# Preparing EFL Pre-Service English Teachers: Challenges and Solutions for Integrating Local and Global Reading Materials

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## ABSTRACT

Despite ongoing effects to improve Thai children's reading competency, particularly their engagement with reading strategies, concerns remain regarding EFL pre-service English teacher's (PSTs) ability to effective instruction these strategies. This study investigates stakeholders' perspectives on PSTs' reading proficiency and instructional skills, alongside their own needs in these areas. Data was collected through surveys and semi-structured interviews with five English teaching specialists, three ELT instructors, five school mentors, fifteen English education program alumni, and twenty-two current undergraduate students. The findings highlight key dimensions for improving reading strategy instruction, including addressing challenges and promoting best practices. A crucial theme emerged: the need to align locally-set contexts with global reading materials. This research identifies both problems and needs that can inform the development of curriculum and course design for PSTs, specifically in the creation of reading strategy materials. Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance

of integrating cultural awareness and cross-cultural understanding into English reading instruction to effectively prepare Thai students for 21st century learning.

**Keywords:** localized English reading strategy materials, culturally-responsive reading strategy materials, Thai pre-service English teacher

## Introduction

In the 21st century, non-native English learners face challenges in reading proficiency that extend beyond basic literacy skills. While lack of language proficiency significantly impacts their reading ability, cultural issues also play a crucial role (Kramsch, 2014; Risager, 2018). Learning content embedded in reading texts may not reflect the realities of non-native students' lives (Shimbo & Tendo, 2022; Thongrin, 2018; Wichanee & Thongrin, 2024), creating a significant barrier to understanding and hindering their progress in English reading comprehension (Adunyarittigun, 2012; Thongrin, 2016).

Addressing the issue of cultural relevance in English reading instruction is crucial, particularly within the curriculum of English education. Textbooks used across various subjects, including reading in EFL contexts, should prioritize cultural domains (McKay, 2012; Rattanawong & Thongrin, 2023; Risager, 2018; Sharifian, 2013; Wichanee & Thongrin, 2024). Reading strategy instruction serves as a key tool to support learners, especially preservice teachers (PSTs), in overcoming these challenges. However, as noted by Akyol and Ulusoy (2009), despite a strategic reading teaching background, the capacity of suitable reading materials preparation was also a remarkably knowledge highlighted for the PSTs' reading teaching effectiveness (Vieira, 2019). It highlights the difficulties PSTs face in reading teaching comprehension. These difficulties can become significant barriers in their future careers as in-service teachers, potentially leading to self-doubt or being perceived by students as less-effective educators (Hall, 2005). Notably, a highly qualified in-service teacher can significantly impact a large number of learners. Therefore, ensuring adequate training during the preservice stage is vital for fostering such qualified teachers.

Research on the challenges and needs of PSTs in teaching reading strategies to students remains scarce, particularly within non-English contexts like the Thai educational setting. Despite significant efforts to train English teachers for Thai students, studies highlight ongoing difficulties in PSTs' own learning and teaching of English (Klaichim, 2009; Oeamoum & Sriwichai, 2020). Furthermore, the root causes of their difficulties with reading strategy

instruction remain largely unexplored. Therefore, investigating these underlying issues and subsequently improving preservice teacher training in reading strategy instruction is crucial. As PSTs' need a comprehensive understanding of all English teaching methods and activities (Hill, 2014), professional development programs should specifically empower them in teaching reading, with a strong focus on reading strategy instruction.

To address the need for balancing local and global materials in PSTs training, this research delves into stakeholder perspectives on reading strategy instruction. Two key research questions, designed to gain deeper insight into the current state of preservice teachers' preparedness, guide this investigation:

1. What do stakeholders expect pre-service English teachers to achieve in terms of teaching reading skills effectively?
2. How do pre-service teachers perceive their own reading ability and readiness to teach reading strategies?

The findings from this research can provide valuable insights for policymakers, curriculum designers, and instructors of reading methodology and cultural learning. These insights can be used to refine PSTs education in EFL settings, ensuring that graduates are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively teach reading strategies while balancing the use of local and global materials.

## Literature Review

### PSTs' Problems and Needs in Teaching English

The presence of unqualified and poorly-trained teachers remains a persistent issue in various educational settings. For example, Darling-Hammond (2000) emphasizes the crucial role of teacher preparation in influencing student achievement. Completing rigorous teacher certification programs equips educators with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively guide students' learning. This is further supported by the finding that traditional certification programs generally lead to better student outcomes compared to alternative certification methods. Similarly, Hanushek (2005) highlights the importance of teacher experience and subject matter knowledge. While the initial years of teaching typically show the most significant positive impact, teachers with a strong grasp of their subject matter are consistently more effective in conveying concepts clearly and fostering student understanding. However, the research also acknowledges that the relationship between teacher test scores and student achievement is complex and not always clear-cut.

The detrimental effects of unqualified and poorly-trained teachers are also evident within the Thai context, as Noom-ura's research (2013)

demonstrates. This underscores the need for robust teacher training programs that equip educators with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively guide students' learning and development. Consequently, developing strong English proficiency, particularly in PSTs' English reading instruction abilities, becomes a critical challenge. As Adunyarittigun (2012) emphasizes, reading teachers play a vital role, as they should not only be able to teach effectively but also serve as role models for students in practicing reading strategies.

