



## University EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Reading Aloud as a Teaching Strategy in Reading Classes

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### تصورات أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في الجامعات حول القراءة الجهرية كاستراتيجية تدريس في حصص القراءة

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#### Abstract

This study investigates university EFL teachers' perceptions of reading aloud as a teaching strategy in reading classes. Although reading aloud is often associated with young learners, it remains a potentially valuable instructional practice for enhancing comprehension, pronunciation, and learner engagement in tertiary EFL contexts. The main objective of this research is to explore how university English instructors perceive the role, benefits, and challenges of using reading aloud in their teaching. A mixed-methods approach was employed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. A questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 28 university EFL reading instructors to identify their frequency of use, perceived effectiveness, and attitudes toward reading aloud. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected participants to obtain deeper insights into their experiences and beliefs regarding this instructional technique. Data from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive statistics to highlight trends in teachers' responses, while the interview data were thematically analyzed to identify common themes and perspectives. The findings revealed that teachers generally conceptualize the value of reading aloud in developing students' reading comprehension and engagement, although contextual factors such as large class sizes and time constraints influence their instructional choices. This study aims to contribute to the understanding of effective reading instruction strategies in EFL university settings and to inform teacher training and curriculum development.

**Keywords:** reading aloud, EFL teachers, perceptions, reading instruction, university, questionnaire, semi-structured interview.

#### المخلص

تفحصت هذه الدراسة تصورات أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في الجامعات حول القراءة الجهرية كاستراتيجية تدريس في حصص القراءة. وعلى الرغم من أن القراءة الجهرية غالباً ما ترتبط بالمتعلمين الصغار، إلا أنها تظل ممارسة تعليمية ذات قيمة محتملة لتعزيز الفهم والنطق وتفاعل المتعلمين في سياقات اللغة الإنجليزية الجامعية. الهدف الرئيسي من هذا البحث

هو استكشاف كيف يدرك أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية في الجامعات دور وفوائد وتحديات استخدام القراءة الجهرية في تدريسهم . تم اتباع منهج مختلط لجمع البيانات الكمية والنوعية . وُزِع استبيان على عينة من 28 أستاذاً جامعياً لمواد القراءة لتحديد وتيرة استخدامهم للقراءة الجهرية، وفعاليتها المتصورة، واتجاهاتهم نحوها .بالإضافة إلى ذلك، أُجريت مقابلات شبه منظمة مع مشاركين مختارين للحصول على رؤى أعمق حول تجاربهم ومعتقداتهم فيما يتعلق بهذه التقنية التعليمية .خُلّت بيانات الاستبيان باستخدام الإحصاء الوصفي لإبراز الاتجاهات في استجابات الأساتذة، بينما خُلّت بيانات المقابلات موضوعياً لتحديد السمات والمنظورات المشتركة .كشفت النتائج أن الأساتذة يدركون عموماً قيمة القراءة الجهرية في تطوير فهم الطلاب للقراءة وتفاعلهم، رغم أن العوامل السياقية مثل أحجام الفصول الكبيرة وضيق الوقت تؤثر على خياراتهم التدريسية .تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى المساهمة في فهم استراتيجيات تدريس القراءة الفعالة في سياقات اللغة الإنجليزية الجامعية وإفادة برامج تدريب المعلمين وتطوير المناهج.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** القراءة الجهرية، أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، التصورات، تدريس القراءة، الجامعة، الاستبيان، المقابلة شبه المنظمة.

## Introduction

Reading plays a central role in the process of language learning and academic success, particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. It provides learners with access to linguistic input, vocabulary, and discourse structures that are essential for language development. Among the various methods teachers employ to support reading comprehension, *reading aloud* has long been used as an instructional practice. Traditionally, it has been associated with primary and secondary education, where teachers read to students to model pronunciation and intonation or to create an engaging learning environment. However, in tertiary education, the practice of reading aloud remains controversial. Some EFL instructors view it as a useful tool for enhancing comprehension, pronunciation, and classroom interaction, while others regard it as outdated or unsuitable for adult learners. Understanding teachers' beliefs about reading aloud is therefore essential to improving reading pedagogy in higher education.

