

EXPLORING ENGLISH TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES AND PRACTICES ON CRITICAL READING IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

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Abstract

This study explores English teachers' perspectives and practices of critical reading in senior high schools in Purworejo Regency. It aims to identify teachers' understanding of critical reading, the strategies they apply, and how they implement critical reading activities in the classroom. Despite growing attention to literacy instruction, critical reading remains underexplored in this context, as teachers tend to emphasize general comprehension and vocabulary over analytical reading skills. Using a qualitative approach, four English teachers from two senior high schools were interviewed and observed. The data were transcribed, coded, and analyzed thematically. The findings reveal that teachers demonstrate a sound conceptual understanding of critical reading and employ various strategies to foster it. However, a gap was found between teachers' stated intentions and their classroom practices, as critical reading activities were inconsistently implemented. While teachers' assessments and accommodations aligned with their stated beliefs, the inconsistency in practice highlights the need for stronger alignment between teachers' understanding and instructional implementation to ensure students receive equitable opportunities to develop critical reading skills.

Keywords: *Critical Reading, ELT, Senior High School, Teachers' Perspectives, Teaching Critical Reading*

Sari

Studi ini mengeksplorasi perspektif dan praktik guru bahasa Inggris dalam membaca kritis di sekolah menengah atas di Kabupaten Purworejo. Tujuannya adalah untuk mengidentifikasi pemahaman guru tentang membaca kritis, strategi yang mereka terapkan, dan bagaimana mereka menerapkan kegiatan membaca kritis di kelas.

Meskipun perhatian terhadap pengajaran literasi semakin meningkat, membaca kritis masih kurang dieksplorasi dalam konteks ini, karena guru cenderung menekankan pemahaman umum dan kosakata daripada keterampilan membaca analitis. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, empat guru bahasa Inggris dari dua sekolah menengah atas diwawancarai dan diobservasi. Data ditranskripsi, diberi kode, dan dianalisis secara tematis. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru menunjukkan pemahaman konseptual yang baik tentang membaca kritis dan menggunakan berbagai strategi untuk mengembangkannya. Namun, ditemukan kesenjangan antara niat yang dinyatakan guru dan praktik kelas mereka, karena kegiatan membaca kritis diterapkan secara tidak konsisten. Meskipun penilaian dan akomodasi guru selaras dengan keyakinan mereka, ketidakkonsistenan dalam praktik menyoroti perlunya penyelarasan yang lebih kuat antara pemahaman guru dan implementasi instruksional untuk memastikan siswa menerima kesempatan yang setara untuk mengembangkan keterampilan membaca kritis.

kata kunci: *Membaca Kritis, ELT, SMA, Perspektif Guru, Mengajar Membaca Kritis*

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Introduction

In the twenty-first century, readers face unique challenges as information flows from diverse traditional and digital sources (Roomy, 2022). Critical reading has therefore become increasingly important, particularly in the classroom, where it fosters students' ability to understand cultural, social, and political issues (Yoon, 2016). For EFL contexts, teachers play a key role in fostering these skills because reading instruction directly shapes students' language development. With overwhelming amounts of information available, students need teachers' guidance to filter, analyze, and evaluate texts critically. Nations worldwide have emphasized nurturing critical thinking and creativity in education (Yang, 2024), highlighting the importance of this issue.

Critical reading involves analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating texts beyond surface comprehension (Din, 2020). It requires questioning assumptions, identifying biases, and assessing arguments. Hajare et al. (2016) emphasized that critical reading is about understanding meaning through analysis of structure and style. However, teaching critical reading presents challenges. Students often lack motivation, with only 20–30% reading assigned materials (Edwards, 2024). Limited vocabulary and complex grammar

further hinder comprehension (Rohmah, 2018). Teachers also face restricted time due to test-driven curricula and lack of specific training in critical reading (Cho, 2015). These constraints often reduce critical reading activities to surface-level comprehension checks rather than deeper analysis.

Teachers play a central role in addressing these challenges. As Yunus and Ubaidillah (2021) noted, teachers should not only provide texts and comprehension questions, but also guide students to uncover both explicit and implicit meanings. Effective teaching requires scaffolding, motivating students, and creating a supportive classroom environment. Previous studies (e.g., Rohmah, 2018; Yunus & Ubaidillah, 2021) have explored problems, strategies, and reflections on critical reading. They highlight effective practices such as group discussions, inquiry-based learning, and long-term approaches to developing critical thinking.

