom. In contrast, contemporary understandings of comprehension have evolved through contributions from disciplines such as cognitive science, psychology, sociology, linguistics, cultural studies, literary criticism, and composition. This interdisciplinary approach has broadened the definition of reading comprehension beyond mere skill acquisition to encompass a deeper

understanding of how readers construct meaning from texts. It emphasizes the complex interaction between reader, text, and context, moving away from a simplistic stimulus-response model towards a more nuanced understanding of reading as a cognitive and socio-cultural activity (VANDER, 2012, p. 13).

The various definitions of reading comprehension highlight its complexity and significance. A prevalent and modern view is that comprehension involves readers actively constructing meaning through their interaction with the text. This process requires combining information from the passage with prior knowledge to create understanding. Additionally, Nunan (2005) defines reading comprehension as a thinking process where readers not only become aware of ideas but also understand them in the context of their own experiences. They then interpret these ideas in relation to their own needs and purposes (Ardianti & others, 2021, p. 106).

This definition emphasizes the dynamic and interactive nature of reading comprehension, involving both cognitive and personal elements to derive meaning from the text.

Reading comprehension is the skill of deriving meaning from a text based on the reader's preexisting knowledge or opinion about the topic. Scanlon et al. (2010) describe comprehension as an active process where readers combine their understanding of the text with their background knowledge. This process requires readers to interpret and make decisions about the text in relation to the writer's intended meaning. Lems et al. (2010) further define reading comprehension as the ability to build personal meaning from the text provided by the writer. Snow (2002) also emphasizes that reading comprehension involves continuously extracting and constructing meaning from the text. Additionally, Kintsch, as cited in Sanford (2015), notes that reading comprehension involves creating mental images from the given text (Furberg & Anderberg, 2012, p. 41).

From these perspectives, it is clear that reading comprehension is a complex process that involves interaction between the reader's preexisting knowledge and

the content of the text. In essence, reading comprehension is about transferring meaning from the text and building understanding based on the ideas conveyed.

Reading comprehension is portrayed as a process of discovery that varies among readers due to their unique experiences, social connections, cognitive habits, and emotional makeup. Through reading and understanding, individuals engage in creating intellectual, emotional, and cultural insights that enrich their personal, professional, and civic lives. Readers actively clarify, revise, and expand their existing knowledge. They appreciate the aesthetic qualities of language and recognize its influence. Reading prompts readers to think critically, evoke emotional responses, pose questions, and undergo personal transformation (VANDER, 2012, p. 5).

Anisa Ardianti, and others, determined the strategies used by English teachers in teaching reading comprehension and how they apply these strategies. This research was designed as descriptive qualitative research. The research was conducted at SMAN 02 Muaro Jambi. The participants of this research were three English teachers who taught in the tenth (X) MIPA grade of the school. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic so, each English teachers had two meetings observed by the researcher. The research instrument is an observation and interview. The instrument used is to find out the strategies used and how the English teachers apply the strategies in teaching reading comprehension. The results of the data were analyzed by; checklist observations and field notes. The results showed that the teacher used several strategies in teaching reading comprehension. The strategies are Translation strategy, Scaffolding strategy, and Question and Answer Relationship Strategy. Encourage the use of dictionaries, rereading to assess comprehension, understanding in certain tasks, and asking questions for specific information strategies applied in implementing reading comprehension in the school. This is evidenced by the motivation of students, students' attention, and the ease of teachers in teaching and learning process (Ardianti & others, 2021).

Reading is one of the most crucial core skills that students should learn, because without it, it is difficult to become proficient in other subject areas. If reading competence is not well-founded, the teaching and learning process will be challenging for both teachers and pupils. Reading skill impacts academic performance of the students (Adao & others, 2023, p. 221).

There are two types of reading, as identified by Brown (2000), which are essential components of the four language skills (Ardianti & others, 2021, p. 106):

- The first type is initial reading, which involves efforts by beginners to learn how to read. This includes learning the alphabet, letter combinations, and simple words. Initial reading is particularly beneficial for children who are starting to read English, providing them with the foundational skills necessary for literacy.
- The second type is reading comprehension, which focuses on understanding the messages conveyed in a text. This type of reading involves more advanced skills, where readers engage with the content to fully grasp its meaning and implications.

Both types of reading have their own advantages. Initial reading is crucial for early learners as it lays the groundwork for future reading abilities. Reading comprehension, on the other hand, is vital for deeper engagement with texts, allowing readers to interpret and understand complex messages.

Reading comprehension involves readers extracting meaning, ideas, information, and values from a text, rather than merely reading it. This aligns with Grellet's (2010) definition, which describes reading comprehension as effectively extracting the required information from a written text. While comprehending a text during a reading exercise can be relatively easy due to the availability of dictionaries and peer discussions, doing so in a test situation is different. The test

setting, along with the inherent difficulties of the questions, impacts students' ability to comprehend the text effectively (Furberg & Anderberg, 2012, p. 40).

According to Mickulecky (2008), reading skills are the cognitive processes that a reader uses to make sense of a text. For fluent readers, most of these reading skills are employed unconsciously and automatically (Ardianti & others, 2021, p. 107). This indicates that proficient readers have developed their reading abilities to a level where they can interpret and understand texts effortlessly, without having to deliberately think about the processes involved. These skills allow fluent readers to quickly and efficiently extract meaning from what they read.

Reading comprehension, according to Grabe and Stoller (2011), is a complex combination of abilities that includes quick, efficient, interactive, strategic, flexible, assessing, intentional, comprehending, learning, and linguistic processes. These skills work together to help readers attain the ultimate aim of reading, which is a complete knowledge of a text. Furthermore, reading comprehension is a collaborative effort between the reader and the text. Understanding the primary idea of a text, recognizing the type of writing, ordering the sequence of the text, predicting what a text is about, and guessing the author are all important parts of reading comprehension. Students who master these elements have a greater understanding of the material. Making predictions based on prior knowledge of the structural organization and text elements might also help pupils better understand the material they're reading. Furthermore, the number of vocabulary influences reading comprehension, with increased vocabulary leading to better reading comprehension (Dang & Thai Cong Dan, 2022, p. 221).

Reading comprehension is a complex process that relies heavily on learning new content and the vocabulary associated with it. It is closely linked to students' ability to read fluently. As students progress, they need to develop the stamina to persist through increasingly difficult and lengthy texts (Sawchuk, 2024).

1.4 Rationale for Effective Reading:

The success of reading in a foreign language relies on multiple factors (Petchinalert, 2016, p. 1):

- **Effective Reading Strategy Use:** Learners need to employ strategies that enhance their comprehension and engagement with the text. This is supported by studies, indicating the importance of using appropriate strategies.
- **Reading Self-Efficacy:** The belief in one's ability to read effectively in English plays a significant role. Higher levels of self-efficacy are associated with better reading outcomes.
- **Development through Meaningful Activities:** Learners, especially those with lower English reading proficiency, benefit from engaging in various and meaningful reading activities. These activities not only improve their comprehension skills but also help them develop their own effective reading strategies.
- **Classroom Instruction:** Effective reading strategies can be cultivated through deliberate classroom instruction. Teachers play a crucial role in guiding learners towards adopting and refining strategies that support their reading development.

In essence, the rationale underscores the importance of both strategic use and self-belief in reading proficiency, advocating for active engagement in meaningful reading activities as a pathway to improving skills in a foreign language context.

Section 02: Instructional Strategies and Models

2.1 Comprehension Instruction:

Comprehension instruction based on a socio-cognitive framework termed transactional strategies instruction. This approach emphasizes the dynamic

interaction between the reader and the text, highlighting the interconnectedness of cognitive, social, and affective factors in the process of deriving meaning from reading. In contrast to traditional classroom discourse patterns like I/R/E (initiate, respond, evaluate) described by Cazden (1988), where teachers typically lead discussions and dominate language production in the classroom, transactional strategies instruction shifts the focus to students' active participation and thinking. In this approach, teachers engage in think-aloud while reading to model cognitive processes, emotional responses, and critical thinking in response to the text (VANDER, 2012, p. 7).

This method aims to empower students to develop their comprehension skills by immersing them in meaningful interactions with the text and encouraging personal engagement and reflection.

Instructional practices designed to enhance students' comprehension through metacognition and self-regulation (VANDER, 2012, p. 7):

- Direct Explanation and Reflection: Teachers explain and reflect on strategies, discussing what, how, and why they are used to help students understand and monitor their own comprehension processes.
- Release of Responsibility Framework: Following Vygotsky's framework, instruction begins with scaffolding students' engagement, gradually transferring responsibility to them as they gain proficiency (Bruner, 1956). This approach supports guided practice and fosters independence in learning.
- Responsive and Flexible Instruction: Instruction adapts to students' needs and progress, allowing for flexibility in strategies and approaches.
- Integration of Language Skills: Speaking, writing, and listening are integral to developing thinking and responding to text. Students engage in frequent discussions before, during, and after reading, using think-aloud and open-ended conversations to deepen understanding.

- **Written Responses:** Students document their thinking through jottings (brief notes reflecting their thoughts) and more developed written pieces, encouraging reflection and synthesis of ideas.

Overall, this instructional approach aims to cultivate students' metacognitive awareness, self-regulation, and active engagement with texts through structured support and varied opportunities for expression and reflection.

Durkin's research emphasizes the discrepancy between the broad definition of comprehension instruction and its actual implementation in classrooms. Her definitions are clear: comprehension instruction involves teachers actively helping students understand the meaning of more than isolated words, and comprehension application involves teachers assessing whether students can apply their understanding to connected texts beyond what was explicitly taught. Despite these definitions, Durkin found that in practice, comprehension instruction was largely absent or minimal. Instead of engaging in activities that directly fostered deep understanding of texts, teachers were often seen doing activities like mentioning texts, giving assignments, or questioning students mainly for assessment purposes (VANDER, 2012, p. 14).

This highlights a critical gap between what is theoretically defined as effective comprehension instruction—actively guiding students to understand and apply meaning from texts—and the often more passive or assessment-focused practices observed in classrooms. Durkin's findings underscore the importance of bridging this gap through more intentional and effective instructional strategies that promote genuine comprehension and engagement with texts among students.

2.2 Strategies for teaching reading:

Strategy Definition defined as a general plan for a lesson that outlines the lesson structure, desired learner behavior aligned with instructional goals, and necessary tactics for implementing the strategy (Dwiningtiyas, Dedi , & Puspita, 2020, p.

67). Teachers are crucial in fostering a deep appreciation for reading among students. They should teach effective reading strategies tailored to academic texts and provide ample opportunities for practice throughout the term (Adao & others, 2023, p. 221).

Reading strategies can be defined as the mental operations involved when readers purposefully approach a text to make sense of what they read (Petchinalert, 2016, p. 6).

Teachers employing effective strategies tailored to the specific conditions of their classes to facilitate reading comprehension. According to Larsen-Freeman (2000), it is crucial for teachers to select appropriate strategies for reading classes to ensure an effective learning process. This selection is based on understanding the unique circumstances and abilities present within each class. The varying conditions within classrooms necessitate strategies that are well-suited and adaptable to meet the needs and capabilities of students effectively (Ardianti & others, 2021, p. 104).

In teaching reading comprehension, it's important to focus on the processes that students can use with any text, not just getting correct answers to questions about a specific text. Effective assessment requires teachers to pay attention to various reading strategies, such as activating prior knowledge, self-questioning, metacognition, predicting, determining importance, visualizing, and inferring. These strategies are often revealed through complex, language-rich classroom interactions. This approach places significant demands on teachers, who must be deeply engaged in these processes to observe and interpret students' comprehension effectively (VANDER, 2012, p. 9).

Some students dislike lessons because they struggle to understand what the teacher explains, particularly in interpreting English texts or sentences. This difficulty leads to confusion and hampers their engagement with the subject. On the other hand, there are students who enjoy English lessons but are dissatisfied

with the strategies employed by the teacher. This suggests that while they have an interest in learning English, they feel that the methods used may not effectively support their learning preferences or needs. Overall, these perspectives highlight the importance of effective teaching strategies and clear communication in fostering positive student engagement and understanding in English language education. Addressing these concerns could potentially improve students' attitudes towards and performance in English lessons (Ardianti & others, 2021, p. 104).

They have been classified differently; four of the classification schemes are reviewed below (Petchinalert, 2016, pp. 6-7):

Paris, Lipson, and Wixson (1983) categorize reading strategies based on when they are used: before, during, and after reading. Before reading, strategies involve activating prior knowledge about the text. During reading, strategies help readers understand the main idea and make connections. After reading, strategies focus on reviewing the text's content and critically evaluating its validity. Anderson (1991) identifies five types of reading strategies: supervising, support, paraphrase, coherence, and test-taking. Supervising strategies involve monitoring comprehension, support strategies help manage reading processes, paraphrase strategies involve translating and rephrasing, coherence strategies focus on global understanding, and test-taking strategies aid in answering comprehension questions. Chamot and O'Malley (1994) classify reading strategies into cognitive, metacognitive, and social/affective categories based on their function.

Meyer et al. (1994) found that the time American first-grade teachers spent reading aloud was not directly linked to reading achievement, suggesting that reading aloud alone is insufficient. Research indicates that when teachers explain and engage students in discussions during read-aloud sessions, it significantly enhances vocabulary and comprehension. Swanson et al. (2011) found positive

effects of read-aloud interventions on language awareness and vocabulary for at-risk children. Beck and McKeown (2001) developed "Text Talk," a method enhancing read-aloud effectiveness by selecting challenging texts, asking open and follow-up questions, and using background knowledge and explicit vocabulary instruction. Santoro et al. (2008) demonstrated the success of a framework focused on vocabulary, text structures, explicit comprehension instruction, and text-focused discussions in first-grade read-aloud sessions (Furberg & Anderberg, 2012, p. 2).

Pressley & Afflerbach's meta-review of cognitive processing studies on reading comprehension, which utilized think-aloud and verbal protocol methodologies, focused on proficient readers. Their investigations identified various categories of strategies that proficient readers employ before, during, and after reading. These strategies include (VANDER, 2012, pp. 13-14):

- Constructing a goal: Setting specific purposes or objectives for reading.
- Predicting: Making educated guesses about what will happen next in the text.
- Activating prior knowledge: Using existing knowledge and experiences to make connections with the text.
- Determining importance: Identifying key ideas or information in the text.
- Self-monitoring: Being aware of one's understanding during reading and adjusting strategies as needed.
- Self-questioning: Asking oneself questions to clarify understanding or provoke deeper thought.
- Visualizing: Creating mental images to enhance comprehension.
- Hypothesizing: Forming hypotheses or educated guesses based on information from the text.
- Making inferences: Drawing conclusions or making interpretations based on evidence from the text.

- Drawing conclusions: Synthesizing information and arriving at overarching understandings.

This body of work contributed significantly to the field of comprehension instruction by providing a comprehensive set of strategies that proficient readers use to comprehend texts effectively. These strategies are seen as essential for teaching comprehension because they encourage active engagement with the text and facilitate deeper understanding. Teachers can utilize these strategies to scaffold and support students' development of reading comprehension skills across various texts and contexts.

According to Vacca & Vacca (1999), there are several key strategies for teaching reading (Ardianti & others, 2021, p. 107):

- **Scaffolding:** This involves providing temporary support to students as they develop new skills, gradually removing the support as students become more proficient.
- **Think-aloud:** This strategy encourages teachers to verbalize their thought process while reading, demonstrating how to approach and understand a text.
- **Reciprocal Teaching:** This method involves students taking turns leading a discussion about the text, which helps them engage with and better understand the material through dialogue and questioning.
- **Questions and Answer Relationships (QARs):** This strategy helps students understand the different types of questions and how to find answers, whether from the text or their own knowledge.

These strategies aim to enhance learners' reading comprehension skills by providing structured approaches to interpreting and understanding texts.

The various strategies that teachers can utilize to enhance reading comprehension instruction according to Setiyadi (2006), are the use of authentic materials and

approaches, reading aloud in class, posing comprehension questions, assessing text difficulty, and employing pre-reading activities to prepare students. Additionally, teachers are advised to focus on vocabulary development, ensure students understand the main ideas, use contextual clues effectively, teach explicit reading strategies, encourage visualization, offer diverse reading purposes, and teach students to identify different types of texts and tasks. These strategies collectively aim to foster a comprehensive approach to reading instruction, promoting students' comprehension skills and engagement with texts (Dwiningtiyas, Dedi , & Puspita, 2020, p. 67).

2.3 Models of pedagogy to teach EFL reading:

Reading involves more than just seeing words clearly, pronouncing them correctly, or recognizing the meanings of isolated words. It requires thinking and feeling, aiming to comprehend all components of a text. The ultimate goal of reading is to understand the meaning conveyed in the written text. Understanding the entire text and the writer's intent is crucial for students to gain knowledge and information. They must also think critically so they can accurately answer questions based on the text they have read (Yusmalinda & Puji , 2020, p. 76).

Three reading models are extensively used in EFL reading instruction: bottom-up, top-down, and interactive(Dang & Thai Cong Dan, 2022, p. 222):

- The bottom-up reading paradigm encourages teaching that builds learners' decoding abilities from the ground up, starting with the smallest units, such as single letters and letter blends, and progressing to words and phrases.
- The top-down model emerged as this concept began to become obsolete, viewing reading as a process of reconstructing meaning by emphasizing comprehension of units larger than words and sentences. Kenneth Goodman and Frank Smith are proponents of this paradigm. This theory's applicability in the EFL environment is evident in instructional practices

that highlight learners' active role as readers, such as guessing word meanings based on context, previewing articles to get a general idea of the content, and predicting what the author will say next. The reader uses vocabulary, sentence structure, discourse, and world knowledge in this process.

- The third model, the interactive model, combines the previous two reading modes, bottom-up and top-down. This paradigm sees reading as a combination of all meaning-gathering tasks, recognizing the value of prior knowledge and prediction while emphasizing the importance of speedy and precise processing of the text's actual words. Harmer explained that sometimes individual details help understand the whole, and sometimes an overview allows processing the details. This model aims to improve pupils' reading metacognitive skills and suggests facilitating reading instruction through various methods, such as providing advance organizers to activate background knowledge before reading, giving examples and more practice during reading, and providing feedback for pre-reading and reading activities.