In EFL university settings, reading aloud can serve multiple pedagogical purposes. It allows teachers to demonstrate how prosody, stress, and rhythm contribute to meaning, helping students make connections between spoken and written forms of language. According to Gibbons (2015), reading aloud offers an authentic context for integrating the four skills—reading, listening, speaking, and pronunciation—within a single activity. Similarly, Young and Rasinski (2018) argue that reading aloud can improve reading fluency and comprehension by promoting active engagement with the text. Through oral reading, learners can become more aware of sentence structure, word recognition, and textual cohesion. Despite these advantages, many university EFL instructors still prefer silent reading activities, emphasizing the need for autonomous reading and efficient time management. This difference in pedagogical preferences raises important questions about how teachers perceive reading aloud and how their beliefs influence their teaching practices.

Teachers' perceptions and beliefs play a critical role in shaping their instructional decisions. Borg (2018) explains that teacher cognition—the combination of beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge about teaching—influences how teachers plan, interpret, and deliver lessons. In the context of reading instruction, these perceptions determine whether teachers view reading aloud as a valuable or ineffective strategy. Furthermore, perceptions may be shaped by factors such as teaching experience, professional training, institutional expectations, and students' proficiency levels. Exploring teachers' attitudes toward reading aloud can therefore offer valuable insights into classroom practices and the broader understanding of reading pedagogy in higher education.

Although several studies have examined the effects of reading aloud on learners' comprehension and pronunciation (e.g., Eldridge, 2019; Hsu, 2020), limited research has focused on the perspectives of university-level EFL teachers. Most previous research has

concentrated on younger learners or secondary education, leaving a gap in understanding how reading aloud is perceived and practiced in university contexts. As higher education institutions increasingly emphasize communicative and student-centered approaches, investigating how instructors view this traditional yet potentially powerful strategy becomes relevant and timely. By exploring teachers' perceptions, this study seeks to bridge the gap between theory and classroom practice.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is significant because it contributes to the understanding of how university EFL teachers conceptualize and implement reading aloud in reading courses. The findings will provide practical implications for curriculum designers and teacher educators, helping them recognize the potential benefits and limitations of using oral reading activities with adult learners. Moreover, the study will shed light on the contextual factors—such as institutional culture, teaching experience, and class size—that influence teachers' decisions to use or avoid reading aloud. By giving voice to teachers' experiences, the research will support the development of more effective reading instruction strategies that combine both oral and silent reading practices.

### **Thesis Statement**

This study argues that exploring university EFL teachers' perceptions of reading aloud is essential to understanding how beliefs about language instruction shape classroom practices. It contends that teachers' attitudes toward reading aloud—whether positive or negative—directly affect the extent to which this strategy is used in developing students' reading comprehension and engagement in EFL contexts.

### **Research Objectives**

The main objectives of this study are to:

1. Examine university EFL teachers' perceptions of reading aloud as a teaching strategy in reading classes.
2. Identify the perceived benefits and challenges associated with using reading aloud in university EFL settings.
3. Determine how frequently and in what ways teachers employ reading aloud in their reading instruction.
4. Explore the influence of teachers' background factors (such as teaching experience and professional training) on their perceptions of reading aloud.

### **Research Questions**

To achieve these objectives, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What are university EFL teachers' perceptions of reading aloud as a teaching strategy in reading classes?
2. How often do teachers use reading aloud in their university reading courses?
3. What benefits and challenges do teachers associate with using reading aloud?
4. How do teachers' backgrounds and experiences influence their views on reading aloud as an instructional practice?

## **Literature Review**

### **Reading Aloud as a Teaching Strategy**

Reading aloud has been a well-established component of language education for many decades. Traditionally used with young or beginning learners, it serves as a bridge between spoken and written language. The practice involves oral rendering of a text by the teacher or the student,

allowing for the simultaneous development of pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension (Rasinski, 2014). According to Eldridge (2019), reading aloud not only exposes learners to the rhythm and intonation of the target language but also provides a model of fluent reading. In the EFL context, where learners have limited access to authentic English input, such modeling can be particularly valuable.

Reading aloud is also regarded as a form of scaffolded instruction that supports learners' linguistic and cognitive development. Gibbons (2015) notes that when teachers read aloud, they make language visible and accessible, especially for learners struggling with complex academic texts. Furthermore, when students read aloud themselves, they actively engage with the text and demonstrate their decoding and comprehension skills. These functions suggest that reading aloud can play an important role in EFL university classrooms where reading comprehension is a core learning goal.