In the deeper focus, reading stategy instruction is quite complex specially for the PSTs to achieve and to teach it effectively in the classroom. Roehler et al. (1988) explain that to teach reading strategy, teachers require a expert organized knowledge, and according to their reseach, it indicates that there is a significant difference between the PSTs' teaching performances comparing to those done by the exper of teaching reading straegy. For the experts, they tend to teach reading strategically meanwhile for the preservice teachers, it is consideredly hard for them to do (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). It could be concluded that to promote the PSTs' experiences particularly in the strategic reading instructions, they needs a remarkable assistnce to learn and to manage their lessons as well as an understanding of how reading strategy is implemented in classrooms. Importantly, Grabe and Stoller (2002) underlined the experiences in which it is highly essential for the preserivce teachers' effective reading straegy rely on how to promote them the appropriate stategic reading steps and activities for teaching. They need precise comprehension on the reading strategy topics as well as the proper reading strategy explanation emphasizing on the texts they teach to empower their reading strategy lessons.

Developing strategic reading skills is crucial for EFL students' success. Effective instruction in productive reading strategies equips them with the knowledge and skills to approach texts purposefully and critically. As noted by Pressley (2000), the way students interact with the text they read as well as how they choose and use their reading strategy knowledge to fix their reading problems is important. Essentially, to accomplish reading strategy performances, EFL students really need for an adequate practice that develop them a high level-reading proficiency (Grabe, 2009; Habók & Magyar, 2019) while reading so that they can choose the right strategic reading types for examples, finding main ideas, using context clues, and inferencing from the texts, and monitoring the comprehension, to vanish their reading difficulty. However, to be able to do so, they also need a significant background of the lower-level reading ability about the lexical and syntactical knowledge for reading since both reading levels occur at the same time when

they read (Grabe, 2009; Habók & Magyar, 2019). Meanwhile, each EFL student with diverse reading levels can perform differently when they read. In this point, Fitrisia, Tan, and Yusuf (2015) found that the EFL students' reading performances quite weak due to their low-level strategic reading uses. This was in contrast to Sheorey and Mokhtari (2001), who studied the reading strategies of native and ESL students and found that the knowledge of reading strategy ability is highly recommended for the EFL students as a high-level of reading proficiency.

In addition, the importance of reading materials for strategy empowerment is crucially investigated among the EFL student scenarios, the research conducted by Azizah et al. (2021), Estuarso et al. (2017), and Wulandari et al. (2018) were significantly determined the EFL students' reading improvement particularly in comprehension and motivation after using the reading context that match their real-world background. The EFL students' real-world reality is a great source of their authentic reading practices that connects them to the cross-cultural worlds (Kramsch, 2014; Baker, 2012; Taylor, Stevens, and Asher, 2006). And local context reading is a great tool bridging the EFL learners to various ways strategic reading types (Maipoka & Soontonwipast, 2021). As Tomlinson (2011) emphasizes that using materials in EFL reading classroom is excellent way to engage the students to the learning activities purposively. And by that means, EFL students will be directed to the right learning path and centered the reading materials. It is noted that the appropriate reading strategy reading materials for EFL students' reading development is essentially the local context-based reading texts.

Consequently, to empower the PSTs the reading strategy, it is necessary to encouragement them the ability of reading strategy materials via the local context-based reading contexts. Therefore, the PSTs of EFL reading class should be highly learn to conduct such a lesson that link their students' cultural background to the real-world environment (Adunyarittigun, 2012; Thongrin, 2016).

## Local Contexts for Cultural Learning

Several scholars cited that cultures and languages are notably woven therefore to teach language is highly involved in cultural learning. As Agar (1994) states that, "*culture is in language and language is loaded with culture*" (p.28), as a result, the cultural learning is important for language education (Kramsch, 1993). For Kramsch (2014) reveals in EFL learning conditions or for non-native of English students, the teachers should not only concern on the global contexts in the EFL classroom since it is not the real goal for them to learn

English. English should be promoted in the 21ˢᵗ century for the students' communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities (Kramsch, 2014, p.297). To encourage these four aspects, the EFL students need to be engage with suitable contexts for their target language learning as well as the cultural learning emphasize. It is highly served by the EFA Global Monitoring Report, that underlines 'culture' for the equality on learning sources alongside with other concerning of age, ability, gender, socioeconomic statues, religion, occupation, and sextual orientation (UNESCO, 2014), the term of 'localization' has been highly engaged in the EFL curriculum.

The integration of local context using in English reading education becomes a crucial path on connecting the EFL students to their cultural and English reading learning at the same time. Many EFL researchers have explored to prove the essence of locally-based lesson for the EFL students' learning of cultural as well as the intercultural encouragement. For Rafael and Tamban's work (2022), it reveals the positive effects on the effectiveness of local contexts integrating in English reading materials that helps the grade two EFL students' reading encouragement. Likewise, Visconde and Lasaten's (2018) research indicates that using the contextualized and localized learning materials raises the EFL students be more confident in communicating to other people and less complicated to complete their task while learning. The localized context also helps them comprehend the social issues in which relating their real-life to the outside community. Similarly, the work of Limongco (2022) found that the localized learning research materials in teaching Afro-Asian literature vitally helped students be more engaged, interactive, collaborative, and increased their interests in learning by the localizing supplementary. However, in Thailand, despite the fact that Todd and Darasawang (2021) reveal that Thainess is highly underlined for English language teachers alongside of developing Thai students' English development, in reality, it is quite rare for using local-based contexts in English class (Wuttisrisiriporn & Usaha, 2019). Consequently, the integration of Thai local scenario context materials as a strategy for reading empowerment is still inadequate specially for the English teacher education Todd & Darasawang, 2021).

**Methodology**

**Research Design**

To address the two research questions regarding stakeholder expectations and requirements for preservice teachers' reading strategy ability and instruction, we employed a mixed-methods research approach (Bryman,

2022; Creswell, 2011). This research employed both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods: in-depth interviews and standardized surveys.