The bottom-up processing model sees reading as a decoding process, where readers derive meaning by beginning with the smallest language units, such as letters and sounds, and building up to larger ones like syllables, words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. This approach relies on using linguistic knowledge to understand the text. Top-down processing involves readers generating meanings based on their prior knowledge, assumptions, and expectations. Instead of relying solely on linguistic knowledge, readers use contextual clues to form hypotheses about the text's comprehension. The interactive model sees reading comprehension as a process where readers use both bottom-up and top-down strategies simultaneously. This approach integrates linguistic knowledge, prior

knowledge, and reading strategies, all of which play crucial roles in understanding the text (Petchinalert, 2016, pp. 5-6).

Duke and Pearson (2002) proposed a model for teaching reading comprehension, which begins with explicit strategy instruction and gradually shifts responsibility to students. They emphasize that strategy instruction should be integrated with other activities and instructional forms in a supportive classroom environment. Duffy and Israel (2009) highlight that strategy instruction should focus on being generally "strategic" rather than teaching isolated strategies. Allington and McGill-Franzen (2009) argue that effective comprehension instruction cannot be simply sequenced, scripted, or packaged, but should be based on teachers' understanding of reading comprehension and their ability to design activities tailored to their students' needs. Applegate et al. (2006) add that individual students have different reading profiles, necessitating closely matched instruction. Additionally, teaching vocabulary alone is insufficient; developing comprehensive language skills from an early age is crucial for reading comprehension (Furberg & Anderberg, 2012, p. 2).

Section 03: Assessing and testing Reading Comprehension

3.1 Assessing Comprehension:

Teacher observation is frequently cited as a method for assessing students' reading comprehension. This approach is justified because teachers, through their close relationships and constant interactions with students, are well-positioned to understand various aspects of their students' lives and learning processes. In this context, assessment is viewed less as a technical task of creating precise measuring tools and more as a social process. Like reading, assessment can be seen as a multidimensional interpretive activity where the complexities of comprehension are reflected in the complexities of assessment. Teachers, by observing students in different situations and contexts, can gather a holistic

understanding of their reading comprehension abilities (VANDER, 2012, pp. 8-9).

Furberg K., Anderberg E., investigated relationships between teachers' experiences of reading comprehension and their teaching of comprehension, in the context of reading aloud to pupils in the first year of Swedish compulsory school. A qualitative phenomenon graphic design is used, focusing the relationship between what- and how- aspects. The teachers' conceptions of reading comprehension represent the what-aspect, while description of their teaching of reading comprehension represents the how-aspect. Interviews were conducted with 36 teachers in 36 schools. The aim of the analysis was to distinguish and group similarities and differences; firstly, regarding teachers' conceptions of reading comprehension, and secondly, concerning the teaching they described. In the third and last step, the relationships between conceptions and teaching were analyzed. Three main categories and four subcategories of description were identified, showing variations of conceptions of reading comprehension and their relationships to the eight instructions reported. Results show discrepancies between teachers' conceptions of reading comprehension, and the instructions they reported. In spite of describing a more complex understanding of reading comprehension, their teaching practice were mainly reported to represent general and more isolated activities, rather than more interrelated and strategic activities (Furberg & Anderberg, 2012).

Routines and tools that readers can use to make sense of text. Decades of studies have shown that explicitly teaching students how to use certain strategies—such as summarizing, visualizing, inference, creating graphic organizers, and asking questions about their understanding—can support their reading comprehension. Advocates of knowledge-building curricula have argued that isolated strategy practice isn't as effective as teaching these skills within the context of topically related texts that allow students to draw connections (Sawchuk, 2024).

The use of the mother tongue in foreign language classrooms is considered beneficial by many researchers. Wilkins (1974) noted that giving explanations and instructions in students' native language helps ensure clear understanding. Cochran (1985) outlined several strategies for teaching students with limited English proficiency, one of which involves using native language literacy as a foundation for developing second language skills (Jihad & Diab, 1997, p. 5).

3.2 Test:

In order to assess the learning process, teachers must evaluate the subjects being taught using various methods, one of which is testing. According to Brown (2003), a test is a process that measures a person's ability, knowledge, and performance. This definition highlights that tests serve as instruments for students to demonstrate their understanding and skills. Ur (1996) similarly views tests as a way to gauge the level of students' knowledge through their scores, and also notes that tests can motivate students to learn or review specific material. Through testing, teachers not only assess and motivate students but also refine their teaching methods to enhance the learning process (Furberg & Anderberg, 2012, p. 42). In summary, tests are activities used to assess and measure students' knowledge and abilities in current educational contexts.

Dang The Bac, Thai Cong Dan, investigated two issues. Firstly, it explores English as foreign language (EFL) high school teachers' practices of testing and wash back in teaching reading comprehension. Secondly, their perceptions of its wash back effects are scrutinized. Content analysis, questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews were employed to collect data. Sixty teachers at some high schools in Can Tho City, Vietnam were contacted to answer the questionnaire. In the end, five of them were selected to take part in the interviews. The findings indicated that designing tests has a beneficial impact on reading for EFL learners in the areas of students' passion for reading, decreasing reading boredom, students' interest in reading text content, and students' development of thinking skills. It

has an impact on the teachers' time allotment, teaching strategies, and instructional materials (Dang & Thai Cong Dan, 2022).

Reading comprehension tests typically feature several types of questions. According to the lesson plan and syllabus, the test primarily emphasizes four question types: guessing the main idea along with supporting details, assessing vocabulary knowledge, making inferences, and summarizing. These question types are designed to evaluate students' ability to comprehend and interpret written texts effectively within the specified curriculum framework (Evenddy, Nurlily, & Marfu'ah, 2021, p. 41).

Weir (1990) suggests that test format can disproportionately influence the measurement of a skill, so using a variety of test methods is advisable to mitigate this. Consequently, using the mother tongue (L1) could be an effective testing method. Clarke (1972) supports this by incorporating Arabic distracters in English vocabulary tests, arguing that this approach can solve the problem of finding appropriate distracters (Jihad & Diab, 1997, p. 5).

3.3 Reading difficulties:

Many students find English text difficult due to unfamiliar vocabulary and structures that differ from their native language rules. This difficulty significantly hinders their comprehension of English texts. Furthermore, findings from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2012 highlight Indonesia's low ranking—63rd out of 64 countries—in reading assessment. This underscores the pressing need for improvement in reading skills among students. The research indicates that despite efforts, there remains a substantial gap in achieving adequate reading proficiency, necessitating targeted interventions and strategies to enhance reading comprehension levels (Ardianti & others, 2021, p. 104).

Janette (2007) notes that reading is difficult both to learn and to teach. Additionally, reading involves three critical elements: the reader, the text, and the process of comprehension. For readers, this means combining their background knowledge with the information in the text to create meaning (Wardani & others, 2024, p. 17). This underscores that successful reading is not just about decoding text but also about effectively navigating and integrating these elements to gather information and understand the content.

In addition, Harmer (2002) classifies student reading difficulties into four main categories: language-related issues, challenges with topics and genres, problems with comprehension tasks, and negative expectations (Wardani & others, 2024, p. 17):

- Language-related issues: Students struggle more with understanding longer sentences compared to shorter ones.
- Challenges with topics and genres: Students often find it hard to grasp unfamiliar genres or topics.
- Problems with comprehension tasks: Students frequently perceive reading tasks as overly complex.
- Negative expectations: Students sometimes have low expectations and feel discouraged because they consider reading activities too difficult.

These categories highlight the multifaceted nature of reading difficulties and the various factors that can impede students' ability to comprehend texts.

To find out the students' difficulties in reading, some tests need to be administered. Alderson (2000) suggests several test types (Wardani & others, 2024, pp. 17-18):

Discrete-point versus integrative techniques, Cloze and gap filling tests, Multiple choice questions, matching techniques, ordering tasks, dichotomous items, editing tests, C-test, Cloze elide test, short answer tests, Free recall test,

Summary test. However, Alderson underscores that there is no "best method" as one test approach cannot fulfill all testing objectives. He further states that the first approach, Discrete-point versus integrative techniques, is not recommended for testing reading since there is not enough time to test one thing at a time, and the objectives do not require a detailed evaluation of students' understanding.

The second approach involves cloze tests and gap-filling tests. Cloze tests remove every n-th word (typically between the fifth and twelfth word) from a text, requiring students to fill in the blanks. In contrast, gap-filling tests remove specific words to evaluate particular aspects such as grammar sensitivity or vocabulary. Alderson (2000) suggests that gap-filling tests are more advisable because they offer greater simplicity and control. Consequently, this study employed gap-filling tests due to their ease of administration (Wardani & others, 2024, p. 18).

Knowledge, which is defined as familiarity with a subject acquired through education or experience. This knowledge is considered explicit, universally accepted, and objectively true. When applied to teachers, the focus shifts to their professional identity and how they perceive themselves in their role. Teachers are categorized as subject matter experts, pedagogical experts, or didactical experts.

Section 04: Teacher Knowledge and Self-Efficacy

4.1 Knowledge:

The knowledge of teachers has become a focus of interest to educators and policy makers, attracting the attention of scholars. Education literature reflects this growing focus (BenPeretz, 2011).

Lin (2005) identified three main approaches that researchers use in studying teacher knowledge in general and in language education specifically:

- Categorizing teacher knowledge.
- Exploring the sources of teacher knowledge.

- Investigating how teacher knowledge influences teaching.

These approaches are often integrated within a single study rather than treated as independent aspects. According to Fenstermacher (1994), these approaches are guided by four fundamental questions related to teachers' knowledge (Rahmany, Hassani, & Fattahi, 2014, p. 453).

Effective teaching is not necessarily a consequence of new policy. Lying at the heart of effective teaching are the knowledge and skill that an individual teacher brings to the cognitive demands of teaching. A teacher with merely the intention of developing student understanding will not necessarily produce the desired effect. What is clear, however, is that repertoires of sound content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge will provide the means to realize the good intention (Walshaw, 2012).

According to Gudmundsdottir & Shulman (1987), three main foci form the foundation of teacher knowledge (Delgado & Mark, 2021):

- **Content knowledge:** Teachers need to understand the truth claims of the discipline and interpretive community (professional organization) and explain why these accepted truth claims are warranted.
- **Pedagogical Content Knowledge:** Teachers need to understand the teachability of the content. Teachers need to be able to articulate the core topics of the discipline and the best examples (and worst) of the key concepts being taught. Besides, teachers should understand when illustrations and representations of the discipline's key concepts will be useful. Teachers need to understand which topics are easier or more difficult for students to learn. Moreover, teachers need to also understand the developmental appropriateness of the topic to their students. For example, an English Language Arts/Reading teacher should evaluate the readability and appropriateness of a certain novel selected for a class and then be able to

provide appropriate accommodations for supporting students' comprehension of the text.

- **Curricular Knowledge:** Teachers need to describe the range of programs designed to teach a particular topic or subject at a particular level. Teachers should identify and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the instructional materials used to teach particular subjects or topics. For example, math teachers should describe possible concepts that could be on the New York State Regents exam.

Teacher knowledge is a crucial aspect when analyzing the challenges teachers face in testing reading comprehension. This term encompasses the knowledge and expertise teachers have regarding teaching reading comprehension. It includes several key areas. First, content knowledge involves a deep understanding of the subjects and materials being taught. For reading comprehension, teachers must be familiar with various texts, genres, and literacy concepts. Second, pedagogical content knowledge refers to the strategies and methods specific to teaching reading comprehension effectively. This includes knowing how to explain complex ideas, engage students, and foster critical thinking skills. Third, knowledge of students involves understanding students' reading levels, backgrounds, and individual needs, enabling teachers to tailor their instruction accordingly. Finally, self-efficacy, or teachers' beliefs in their abilities to teach reading comprehension successfully, plays a significant role in how they approach and overcome instructional challenges.

4.2 Teachers' Conceptions of Comprehension:

Studies conducted in the 1970s and 1980s regarding teachers' conceptions of reading comprehension and their decision-making processes revealed more about systemic constraints rather than the actual thoughts and decisions of teachers themselves. Since the 1940s, various entities such as test makers, curriculum developers (often represented by authors and publishers of basal textbooks), and

administrators have exerted significant technical control over reading curricula and instruction in the United States. This control was manifested through (VANDER, 2012, p. 24):

- Master developers: These individuals or groups provided teachers with structured materials including scope and sequence charts, scripted teachers' manuals, grade-level readings, workbooks for skills practice, and unit tests. These materials were designed not only to guide instruction but also to control and standardize teacher behavior.
- Purpose of control: The overarching goal of this technical control was to enforce the use of specific programs and ensure standardized pacing across classrooms. This approach was intended to improve instructional quality by providing uniformity and adherence to prescribed methods.

Susan Vander Does, framed a research by a transactional conception of reading and informed by cognitive and sociocultural studies of reading comprehension. Data were derived from a three-phased set of semi-structured interviews conducted with ten study participants, teachers employing a transactional strategic instructional approach in grades two through five. Quantitative and qualitative analyses resulted in a comprehension framework that organizes teachers' observations into three categories: stance, technique, and interpretation. The three categories are comprised of nine observed states and twenty-seven ranges with definitions and exemplars derived from the data. Teachers' observational methods are characterized as a real-time data processing system in which dimensions of comprehension are articulated as moments, patterns, and trends (VANDER, 2012).

Overall, this historical context reveals a top-down approach to reading instruction where external forces exerted significant influence over what and how teachers taught. It underscores how systemic constraints shaped the educational

landscape, potentially limiting teachers' autonomy and flexibility in adapting instruction to meet the diverse needs of students.

There is a significant shift in educational research from focusing on teachers' behaviors to examining their cognition and beliefs. This change, driven by developments in cognitive psychology, recognizes that teachers' thoughts and actions are interconnected. Historically, teachers were seen as implementers of educational innovations created by researchers, but many of these innovations failed because they didn't align with teachers' existing knowledge and beliefs, causing teachers to revert to old practices. Fenstermacher (1994) identified a gap between formal knowledge (gained through education) and practical knowledge (gained through experience), both of which are essential for effective teaching. The study focuses on teachers' practical knowledge, emphasizing the importance of integrating both formal and practical knowledge to support professional development and successful educational practices (Rahmany, Hassani, & Fattahi, 2014, p. 452).

Formal testing has an indirect impact on language teaching, whereas classroom-based assessment has a direct influence, making knowledge of testing essential for understanding and investigating language education. Researchers in language testing typically focus on the challenges and problems inherent in tests to improve their reliability and validity. However, the wash back effect encompasses not just the test itself but also aspects such as curriculum, teacher and student actions both within and outside the classroom, opinions of the test, and the use of test scores. Consequently, establishing an effective learning environment for students when teaching foreign languages, particularly English, remains a complex challenge, as it requires careful consideration of how tests impact various elements of the educational process (Dang & Thai Cong Dan, 2022, p. 217).

Also for teachers a crucial role of as mediators in providing the best education to students. When students face difficulties in studying, it is the teacher's

responsibility to assist them. Specifically, in mastering English skills, particularly reading comprehension, and students require significant support from teachers. Teaching reading is complex because it involves not just having students read the words but also encouraging them to understand the text and engage in critical thinking. Therefore, teachers need to carefully consider the methods or strategies that can simplify reading texts and enhance comprehension (Yusmalinda & Puji , 2020, p. 76).

Teachers have a crucial role in effectively teaching reading comprehension. They play a significant part in addressing students' challenges in learning comprehension skills. There is the importance of teachers adopting diverse strategies to enhance the quality of the teaching and learning process. Additionally, it implies that if teachers do not address challenges related to their strategies in teaching reading comprehension promptly, it can potentially hinder the learning process (Dwiningtiyas, Dedi , & Puspita, 2020, p. 68).

Teachers face various challenges when it comes to teaching reading assessment. These challenges include inadequate assessment literacy, lack of shared knowledge, unclear assessment identity, inadequate professional training, overcrowded classrooms, lack of resources and support, poor knowledge of reading instruction, teachers' and students' attitudes towards literary texts, lack of experience and preparation, text authenticity, difficulty, length, large class sizes, students' motivation and perception, shortage of time, lack of literary texts in schools, lack of in-service training, and lack of support from the Department of Education and parents. Addressing these challenges through proper training, support, and resource allocation is crucial for enhancing teacher competence in teaching reading assessment (Jihad & Diab, 1997, p. 3).

4.3 Teachers' Knowledge of Students' Comprehension:

Brown, (2002) emphasizes the teacher's role in addressing students' difficulties and determining the best methods for teaching reading. It suggests that various methods can be employed, each defined by a set of classroom specifications aimed at achieving linguistic objectives. These methods focus on the roles and behaviors of teachers and learners, as well as linguistic and subject matter objectives, sequencing, and materials. The success of reading instruction hinges on the teacher's ability to choose the appropriate method for a specific text, ensuring that students can easily comprehend and acquire knowledge from the text. Additionally, preparing students for what they are about to read can significantly enhance their comprehension (Yusmalinda & Puji , 2020, p. 76).

Programmed instruction, such as that found in basal readers and extensive testing systems, can constrain teachers' understanding of students' comprehension. Johnston, Weiss, and Afflerbach (1990) conducted a study focusing on how teachers in more or less controlled instructional settings perceive students' literacy development and evaluate their comprehension. Key points from the study include (VANDER, 2012, p. 25):

- **Controlled instructional settings:** These settings often involve programmed instruction where teachers follow prescribed curricula like basal readers and adhere to extensive testing systems. Such programs emphasize standardization and can limit teachers' flexibility in adapting instruction to individual student needs.
- **Teachers' assessment methods:** All teachers mentioned classroom observation as a method of assessment. However, the study found that teachers who had more extensive knowledge of literature and operated with fewer external constraints (like those imposed by basal readers and high-profile testing systems) tended to rely more on observing student behavior and engaging in discussions about books.

- Detailed descriptions of students: Teachers with greater autonomy and deeper literary knowledge provided more detailed descriptions of their students' literacy development. They were able to observe nuances in student behavior and communication about books, which allowed for a richer understanding of each student's comprehension abilities.