### **Teachers' Perceptions and Beliefs in Language Teaching**

Teachers' perceptions and beliefs form the foundation of their classroom practices. Borg (2018) defines teacher cognition as the mental processes that influence how teachers interpret, plan, and implement instruction. In reading instruction, these perceptions shape how educators select materials, design activities, and decide which methods are most effective for their learners. Phipps and Borg (2009) emphasize that teachers' beliefs are not always aligned with theoretical knowledge; they are often shaped by experience, training, and contextual factors such as institutional policies and student expectations.

In relation to reading aloud, teachers' perceptions determine whether they view it as a productive learning tool or a less efficient practice. Studies by Tsang (2017) and Al-Musawi (2021) found that teachers' attitudes toward reading aloud vary according to their professional background, teaching experience, and the perceived needs of their students. Some teachers believe that reading aloud helps build students' confidence and comprehension, while others see it as a traditional method that limits silent reading and independent learning. Understanding these differing viewpoints is crucial to addressing how reading aloud is used—or neglected—in university reading courses.

### **Perceived Benefits of Reading Aloud**

A substantial body of research highlights the cognitive and linguistic benefits of reading aloud for EFL learners. One major advantage is its role in improving reading fluency. According to Young and Rasinski (2018), repeated oral reading activities enable learners to recognize words more automatically, leading to improved reading rate and comprehension. In addition, reading aloud enhances pronunciation accuracy and intonation, helping learners internalize sound patterns of the target language (Hsu, 2020).

Another key benefit relates to comprehension and engagement. When teachers read aloud with expression, they model how tone and stress convey meaning, making texts more accessible to students. Chang (2011) found that university students who participated in reading-aloud sessions demonstrated greater understanding of main ideas and vocabulary retention compared to those who only engaged in silent reading. Furthermore, reading aloud encourages collaborative learning and increases motivation. It allows learners to participate actively, listen attentively, and engage emotionally with the content. Thus, for many EFL teachers, reading aloud represents not just a linguistic exercise but a means to create a dynamic classroom atmosphere that supports comprehension and confidence.

### **Perceived Challenges and Limitations**

Despite these potential benefits, several studies have reported mixed or negative perceptions of reading aloud among teachers, particularly in higher education. Some instructors argue that reading aloud is time-consuming and less suitable for advanced students, who are expected to read silently and independently (Anderson, 2003). Others note that large class sizes and limited instructional time make it difficult to include oral reading activities (Al-Mahrooqi & Denman, 2020). Another common concern is that reading aloud may focus students' attention on pronunciation rather than meaning. Nation (2013) cautions that excessive emphasis on oral performance can reduce opportunities for extensive reading, which is essential for vocabulary growth and overall proficiency. Additionally, some teachers perceive that adult learners may feel anxious or self-conscious when asked to read aloud in front of their peers. These challenges often discourage instructors from integrating reading aloud into their teaching, even when they acknowledge its potential advantages. Therefore, examining both benefits and barriers is vital for understanding how teachers decide whether to include reading aloud in their reading courses.

### **Frequency and Contexts of Use**

The frequency and context in which teachers use reading aloud vary widely. In primary and secondary education, it is often a daily practice, whereas in universities it may be used occasionally for specific purposes such as pronunciation drills or text analysis (Eldridge, 2019). Research by Mokhtari and Reichard (2004) indicates that teachers' choices of reading strategies are influenced by their instructional goals and students' proficiency levels. For example, instructors may employ reading aloud at the beginning of a course to build confidence and later shift toward silent reading to promote autonomy. Understanding these patterns of use aligns with one of the current study's objectives—to determine how frequently and in what ways university EFL teachers employ reading aloud in their reading classes.

### **Factors Influencing Teachers' Perceptions**

Teachers' perceptions are shaped by several background factors. Experience, educational training, and teaching context all influence how instructors view particular instructional strategies (Borg, 2018). Experienced teachers may draw on practical classroom insights, while novice teachers may rely more on theoretical principles learned during their training. Institutional expectations, class size, and students' language proficiency can also affect whether teachers perceive reading aloud as suitable for their teaching environment. Additionally, cultural and educational traditions play a role. In some EFL contexts, oral reading is deeply embedded in learning practices, while in others, it may be considered unnecessary at the tertiary level. Therefore, exploring these influences provides a fuller understanding of why teachers' perceptions differ and how these differences impact their pedagogical choices.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study employs a mixed-methods design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to explore university EFL teachers' perceptions of reading aloud as a teaching strategy. The mixed-methods approach was chosen to provide both breadth and depth: the quantitative component offers measurable patterns of perception and frequency of use, while the qualitative component reveals the underlying reasons, beliefs, and contextual influences shaping those perceptions. According to Creswell (2014), integrating quantitative and qualitative data allows for a more comprehensive understanding of complex educational phenomena than either approach alone. The design of this study is descriptive and exploratory. It does not attempt to manipulate variables or establish causal relationships; instead, it seeks to describe teachers' existing attitudes and experiences. The questionnaire serves as the primary