In-depth interviews delved deeper into qualitative data regarding stakeholder expectations for teacher quality in relation to reading instruction and specific challenges faced by reading teachers. This method provided rich insights into participants' perspectives and experiences, allowing for a nuanced understanding of their views and concerns (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002; Rubin & Rubin, 2011).

To gain quantitative overviews of the use of reading strategies among teachers, we used surveys to collect data. This allowed for broader data collection, reaching a larger sample of stakeholders, and enabling the identification of trends or patterns in their responses (Babbie, 2010; De Vaus, 2001).

Both in-depth interviews and surveys helped us understand the current state of PSTs, their ability for reading instruction, and the data that inform the need for localized materials designed to serve the students' needs better.

**Research Framework**

The research framework, which emphasizes stakeholder and preservice teacher perspectives on reading ability and strategy instruction within the context of locally-based reading materials, is illustrated in the following figure. This framework focuses specifically on reading material instruction that utilizes locally relevant topics.

**Figure 1**

*The Research Framework*
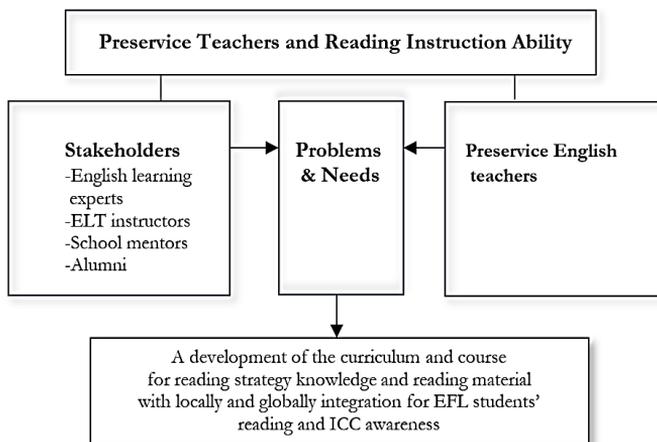
**Research Procedures**

Once the research received ethical approval, it was conducted through the following steps. First, all stakeholder groups participated in the approval process, and authorization letters were obtained. Then, data collection commenced with individual interviews of five English teaching experts. Three ELT instructors and five school mentors were also interviewed privately one-on-one, followed by the completion of a survey by all three groups. Next, fifteen alumni completed the survey, with five also participating in semi-structured online interviews. finally, PSTs who had completed all English education curriculum courses were invited to participate. All completed the survey, and five participated in semi-structured online interviews.

**Participants**

In this study, there were five groups of the participants and each group of the participants involving in this research was highly relevant to the English curriculum design.

**Table 1**

*The Participants' Backgrounds*

| No. | Participants | Numbers (N) | Positions/ Educations | Experiences of work | Roles of the curriculum design |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | English teaching experts | 5 | Associate Professor/Dr. | 15-30 years | Revising the curriculum |
| 2 | ELT instructors | 3 | Associate Professor/Dr. Assistant Professor/Dr. | 16-25 years | Teaching / Planning the curriculum |
| 3 | School mentors | 5 | Master/ Bachelor | 5-20 years | Mentoring the PSTs |
| 4 | Alumni (survey) | 15 | Bachelor | 1-2 years | Graduating from the curriculum |
|  | Alumni (interview*) | 5* |  |  |  |
| 5 | PSTs (survey) | 22 | Undergraduate | On-going the teaching practicum | Completed all courses of the curriculum |
|  | PSTs (interview*) | 5* |  |  |  |

## Research Instruments

The binary ways for the qualitative and quantitative methods were pursued in this study. The semi-structured interview questions and surveys were used as major research instruments. First, the semi-structed interview questions and the survey questions were drafted and validated by three experts' comments of the Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) (Rovinelli & Hambleton, 1977; Turner & Carlson, 2003). Following the instrument validation procedure, both research tools were first revised, validated and piloted to ensure the applicability of the instruments.

## Qualitative Instrument

Interview can be effectively tailored to specific needs of research projects (Rubin & Rubin, 2011). In this research, we employed semi-instructed interview questions that allowed us to ask follow-up questions based on participants' responses, explore unexpected themes that emerged, and gain a more comprehensive picture of each individuals' perspective. These interview questions were created and validated by a panel of three experts to ensure their clarity, relevance, and alignment with the research objectives. The questions were specially designed to gather data from five distinct stakeholder groups: English teaching specialists, ELT instructors, school mentors, alumni, and PSTs. Importantly, the interview questions were specially targeted at the perspectives and expectations of the English teaching specialists, ELT instructors, and school mentors. These included the topics of Thai students' reading proficiency; the causes behind the reading difficulties of Thai students; the PSTs' reading materials for EFL learners' reading; and the possibility of using an association of local and global contexts to teach reading strategy. whereas for the groups of the alumni and the PSTs, the interview questions were directly on the focuses on the reading strategy proficiency, the confidences in reading strategy instructions including any problems or difficulties found, the expectations on reading instruction knowledge, the favorable contexts for English reading strategy instructions.