Despite these contributions, important gaps remain. First, many studies have focused on students' challenges rather than teachers' perspectives and strategies. Second, most research has been conducted in universities or junior high schools, with limited attention to senior high school contexts. Third, little is known about how teachers' stated perspectives align or fail to align with their actual classroom practices. Finally, no study has examined these issues in Purworejo Regency, a region recognized for its commitment to educational improvement but still facing challenges such as uneven teacher distribution and socio-economic barriers.

This study addresses these gaps by investigating senior high school teachers' perspectives on critical reading and the strategies they use in classroom practice in Purworejo Regency. By combining interview and observation data, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how teachers conceptualize, implement, and adapt critical reading instruction. Findings from this study are expected to inform teacher professional development and curriculum design to better foster critical reading skills in EFL contexts. This study aims to explore teachers' perspectives on specific aspects of critical reading, such as the teachers' perspective on critical reading itself, its importance, effective teaching strategies, challenges in implementation, and also how teachers conduct critical reading activities in their classrooms. The following research questions have been formulated in this study:

1. What are senior high school English teachers' perspectives on critical reading?
2. How do senior high school teachers in Purworejo implement critical reading teaching-learning activities in their classrooms?

Literature Review

1. Teachers' Perspectives

Definition and Influencing Factors of Teachers' Perspectives

Cross et al. (2014) defined perspective as a specific attitude or point of view toward something, while Zeichner and Tabachnick (1985) described it as an organized collection of thoughts and behaviors used to address situations. Palawa and Rawung (2022) explained that a teacher's perspective reflects how teachers view classroom events, motivate students, and help them reach learning goals. Teachers play a crucial role in shaping students' character through continuous interactions inside and outside the classroom. Marble et al. (2000) stated that teachers' perspectives focus on creating meaning through teaching and evolve through reflection and professional development. These perspectives include teachers' understanding of their roles, curriculum, assessment, and the connection between methods and student progress.

According to Pajares (1992), teachers' beliefs about goals, conceptions of children, and curriculum strongly influence their perspectives. Sylvia and Maxon (1996) divided these influences into internal and external factors. Internal factors include personal experiences and professional knowledge, while external ones involve subjects taught, students, and institutional or governmental policies. When these align, teaching reflects beliefs; when not, a mismatch may occur. Thus, teachers' perspectives are shaped by both experience and environment, influencing their approaches and classroom decisions.

Teachers' Perspectives and Their Role in Instructional Practice

Teachers' perspectives have a significant influence on classroom instruction, student engagement, and learning outcomes (Marble et al., 2000). Their beliefs about students' potential shape expectations and teaching strategies. Jaihu (2021) found that teachers with high expectations design more challenging

and engaging lessons, while Miller (2018) observed that teachers with positive perspectives rated their teaching as more effective.

Ozen and Yildirim (2020) emphasized that classroom management and student engagement are linked to teachers' perspectives on student behavior. Teachers who acknowledge students' abilities foster supportive learning environments and stronger participation.

Enhancing teacher perspectives can be achieved through reflection, professional development, and mentoring. Leite et al. (2020) suggested that teachers must integrate self-awareness and authenticity to strengthen teacher–student relationships. Lehman (2022) highlighted mentoring programs as effective for improving teacher perspectives and classroom interaction. Navolio (2023) noted that collaboration promotes shared teacher efficacy, while Nishioka (2019) argued that perspective-taking enables teachers to understand students' needs better, improving communication and instructional practices.

2. Critical Reading

Definition and Importance of Critical Reading

Critical reading is an interactive and evaluative activity that involves analyzing, questioning, and interpreting texts (Kurland, 2000; Wallace & Wray, 2011). It goes beyond decoding words to assessing arguments and recognizing bias. Lyman and Collins (1990) noted that critical reading integrates text understanding with prior knowledge and metacognitive reflection. This method concentrates on a person's ability to interpret and evaluate the text at a high level and draw logical conclusions by drawing as close to the truths as possible (Comber & Nixon, 2011).

Critical reading fosters personal and academic growth, helping readers connect ideas, question assumptions, and evaluate sources (Din, 2020). In the 21st century, as information flows rapidly from diverse media (Roomy, 2022), these skills are essential. Yoon (2016) emphasized that critical practice in classrooms helps students navigate cultural and social complexities. Muhamad et al. (2023) found that regular reading enhances both language proficiency and critical thinking, preparing students for academic and real-world challenges.