Overall, external constraints, such as programmed instructional materials and standardized testing systems, can influence teachers' perceptions and evaluations of students' comprehension. It underscores the importance of teacher knowledge, autonomy, and engagement in fostering a more nuanced understanding of student literacy development beyond what standardized assessments may capture.

Ramin Rahmany, Mohammad Taghi Hassani, Hamid Fattahi, conducted to study language teachers' practical knowledge about the teaching of reading comprehension to engineering major students. The participants were 36 master and doctoral holders teaching ESP courses chosen from Payame Noor Universities of Kermanshah, Islamic Azad Universities of Kermanshah and Razi University of Kermanshah. A questionnaire was administrated to the participants. The first part of this study tried to search for any shared category(s) among the categories of practical knowledge and isolated the unshared category(s). The second part examined the overall unshared category(s) in order to see whether there is a significant difference among them or not. The study didn't detect any shared category but there was a significant difference in the categories (Rahmany, Hassani, & Fattahi, 2014).

In teaching of reading comprehension, teachers aim to cultivate proficiency and success among their students. Rather than relying on a single method or technique, creative teachers employ a diverse array of strategies and skills tailored to accommodate the individual needs and learning styles present in their classrooms. Slavin (2000) emphasizes that effective instruction goes beyond mere transmission of knowledge; instead, it involves adapting teaching methods to suit

the specific needs of students. Successful teachers understand that reading skills can be developed through a variety of approaches, and they adjust their teaching methods accordingly based on their students' requirements. According to Allington (2002), these adaptable and innovative teaching practices consistently yield positive outcomes, regardless of the specific curriculum materials, pedagogical approaches, or reading programs used (Dwiningtiyas, Dedi , & Puspita, 2020, p. 68).

4.4 Self-efficacy :

Self-efficacy concerns how people learn and behave, explained through behaviorism and cognitivism. Behaviorism focuses on external behaviors, like practice and positive reinforcement, while cognitivism emphasizes internal mental processes and changes in mental associations. Bandura's social learning theory combines these views and later evolves into social cognitive theory, highlighting the interplay between environment, personal factors, and behavior. This reciprocal relationship allows educators to influence learners' academic competence by addressing emotional states, self-regulation, or environmental factors. Bandura views self-efficacy, or people's belief in their abilities to achieve tasks, as crucial for motivation and academic performance. Self-efficacy is influenced by enactive attainment (personal successes and failures), vicarious experience (observing others), verbal persuasion, and physiological states (e.g., stress and fear)(Petchinalert, 2016, p. 8).

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task. In the context of teaching reading comprehension, self-efficacy plays a critical role in determining how teachers approach their instructional practices and handle challenges. Teachers with high self-efficacy are more likely to implement effective teaching strategies, persist through difficulties, and positively influence their students' reading comprehension skills. They are confident in their ability to engage students, manage classroom dynamics, and

adapt their teaching methods to meet diverse student needs. This belief in their competence can lead to higher levels of motivation, better classroom management, and a greater willingness to experiment with innovative teaching techniques. Conversely, teachers with low self-efficacy may struggle with implementing effective reading comprehension strategies and may be less resilient in the face of challenges. Therefore, fostering teacher self-efficacy is essential for improving instructional quality and student outcomes in reading comprehension.

Conclusion:

We sought in this chapter to explore and analyze these challenges by examining the underlying principles and methodologies involved in reading comprehension testing. Understanding these challenges was crucial for developing effective assessment strategies that accurately measured students' comprehension abilities. This chapter delved into various theoretical perspectives on reading and comprehension, instructional strategies, assessment techniques, and the critical role of teacher knowledge and self-efficacy. By providing a comprehensive overview, this framework aimed to offer valuable insights into the complexities of testing reading comprehension and to propose solutions for overcoming the obstacles faced by educators in this critical area. In summary, we underscores

the intricate nature of reading comprehension, the challenges researchers face in studying it, and the pivotal role teachers play in understanding and assessing students' comprehension through close observation and engagement with their reading practices.



**Chapter Two: Research
Methodology, Data Analysis,
and Pedagogical
Recommendations**

Section one: Research Methodology

Introduction:

This chapter outlines the research methodology employed in the study, detailing the processes and techniques used to collect and analyze data. It begins with a comprehensive explanation of the research design and the rationale behind the chosen methods. Following this, the chapter presents the data analysis procedures, highlighting the tools and statistical techniques used to interpret the findings. The key results of the study are then discussed, providing insights into the main findings and their implications. The chapter concludes by addressing the limitations encountered during the research and offering recommendations for further studies to build on the current work.

1. Research Method and research design

1.1 Research methodology

The study adopts a quantitative approach, through the distribution of a questionnaire. This approach, was chosen because it fits the focus of the study. The questionnaire data is examined quantitatively. Descriptive statistics are used to evaluate the questionnaire responses, which are then presented in tables showing numbers and percentages.

1.2 Population and sample

The entire population of the current study is middle school English teachers at Bordj Bou Arréridj. The target sample comprises of 30 middle school teachers in BBA, they were randomly selected, to explore the challenges they face in assessing reading comprehension among middle school students.

1.3 Research setting

This study took place at BBA schools, it was conducted during the period from July to August of the academic year 2023/2024.

1.4 Research tools

In order to achieve the main objectives of this descriptive study, the primary tool for data collection was a structured questionnaire, designed to capture a wide range of issues such as the students' varying reading abilities, complexity of reading materials, collaboration with colleagues, curriculum supports, and alternative assessment methods. Questionnaires were collected to provide an in-depth study on this research. These online questionnaires were intended for

teachers to study teachers' challenges in testing reading comprehension for middle school learners.

1.5 Questionnaire development

The questionnaire was further adapted by deleting and adding items based on the analysis of literature review in order to fit the purpose of the current study and its sample. Moreover, a translation of the items into the participants' native language which is Arabic was provided to facilitate the process of reading and responding to the questions. The questionnaire aims to investigate teachers' challenges in testing reading comprehension for middle school learners.

The questionnaire consists of a variety of both open-ended and close-ended questions, fifteen close-ended questions in addition to one open ended question. The fifteen item questionnaire is divided into four sections. The first section is demographic information. Section 02: General Challenges. Section 03, Resources and Support, whereas the fourth section is about the Assessment Practices.

1.6 Description of the Questionnaire

The majority of the questions are in the form of close-ended questions and one open-ended questions in which pupils have to justify their answers. The close-ended questions are in form of multiple choices.

Section 1: General Information about the teachers

This section aims at collecting background information about the teachers, it contains merely three questions about their gender, years of teaching experience, grade level currently teaching.

Section 02: General Challenges

Q1. Testing reading comprehension for middle school learners is challenging.

This question aims to gauge the overall sentiment of teachers regarding the inherent difficulties in assessing reading comprehension. By agreeing or disagreeing, teachers can express their experiences with the multifaceted nature of reading comprehension tests, which require not just understanding but also interpretation and analysis. The responses will provide insight into whether teachers feel adequately prepared and supported in their assessment practices.

Q2. Students' varying reading abilities make it difficult to create standardized reading comprehension tests.

The purpose of this question is to highlight the challenges posed by the diverse reading abilities of students. It addresses the issue of equity in assessment, as standardized tests may not account for individual differences in reading skills. Teachers' responses can reveal the extent to which they believe that a one-size-fits-all approach is ineffective and how it complicates their ability to fairly assess all students.

Q3. Assessing students' inferential and critical thinking skills through reading comprehension tests is practically challenging.

This question seeks to explore the difficulties teachers face when trying to evaluate higher-order thinking skills, such as inferencing and critical analysis. These skills are crucial for deep comprehension but can be elusive in traditional testing formats. By understanding teachers' perceptions of these challenges, educational stakeholders can consider ways to enhance assessment methods to better capture these essential skills.

Q4. Time constraints hinder my ability to effectively assess reading comprehension.

Here, the focus is on the impact of time limitations on the assessment process. This question recognizes that teachers often operate under tight schedules, which may prevent thorough evaluations of student understanding. Responses will shed light on how time pressures might affect the quality of assessments and, consequently, student learning outcomes. It highlights the need for adequate time allocation for effective assessment practices.

Q5. The complexity of reading materials affects the accuracy of comprehension assessments.

This question aims to assess how the difficulty level of reading materials influences teachers' ability to accurately measure comprehension. Complex texts can confuse students and lead to misinterpretation, skewing assessment results. By understanding this dynamic, educators can advocate for appropriate reading levels in assessments and ensure that the materials used are conducive to accurate measurement of comprehension skills.

Each question in this section is designed to uncover specific challenges faced by teachers in assessing reading comprehension. The insights gathered can inform professional development, curriculum design, and assessment practices, ultimately leading to improved educational outcomes for middle school learners.

Section 03: Resources and Support

Q1. I have access to sufficient resources and materials for developing reading comprehension assessments.

This question evaluates teachers' perceptions of the availability of resources, such as textbooks, assessment tools, and digital materials. By understanding whether teachers feel adequately equipped, educational administrators can identify gaps in resource provision and make informed decisions to enhance support for reading comprehension assessment.

Q2. Professional development programs have adequately prepared me for assessing reading comprehension.

This question seeks to assess the effectiveness of professional development programs in preparing teachers for the specific challenges of assessing reading comprehension. Responses will provide insight into whether teachers feel confident in their skills and knowledge, indicating the need for targeted training programs that focus on assessment strategies and best practices.

Q3. Collaboration with colleagues helps me improve my reading comprehension assessment practices.

This question highlights the role of collaboration in professional growth. It emphasizes the importance of sharing strategies, resources, and experiences among colleagues to enhance assessment practices. Positive responses would suggest that fostering a collaborative environment can be beneficial in improving teaching effectiveness and student outcomes.

Q4. I have adequate administrative support for implementing reading comprehension assessments.

This question evaluates the level of administrative support teachers receive in their assessment efforts. Administrative backing can include providing time for assessments, resources, and guidance on best practices. Understanding teachers' perceptions of this support can help identify areas where administrative actions can better align with teachers' needs, ultimately leading to more effective assessment implementation.

Q5. The curriculum supports effective assessment of reading comprehension skills.

This question examines how well the existing curriculum aligns with the goals of assessing reading comprehension. A supportive curriculum should provide clear guidelines and appropriate materials that facilitate effective assessment. Responses will indicate whether the curriculum is perceived as beneficial or in need of revisions to better support reading comprehension assessments.

Each question in this section is designed to gather insights into the resources and support available to teachers for assessing reading comprehension. Understanding these factors is crucial for improving assessment practices and ensuring that teachers have the tools and support they need to foster student learning effectively. The results can guide future investments in professional development, resources, and curriculum design.

Section 04: Assessment Practices

Q1. I feel confident in my ability to design effective reading comprehension tests.

This question assesses teachers' self-efficacy regarding their test design skills. Confidence in creating effective assessments is crucial for ensuring that evaluations are valid and reliable. Responses can reveal whether teachers believe they have the necessary skills, highlighting potential areas for professional development to enhance their confidence and abilities in test creation.

Q2. The reading comprehension assessments I use accurately reflect students' understanding.

This question evaluates the validity of the assessments teachers employ. It seeks to determine whether teachers believe their tests truly measure what students have learned regarding reading comprehension. Positive responses indicate that teachers feel their assessments are effective, while negative responses may suggest a need for refinement in assessment strategies to better align with learning objectives.

Q3. Feedback from reading comprehension assessments informs my instructional practices.

This question examines the extent to which assessment results are used to inform teaching strategies. Effective assessment should guide instruction, helping teachers identify areas where students struggle and adjust their teaching accordingly. Responses will provide insight into whether teachers are leveraging

assessment data to enhance student learning and improve their instructional methods.

Q4. Alternative assessment methods (e.g., projects, oral presentations) could better evaluate reading comprehension.

This question invites teachers to consider the effectiveness of traditional assessment methods versus alternative approaches. It aims to explore whether teachers believe that other formats, such as projects or presentations, might provide a more comprehensive evaluation of reading comprehension skills. Insights from this question could inform discussions about diversifying assessment methods to accommodate different learning styles.

Q5. I regularly update and improve my reading comprehension assessments based on student performance and feedback.

This question focuses on the iterative nature of assessment practices. It assesses whether teachers actively reflect on and modify their assessments in response to student performance and feedback. Regular updates are essential for ensuring that assessments remain relevant and effective. Responses will indicate the extent to which teachers engage in continuous improvement, highlighting a commitment to refining their practices based on evidence.

Each question in this section aims to uncover teachers' perceptions and practices related to assessing reading comprehension. Understanding these aspects can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of current assessment strategies and identify areas for professional growth and support. The findings can help drive improvements in assessment practices, ultimately benefiting student learning outcomes.

1.7 Data Collection Procedures

Before gathering data from the target respondents, the required permissions responding to the questionnaire; as a result , the questionnaire has undergone certain modifications .

In addition, the content validity of the questionnaire was ensured by consulting three expert teachers at the department of English at Setif University. Based on the recommendations and comments of the experts, the questionnaire underwent some alterations involving deletion and rephrasing of some items. Afterwards, the questionnaire was administered randomly to a sample of thirty (30) middle school

teachers in BBA , then the researcher read and clarified the questions to assure their understanding by the respondents and to obtain reliable answers .

1.8 Data Analysis Procedures

In order to reach answers to the aforementioned research questions, the data collected via the questionnaire were processed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version (28) .The analysis of the questionnaire was conducted quantitatively using the descriptive statistical analysis by means of frequency and percentage . The representation of the findings was in the form of tables and graphs followed by a discussion of each question ' results separately.

The forthcoming section is dedicated to the analysis of the obtained data, discussion, and interpretation of the findings.

Section Two: Data Analysis

Section 01: Demographic information

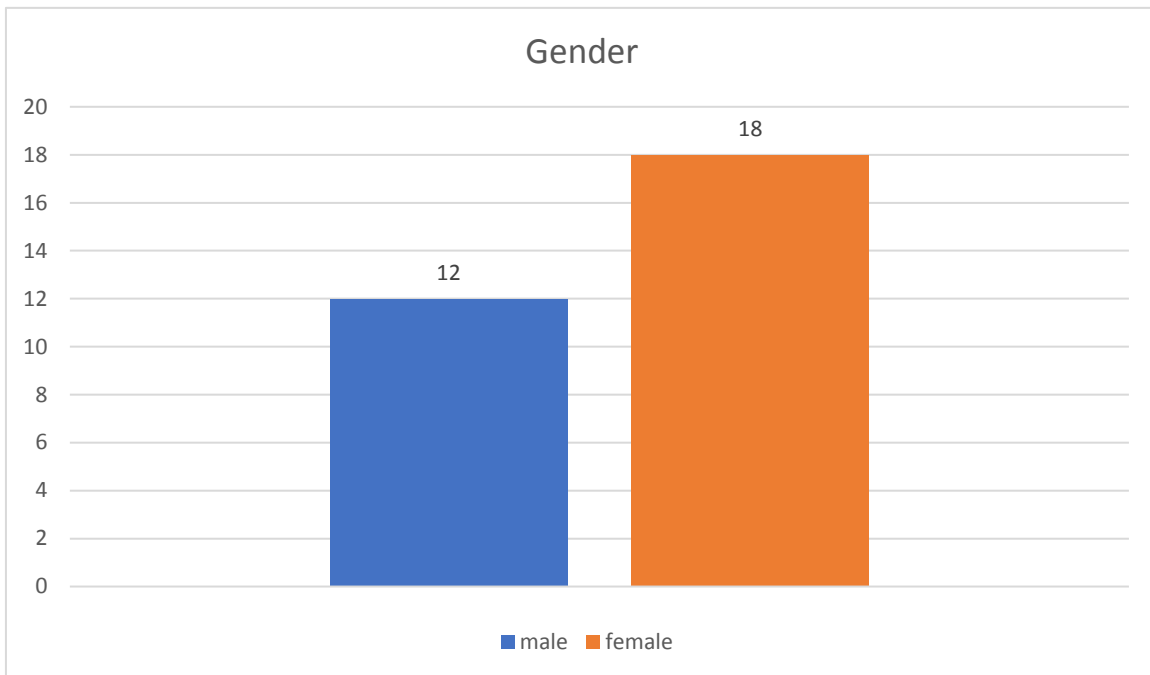
1.1 Gender:

Table 01: Frequency distribution table, answers to question 01 (gender)

	frequencies	percentages
male	12	40
female	18	60

The first question aims to identify the gender distribution of the respondents. The results indicate that out of 30 middle school teachers who participated in the study, 12 (40%) are male, and 18 (60%) are female. This suggests a higher representation of female teachers in the sample, which might reflect the actual gender distribution among middle school teachers or a particular sampling bias.