## Quantitative Instrument

Leveraging the advantages of surveys, this study employed them to gather comprehensive data from a wide range of stakeholders in a manageable way (Babbie, 2010; De Vaus, 2001). The surveys were meticulously designed and validated by three experts to ensure their accuracy and effectiveness in eliciting data from four key groups: preservice teachers, alumni, mentors from the institution, and ELT instructors. Specifically, the study utilized a three-

dimensional set of final survey questions tailored for ELT teachers and school mentors. These questions focused on:

- Thai students' reading causes and weaknesses
- The perceived benefits of the reading strategy material development
- Concerns regarding PSTs' readiness in delivering reading strategy instruction, particularly regarding reading material construction
- Reading strategy areas suitable for lesson plans to promote effective reading strategy instruction
- Locally-based context areas relevant for sample reading strategy lessons

Furthermore, separate surveys were administered to preservice teachers and alumni, addressing five key areas:

- Reading strategies utilized for both teaching and personal reading
- Teachers' perceived needs for the development of strategic reading materials
- Advantages associated with the process of creating reading strategy lessons
- Anticipated reading strategy areas
- Locally-based reading contexts that should be covered in the lessons

By employing surveys tailored to each stakeholder group, the study aimed to gather a holistic understanding of various perspectives and experiences related to development and implementation of reading strategy instruction.

**Interview Procedures**

The interview process followed a structured approach (George, 2023). Prior to the interviews, English teaching experts received the research interview questions and semi-structured interview guidelines for the upcoming Zoom application platform sessions. Online interviews were then scheduled individually with each expert. Their 50-minute interviews were recorded and utilized in the subsequent data processing stage. Meanwhile, the four other participant groups received separtate access to the survey procedures. After a three-week period, all survey groups completed and returned their responses.

Following the interview scheduling, each of the four stakeholder groups convened separately for online Zoom application program interviews. Finally, a comprehensive data analysis was conducted, extracting

both qualitative and quantiative information, with a particular focus on key insights from all stakeholder groups.

## Data Analysis

The data analysis employed a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative methods (Bryman, 2022). For the qualitative analysis, thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data, identifying recurring themes and patterns within the stakeholder group excerpts (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In quantitative analysis, stakeholders' needs were assessed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from "highest relevant" (4.51-5.00) to "most irrelevant" (1.00) (De Vaus, 2001). Survey responses related to reading proficiency and difficulties were categorized into "yes" and "no" responses for straightforward analysis. Similarly, advantages and concerns regarding reading strategy instruction were categorized as "yes" or "no" for easier interpretation. A Likert scale was employed to analyze data related to reading strategy topic categories and locally-based reading materials (De Vaus, 2001).

To ensure the qualitative data's reliability and reduce potential bias, an external rater working in the same field as the stakeholders (PST education and English teaching) verified the accuracy of the identified themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

## Findings

### Research Question 1
### What do the stakeholders expect the PSTs to achieve in term of teaching reading skills effectively?

This article focuses on the expectations of stakeholders, specifically about the reading competency and ability of PSTs to teach reading strategy, especially when it pertains to developing reading materials. The qualitative information obtained from each informant group was essential in identifying the primary problems and needs, with regard to the preservice teachers' fulfillment of their reading instruction knowledge. Meanwhile the quantitative results acquired from all groups of the stakeholders can be potentially supported the qualitative data in several dimensions. It is highly noted that the research extraction into themes as well as the statistical data are vitally woven to explain the findings of the study.

### *The Problems on Reading Strategy Instructions*

To begin with, all stakeholders involved - experts, ELT instructors, school mentors, and alumni - focus on the fact that PSTs' reading instructions and confidences in teaching reading are still problematic.

**The PSTs' Reading Strategy Ability.** Firstly, findings vitally indicated the PSTs' reading ability to read strategically was firmly prepared according to all stakeholders' qualitative data. In this point, the English teaching experts pointed in the same vein that the reading strategy is remarkably required as the fundamental ability for the PSTs of English according to their learning as well as reading instructions.

> Strategic reading is an important ability for every student for both learning,and working. (Expert 1)

> Absolutely, reading strategies should be grounded as the basic reading lesson for all levels of Thai students (Expert 2)

> I think it is a requirement for every PST to acquire the reading strategy due to their learning and teaching (Expert 3)

For the ELT instructors, and the school mentors, they were notably assured for the reading proficiency before the practicum. Likewise, the alumni also pressed on their positive views on their own reading strategy ability that they received from the English education curriculum.

> From my experience, the PSTs can read and use the techniques of reading strategy well too. (School mentor-1)

> I noticed that the PSTs I have been working with are very good at all English skills including reading strategy ability. (School mentor-3)

> Since they completed many courses of reading strategy techniques, I am quite sure that they were well prepared for it. (ELT instructor 2)

**The Psts' Ability in Reading Strategy Instructions.** Moreover, it is evident from the standpoints of the English teaching experts and the ELT instructors, that the reading instruction knowledge that emphasize strategic reading aspects severely limit the PSTs' ability to teach English. Further from that, the school mentors agreed that the PSTs' teaching specially on reading strategy is quite rare to fully support the reading practices of Thai students. Also, the alumni insisted on the limitations of knowledge on methods and

stages of teaching strategic reading and the reading materials construction, especially on strategic reading instructions.

> It is obviously seen that when the PSTs teach reading, they hardly emphasize strategic reading lessons. (School mentor-2)

> I admit that although they try to teach reading, the strategic reading techniques are still hardly found in their classes. (ELT instructor 3)

> At school now, I have to teach reading too but I can say that stages of teaching reading strategy and the material construction are still a problem for me. (Alumni-4)

### The PSTs' Actual Teaching Involving Reading Strategy Instructions

In the closer view, the ELT instructors, the school mentors, and alumni crucially revealed the reading strategy teaching reality they found from their experiences with preservice teachers' teaching practicum. Three of the school mentors explained that even though some PSTs attempted to ask students to locate the main ideas or summarize the passages, they were unable to do so effectively since they still had to translate everything into Thai for students. Likewise, all of the alumni proclaimed that they hardly teach reading strategy because they were not sure about it. As a result, they could only focus on skimming and scanning the texts. Similarly, two ELT instructors noted that it was hardly found that the PSTs' doing the strategic reading lesson to teach. And for some of them who tried to do it, their stages of teaching as well as the exercises still not serve much for strategic reading practices.