By engaging critically, students not only improve comprehension but also strengthen writing, speaking, and reasoning abilities. Critical reading supports lifelong learning, digital literacy, and responsible participation in an information-rich society (Rahmasari & Sunarti, 2024).

Strategies, Approaches, and Texts for Teaching Critical Reading

Critical reading can be developed through structured and interactive strategies. Duke et al. (2021) suggested guided repeated reading, while Gustanti and Ayu (2021) emphasized skimming, identifying main ideas, and summarizing. Vocabulary knowledge and flexible decoding strategies (Moats, 2020; Duke & Cartwright, 2021) are also crucial.

Harvey and Goudvis (2007) highlighted comprehension processes such as questioning, inferring, and synthesizing. Petscher et al. (2020) and Duke & Cartwright (2021) emphasized metacognitive strategies like prediction and self-regulation to build critical understanding.

Wallace (2003) categorized critical reading texts into several types:

1. **Community texts** – e.g., advertisements and news articles that reveal social messages.
2. **Texts with embedded power relations** – such as political speeches and media posts that shape ideology.
3. **Biased or discriminatory texts** – allowing students to uncover prejudice in discourse.
4. **Texts with multiple interpretations** – including literature and essays to deepen engagement.
5. **Genre-based texts** – showing how language functions in different social contexts.

Engaging with these text types enables students to question meaning, evaluate perspective, and connect language to social power.

Critical Reading in the English Curriculum in Indonesia

Critical reading aligns with the goals of Indonesia's 21st-century education to foster critical thinking and problem-solving (Nuryanti et al., 2021).

Both the 2013 Curriculum (K13) and Merdeka Curriculum emphasize analyzing, evaluating, and interpreting information (Rahaded & Widodo, 2019; MoEC, 2022).

The 2013 Curriculum promotes competency-based and character-centered learning, while the Merdeka Curriculum introduces flexibility, autonomy, and differentiated instruction (Sulistiyono, 2025). English remains a core subject, focusing on listening, speaking, reading, and writing, with an increasing emphasis on higher-order thinking.

Both curricula aim to develop analytical reading skills, with outcomes such as identifying arguments, evaluating sources, and interpreting meaning. However, teachers' ability to integrate critical reading depends on their understanding, experience, and institutional support (Pakpahan, 2023). Effective teacher training and awareness are essential to ensure that students engage meaningfully with texts and develop the critical literacy needed in modern society.

Methods

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore senior high school English teachers' perspectives and practices of critical reading in Purworejo Regency. This design was chosen because it focuses on describing participants' lived experiences and interpretations of a phenomenon. The data were collected through interviews and classroom observations involving four English teachers from two senior high schools. All data were transcribed, coded, and thematically analyzed following Creswell's (2018) qualitative analysis procedures to reveal patterns and themes related to teachers' understanding and classroom practices of critical reading.

The participants of this research were English teachers from two senior high schools in Purworejo Regency. There were 4 teachers who were interviewed and observed. For the data source, the purposive sampling technique was used to determine the participants. Several criteria were used to select participants, as follows: (1) Currently teaching English in a senior high school; (2) Having at least 5 years of teaching experience; (3) Being considered by school administrators, peers, or the school's principal to have an adequate understanding of classroom practices and curriculum (4) Having

adequate knowledge of English language teaching, particularly reading, or having experience teaching materials related to reading activities, and (5) willing to voluntarily participate in this research, including being interviewed and observed.

The data for this study were collected through interviews and classroom observations with four English teachers from two senior high schools in Purworejo Regency. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in person to explore teachers' perspectives on critical reading. An interview guide with open-ended questions was used, while allowing flexibility to follow the flow of the conversation. All interviews were audio-recorded with participants' consent and later transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy. Classroom observations were carried out to capture how teachers implemented critical reading strategies in practice. Each teacher was observed once during lessons that involved reading activities. The observations were non-intrusive, with the researcher maintaining a passive role to preserve the natural classroom environment.