Figure No. 01: Chart of distribution of sample responses by gender

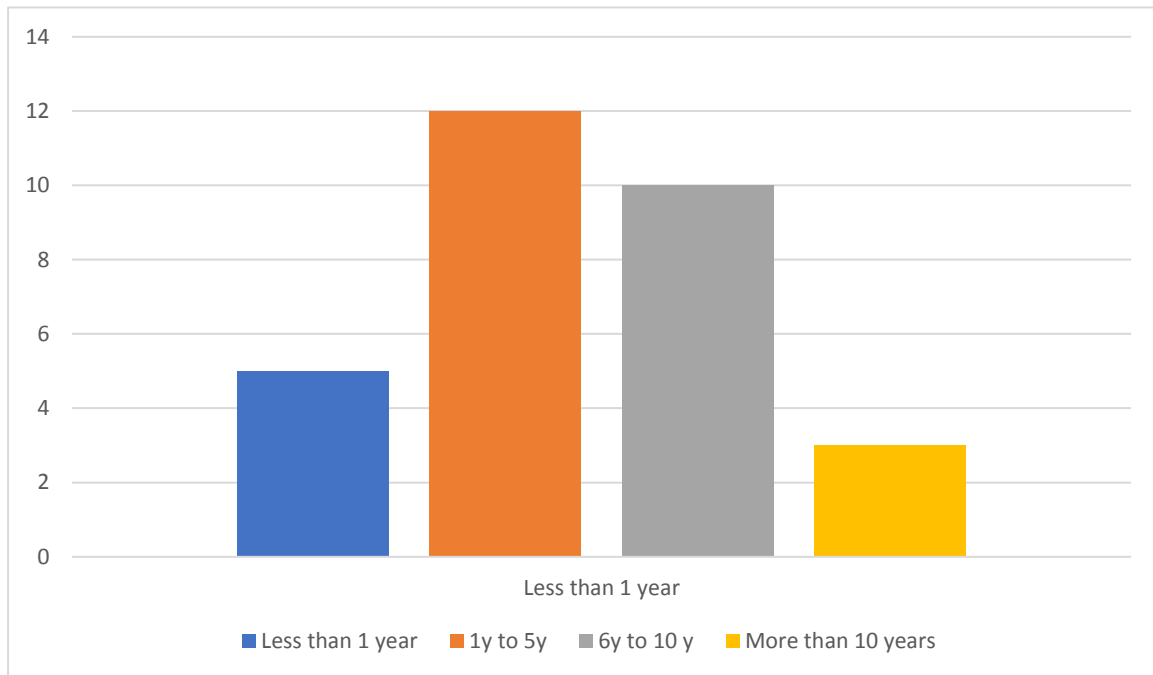


The histogram indicates that there are more female teachers (18) compared to male teachers (12) among the respondents, corresponding to 60% and 40% respectively.

1.2 Years of teaching experience

Table 02: Frequency distribution table, answers to question 02 (experience)

	frequencies	percentages
Lessthan 1 year	05	16.7
1-5	12	40
6-10	10	33.3
More than 10 years	03	10

Figure No. 02: Chart of distribution of sample responses by experience**Interpretation of the Percentages:**

Less than 1 year (16.7%): This percentage indicates that 16.7% of the respondents are relatively new to the teaching profession, having less than one year of experience. This group may include recent graduates or individuals who have recently transitioned into teaching.

1-5 years (40%): The largest percentage, 40%, shows that a significant portion of the respondents have between one and five years of teaching experience. This group likely consists of teachers who have settled into their roles and are gaining practical experience in the classroom.

6-10 years (33.3%): With 33.3%, this category represents teachers with a considerable amount of experience, ranging from six to ten years. These teachers are likely well-established in their careers and possess a deep understanding of the educational environment and teaching methodologies.

More than 10 years (10%): The smallest group, at 10%, comprises the most experienced teachers with over ten years in the profession. These individuals bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise, likely having witnessed and adapted to various changes in educational practices over the years.

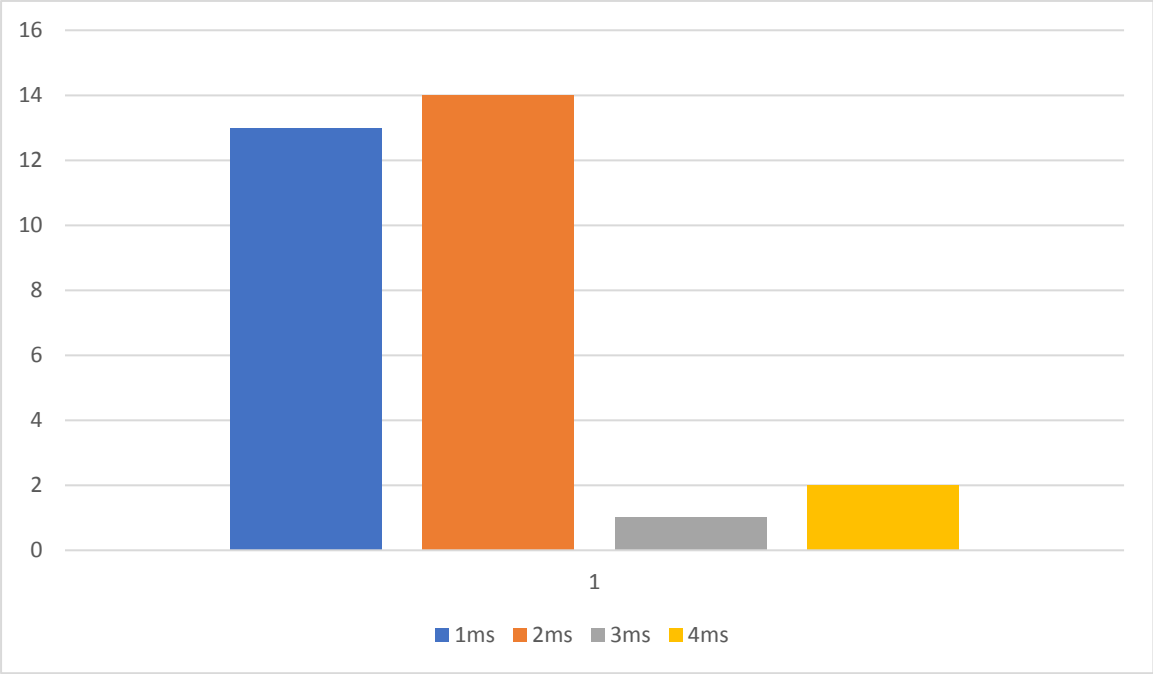
Overall, the distribution shows that the majority of respondents have between one to ten years of teaching experience, with fewer respondents in the extreme ends of the spectrum (less than one year and more than ten years). This mix of experience levels suggests a dynamic teaching workforce with both fresh perspectives and seasoned expertise.

1.3 Grade level currently teaching

Table 03 Frequency distribution table, answers to question 03 (level)

	Frequencies	Percentages
Valide 1ms	13	43,3
2ms	14	46,7
3ms	1	3,3
4ms	2	6,7
Total	30	100,0

Figure No. 03: Chart of distribution of sample responses by level



- Level 1ms: This level has 13 respondents, indicating a high frequency of individuals associated with this level. It suggests that a significant number of respondents identify with or operate at this level.

- Level 2ms: With 14 respondents, this is the most common level among the respondents. This level has the highest frequency, indicating it is the predominant category.
- Level 3ms: Only 1 respondent falls into this category, making it the least common level. This low frequency suggests that this level is not widely represented among the respondents.
- Level 4ms: This level has 2 respondents, showing a slightly higher representation than Level 3ms but still relatively low compared to Levels 1ms and 2ms.

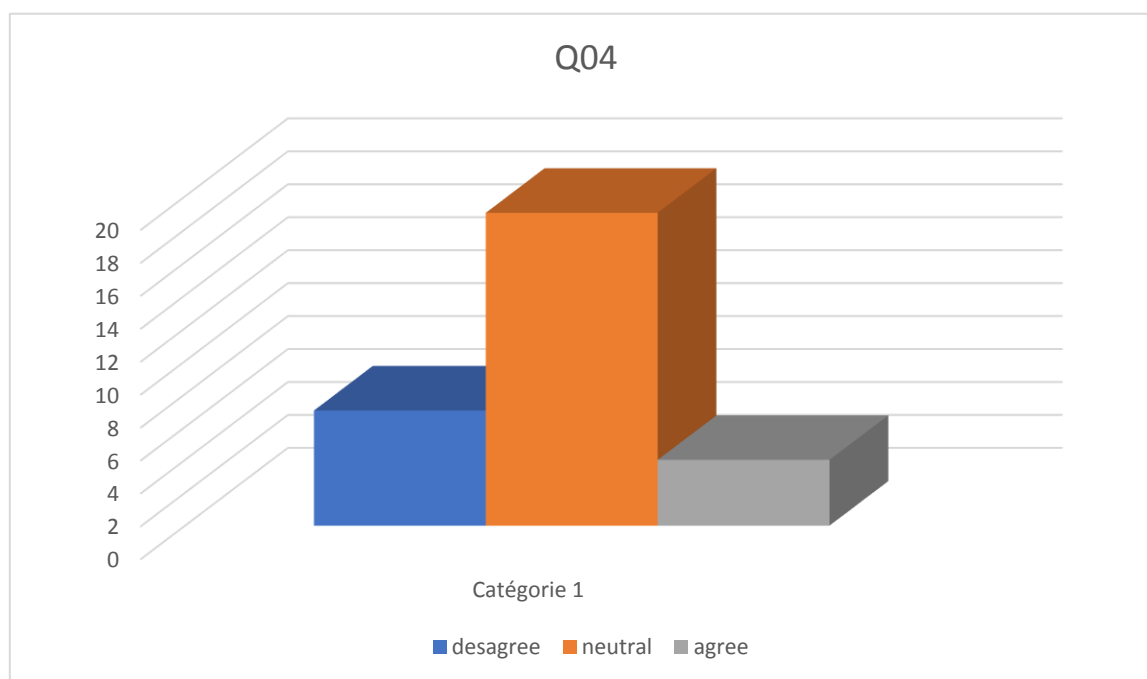
The frequency distribution indicates that Levels 1ms and 2ms are the most common among the respondents, with Level 2ms being the most predominant. Levels 3ms and 4ms have significantly fewer respondents, indicating these levels are less commonly identified with. This distribution highlights a concentration of respondents in the mid-level categories (1ms and 2ms), with fewer individuals at the higher levels (3ms and 4ms).

Section 02: General Challenges

4. Testing reading comprehension for middle school learners is challenging

Table 04: Frequency distribution table, answers to question 04

		Frequencies	Percentage
Valid	Disagree	7	23,3
	neutral	19	63,3
	agree	4	13,3
	Total	30	100,0

Figure No. 04: Chart of distribution of sample responses on Q04**Analysis:**

- **Disagree (23.3%):** A minority of respondents, 7 out of 30, disagreed with the statement that testing reading comprehension for middle school learners is challenging. This suggests that these individuals do not perceive significant difficulty in assessing this skill, possibly indicating they have effective strategies or tools that simplify the process.
- **Neutral (63.3%):** The majority, 19 out of 30 respondents, remained neutral. This indicates that a substantial portion of respondents neither agree nor disagree with the statement, possibly suggesting uncertainty or variability in their experiences with testing reading comprehension. They might feel that the challenge level is context-dependent or that they lack a strong opinion on the matter.
- **Agree (13.3%):** A smaller segment, 4 out of 30 respondents, agreed that testing reading comprehension is challenging. This indicates that a few respondents find it difficult to assess middle school learners' reading comprehension, which could be due to various factors such as the complexity of reading materials, the diverse reading levels of students, or the lack of suitable assessment tools.

The data reveals a tendency towards neutrality regarding the difficulty of testing reading comprehension among middle school learners. With the majority of

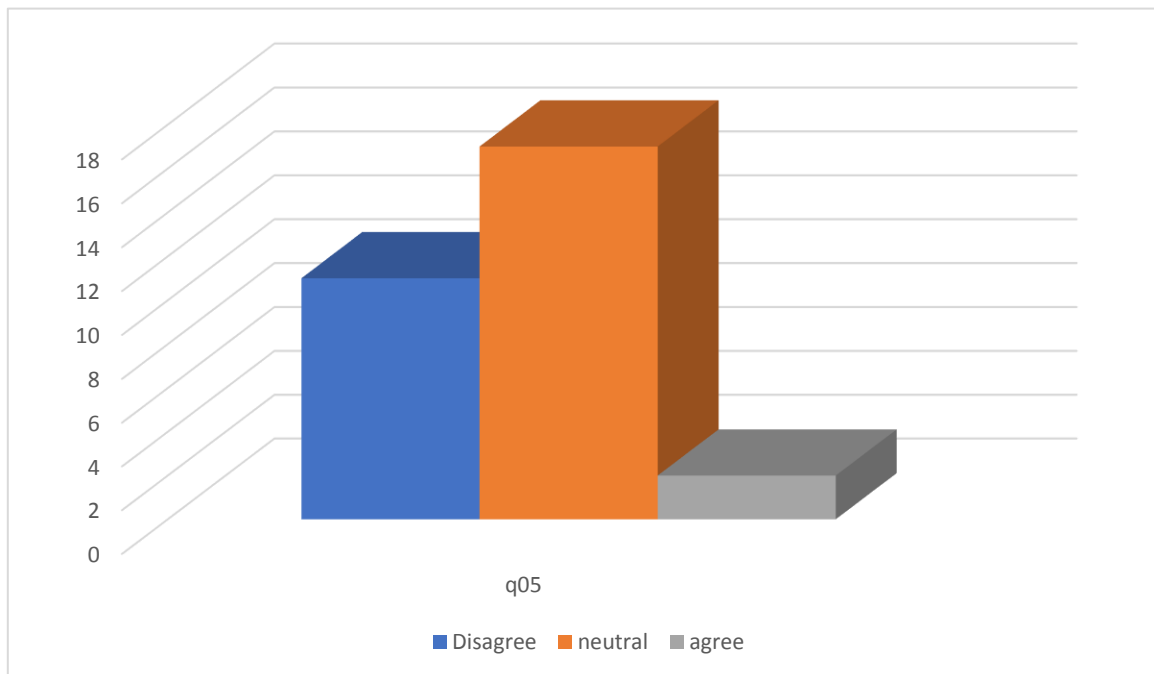
respondents neither agreeing nor disagreeing, it implies that there might be a variety of experiences and perceptions about the challenges involved. Only a small fraction find it particularly challenging, while a slightly larger portion disagrees, suggesting mixed feelings and a possible need for more consistent or effective assessment methods in this area.

5. Students’ varying reading abilities make it difficult to create standardized reading comprehension tests.

Table 05: Frequency distribution table, answers to question 05

	Frequencies	Percentage
Valide Disagree	11	36,7
neutral	17	56,7
agree	2	6,7
Total	30	100,0

Figure No. 05: Chart of distribution of sample responses on Q05



Analysis:

- Disagree (36.7%): A significant portion, 11 out of 30 respondents, disagreed with the statement. This suggests that these respondents believe it is possible to create standardized reading comprehension tests despite the varying reading abilities of students. They might feel that standardized tests can be designed to accommodate a range of reading levels or that differentiation strategies can address these differences.
- Neutral (56.7%): The majority, 17 out of 30 respondents, remained neutral. This indicates that most respondents neither agree nor disagree with the statement. This neutrality could suggest uncertainty or ambivalence about the impact of varying reading abilities on the creation of standardized tests. They might recognize the challenge but do not have a strong opinion on its significance or have mixed experiences.
- Agree (6.7%): A small fraction, 2 out of 30 respondents, agreed that varying reading abilities make it difficult to create standardized reading comprehension tests. This indicates that a minority find it challenging to standardize assessments due to the diverse reading levels of students. They may feel that these differences significantly hinder the ability to create fair and effective standardized tests.

The data reveals a tendency towards neutrality regarding the impact of varying reading abilities on the creation of standardized reading comprehension tests. With the majority of respondents being neutral, it suggests mixed feelings or uncertainty about the extent of the challenge. A notable portion disagrees with the statement, indicating some confidence in the feasibility of standardizing tests despite reading differences. However, a small minority agrees, highlighting that for some, this remains a significant issue. This overall distribution points to diverse perspectives and possibly varied experiences with standardized testing in the context of reading comprehension.

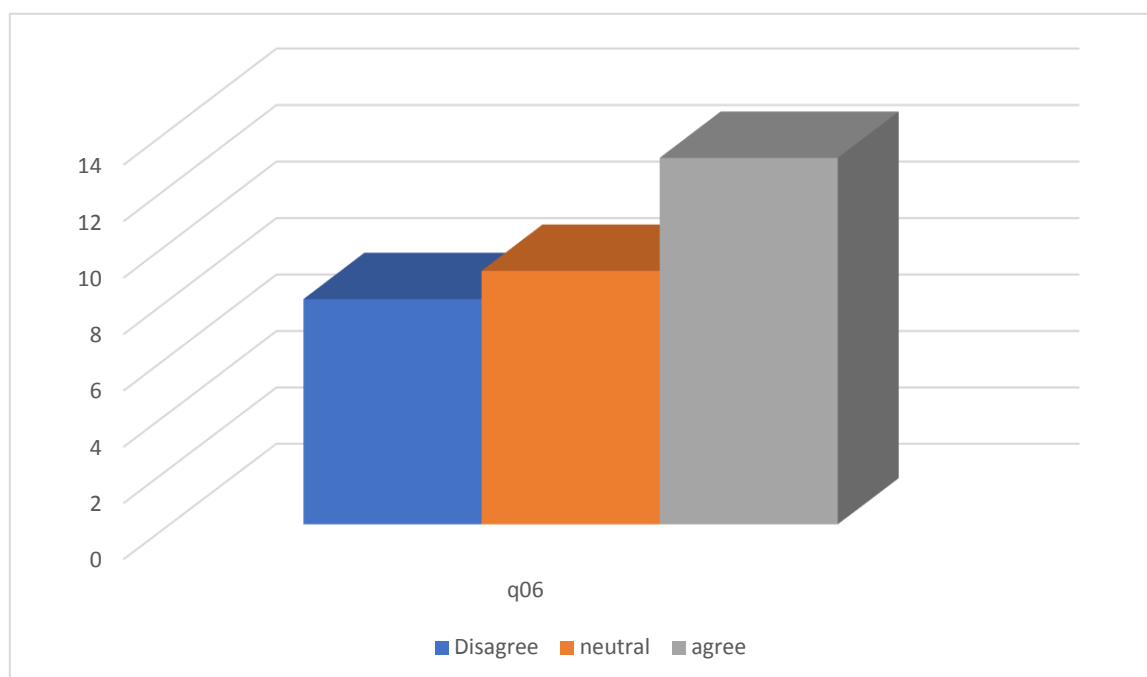
6. Assessing students' inferential and critical thinking skills through reading comprehension tests is practically challenging

Table 06: Frequency distribution table, answers to question 06

	Frequencies	Percentages
Valid Disagree	8	26,7
neutral	9	30,0
agree	13	43,3

Total	30	100,0
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Figure No. 06: Chart of distribution of sample responses on Q06



Analysis:

- **Disagree (26.7%):** A minority of respondents, 8 out of 30, disagreed with the statement. This suggests that these respondents do not find it particularly challenging to assess inferential and critical thinking skills through reading comprehension tests. They might believe that existing tests and methods are sufficient to measure these higher-order thinking skills effectively.
- **Neutral (30.0%):** A significant portion, 9 out of 30 respondents, remained neutral. This indicates that many respondents neither agree nor disagree with the statement, suggesting uncertainty or a balanced view. They might recognize that while there are challenges, there are also ways to address them, or they might lack strong opinions due to varied experiences.
- **Agree (43.3%):** The largest group, 13 out of 30 respondents, agreed that it is practically challenging to assess inferential and critical thinking skills through reading comprehension tests. This indicates that a substantial number of respondents find it difficult to evaluate these skills effectively using traditional reading comprehension assessments, possibly due to the complexity and subjectivity involved in measuring inferential and critical thinking.