> At that time, I didn't do well on reading strategy. Because I was afraid to make a mistake, I only taught students to skim and scan the text when reading. (Alumni-1)

> At their teaching practicum, I found that their reading lessons are quite far from teaching reading strategy practices variously. (ELT instructor-3)

> It is obviously seen that they teach reading by translating although when they teach them to summarize the passage because they are afraid that the students might not understand it (school mentor-1)

Intriguingly, those three topics were highly supported by the quantitative data that acquired from the stakeholders, included ELT

instructors, school mentors, and alumni of the English education curriculum, can be considered from the following figure.

At first, the three ELT instructors, who have been instructing novice teachers for over fifteen years, agreed that there are problems and a need to develop PSTs' reading instruction, particularly with regard to their ongoing exposure to strategic reading materials. Secondly, a group of five English teachers who have taught English for many years and coached PSTs during their actual professional practice in the classroom, known as the school mentors, directly shared their opinions, particularly regarding the challenges and requirements that the preservice teachers are likely to encounter in order to improve their reading instruction through the promotion of reading strategies. Lastly, fifteen graduates of the English education curriculum, working as an English teacher at school, significantly agreed on the difficulties they face and the need to develop their reading strategy and confidence in the real-life setting of teaching English to foreign language learners. That information aimed to demonstrate the perspectives of each stakeholder group on particular problems that the PSTs have been facing.

**Figure 2**

*The Stakeholders' Perspectives on the PSTs' Reading Strategy Instruction Problems*
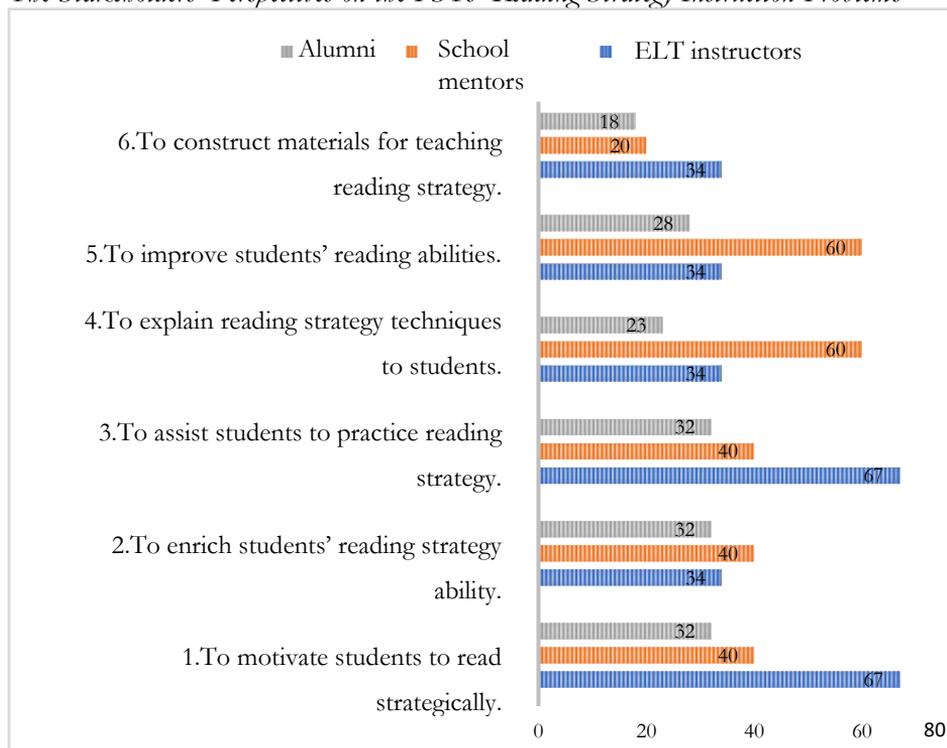
Regarding the above figure, the ELT instructors' views on the PSTs' problems on motivating reading strategy and assisting students to practice reading strategy (67%). And the rest of the topics of enriching students' reading strategy ability, explaining the strategic techniques, improving students' reading strategy ability and to construct materials for teaching reading strategy were on the same rate (34%). Meanwhile, the school mentors remarkably pointed on the PST's problems about explaining and improving students' reading strategy (60%). The topics of motivating, enriching, and assisting students reading strategy were similarly rated (40%). Finally, the alumni, the PSTs' problems highly focused on motivating students to read strategically, enriching students' reading ability, and assisting students to practice reading strategy (32%).

### The PST's Needs on Teaching Reading Strategy Instructions

According the research results, it is noted by the stakeholders that reading strategy instructions appear to be restrained to the PSTs' practicing. In particular, the English teaching experts accentuated that it is very important that the PSTs know who to teach reading strategically. Meanwhile the ELT instructors highly agree on that point despite their complication of including it in the lessons. And for the school mentors and the alumni, all of them concurred that it is quite a crucial need on the knowledge of reading strategy instructions. Further, all five groups of the stakeholders determined their concise viewpoints on the appropriate reading context settings for EFL students that possibly becomes useful for the material construction knowledge for PSTs' reading strategy instructions.

**A Need on Reading Strategy Instruction Knowledge.** In this focus, the five English teaching experts pointed in the same way that the PSTs remarkably need the knowledge of teaching reading strategy. However, due to a large amount of English teaching methodology and principles that were necessary to be taught in the course, all three ELT instructors realized that it was too hard for them to specially emphasize reading strategy instructions for the PSTs. What they could do was to teach PSTs to teach students some topics like skimming and scanning the texts to read, finding the main ideas, and summarizing the passages, and using some context clues to guess the meaning of the unknown words.