quantitative tool, while semi-structured interviews provide qualitative insights that complement and enrich the numerical findings. The overall methodological orientation aligns with an interpretivist perspective, acknowledging that teachers' perceptions are subjective, context-dependent, and shaped by personal and institutional experiences.

### **Participants**

The participants in this study will be university EFL teachers who teach reading or integrated language skills courses in English departments at public and private universities. Approximately 25 to 30 instructors will be selected to complete the questionnaire, and a smaller subset of six to eight teachers will be invited to participate in semi-structured interviews. All participants will be informed about the purpose of the study and will voluntarily consent to participate. Confidentiality will be maintained by assigning pseudonyms and by excluding any identifying information from the data presentation. To collect comprehensive data, two primary instruments will be used: a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview.

### **Questionnaire**

The questionnaire is designed to gather quantitative data about teachers' perceptions, attitudes, and practices related to reading aloud. It will include both closed-ended and open-ended questions and will be divided into four main sections. The questionnaire will be piloted with a small group of teachers (3–5 participants) to ensure clarity and reliability before being distributed to the full sample.

### **Semi-Structured Interview**

To complement the questionnaire data, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with a subset of participants. These interviews will allow for deeper exploration of teachers' beliefs, experiences, and the reasoning behind their perceptions. The interview guide will include open-ended questions. Each interview will last approximately 30–45 minutes and will be conducted either face-to-face or online via video conferencing, depending on participants' availability. Interviews will be audio-recorded with consent and later transcribed for analysis. Data collection will proceed in three stages: preparation phase, questionnaire administration and interview phase.

### **Data Analysis**

#### **Quantitative Data Analysis**

The quantitative data from the questionnaire will be analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage). This will provide an overview of teachers' general attitudes, frequency of reading aloud use, and perceived benefits and challenges. Where appropriate, cross-tabulations will be used to identify relationships between teachers' background variables (e.g., experience, qualification) and their perceptions of reading aloud. The data will be processed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to ensure accuracy and consistency in the analysis.

#### **Qualitative Data Analysis**

The qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews will be analyzed using thematic analysis, as described by Braun and Clarke (2006).

To enhance trustworthiness, the researcher will employ triangulation by comparing findings from the questionnaire and interviews, ensuring that quantitative trends are supported by qualitative insights. Additionally, peer debriefing and member checking will be used to validate interpretations.

## Results

This section presents the results of the study based on questionnaire data (quantitative) and semi-structured interviews (qualitative). The quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS, while qualitative responses were analyzed thematically.

### 1. Demographic Information of Participants

A total of 28 university EFL teachers completed the questionnaire. The demographic breakdown is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Participant Demographics.**

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
- Male	12	42.9
- Female	16	57.1
Teaching Experience (Years)		
- 1–5	6	21.4
- 6–10	10	35.7
- 11–20	9	32.1
- 21+	3	10.8
Highest Qualification		
- Bachelor's	5	17.9
- Master's	20	71.4
- PhD	3	10.7

### 2. Frequency of Using Reading Aloud

Participants were asked how often they use reading aloud in their classes. Responses were measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Never, 5 = Always).

**Table 2: Frequency of Reading Aloud Use.**

Frequency	N	Percentage (%)
Never	2	7.1
Rarely	6	21.4
Sometimes	12	42.9
Often	5	17.9
Always	3	10.7

### 3. Teachers' Perceptions of Reading Aloud

Teachers rated their agreement with statements about the benefits of reading aloud (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). Descriptive statistics were calculated in SPSS.