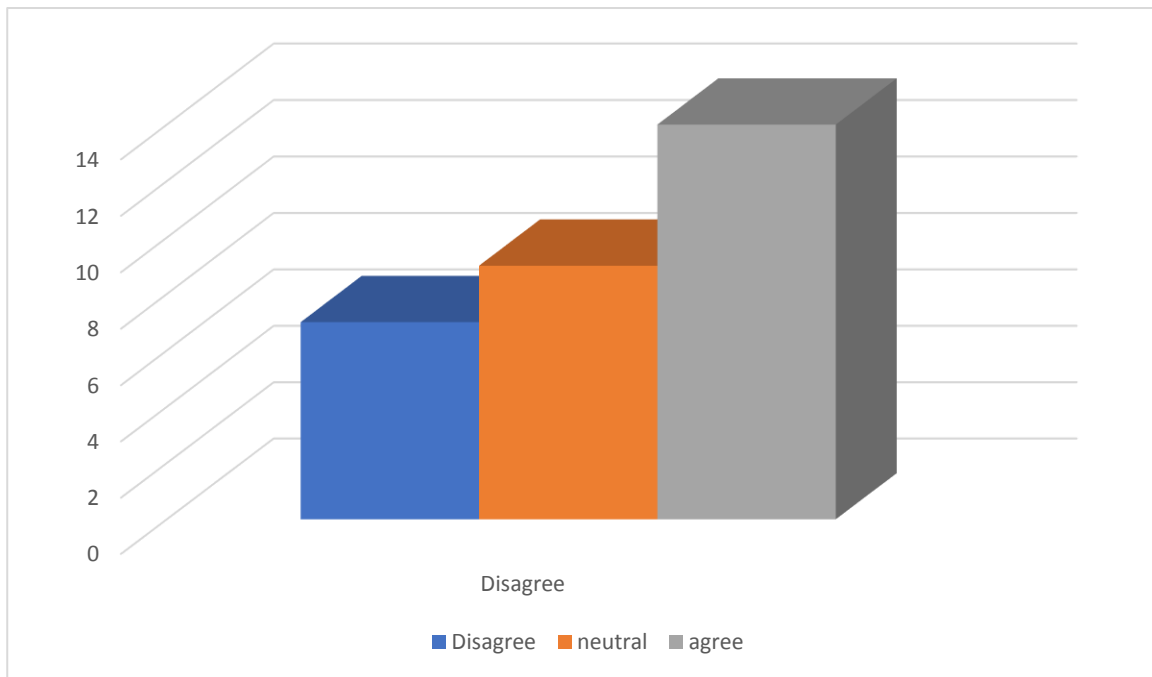
The data reveals a notable concern regarding the practical challenges of assessing inferential and critical thinking skills through reading comprehension tests. With 43.3% of respondents agreeing, it highlights a significant perception of difficulty in this area. However, the presence of 26.7% disagreeing and 30.0% remaining neutral suggests that experiences and opinions on this issue are diverse. While many find it challenging, a considerable number of respondents believe it can be managed or are undecided on the matter. This overall distribution points to a recognized need for effective strategies and tools to assess higher-order thinking skills in reading comprehension.

7. Time constraints hinder my ability to effectively assess reading comprehension

Table 07: Frequency distribution table, answers to question 07

	Frequencies	Percentage
Valid Disagree	7	23,3
neutral	9	30,0
agree	14	46,7
Total	30	100,0

Figure No. 07: Chart of distribution of sample responses on Q07



Analysis:

- **Disagree (23.3%):** A minority of respondents, 7 out of 30, disagreed with the statement. This suggests that these respondents do not find time constraints to be a significant barrier to effectively assessing reading comprehension. They might have efficient assessment methods or strategies that allow them to evaluate reading comprehension within the available time.
- **Neutral (30.0%):** A significant portion, 9 out of 30 respondents, remained neutral. This indicates that many respondents neither agree nor disagree with the statement, suggesting uncertainty or a balanced view. They might recognize that time constraints can sometimes be an issue but do not see it as a predominant problem, or they may have varied experiences that lead to a neutral stance.
- **Agree (46.7%):** The largest group, 14 out of 30 respondents, agreed that time constraints hinder their ability to effectively assess reading comprehension. This indicates that nearly half of the respondents find time limitations to be a significant challenge in evaluating students' reading comprehension skills. This could be due to the need for more thorough assessments, individualized feedback, or the complexity of the reading materials.

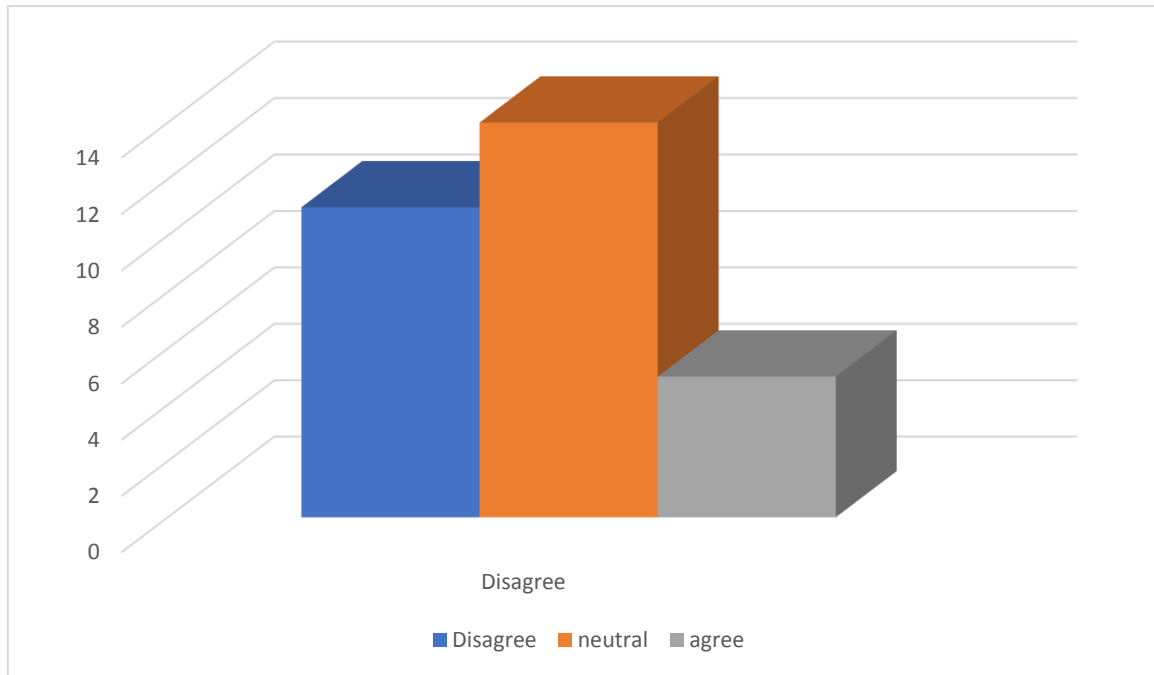
The data reveals a significant concern regarding time constraints as a barrier to effectively assessing reading comprehension. With 46.7% of respondents agreeing, it highlights that many educators find time limitations to be a considerable challenge. However, the presence of 23.3% disagreeing and 30.0% remaining neutral suggests that experiences and opinions on this issue are mixed. While nearly half of the respondents see time constraints as a major hindrance, a substantial portion does not perceive it as a significant issue, and some are undecided. This overall distribution points to a need for efficient assessment strategies that can fit within the time available while still effectively measuring reading comprehension.

8. The complexity of reading materials affects the accuracy of comprehension assessments.

Table 08: Frequency distribution table, answers to question 08

	Frequencies	Percentages
Valid Disagree	11	36,7
neutral	14	46,7
agree	5	16,7
Total	30	100,0

Figure No. 08: Chart of distribution of sample responses on Q08



Analysis:

- **Disagree (36.7%):** A significant portion, 11 out of 30 respondents, disagreed with the statement. This suggests that these respondents do not believe that the complexity of reading materials significantly affects the accuracy of comprehension assessments. They might feel that effective assessment tools and strategies can accurately gauge comprehension regardless of the material's complexity.
- **Neutral (46.7%):** The majority, 14 out of 30 respondents, remained neutral. This indicates that many respondents neither agree nor disagree with the statement, suggesting uncertainty or a balanced view. They might recognize that while complexity can be a factor, it may not always significantly impact the accuracy of assessments, or their experiences with this issue might be mixed.
- **Agree (16.7%):** A smaller group, 5 out of 30 respondents, agreed that the complexity of reading materials affects the accuracy of comprehension assessments. This indicates that a minority of respondents find that more complex materials can make it harder to accurately assess students' comprehension, possibly due to challenges in ensuring that assessments effectively measure understanding rather than just the ability to decode complex text.

The data reveals a diverse range of opinions regarding the impact of reading material complexity on the accuracy of comprehension assessments. With 36.7% of respondents disagreeing, it shows that a significant number of educators believe that complexity does not substantially affect assessment accuracy. However, the largest groups, 46.7%, remains neutral, indicating that many educators see this issue as nuanced or context-dependent. A smaller portion, 16.7%, agrees that complexity affects accuracy, suggesting that some educators do encounter difficulties in accurately assessing comprehension with more complex texts. This overall distribution highlights the need for a balanced approach, taking into account the complexity of reading materials while developing effective assessment strategies to ensure accuracy.

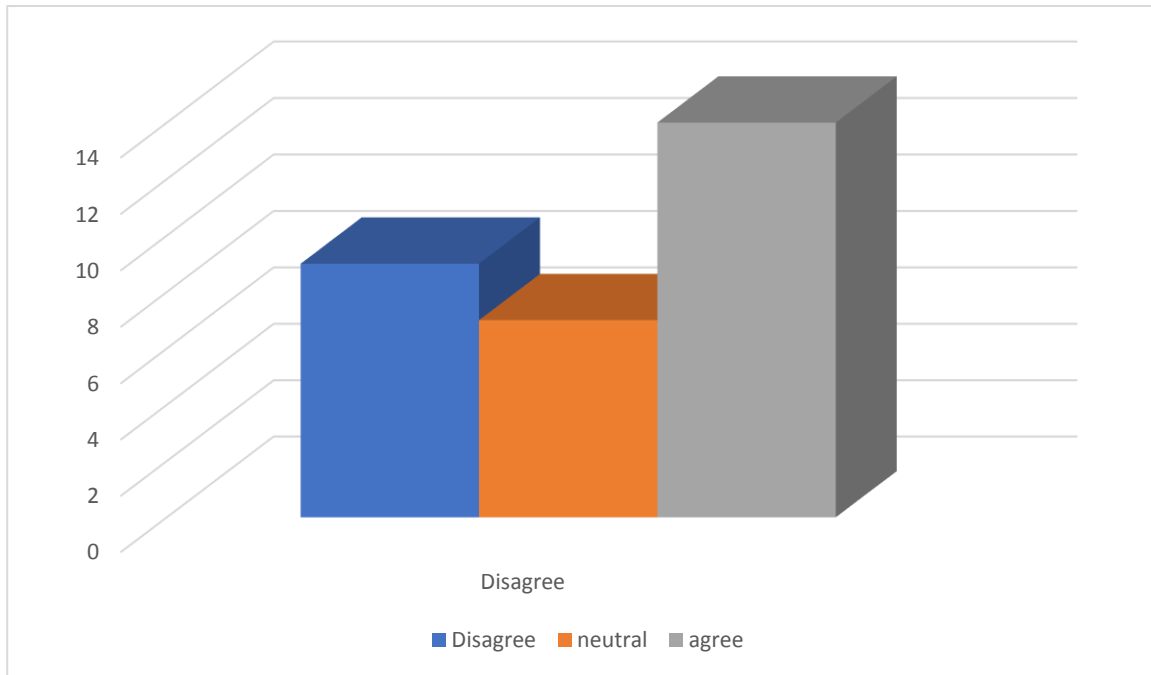
Section 3: Resources and Support

9. I have access to sufficient resources and materials for developing reading comprehension assessments.

Table 09: Frequency distribution table, answers to question 09

	Frequencies	Percentage
Valid Disagree	9	30,0
neutral	7	23,3
agree	14	46,7
Total	30	100,0

Figure No. 09: Chart of distribution of sample responses on Q09



Analysis:

- **Disagree (30.0%):** A significant portion, 9 out of 30 respondents, disagreed with the statement. This suggests that these respondents feel they do not have enough resources and materials to develop effective reading comprehension assessments. This lack of resources might hinder their ability to create diverse and comprehensive assessments that adequately measure students' reading comprehension skills.
- **Neutral (23.3%):** A notable portion, 7 out of 30 respondents, remained neutral. This indicates that these respondents neither agree nor disagree with the statement, possibly reflecting uncertainty or mixed experiences regarding the availability of resources. They might sometimes feel adequately supported, while at other times they might find resources lacking.
- **Agree (46.7%):** The largest group, 14 out of 30 respondents, agreed that they have access to sufficient resources and materials for developing reading comprehension assessments. This suggests that these respondents feel well-equipped to create assessments, likely due to having access to a variety of materials, tools, and support needed to develop effective reading comprehension tests.

The data reveals a range of experiences regarding the availability of resources and materials for developing reading comprehension assessments. With 46.7% of respondents agreeing, a significant number of educators feel they have sufficient

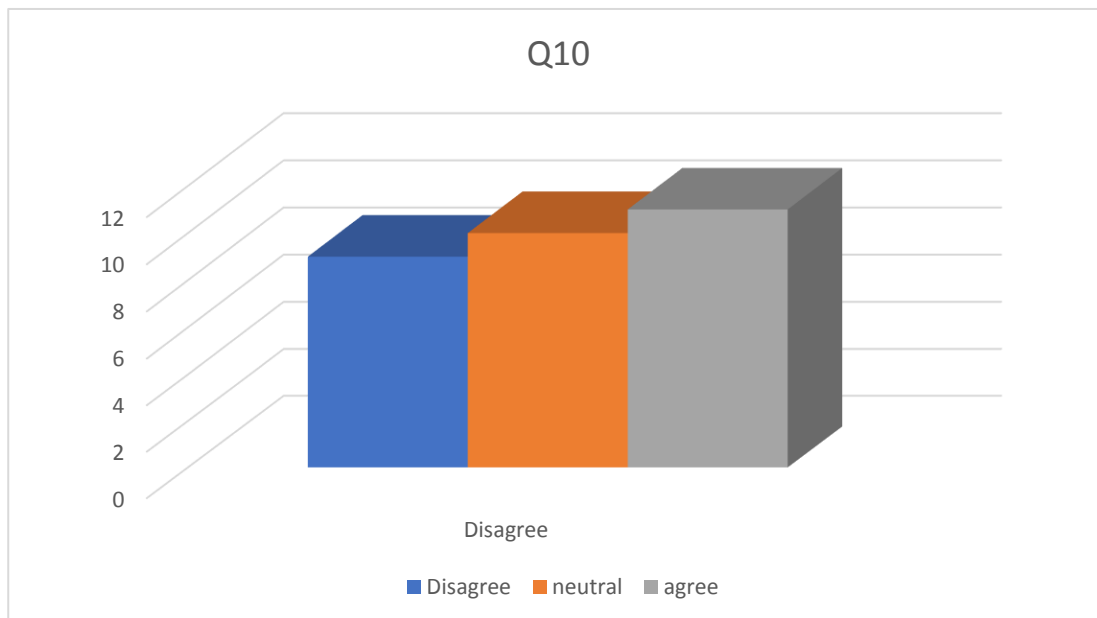
resources. However, 30.0% disagree, indicating a notable portion of educators who feel resource-constrained. The 23.3% who are neutral suggest that experiences with resource availability can vary. This overall distribution points to a mixed landscape where while many educators feel adequately supported, there is a substantial minority who may need more resources to effectively develop reading comprehension assessments.