> Importantly, PSTs need to be well-versed in reading strategy instructions in order to provide them with effective teaching guidelines. So, they can be a good reading teacher (Expert-1)

> Because I have to teach all four skills of the English teaching methods, I must say it is quite hard for me to complete the reading strategies and the lesson construction in the same course. (ELT-instructor-1)

> There are many topics to include about teaching reading strategy so it is too complicated for them to learn it in a short time. (ELT instructor-2)

In addition, five of school mentors determined that the PSTs' reading strategy restriction was seen through their teaching practicum. Four of them emphasized that their teaching reading were highly related to word translation. Therefore, the knowledge of reading strategy explanations in various topics was an essential need for the preservice teachers. Also, the alumni pointed out their needs on reading strategy knowledge since it was highly used in their real teaching situations.

> When I observed the PSTs teaching reading, I found that they mostly translating the texts into Thai. (School mentor-2)

> I know reading strategy but when teaching, it is not the same. I don't know how to explain students to find main ideas or to summarize the story. (Alumni-4)

> Since I am working now, I realized that strategic reading knowledge is important. If I had learned how to teach it much enough, it would be good for me today to teach reading strategy to students in the class. (Alumni-5)

**A Need on Real-Life Reading Settings for Reading Instructions.** The qualitative data from the research procedures was highly indicated on the EFL students' real-world backgrounds. It is noted that Thai students' reading is not being improved in suitable reading setting. Three of the English teaching experts described that when the English contexts are not matched to the EFL students' background, it might be hard for them to comprehend the texts. Likewise, the ELT instructors, the school mentors and the alumni were all concurred with that point. Two of the ELT instructors as well as three of the school mentors similarly imparted that since the school textbooks are not relevant to Thai students, it turned a crucial obstacle for them to understand the texts.

> I think that one of the obstacles when reading is that the students don't have sufficient background on what they are reading (Expert-4)

Consequently, all five of the English teaching experts determined that for EFL students, it was essential to learn to read things that also served their real-life. Also, two of EFL instructors pointed out that by that way of learning, they would see the meaning of the reading lessons and make them feel more engaged to read. And it was the same line as three school mentors who concurred that Thai students' reading strategies needs to be improved in suitable reading settings. Similarly, every stakeholder of ELT instructors, school mentors, and alumni supported that reading passages relating to the students' life circumstances as mentioned would help them be more motivative to read. Especially, three of the English teaching experts and all school mentors noted that the English language they learned from the reading would also help them improve their English language ability as well.

> After reading the passages that are similar to their real-life environments, they are not only learning to read but they also learn how to use the language to express themselves too (Expert-2)

**A Need on Knowledge of Reading Material Development for Reading Strategy Instructions.** In this focus, all five English teaching experts pointed in the same way for several concerns for the PSTs' accomplishment of reading strategy instruction specially on the material construction. Five alumni added that if they had been taught how to organize reading strategy classes and given classroom supplies, they may have eliminated their difficulty with teaching strategic reading.

> I admit that I wish I had known more about how to help my reading lessons be more successful by teaching children to read strategically and creating a lesson on reading strategy. (Alumni-5)

> Importantly, PSTs need to be well-versed in reading strategy instructions in order to provide them with effective teaching guidelines. However, in order for preservice teachers to learn how to teach strategic reading, they might also need to understand how to create reading lessons where they can direct students through each element of strategic reading. (ELT experts-4)

### A Need on Reading Strategy Training for the PSTs

Further still, all the English teaching experts, the ELT instructors, and the school mentors similarly underlined on how important it is for PSTs to get specific coaching that helps them understand not only how to teach

reading strategy but also how to use both locally and worldwide contexts in order to teach reading strategy lessons effectively.

First of all, for the English teaching experts, they remarked on the essence of reading instruction coaching that it can be the way encouraging the preservice teachers' the reading teaching background. Especially, the knowledge of how to make a reading strategy lesson as well as integrating local contexts to teach reading can be their great grounded information for their teaching life.

> The knowledge they achieve from the training will help them to teach reading strategy appropriately. I think they can learn how to use local contexts to teach too. That would help be more encouraged to teach reading strategy in real life (Expert-1)

Similarly, two of the ELT instructors and all five school mentors revealed that by means of providing a certain course of reading strategy promotion, it is a great chance for the PSTs to further their ability in teaching in particular for reading strategy instruction and the reading material construction to teach. Also, four alumni concurred that if they had more knowledge on reading strategy and the lesson development, they would be a better reading teacher than they are now. Importantly, three of the English teaching experts agree on the fundamental information that learners possess as Fund knowledge, a great tool for teaching EFL students and helping them understand how to use the language in everyday contexts. Through the English lessons they experience, it specifically enhances students learning and encourages their use of the language in their real situations as specially revealed by two ELT instructors and five experts of English teaching.

> Nowadays, it doesn't solely learn English by imitating the natives, so I think Thai students should learn reading from the contexts that relates to their actual lives to make them be comfortable to read English (Mentor-4)

> It serves as essential to make connections between EFL students' experiences and the real world of English usage. Allow them to use their personal knowledge bases to aid in their understanding of the English classes (Expert-5)

In the deeper emphasis, every English expert specified that connecting the local and global settings can serve as an ideal way to help EFL students grasp the importance of international and cultural knowledge in English lessons. By helping EFL students understand the similarities between their own and other cultures, it raises intercultural awareness. Importantly, all

experts and ELT instructors revealed that that is the way to promote PSTs' comprehension for teaching English literacy as well as ICC learning encouragement via the base of critical literacy as a starting point for English courses.