**Table 3: Perceptions of Reading Aloud**

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Reading aloud improves students' comprehension	4.21	0.78
Reading aloud helps students improve pronunciation	4.46	0.65
Reading aloud increases student engagement	4.11	0.82
Reading aloud is time-consuming in university classes	3.32	1.05
Reading aloud is more suitable for beginners	3.86	0.91

#### 4. Challenges and Contextual Factors

From open-ended responses, the most frequently mentioned challenges included:

- Large class sizes (mentioned by 64% of participants)
- Time constraints (50%)
- Students' reluctance or anxiety when reading aloud (36%)

#### Themes from Semi-Structured Interviews

Thematic analysis of six interviews identified three main themes:

1. Pedagogical Benefits: Teachers highlighted improvements in pronunciation, comprehension, and engagement.
2. Practical Challenges: Teachers cited time limitations, class size, and students' discomfort as barriers.
3. Contextual Influence: Teachers' use of reading aloud depended on student proficiency, course objectives, and personal teaching philosophy.

#### Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate university EFL teachers' perceptions of reading aloud as a teaching strategy in reading classes. The results revealed that most teachers view reading aloud as a useful and supportive strategy, particularly for enhancing students' comprehension, pronunciation, and engagement, yet its classroom use remains moderate due to contextual and logistical challenges such as large class sizes, time limitations, and student reluctance. These findings align with and extend previous research on the role of reading aloud in foreign language instruction.

#### Teachers' Positive Perceptions of Reading Aloud

The majority of teachers in this study expressed favorable attitudes toward reading aloud, agreeing that it improves comprehension and pronunciation and increases student engagement. These findings are consistent with the arguments of Hudson, Lane, and Pullen (2012) and Rasinski (2014), who emphasize that reading aloud fosters reading fluency, supports word recognition, and models expressive reading for learners. Similarly, Chang (2011) and Eldridge (2015) found that when teachers read aloud to EFL students, they not only model natural rhythm and intonation but also scaffold learners' understanding of complex texts. The mean scores from the questionnaire (ranging from 4.11 to 4.46) indicate that university teachers recognize reading aloud as an effective means of reinforcing both comprehension and pronunciation skills. This reflects the view of Grabe and Stoller (2019), who argue that integrated reading practices combining oral and silent reading can strengthen text processing and lexical awareness. In the context of university-level EFL teaching, where students often struggle with academic vocabulary and complex syntax, reading aloud appears to function as a bridge between decoding and understanding (Nation, 2015). Furthermore, teachers' perception that reading aloud promotes engagement aligns with the findings of Elley (1991), who reported that oral reading increases motivation and attentional focus. In this study, several interviewees mentioned that students become more attentive and involved when listening to or performing reading aloud activities, particularly when the text is relevant to their interests or academic goals. This supports the notion that reading aloud can enhance student participation in EFL classrooms when implemented interactively rather than mechanically.

#### Moderate Frequency of Use

Despite their positive perceptions, most teachers reported using reading aloud only "sometimes." This moderate frequency reflects a gap between belief and practice, a pattern

observed in other studies on EFL pedagogical strategies (Borg, 2015). While teachers acknowledge the benefits, they often limit the practice due to contextual constraints. In this study, large class sizes and time limitations emerged as the two most cited barriers. This finding echoes Mekheimer (2011), who found that institutional factors—such as limited instructional time and overcrowded classrooms—reduce teachers’ ability to employ oral reading tasks effectively. Moreover, university-level reading courses often prioritize critical reading and academic skills, leaving little time for activities perceived as “basic.” However, as Rasinski (2014) argues, reading aloud should not be dismissed as a lower-level skill; rather, it provides a foundation for fluency and comprehension that supports higher-level reading processes. Teachers’ selective use of reading aloud—depending on text difficulty or student proficiency—suggests an adaptive pedagogical stance. Interview data showed that teachers prefer using reading aloud for lower-proficiency learners or at the beginning of new units to model pronunciation and comprehension strategies. This targeted approach aligns with Anderson (2008), who recommends balancing reading aloud with silent reading depending on learners’ needs and instructional goals.