10. Professional development programs have adequately prepared me for assessing reading comprehension

Table 10: Frequency distribution table, answers to question 10

		Frecencies	percentages
Valid	Disagree	9	30,0
	neutral	10	33,3
	agree	11	36,7
	Total	30	100,0

Figure No. 10: Chart of distribution of sample responses on Q10



Analysis:

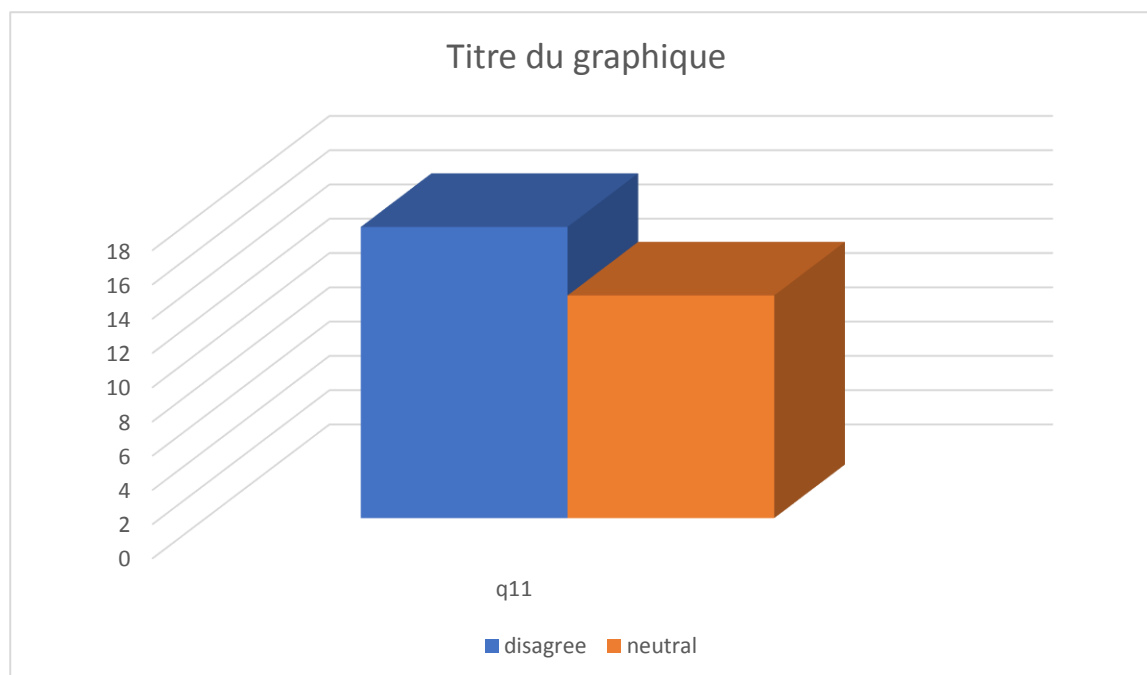
- Disagree (30.0%): A significant portion, 9 out of 30 respondents, disagreed with the statement. This suggests that these respondents feel that professional development programs have not adequately prepared them for assessing reading comprehension. They might find that the training they received was insufficient, lacking in depth, or not practical enough for their needs.
- Neutral (33.3%): A notable portion, 10 out of 30 respondents, remained neutral. This indicates that these respondents neither agree nor disagree with the statement, possibly reflecting uncertainty or mixed experiences regarding the effectiveness of professional development programs. They might find some aspects of the training useful, but overall not conclusive enough to form a strong opinion.
- Agree (36.7%): The largest group, 11 out of 30 respondents, agreed that professional development programs have adequately prepared them for assessing reading comprehension. This suggests that these respondents feel well-prepared by the training programs they have attended, finding them effective in providing the necessary skills and knowledge for reading comprehension assessment.

The data reveals a varied range of opinions regarding the adequacy of professional development programs in preparing educators for assessing reading comprehension. With 36.7% of respondents agreeing, a significant number of educators feel adequately prepared. However, 30.0% disagree, indicating that a substantial portion of educators feels that the training they have received is lacking. The 33.3% who are neutral suggest that experiences with professional development programs can vary widely, and some educators may find them only partially effective. This overall distribution points to a need for more comprehensive, practical, and tailored professional development programs to better prepare educators for assessing reading comprehension.

11. Collaboration with colleagues helps me improve my reading comprehension assessment practices.

Table 11: Frequency distribution table, answers to question 11

		Frequencies	Percentage
Valid	Disagree	17	56,7
	neutral	13	43,3
	Total	30	100,0

Figure No. 11: Chart of distribution of sample responses on 11**Analysis:**

- **Disagree (56.7%):** A majority of respondents, 17 out of 30, disagreed with the statement. This indicates that these respondents do not find collaboration with colleagues particularly helpful in improving their reading comprehension assessment practices. This could be due to a variety of reasons, such as lack of productive collaboration opportunities, differing assessment approaches among colleagues, or a belief that other resources are more beneficial for improving their practices.
- **Neutral (43.3%):** A significant portion, 13 out of 30 respondents, remained neutral. This suggests that these respondents neither agree nor disagree with the statement, possibly reflecting uncertainty or mixed experiences with collaboration. They might find some aspects of collaboration beneficial while other aspects are less impactful, leading to a neutral stance.

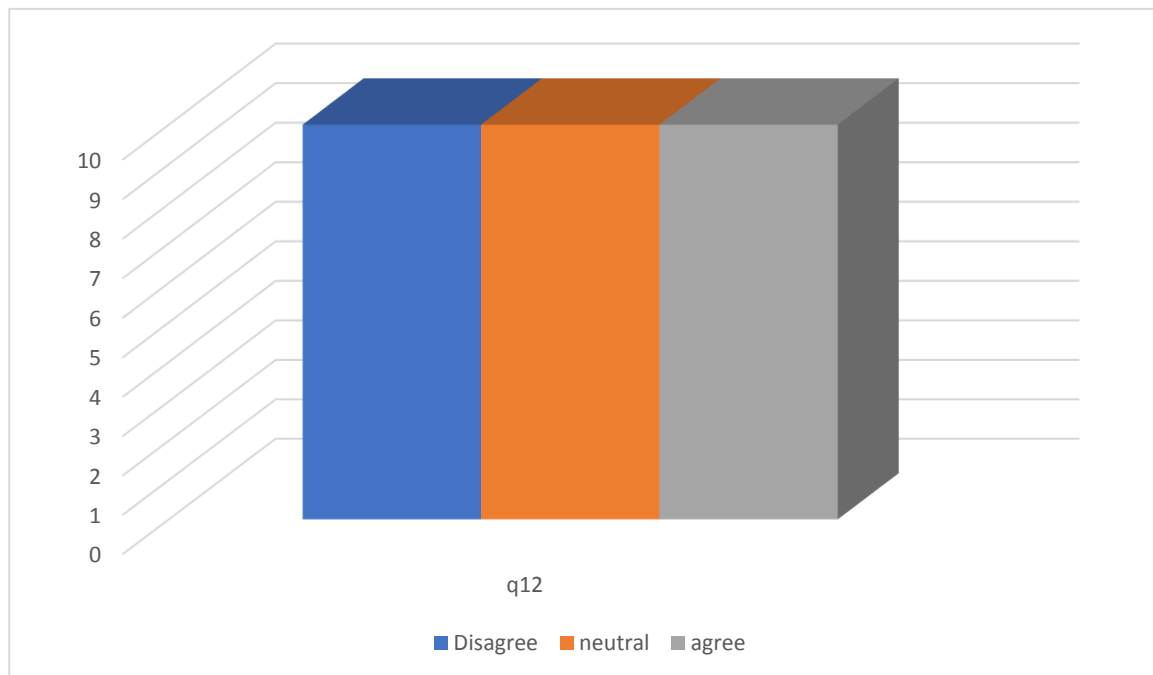
- Agree (0%): Notably, none of the respondents agreed with the statement. This absence of agreement suggests that among the surveyed group, there is a consensus that collaboration with colleagues is not viewed as a key factor in improving reading comprehension assessment practices.

The data reveals a strong tendency toward disagreement regarding the effectiveness of collaboration with colleagues in improving reading comprehension assessment practices. With 56.7% of respondents disagreeing and 43.3% remaining neutral, it suggests that a majority of educators do not find significant value in collaborative efforts for this purpose. This could point to a need for better-facilitated collaboration, more structured professional learning communities, or alternative professional development methods that might be more effective in enhancing reading comprehension assessment practices. The lack of any respondents agreeing underscores the perceived limited impact of current collaborative efforts among colleagues in this area.

12.I have adequate administrative support for implementing reading comprehension assessments.

Table 12: Frequency distribution table, answers to question 12

		Frequencies	Percentage
Valid	Disagree	10	33,3
	neutral	10	33,3
	agree	10	33,3
	Total	30	100,0

Figure No. 12: Chart of distribution of sample responses on 12**Analysis:**

The responses are evenly distributed among the three options: disagree, neutral, and agree. Each category has 10 respondents, which corresponds to 33.3% of the total respondents. This indicates a balanced opinion among the respondents, with no clear majority leaning towards any particular sentiment.

- **Disagree (33.3%):** A third of the respondents feel that they do not have adequate administrative support. This suggests that there may be issues or gaps in the administrative support provided for implementing reading comprehension assessments.
- **Neutral (33.3%):** Another third of the respondents neither agree nor disagree, indicating ambivalence or uncertainty regarding the adequacy of administrative support. This group might feel that the support is adequate in some areas but lacking in others, or they might not have enough information to form a definitive opinion.
- **Agree (33.3%):** The remaining third of the respondents believe that they have adequate administrative support. This indicates that there is a significant portion of respondents who are satisfied with the level of support they receive.

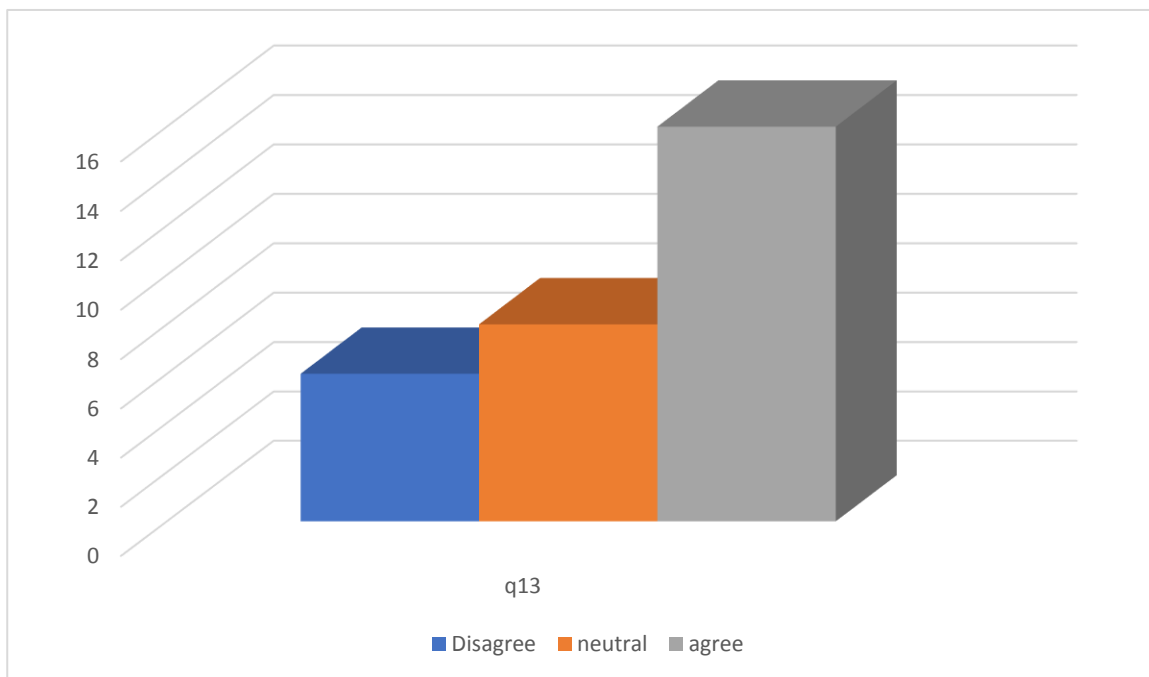
The even split in responses highlights a division in perceptions of administrative support for reading comprehension assessments. The school should consider investigating the reasons behind the dissatisfaction and ambivalence expressed by two-thirds of the respondents. By understanding and addressing the specific concerns of those who disagree or are neutral, steps can be taken to improve the overall support system, ensuring that a larger proportion of respondents feel adequately supported.

13. The curriculum supports effective assessment of reading comprehension skills.

Table 13: Frequency distribution table, answers to question 13

		Frequencies	Percentage
Valid	Disagree	6	20,0
	neutral	8	26,7
	agree	16	53,3
	Total	30	100,0

Figure No. 13: Chart of distribution of sample responses on 13



Analysis:

- Agree: Over half of the respondents (53.3%) agree that the curriculum supports effective assessment of reading comprehension skills. This indicates a positive perception among a majority of the respondents regarding the curriculum's ability to assess reading comprehension effectively.

- Disagree (20.0%): A smaller portion of the respondents, 20%, feel that the curriculum does not support effective assessment. This indicates some level of dissatisfaction or perceived inadequacies in the curriculum related to assessing reading comprehension.
- Neutral (26.7%): About a quarter of the respondents (26.7%) are neutral. This suggests that these respondents either have mixed feelings, lack sufficient information to form an opinion, or feel that the curriculum is adequate but not outstanding in supporting effective assessment.

The high percentage of agreement suggests that the curriculum is generally perceived to be effective in assessing reading comprehension skills, which is a positive indicator. The presence of respondents who disagree or are neutral indicates that there is still room for improvement. The reasons behind these sentiments should be explored to enhance the curriculum further.

While a majority of respondents believe that the curriculum supports effective assessment of reading comprehension skills, a notable portion either disagrees or remains neutral. To ensure the curriculum meets the needs of all educators and students, it would be beneficial to investigate the concerns and suggestions of those who did not agree. This can lead to targeted improvements, increasing overall satisfaction and effectiveness in assessing reading comprehension.

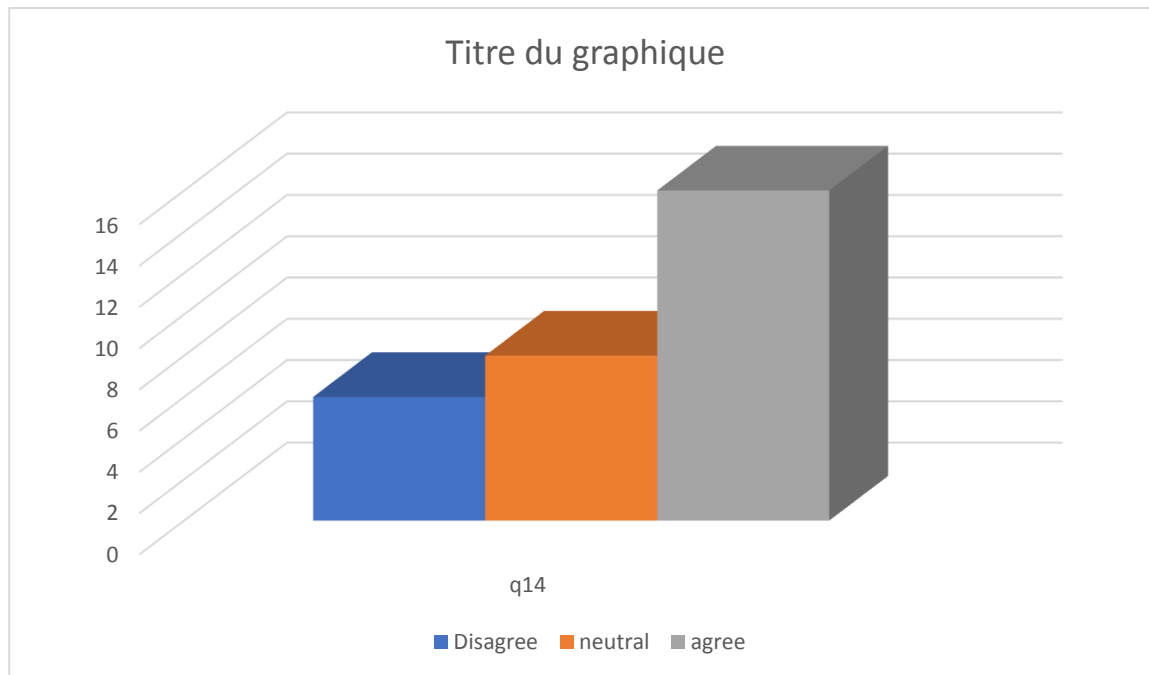
Section 4: Assessment Practices

14.I feel confident in my ability to design effective reading comprehension tests

Table 14: Frequency distribution table, answers to question 14

		Frequencies	Percentage
Valid	Disagree	6	20,0
	neutral	8	26,7
	agree	16	53,3
Total		30	100,0

Figure No. 14: Chart of distribution of sample responses on 14



Analysis:

- Agree: The majority of respondents (53.3%) agree that they feel confident in their ability to design effective reading comprehension tests. This indicates that more than half of the participants have a positive self-assessment regarding their test design skills.
- Disagree (20.0%): One-fifth of the respondents do not feel confident in their ability to design effective reading comprehension tests. This highlights a significant minority that may require additional support or training in this area.
- Neutral (26.7%): Just over a quarter of the respondents are neutral, suggesting that they neither feel particularly confident nor unconfident. This group may benefit from further development to solidify their skills and confidence.

The high percentage of agreement is encouraging, indicating that a majority of respondents feel capable in designing reading comprehension tests. The combined 46.7% of respondents who either disagree or are neutral suggests that there is a notable portion of individuals who may benefit from additional training or resources to boost their confidence and skills in test design.

While a majority of respondents feel confident in their ability to design effective reading comprehension tests, there remain significant portions that are either not confident or neutral. To ensure all educators feel equipped to design effective tests, it would be beneficial to provide targeted professional development and resources. Addressing the needs and concerns of those who lack confidence can help improve

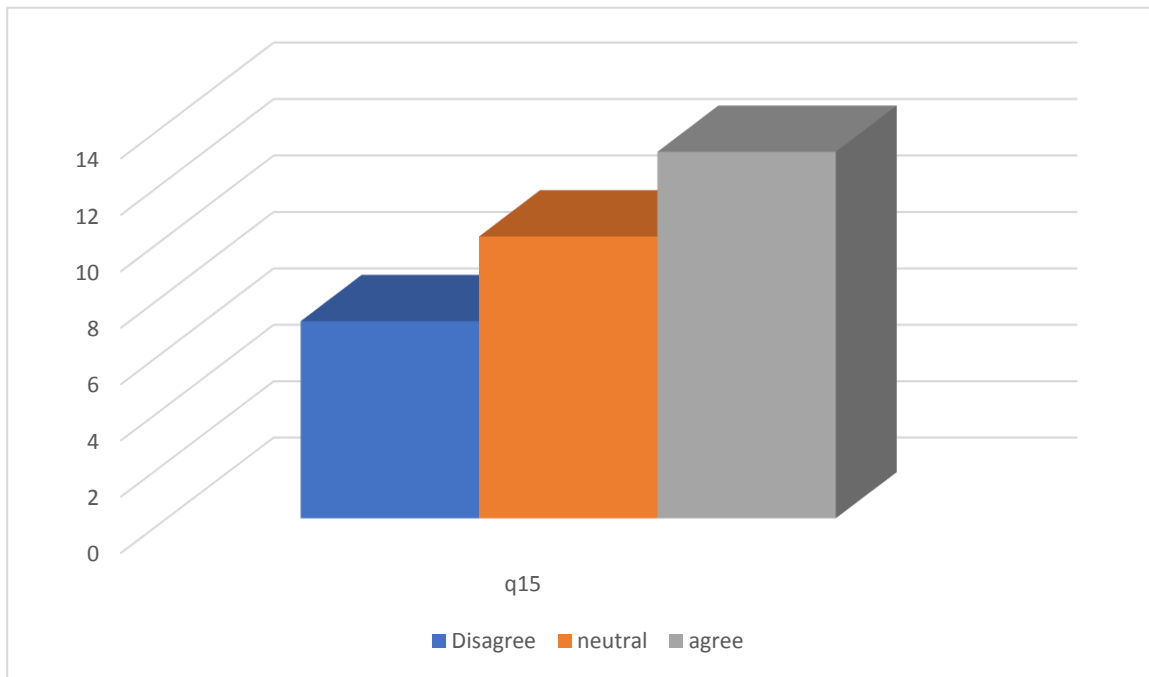
their skills and overall confidence, leading to more effective assessment practices across the board.