> They can develop abilities to read by making the most of their surroundings. Students will find it helpful to apply the themes that combine aspects of Thai and global cultures when attempting to understand the texts they are reading. (Expert-4)

The above data was highly supported by the research quantitative results determined by three groups of the stakeholders; the ELT instructors, the school mentors, and the alumni, that their viewpoints of the PSTs' need to be coached for the reading strategy instruction and material constructions of locally-based reading setting was concisely evident as the followings.

**Figure 3.**

*Training Needs for PSTs Focused on Reading Strategy Instruction and Material Construction Within Local Contexts*
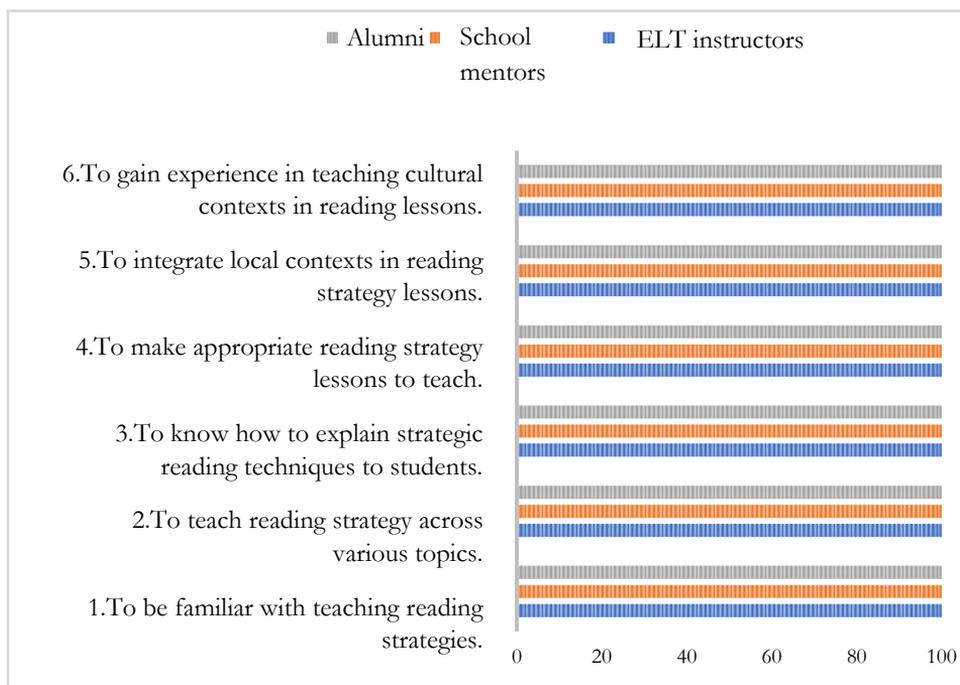


The figure illustrates the demands of the stakeholders in a variety of problems quite apparent, and it illustrates how the PSTs can benefit from this

after training. Also, the perspectives of all three groups of stakeholders on every area on which the PSTs' ability to teach reading gained the significantly highest rate.

In addition, all three stakeholder groups concurred that PSTs are adequately prepared to complete the training course and their readiness in three different regards. It is noted that all three stakeholders underlined the PSTs' readiness is remarkably indicated for all elements as the followings.
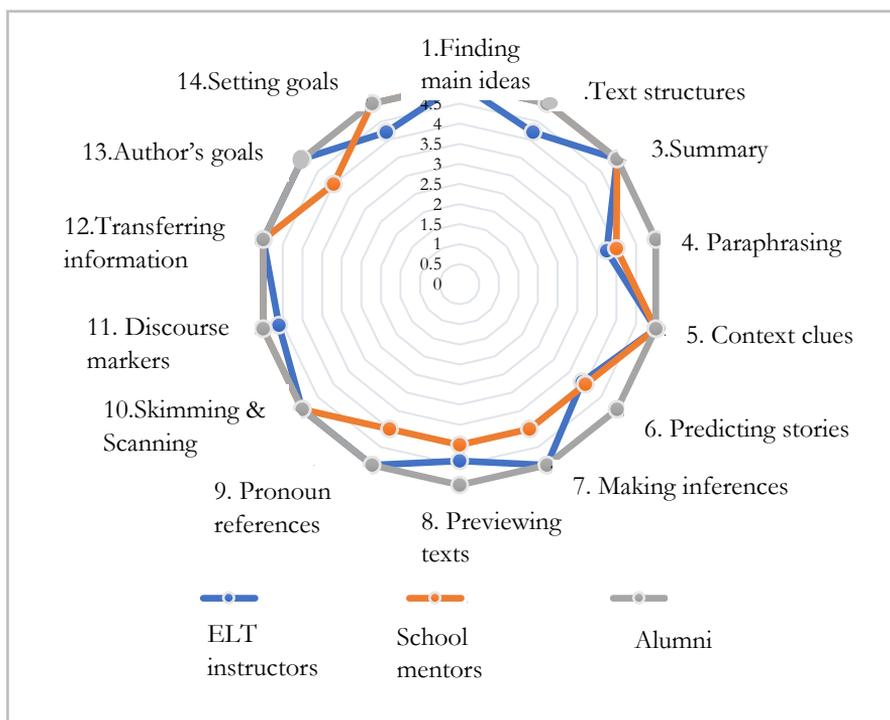
**Figure 4.**