### **Perceived Challenges**

A significant portion of participants reported challenges such as student anxiety, reluctance to read in front of peers, and classroom management issues during oral reading sessions. This finding corresponds with Krashen’s (1982) *Affective Filter Hypothesis*, which suggests that anxiety and self-consciousness can hinder language input and processing. When students feel nervous or embarrassed about pronunciation errors, the pedagogical benefits of reading aloud may be diminished. Large class sizes also restrict opportunities for individual participation, limiting teachers’ ability to monitor and give feedback effectively. This issue is common in many EFL contexts, particularly in developing educational systems where resources are limited. As Nation (2015) and Eldridge (2015) note, the success of reading aloud activities depends largely on classroom size, teacher-student interaction, and the availability of time for feedback and discussion. Another recurring issue identified in this study is the time-consuming nature of reading aloud, particularly when teachers attempt to include many students in oral reading. This concern was also raised by Gibson (2008), who observed that reading aloud can slow down lesson pacing, especially in large or mixed-ability classes. Nevertheless, some participants in this study suggested that short, purposeful reading aloud tasks—such as paragraph-level reading or teacher-led modeling—can balance efficiency and effectiveness.

### **Contextual and Pedagogical Implications**

The results of this study suggest that reading aloud retains pedagogical value even in university EFL settings, where independent and silent reading are often prioritized. Teachers recognize its potential to enhance comprehension, pronunciation, and motivation, but they must adapt it to their classroom realities. Based on these findings, reading aloud can be most effective when it is used strategically (e.g., at the beginning of lessons to introduce a text or model reading fluency), students participate voluntarily and receive supportive feedback to reduce anxiety. And teachers combine it with comprehension activities such as summarizing, predicting, or discussing meaning. The findings also indicate a need for teacher training and professional development programs that provide strategies for integrating oral reading in large classes. As Borg (2015) and Grabe and Stoller (2019) argue, teacher cognition and contextual awareness play key roles in determining how instructional techniques are adapted. Encouraging reflective practice among university EFL teachers may lead to more confident and context-sensitive use of reading aloud as a reading strategy.

## Conclusion

This study investigated university EFL teachers' perceptions of reading aloud as a teaching strategy in reading classes, using both quantitative and qualitative data from questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The findings demonstrated that most teachers hold positive attitudes toward reading aloud, recognizing its value in enhancing students' reading comprehension, pronunciation, and classroom engagement. However, the practice is used only occasionally, primarily due to contextual constraints such as large class sizes, limited instructional time, and students' reluctance to read aloud in front of peers. These results support the conclusions of Hudson, Lane, and Pullen (2012) and Rasinski (2014), who argue that reading aloud contributes to the development of reading fluency and comprehension when applied effectively. Likewise, the findings are consistent with Chang (2011) and Eldridge (2015), who emphasize the value of oral reading for modeling pronunciation and reinforcing text understanding. Nevertheless, practical barriers identified by teachers in this study reflect the broader institutional challenges noted by Mekheimer (2011) and Nation (2015) in EFL contexts. Overall, this research concludes that reading aloud remains a relevant and beneficial practice in university EFL instruction, but its success depends on contextual adaptation and teacher expertise. When integrated thoughtfully into reading lessons, it can complement silent reading activities, promote language awareness, and increase learners' confidence in oral and written communication.

## Recommendations

Based on the study's results, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the quality of reading instruction in university EFL contexts:

### 1. For University Instructors

- **Strategic Integration:** Teachers should use reading aloud purposefully, such as at the beginning of lessons to introduce a text or to model reading fluency and correct pronunciation.
- **Creating a Supportive Environment:** To reduce student anxiety and the "Affective Filter," participation in oral reading should be voluntary, accompanied by supportive feedback.
- **Meaning-Oriented Practice:** Reading aloud should not be a mechanical exercise; it must be combined with comprehension activities like summarizing, predicting, or discussing the meaning of the text.

### 2. For Curriculum Designers and Policy Makers

- **Addressing Contextual Barriers:** There is a need to recognize institutional challenges, such as large class sizes and limited instructional time, which hinder the effective use of oral reading tasks.
- **Balanced Instruction:** Curricula should encourage a pedagogical balance, integrating both oral and silent reading practices to support overall language awareness and confidence.

### 3. For Teacher Professional Development

- **Pedagogical Training:** Teacher training programs should provide specific strategies for managing and integrating reading aloud effectively within large university classes.
- **Reflective Practice:** Encouraging instructors to reflect on their own pedagogical beliefs and cognition can lead to more context-sensitive and confident instructional choices.

### 4. For Future Research

- **Expanded Scope:** Future studies should involve larger sample sizes and diverse institutional settings to increase the generalizability of the findings.

- **Impact of Proficiency:** Further investigation is needed into how teachers adapt reading aloud strategies specifically for different student proficiency levels and academic goals.

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### Compliance with ethical standards

*Disclosure of conflict of interest*

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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