The interview data were analyzed following Creswell's (2018) qualitative data analysis framework. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. The researcher first read and reviewed the transcripts to gain an overall sense of the data, while writing initial memos to capture emerging insights. The transcripts were then coded, with meaningful segments of text labeled according to recurring ideas and patterns. Codes were subsequently clustered into broader categories to generate themes that reflected teachers' perspectives and practices of critical reading. These themes were described and illustrated using representative quotes from participants. Finally, the findings were interpreted in relation to the research questions and connected to relevant literature.

Results and Discussion

Results

1. Teachers' Perspectives on Critical Reading

The data collected from interviews revealed key insights into senior high school English teachers' perspectives on critical reading. Overall, teachers demonstrated a clear conceptual understanding of critical reading, emphasizing its connection to critical

thinking, evaluation, and interpretation. They recognized its importance in helping students analyze texts, identify bias, and engage beyond surface comprehension.

However, teachers also reported several challenges in applying critical reading instruction, such as varying student abilities, low motivation, and distractions from technology. Despite these challenges, teachers described implementing strategies such as scaffolding, questioning techniques, and connecting texts to students' daily experiences to promote engagement and comprehension.

While the teachers showed awareness of critical reading and its relevance, their understanding and implementation varied, with some focusing more on comprehension and vocabulary development rather than analytical engagement. A summary of interview findings on teachers' perspectives of critical reading is presented in table 1.

Table 1. Teachers' Perspectives on Critical Reading

Interview	Description	Quote
Definition of Critical Reading	Teachers defined CR as going beyond comprehension. T1 stressed its link to critical thinking and evaluation of credibility, T2 emphasized explicit and implicit meanings and the need to analyze and question information, T3 highlighted deeper meaning, questioning assumptions, and text construction, and T4 added that vocabulary shapes meaning and influences interpretation. All distinguished CR from simple reading comprehension.	<i>"The definition of critical reading is reading using critical thinking. The two are very much connected in essence. Before reading critically we must have the skills to think critically."</i> (T1).
Importance of Critical Reading	Teachers agreed CR is essential for students but emphasized different reasons. T1 highlighted efficiency (focusing on key information). T2 stressed clarity and full understanding, linked to literacy programs. T3 emphasized deeper thinking (questioning, recognizing bias, drawing conclusions). T4 focused on retention and reasoning, arguing that	<i>"Yes, it is important, because with critical reading, students are required to think more critically about what they read so they will get information that is not only stated in the text."</i> (T3).

	analyzing explicit/implicit details helps memory last longer.	
Critical Reading Aspects	Teachers linked CR with critical thinking. T1 stressed credibility and purpose of texts, T2 highlighted questioning explicit/implicit information, T3 emphasized questioning assumptions, and T4 saw vocabulary as shaping interpretation.	<i>"In my opinion, there's evaluation, synthesis, and then creation."</i> (T1). <i>"Vocabulary or the meaning of the text."</i> (T4).
Challenges in Teaching Critical Reading	Teachers reported three main challenges. First, T1 and T2 highlighted the difficulty of managing varied student abilities, since fast learners may lose interest if the pace is too slow, while struggling readers may be left behind if it is too fast. Second, T3 pointed to low motivation, noting that many students are reluctant to learn vocabulary or engage deeply with texts. Finally, T4 emphasized technology and distraction, observing that students accustomed to instant digital content after the pandemic are less willing to focus on sustained reading.	<i>"The biggest challenge is the difference in students' abilities. Some can immediately grasp the meaning of the text, while others are still confused about where to start."</i> (T2) <i>"The challenge that I feel is that students nowadays are less enthusiastic, like they lack motivation"</i> (T3).
Understanding of Critical Reading Strategies	Teachers described varied approaches. T1 encouraged students to think critically, evaluate credibility, and connect texts to daily life. T2 used scaffolding, beginning with simple texts and moving to complex ones. T3 emphasized step-by-step support, starting with explicit comprehension before guiding students to implied meanings. T4 focused on identifying key question cues (e.g., "Why?") to stimulate deeper investigation.	<i>"I usually start with something that is close to their lives first. For example, I ask them, 'When you see a product review, do you immediately believe it or check the source first?' From there, I invite them to chat about the importance of not just believing when reading. After they understand the concept, then we go into the text, find out what the author meant, see it from</i>

various perspectives, and discuss it together.” (T1).

“Critical reading strategy in my opinion is.., using a “Why?” question because that is critical.” (T4).