15. The reading comprehension assessments I use accurately reflect students’ understanding.

Table 15: Frequency distribution table, answers to question 15

		Frequencies	Percentage
Valid	Disagree	7	23,3
	neutral	10	33,3
	agree	13	43,3
	Total	30	100,0

Figure No. 15: Chart of distribution of sample responses on 15



Analysis:

- Agree: The largest group of respondents (43.3%) agrees that the reading comprehension assessments they use accurately reflect students’ understanding. This suggests that many educators are satisfied with the accuracy of their assessments.
- Disagree (23.3%): Almost a quarter of the respondents do not believe that their assessments accurately reflect students' understanding. This highlights a concern among a notable minority regarding the effectiveness of their assessments.

- Neutral (33.3%): One-third of the respondents are neutral, indicating that they neither agree nor disagree. This suggests ambivalence or uncertainty about the accuracy of their assessments, which might stem from mixed results or a lack of confidence in their evaluation methods.

The fact that 43.3% agree is positive, but the combined 56.6% of respondents who are either neutral or disagree suggests there is significant room for improvement. The reasons for this lack of confidence should be investigated. Addressing the concerns of those who disagree or are neutral could involve reviewing and possibly revising assessment tools, providing additional training on creating or using assessments, and ensuring alignment with instructional goals and standards.

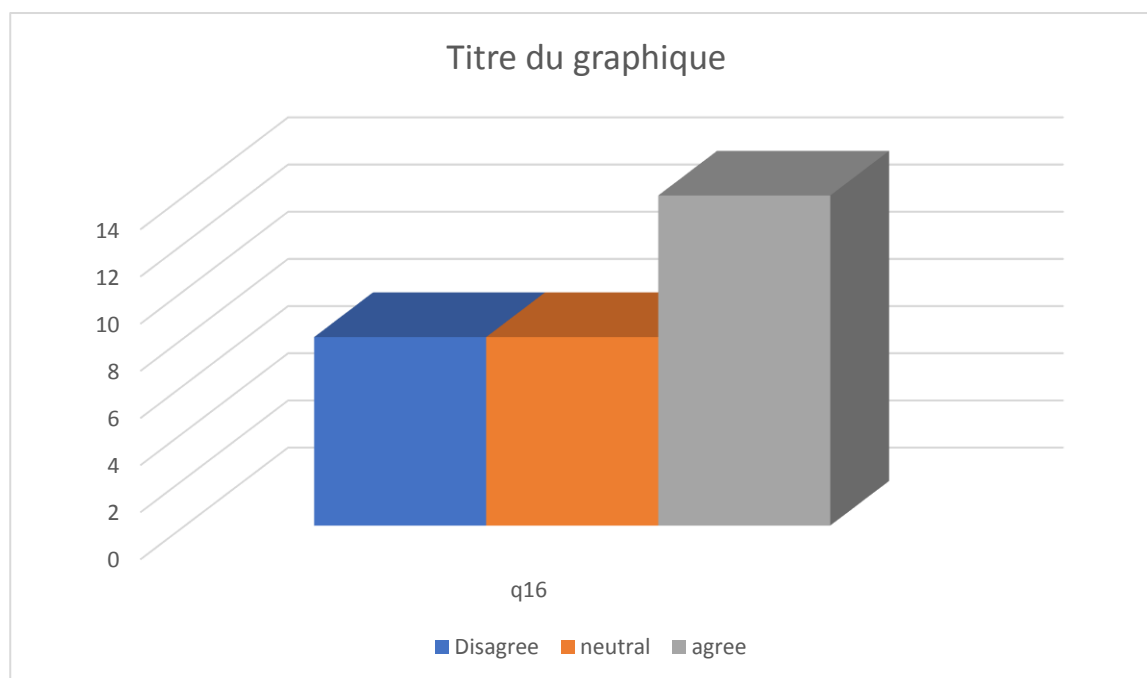
While a plurality of respondents feel that their reading comprehension assessments accurately reflect students' understanding, a substantial portion either disagree or are neutral. To enhance the accuracy and effectiveness of reading comprehension assessments, it would be beneficial to delve into the specific concerns of those who are not fully confident. Providing professional development, revising assessment tools, and ensuring alignment with educational standards can help in improving overall satisfaction and effectiveness in reflecting students' understanding through these assessments.

16. Feedback from reading comprehension assessments informs my instructional practices.

Table 16: Frequency distribution table, answers to question 16

		Frequencies	Percentages
Valid	Disagree	8	26,7
	neutral	8	26,7
	agree	14	46,7
	Total	30	100,0

Figure No. 16: Chart of distribution of sample responses on 16



Analysis:

- **Agree:** The largest group of respondents (46.7%) agrees that feedback from reading comprehension assessments informs their instructional practices. This indicates that nearly half of the respondents find the feedback from these assessments useful for guiding their teaching methods.
- **Disagree (26.7%):** Over a quarter of the respondents do not feel that feedback from reading comprehension assessments informs their instructional practices. This points to a concern among this group regarding the relevance or usability of the feedback they receive.
- **Neutral (26.7%):** An equal percentage of respondents are neutral, suggesting that they neither agree nor disagree. This could indicate uncertainty about how to effectively use the feedback, or that the feedback is not consistently impactful.

The high percentage of agreement is promising, showing that many educators are able to use assessment feedback to inform their teaching. However, the significant percentages of those who disagree or are neutral suggest that there is room for improvement in making feedback more actionable and relevant. Understanding the specific challenges faced by those who do not find the feedback useful could help in refining the feedback process, making it more practical and effective for instructional adjustments.

While nearly half of the respondents find that feedback from reading comprehension assessments informs their instructional practices, a substantial portion either disagree

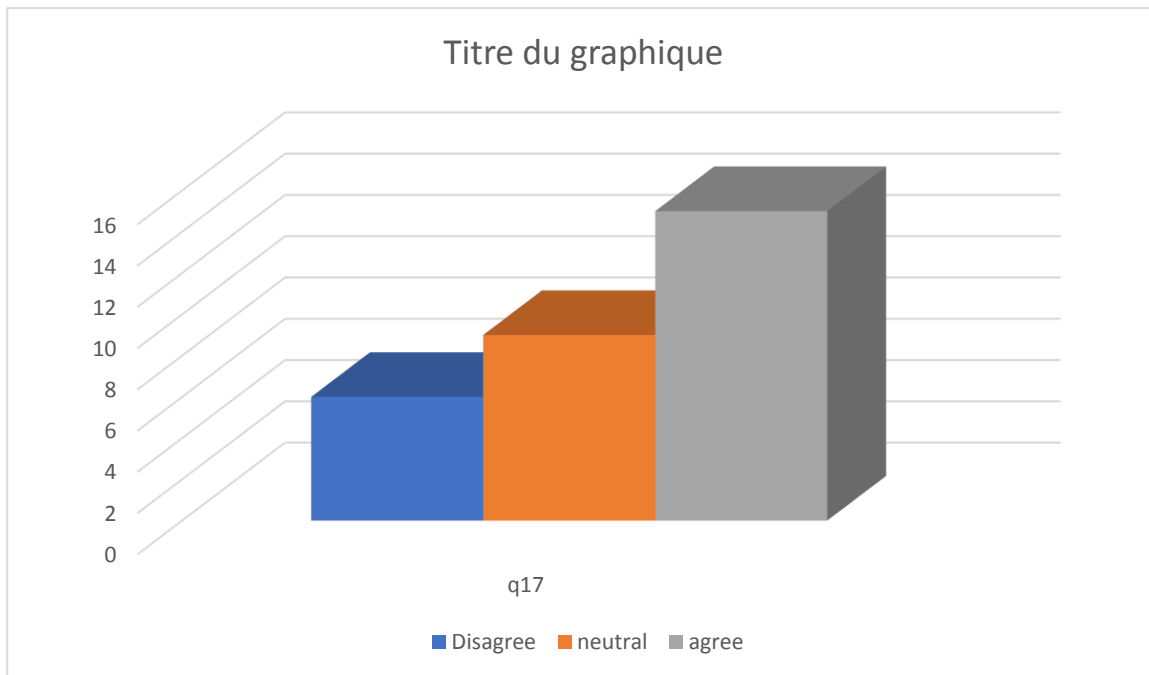
or are neutral. To enhance the effectiveness of feedback, it would be beneficial to explore the reasons behind the dissatisfaction and ambivalence. Providing targeted professional development on how to interpret and apply feedback, and ensuring that the feedback is clear, specific, and actionable, can help more educators use assessment feedback to improve their instructional practices.

17. Alternative assessment methods (e.g. Projects, oral presentations) could better evaluate reading comprehension.

Table 17: Frequency distribution table, answers to question 17

		Frequencies	Percentage
Valid	Disagree	6	20,0
	neutral	9	30,0
	agree	15	50,0
	Total	30	100,0

Figure No. 17: Chart of distribution of sample responses on 17



Analysis:

- Agree: Half of the respondents (50.0%) agree that alternative assessment methods could better evaluate reading comprehension. This suggests a significant portion of the participants see potential in using methods other than traditional tests to assess students' reading comprehension skills.

- Disagree (20.0%): One-fifth of the respondents do not believe that alternative assessment methods would be better for evaluating reading comprehension. This indicates that a minority are either satisfied with current methods or skeptical about the effectiveness of alternatives.
- Neutral (30.0%): Three-tenths of the respondents are neutral, suggesting uncertainty or a lack of strong opinion on whether alternative assessments could be more effective. This group may need more information or experience with alternative methods to form a definitive opinion.

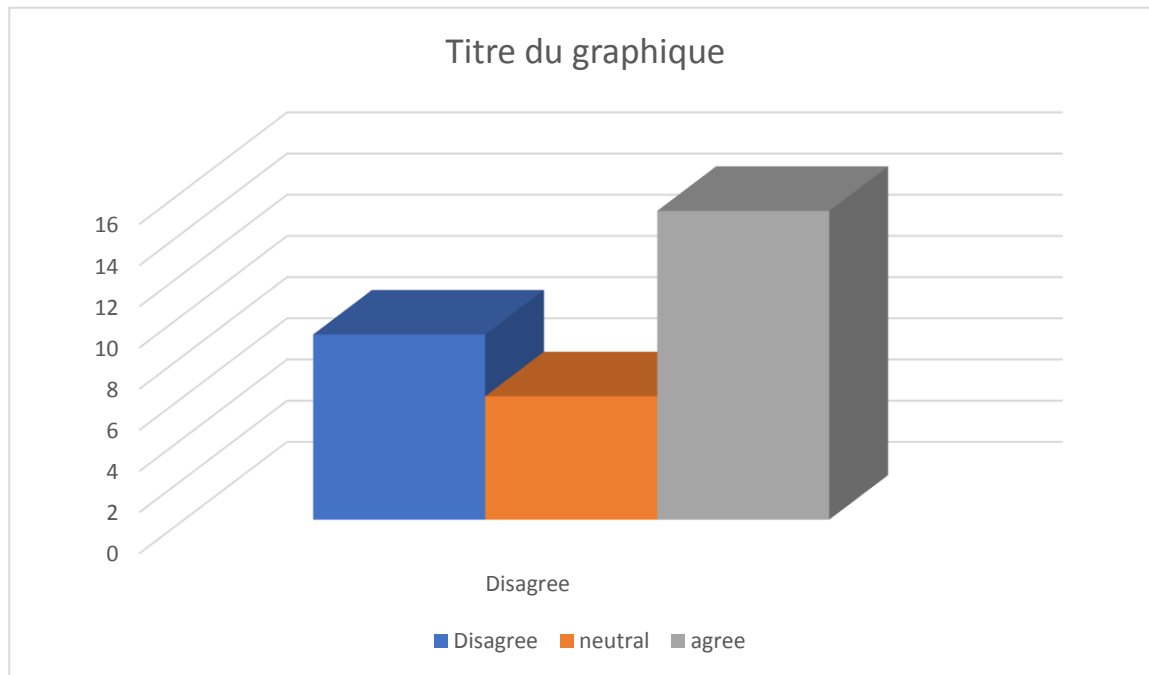
The high percentage of agreement indicates a considerable interest in exploring or implementing alternative assessment methods. This suggests that educators are open to innovative approaches that may provide a more comprehensive evaluation of students' reading comprehension. The combined 50% of respondents who are neutral or disagree highlights the need for further discussion, training, and evidence on the effectiveness of alternative assessment methods. Understanding the concerns and reservations of these respondents could guide professional development and pilot programs.

While a majority of respondents believe that alternative assessment methods could better evaluate reading comprehension, a substantial portion remains neutral or disagrees. To address this, it would be beneficial to provide professional development opportunities focused on alternative assessment strategies, share best practices, and offer evidence of their effectiveness. Engaging educators in pilot programs and gathering feedback could also help in demonstrating the potential benefits of alternative assessments and addressing any skepticism or uncertainty.

18.I regularly update and improve my reading comprehension assessments based on student performance and feedback.

Table 18: Frequency distribution table, answers to question 18

		Frequencies	Percentage
Valid	Disagree	9	30,0
	neutral	6	20,0
	agree	15	50,0
	Total	30	100,0

Figure No. 18: Chart of distribution of sample responses on 18**Analysis:**

- **Agree:** Half of the respondents (50.0%) agree that they regularly update and improve their reading comprehension assessments based on student performance and feedback. This indicates that many educators are actively engaging in reflective practices to enhance their assessments.
- **Disagree (30.0%):** A significant portion, nearly a third of the respondents, do not regularly update their assessments. This could be due to various reasons such as lack of time, resources, or awareness of the importance of updating assessments.
- **Neutral (20.0%):** One-fifth of the respondents are neutral, indicating that they neither agree nor disagree. This might reflect uncertainty or inconsistency in their practices regarding updating assessments based on feedback.

The high percentage of agreement is encouraging, as it shows a commitment to continuous improvement among many educators. The 50% of respondents who are neutral or disagree highlights areas where support or resources might be needed. Understanding the barriers to regularly updating assessments can help in providing targeted solutions.

While a majority of respondents regularly update and improve their reading comprehension assessments based on student performance and feedback, a substantial

portion do not. To enhance the practice of updating assessments, it would be beneficial to provide professional development focused on the importance and methods of using feedback to refine assessments. Additionally, addressing barriers such as time constraints, access to resources, and providing examples of best practices can help more educators engage in this crucial reflective practice.

Section Three: Interpretation of the Study Findings

As teachers responsible for assessing reading comprehension in middle school learners, we face several challenges that impact the effectiveness and accuracy of our evaluations. Here are some additional comments and insights regarding these challenges:

The challenge of addressing diverse reading levels among middle school students emphasizes that students in this age group demonstrate a broad spectrum of reading abilities, making it difficult to create assessments that are equally challenging for everyone. The concept of differentiation refers to the need to tailor assessments to meet the specific needs of both advanced readers and those who are struggling. This process can be time-consuming and complex for teachers, as they must balance varying skill levels while ensuring that assessments are fair, effective, and support all students' learning progress.

Also, the challenges of fostering engagement and motivation in middle school reading comprehension assessments. One key challenge is maintaining students' interest levels, as traditional tests may fail to capture their attention. Middle school learners often respond better to interactive and dynamic methods of assessment. Another aspect is ensuring the relevance of reading materials and questions, as making content relatable to students' lives can significantly boost their engagement. However, achieving this requires constant effort and creativity from teachers to keep the assessments both meaningful and motivating for students.

On the one hand the limitations of standardized tests in assessing reading comprehension. Standardized tests often rely heavily on multiple-choice questions, which may not fully capture a student's deeper understanding or critical thinking skills. As a result, important aspects of reading comprehension might be overlooked. But there is a potential benefit of alternative assessments like projects and presentations, which can offer a more comprehensive evaluation of a student's abilities. However, these methods come with their own challenges, as they tend to be more subjective and harder to grade consistently, making standardization difficult.

We highlight two significant challenges related to feedback and improvement in reading comprehension assessments. The first issue is time constraints, which make it difficult for teachers to regularly update and refine assessments based on student performance and feedback. Despite its importance, the workload often limits teachers' ability to continuously improve their methods. The second challenge focuses on the need for effective feedback—providing timely, specific, and constructive feedback that helps students enhance their reading comprehension skills. While essential for student growth, offering such feedback in a meaningful way is demanding and time-consuming for teachers.

One of the major issues surrounding the availability of resources in assessing reading comprehension is access to materials, as finding a diverse range of high-quality reading materials that cater to different reading levels and student interests can be logistically difficult for teachers. This limits their ability to offer appropriately challenging and engaging content. And let's not forget the importance of professional development, emphasizing that ongoing training is essential for teachers to stay updated on best practices in assessing reading comprehension. However, these opportunities are not always readily available, making it harder for teachers to continuously improve their assessment techniques.

We focus on the challenges related to technology integration in reading comprehension assessments. Firstly, in terms of the growing importance of digital literacy as students increasingly engage with digital reading platforms. Teachers must ensure students have the necessary skills to navigate and comprehend online texts, adding complexity to their assessment strategies. Second, concerns about access and equity, as not all students have equal access to technology and digital resources. This disparity is especially problematic in under-resourced schools, where limited access can hinder students' ability to participate fully in digital assessments, raising issues of fairness and inclusion.