2. Teachers’ Practices of Critical Reading in the Classroom

Classroom observations revealed that while teachers made efforts to implement critical reading instruction, their practices often remained focused on comprehension-level activities. Questioning techniques were primarily literal, emphasizing the identification of main ideas and vocabulary rather than higher-order thinking such as evaluating bias or interpreting meaning.

Scaffolding was consistently applied, with teachers offering gradual support and modeling strategies to help students move from understanding explicit information toward implied meanings. Group discussions were also commonly used, allowing students to share interpretations and exchange ideas, though levels of participation varied across groups.

Textbooks served as the dominant learning material, with only limited use of authentic texts. These materials tended to emphasize surface-level information rather than analytical depth. Nevertheless, teachers demonstrated adaptability by differentiating instruction according to students’ reading abilities, providing additional support for slower learners and more challenging tasks for advanced students.

Overall, while teachers described employing various strategies to promote critical reading, observations revealed that these strategies were often reduced to comprehension checks and vocabulary exercises. A summary of these findings is presented in

Table 2. Teachers’ Practices of Critical Reading in the Classroom

Practice	Observation Findings	Notes
Questioning Techniques	While teachers described questioning as a way to	Common questions included “What is the main idea of the

	encourage analysis and deeper engagement with texts, classroom observations indicated that most questions focused on literal comprehension, such as identifying main ideas or vocabulary. Higher-order questions related to evaluation or interpretation were mentioned in interviews but were rarely observed during classroom practice.	paragraph?” and “What does this word mean?”. Teachers rarely asked evaluative questions about author’s bias, reliability, or purpose. Students’ responses were typically short and factual, with limited elaboration. Questioning functioned mainly as a comprehension check rather than a tool for critical inquiry.
Scaffolding	Scaffolding was frequently observed in critical reading instruction. Teachers provided gradual support through modeling, pre-teaching vocabulary, and guiding questions to help students engage with texts. These activities allowed students to progress from comprehension of explicit information toward interpretation of implied meanings, with adjustments made for students’ varying levels of ability	The teachers helped students who had difficulty understanding the contents of the text and provided support according to the needs that their students needed. Teachers also created a supportive environment by making sure students knew they could seek help.
Group Discussion	Both interview and observation data indicated that group discussion was used as a strategy in teaching critical reading. During classroom observations, students worked in small groups to discuss texts and respond to guiding questions. The level of participation differed among groups, but the activity created opportunities for students to share interpretations and exchange ideas.	Group discussions were used as the main activity in the lesson. Students were divided into groups of 3–5 to answer guiding questions after reading. Some groups engaged actively, debating different interpretations of the text. Other groups required teacher facilitation to remain focused on the task. Teachers asked each group to present a summary or key point to the class.
Use of Texts/Materials	Classroom observations showed that textbooks were the primary source of reading materials, with only one instance of an authentic text being used. The texts provided by teachers, such as discussion, descriptive, and	Materials included descriptive, procedural, and discussion texts that emphasized surface-level information.

Adaptations to Challenges	procedure texts, generally emphasized surface-level factual information rather than deeper analytical content. Observations indicated that teachers applied differentiated approaches to address students' varying abilities in critical reading. Additional support was provided for students who experienced difficulties, while more independent tasks were assigned to those with higher proficiency.	Slower readers were given vocabulary lists or teacher guidance to aid comprehension. Stronger students were asked to complete independent analysis tasks or share answers with peers. Teachers adjusted the pace of reading activities so that weaker students were not left behind.
Teaching Strategies	Interview data indicated that teachers described using a variety of strategies for teaching critical reading, including encouraging critical thinking, scaffolding, and connecting texts to students' experiences. Classroom observations, however, showed that these strategies were frequently applied in the form of comprehension checks, vocabulary support, and reliance on textbook materials. This indicates a difference between teachers' stated intentions and their observed practices.	Teachers asked students to identify main ideas and translate vocabulary items. Most texts were taken from the textbook; only one authentic text was observed. Activities focused on reading comprehension tasks rather than extended analysis or evaluation.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that English teachers in senior high schools in Purworejo Regency hold generally positive perspectives on critical reading. They described it as a process that goes beyond surface comprehension to include analyzing implicit information, questioning assumptions, and evaluating the reliability of texts. This conceptualization aligns with definitions proposed by Kurland (2000) and Wallace and Wray (2011), who emphasized critical reading as an evaluative and interactive process that involves analyzing arguments and identifying bias. Similarly, Comber and Nixon

(2011) view critical literacy as an ability to interpret and challenge texts, reflecting how teachers in this study perceive critical reading as central to developing analytical readers. However, while teachers recognized these higher-level skills, their explanations often remained general and were not fully connected to the academic demands of senior high school instruction. This reflects the pattern identified by Marble et al. (2000), where teachers' perspectives influence instructional practices but may lack alignment with curricular expectations.

Teachers also identified several challenges in teaching critical reading, particularly the wide variation in students' reading abilities and motivation. These challenges reflect internal and external influences on teachers' perspectives, as described by Sylvia and Maxon (1996). Internally, teachers' professional knowledge led them to adapt instruction to students' needs; externally, factors such as technology use and students' habits shaped engagement levels. The finding that students were less motivated to read due to digital distractions resonates with Comber and Nixon's (2011) observation that social and technological contexts influence reading behaviors. To address these issues, teachers implemented differentiated instruction and flexible pacing, echoing Tomlinson's (2001) emphasis on catering to diverse learner needs. While these adaptations supported inclusivity, they often focused more on comprehension than on developing higher-order critical reading abilities, as also noted by Brookhart (2010) in relation to assessment practices that remain surface-level.

In terms of teaching strategies, teachers reported using scaffolding, questioning, group discussions, and contextualized learning to enhance critical reading. These strategies align with Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development, which highlights the role of guided support in helping students progress toward independent analytical thinking. Observations confirmed that teachers implemented modeling, pre-teaching vocabulary, and group activities—approaches consistent with the social constructivist view of learning proposed by Comber and Nixon (2011). Such activities also reflect the metacognitive strategies outlined by Duke and Cartwright (2021) and Harvey and Goudvis (2007), such as questioning and inferring, though in practice these were often simplified into literal comprehension tasks rather than deeper analysis.

The selection of reading materials also played a significant role in shaping classroom practice. Most teachers relied on textbooks containing descriptive, procedural, and discussion texts, with limited use of authentic materials. This pattern contrasts with Wallace's (2003) recommendation that critical reading instruction should include diverse and ideologically rich texts—such as community, biased, or multi-interpretive texts—to stimulate deeper engagement and reflection. The observed text selection thus limited opportunities for students to explore complex issues, evaluate perspectives, and connect texts to broader social contexts.

Overall, the study shows that teachers in Purworejo senior high schools possess sound conceptual understanding of critical reading and employ a range of established strategies in their classrooms. Their perspectives are in line with theoretical frameworks on teacher cognition (Pajares, 1992; Marble et al., 2000) and critical literacy pedagogy (Wallace & Wray, 2011; Vygotsky, 1978). However, a gap persists between theoretical awareness and practical implementation. Teachers' instructional practices often remain focused on comprehension and vocabulary development, rather than fostering analytical and evaluative skills. As highlighted in the Indonesian curriculum (MoEC, 2022; Rahaded & Widodo, 2019), critical reading is integral to developing students' higher-order thinking; thus, professional development should aim to help teachers translate these conceptual understandings into consistent classroom practice. Bridging this gap will ensure that critical reading instruction not only supports academic performance but also equips students with the reflective and analytical skills essential for lifelong learning in a rapidly evolving information landscape.

Conclusion & Recommendation

This study explored English teachers' perspectives and practices of critical reading in senior high schools in Purworejo Regency. The findings indicate that teachers hold a solid conceptual understanding of critical reading and acknowledge its importance for fostering efficiency, deeper comprehension, and reasoning skills. They also employ various strategies such as scaffolding, questioning, group discussion, and interactive activities to promote students' engagement. However, classroom observations revealed a gap between teachers' stated intentions and their actual practices, with instruction often limited to surface-level comprehension tasks and textbook reliance.

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that schools and educational authorities provide more structured professional development for teachers, particularly training that equips them with practical strategies for teaching critical reading effectively. Workshops should focus on supporting classroom critical reading activities and integrating formative assessment to foster inquiry-based learning. Additionally, clearer curriculum guidance and adequate instructional resources are needed to help teachers align their intended goals with actual classroom practices and to ensure that critical reading is implemented consistently across senior high schools.

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Conflict of Interest

Potential conflict of interest, if any, should be reported here during data collection.

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