One of the most important challenges posed by cultural and linguistic diversity in reading comprehension assessments. The first challenge is cultural sensitivity—ensuring that assessments are inclusive of students from diverse backgrounds to avoid bias and ensure fairness. When assessments fail to account for cultural differences, they risk misrepresenting students' abilities. The second challenge involves language barriers, particularly for English language learners (ELLs). It is crucial to design assessments that differentiate between a student's language proficiency and their actual comprehension skills, so that language difficulties don't obscure their understanding of the material. Addressing these challenges is key to developing fair and effective

assessments that accurately reflect students' abilities and support their learning progress.

Comparison of our study with previous studies

1. Our study with the study of (Anisa Ardianti, and others):

Methodological Approach: our study uses a quantitative method focused on identifying challenges and assessing effectiveness through survey. The study of (Anisa Ardianti, and others) employs a descriptive qualitative approach, utilizing observation and interviews to explore strategies.

Focus: our study emphasizes challenges in testing reading comprehension among middle school teachers, while the previous study concentrates on strategies used by English teachers in teaching comprehension.

Participants: our study involves a larger sample of 30 EFL middle school teachers, whereas the previous study includes three English teachers due to COVID-19 constraints.

Outcomes: Both studies highlight the importance of strategies in enhancing teaching and learning processes, with our study focusing on challenges and perceptions related to testing comprehension effectiveness.

In summary, while our study addresses challenges and perceptions among a larger group of teachers using quantitative methods, the study of (Anisa Ardianti, and others) provides insights into specific strategies employed by a smaller group of teachers using qualitative approaches. Each study contributes valuable perspectives on enhancing reading comprehension instruction in educational settings.

2. Our study with the study of (Happy Kusuma Wardani and others):

Methodological Approaches: our study uses a quantitative approach with surveys, focusing on teachers' perspectives on challenges and assessment effectiveness. The study of (Happy Kusuma Wardani and others) employs a qualitative approach with observation and interviews, exploring teaching strategies used by teachers, also a qualitative approach with tests and questionnaires, examining students' difficulties in comprehension tests.

Focus and Participants: our study focuses on teachers and their practices related to testing comprehension. The study of (Happy Kusuma Wardani and others) focuses on teaching strategies used by teachers.

Implications: our study aims to inform strategies for improving testing practices among teachers. The study of (Happy Kusuma Wardani and others) aims to inform effective teaching strategies.

Overall, each study contributes unique insights into reading comprehension challenges and strategies from different perspectives—teacher practices, teaching strategies, and student difficulties—providing a comprehensive view on how to enhance comprehension instruction in educational settings.

3. Our study with the study of (Susan Vander Does):

Methodological Approaches: our study and the study of (Susan Vander Does) use quantitative and qualitative approaches, respectively, focusing on teacher perspectives and student difficulties in reading comprehension tests. The study of (Susan Vander Does) use qualitative approaches, with focusing on teaching strategies and the comparison focusing on transactional reading theories.

Focus and Participants: Both focus on teachers and students, respectively, in middle school settings. The study of (Susan Vander Does) focuses on elementary-grade teachers using transactional instructional approaches.

Key Findings and Frameworks: our study aims to identify challenges and assess assessment effectiveness among middle school teachers. The study of (Susan Vander Does) identifies specific challenges faced by students in comprehension tests. Develops a framework based on transactional reading theory, categorizing teachers' observations into stance, technique, and interpretation related to comprehension.

Each study contributes valuable insights into reading comprehension instruction and assessment from different perspectives—teacher practices, teaching strategies, student difficulties, and theoretical frameworks—enriching understanding of how to improve comprehension instruction across educational levels.

4. Our study with the study of (Dang the Bac, Thai Cong Dan):

Methodology: our study is quantitative, focusing on survey data, while the study of (Dang the Bac, Thai Cong Dan) uses a mixed-methods approach with a strong qualitative component.

Focus: our study aims to identify and describe challenges and assess the effectiveness of testing methods in middle school. The study of (Dang the Bac,

Thai Cong Dan) examines the use of specific instructional approaches and develops a framework based on teachers' observations.

Participants: our study involves a larger group of 30 middle school teachers, whereas the study of (Dang the Bac, Thai Cong Dan) involves ten elementary-grade teachers.

Data Analysis: our study uses descriptive statistics to analyze survey data, while the study of (Dang the Bac, Thai Cong Dan) combines quantitative and qualitative analyses to develop a detailed framework.

Outcomes: our study seeks to identify practical challenges and perceptions of testing methods, whereas the study of (Dang the Bac, Thai Cong Dan) aims to understand and categorize instructional strategies and observations within a theoretical framework.

5. Our study with the study of (Furberg K., Anderberg E.):

Methodology: our study uses a quantitative approach with a focus on survey data.

The study of (Furberg K., Anderberg E.) employs a qualitative phenomenon graphic design with interviews.

Focus: our study aims to identify challenges in testing reading comprehension and assess the effectiveness of assessment methods. The study of (Furberg K., Anderberg E.) focuses on understanding how teachers' conceptions of reading comprehension align with their actual teaching practices.

Participants: our study involves a larger sample of 30 middle school teachers.

The study of (Furberg K., Anderberg E.) includes 36 teachers from Swedish compulsory schools.

Data Collection Methods: our study uses a survey questionnaire for data collection. The study of (Furberg K., Anderberg E.) conducts interviews to gather qualitative data.

Data Analysis: our study uses descriptive statistics to analyze survey responses.

The study of (Furberg K., Anderberg E.) employs phenomenon graphic analysis to categorize and understand teachers' conceptions and teaching practices.

Findings: our study identifies practical challenges and perceptions related to testing reading comprehension. The study of (Furberg K., Anderberg E.) identifies discrepancies between teachers' understanding of reading comprehension and

their instructional practices, noting that while teachers describe a complex understanding, their teaching often reflects more isolated and general activities.

In summary, both studies explore aspects of reading comprehension in educational contexts but employ different methodologies and focus areas: our study uses quantitative methods to assess challenges and perceptions related to assessment, while the study of (Furberg K., Anderberg E.) uses qualitative methods to investigate the alignment between teachers' conceptions and their instructional practices in reading comprehension.

6. Our study with the study of (Ramin Rahmany, Mohammad Taghi Hassani, Hamid Fattahi):

Methodology: our study uses a quantitative approach with survey/questionnaire to gather data from middle school teachers. The study of (Ramin Rahmany, Mohammad Taghi Hassani, Hamid Fattahi) also uses a quantitative approach with a questionnaire but focuses on university-level language teachers teaching ESP courses.

Focus: our study focuses on challenges in testing reading comprehension and perceptions of assessment effectiveness among middle school teachers. The study of (Ramin Rahmany, Mohammad Taghi Hassani, Hamid Fattahi) focuses on exploring language teachers' practical knowledge in teaching reading comprehension to engineering major students.

Participants: our study involves middle school teachers (30 participants).

The study of (Ramin Rahmany, Mohammad Taghi Hassani, Hamid Fattahi) involves university-level language teachers teaching ESP courses (36 participants).

Data Collection Methods: our study collects data through survey/questionnaire. The study of (Ramin Rahmany, Mohammad Taghi Hassani, Hamid Fattahi) collects data through a questionnaire administered to university-level teachers.

Data Analysis: our study uses descriptive statistics to analyze survey responses.

The study of (Ramin Rahmany, Mohammad Taghi Hassani, Hamid Fattahi) analyzes questionnaire responses to identify shared and unshared categories of practical knowledge and assesses differences among them.

Findings: our study identifies specific challenges and perceptions related to testing reading comprehension among middle school teachers. The study of (Ramin Rahmany, Mohammad Taghi Hassani, Hamid Fattahi) finds no shared categories of practical knowledge among university-level teachers teaching ESP courses, highlighting significant differences in their approaches.

In summary, both studies investigate aspects of teaching reading comprehension but focus on different educational levels and employ similar quantitative methodologies to understand challenges and practical knowledge among teachers. However, they differ in participant demographics and specific research objectives related to teaching contexts and challenges.

Our study, contributes uniquely to the existing body of research by focusing specifically on the challenges middle school teachers face in testing reading comprehension and their perceptions of assessment effectiveness. Unlike previous studies that often generalize across different educational levels or focus solely on student perspectives, our study provides targeted insights from EFL middle school teachers. This approach is beneficial as it directly addresses the practical challenges encountered in real classroom settings, offering context-specific strategies that can enhance teaching practices and improve reading comprehension assessment methods. By employing a quantitative approach with surveys/questionnaires, our study ensures a systematic evaluation of teachers' experiences and perceptions, thereby contributing valuable data to inform educational policy and practice aimed at improving reading comprehension instruction in middle school settings.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, this study aimed to explore the challenges faced by middle school English teachers in assessing reading comprehension. Through an electronic survey distributed during the summer holiday, we gathered valuable insights from 30 teachers. The responses highlighted various issues, including the need for improved assessment design, the effectiveness of feedback, the potential of alternative assessment methods, and the importance of regular updates and improvements to existing assessments.

Our analysis revealed that while a majority of teachers feel confident in their ability to design effective assessments, a significant portion still faces challenges. Additionally, many teachers find that feedback from assessments informs their

instructional practices, though there is still room for making this feedback more actionable. The interest in alternative assessment methods indicates willingness among teachers to explore and implement new strategies that could provide a more comprehensive evaluation of student comprehension.

Based on these findings, we provided several recommendations to address the identified challenges. These include offering professional development workshops, encouraging peer collaboration, implementing assessment review processes, and piloting alternative assessment methods. By focusing on these areas, we aim to support teachers in improving their assessment practices and ultimately enhance student outcomes in reading comprehension.

In moving forward, it is crucial to continue collecting data and feedback from teachers to refine and adapt these strategies. Establishing a culture of continuous improvement and providing the necessary resources and support will be key to addressing the challenges in reading comprehension assessment. By doing so, we can ensure that our educational practices remain effective and responsive to the needs of both teachers and students.

limitations of study:

Mentioning study limitations enhances the reader's understanding of the challenges the researcher faced during their work, contributing to a comprehensive analysis of the subject. Highlighting these difficulties can provide valuable lessons for other researchers, helping them avoid similar mistakes in their future projects. Additionally, detailing the difficulties encountered underscores the significant effort invested by the researcher and increases the appreciation of the work and research conducted. Furthermore, the thesis can offer solutions or strategies for dealing with these challenges, adding practical value to the research. Finally, by documenting and addressing difficulties transparently, the researcher enhances the credibility of their work and demonstrates a commitment to academic research, among the most important limitations we faced during this study, we mention:

- **Low Response Rate:** Distributing the electronic questionnaire during the summer holiday led to a lower response rate, as many teachers were on vacation and not checking their professional emails regularly.

- **Engagement and Participation: Lack of Immediate Access:** Teachers were less engaged and slower to participate in the survey due to being away from their usual work environment and routine.
- **Follow-Up and Clarification: Lack of Immediate Clarification:** With electronic surveys, there was limited opportunity for immediate follow-up or clarification of questions, which might have led to misunderstandings or incomplete responses.

Addressing these challenges in future studies by considering alternative distribution timings, enhancing engagement strategies, and providing support for technical issues can help improve response rates and data quality.

Section three: Pedagogical Recommendations and Implications

Recommendations

Enhancing Confidence in Test Design: The survey indicated that while a majority of teachers feel confident in their ability to design effective reading comprehension tests, a significant minority do not. To address this:

- **Professional Development Workshops:** Offer workshops focused on best practices in designing reading comprehension assessments. These workshops can provide teachers with the latest strategies and tools to enhance their confidence and skills.
- **Peer Collaboration:** Encourage collaborative efforts among teachers to share successful assessment strategies and provide peer support, fostering a community of practice.

Improving Accuracy of Assessments: With 23.3% of teachers disagreeing that their assessments accurately reflect students' understanding, there is room for improvement.

- **Assessment Review and Calibration:** Implement a process where assessments are reviewed and calibrated for accuracy and reliability. Involve experienced educators in this process to ensure assessments are robust and reflective of student comprehension.
- **Diverse Assessment Methods:** Incorporate a variety of assessment methods, including formative assessments, to get a more holistic view of student understanding.

Utilizing Feedback for Instructional Practices: Since 46.7% of teachers agree that feedback from assessments informs their instructional practices, but 26.7% disagree, it is essential to make feedback more actionable.

- **Training on Feedback Utilization:** Provide training on how to effectively interpret and use assessment feedback to inform instructional practices. This can help teachers make more informed adjustments to their teaching methods.
- **Feedback Tools:** Develop and share tools or templates that help teachers systematically analyze feedback and plan instructional changes.

Exploring Alternative Assessment Methods: With 50% of teachers agreeing that alternative assessments could better evaluate reading comprehension, there is significant interest in exploring these methods.

- **Pilot Programs:** Implement pilot programs that incorporate alternative assessment methods like projects and oral presentations. Collect and analyze data on their effectiveness in evaluating reading comprehension.
- **Resource Sharing:** Create a repository of alternative assessment examples and case studies that teachers can reference and adapt to their own classrooms.

Regular Updates and Improvements: Given that 30% of teachers do not regularly update their assessments based on feedback, there is a need for ongoing improvement processes.

- **Continuous Improvement Framework:** Establish a framework for continuous improvement where teachers regularly update their assessments based on student performance and feedback. This can be supported by scheduled review periods and collaborative discussions.
- **Resource Allocation:** Provide resources, such as time and professional development, specifically dedicated to assessment review and improvement.

These recommendations are derived from the analysis of the survey responses and aim to address the identified challenges. By implementing these strategies, we can enhance the effectiveness of reading comprehension assessments, better support teachers, and ultimately improve student learning outcomes.



General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Middle school teachers face a range of challenges when assessing students' reading comprehension. One major issue is the diverse reading levels among students, making it difficult to create standardized tests that are appropriately challenging for everyone. Additionally, time constraints limit teachers' ability to develop differentiated assessments and provide detailed feedback to support student growth. Another challenge is assessing higher-order skills like critical thinking and inference, which are harder to measure through traditional tests. Furthermore, teachers often struggle with resource availability, as finding varied, high-quality reading materials that suit different student needs can be challenging. Finally, ensuring assessments are culturally sensitive and free of bias, while also distinguishing between language proficiency and comprehension for English language learners, adds another layer of complexity to the process. Addressing these challenges is crucial for improving assessment practices and helping students develop their reading skills effectively.

The first research question in this study explored the challenges middle school teachers face in testing reading comprehension. To address this, a section of the questionnaire was dedicated to investigating the specific difficulties teachers encounter in designing and administering reading comprehension assessments. The second research question examined the strategies teachers use to overcome these challenges, with a separate section in the questionnaire focusing on their assessment practices and adaptation methods. This study employed a descriptive methodology, collecting quantitative data through research instrument: a questionnaire distributed to middle school teachers to gain deeper insights into their experiences and strategies.

A questionnaire was distributed to 30 middle school teachers in BBA, selected randomly. Our analysis revealed that while a majority of teachers feel confident in their ability to design effective assessments, a significant portion still faces challenges. Additionally, many teachers find that feedback from assessments informs their instructional practices, though there is still room for making this feedback more actionable. The interest in alternative assessment methods indicates willingness among teachers to explore and implement new strategies that could provide a more comprehensive evaluation of student comprehension.

Based on these findings, we provided several recommendations to address the identified challenges. These include offering professional development workshops, encouraging peer collaboration, implementing assessment review processes, and piloting alternative assessment methods. By focusing on these

areas, we aim to support teachers in improving their assessment practices and ultimately enhance student outcomes in reading comprehension.

In moving forward, it is crucial to continue collecting data and feedback from teachers to refine and adapt these strategies. Establishing a culture of continuous improvement and providing the necessary resources and support will be key to addressing the challenges in reading comprehension assessment. By doing so, we can ensure that our educational practices remain effective and responsive to the needs of both teachers and students.



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Appendices

Appendices :

Survey on Teachers' Challenges in Testing Reading Comprehension for middle School Learners

Dear participant,

Thank you for participating in this survey. Your insights are invaluable for our research on the challenges faced by middle school teachers in testing reading comprehension. Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement by selecting the appropriate response on the scale provided.

Section 01: Demographic information

1. Gender: male female
2. Years of teaching experience:
Less than one year / 1-5 years / 6-10 years / more than 10 years
3. Grade level currently teaching:
1ms classes 2ms classes 3ms classes 4ms classes

Section 02: General Challenges

1. Testing reading comprehension for middle school learners is challenging.
Disagree neutral agree
2. Students' varying reading abilities make it difficult to create standardized reading comprehension tests.
Disagree neutral agree
3. Assessing students' inferential and critical thinking skills through reading comprehension tests is practically challenging.
Disagree neutral agree
4. Time constraints hinder my ability to effectively assess reading comprehension.
Disagree neutral agree
5. The complexity of reading materials affects the accuracy of comprehension assessments.
Disagree neutral agree

Section 03: Resources and Support

1. I have access to sufficient resources and materials for developing reading comprehension assessments.
Disagree neutral agree
2. Professional development programs have adequately prepared me for assessing reading comprehension
Disagree neutral agree
3. Collaboration with colleagues helps me improve my reading comprehension assessment practices.
Disagree neutral agree
4. I have adequate administrative support for implementing reading comprehension assessments.
Disagree neutral agree

5. The curriculum supports effective assessment of reading comprehension skills.

Disagree neutral agree

Section 04: Assessment Practices

1. I feel confident in my ability to design effective reading comprehension tests.

Disagree neutral agree

2. The reading comprehension assessments I use accurately reflect students' understanding.

Disagree neutral agree

3. Feedback from reading comprehension assessments informs my instructional practices.

Disagree neutral agree

4. Alternative assessment methods (e.g. projects, oral presentations) could better evaluate reading comprehension

Disagree neutral agree

5. I regularly update and improve my reading comprehension assessments based on student performance and feedback.

Disagree neutral agree

Additional comments:

Please provide any additional comments or insights regarding the challenges you face in testing reading comprehension for middle school learners.