*Stakeholders' Perspectives on PSTs' Readiness for Training in Reading Strategy Instruction*
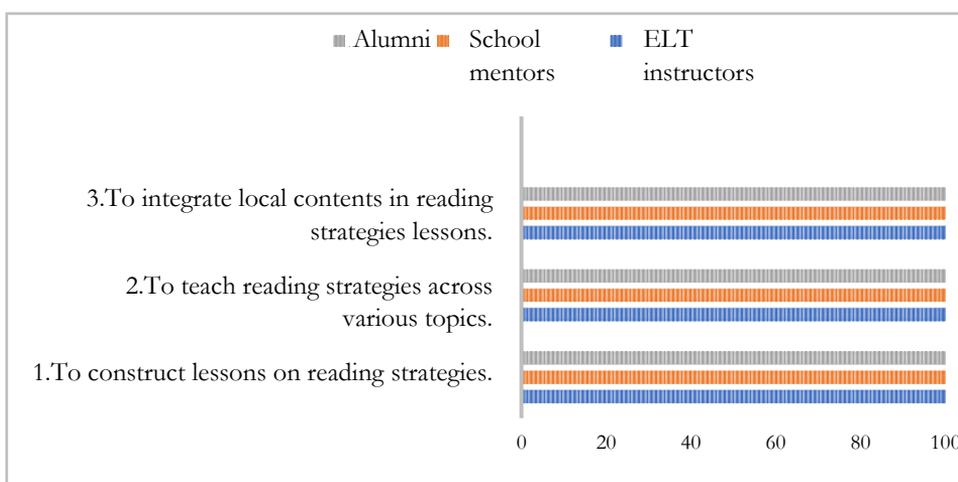


The three stakeholders' quantitative results pointed out several dimensions of the PSTs' difficulties and demands in reading strategy instruction and locally-based lesson construction to promote the reading strategy teaching for the EFL students. Further, the stakeholders' needs on the topics of reading strategy instructions as well as the locally-based context areas were also identified as the follows.

**Figure 5.**

*The Stakeholders' Perspectives on Topics of Reading for the Training of Reading Strategy Instruction Promotion*



The above figures indicated that among the fourteen topics of reading strategy, the topics of "Finding main ideas", "Summary", "Context clues", "Skimming & Scanning", and "Transforming information" gained the highest rates equally from three groups of the stakeholders. Meanwhile, "Text structures", "Discourse markers", "Author's goals" and "Setting goals" turned the second highest rate for the ELT instructors and the school mentors. Finally, "Paraphrasing", "Predicting stories", "Previewing texts", and "Pronoun references" seemed to be the last rate of all.

**Figure 6.**

*Stakeholders' Perspectives on Local Context Topics for Reading Strategy Training*
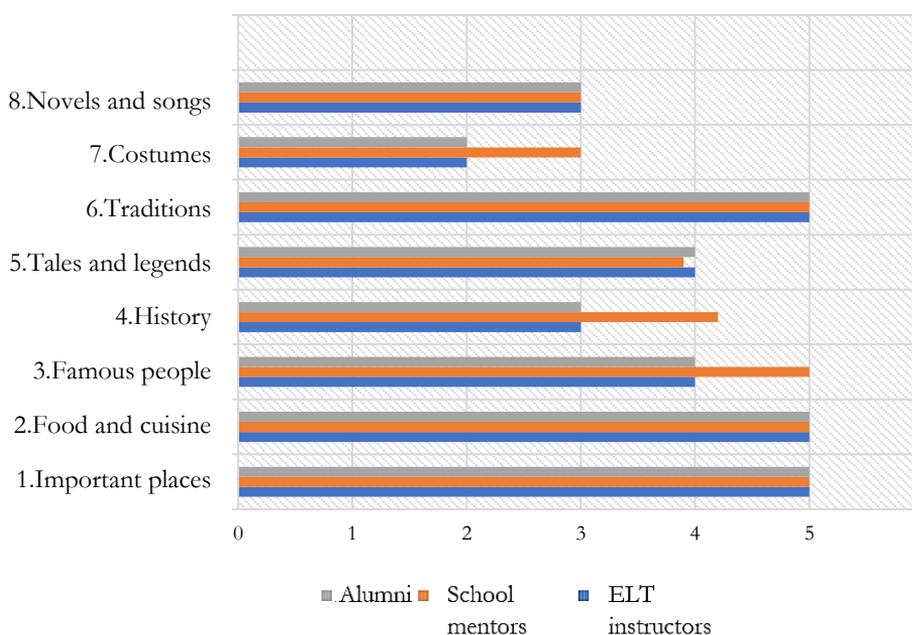


The above figure showed the stakeholders' views on the topics of locally and globally-based reading that should be included in the lessons which the highest rates of the most relevant for all three informers are "Important places", "Food and cuisine", and "Traditions". The second is the topics of "Famous people", 'Tales and legends.' The third is "History" and "Novels and songs" and "Costumers" is the least relevant of the ELT instructors and the alumni's views but for the school mentors, the "History" and "Costumes" topics are a slightly higher rate comparing to those that had been made by the ELT instructors and the alumni. In the deeper focus, the qualitative data was also pursued to fulfil the second research inquiry.

**Research Question 2:**
**How do pre-service English teachers perceive their own reading ability and readiness to teach reading strategies?**

With regard the study's second research query, the five PSTs who had completed the English Education curriculum and were awaiting their teaching practicum periods in schools were involved in the semi-structured interview

as well as the survey completion in order to fulfil the research work inquiry. In this point, both qualitative and quantitative data was crucially integrated and the findings could be significantly separated in three major topics on the PSTs' viewpoints; the confidence on teaching, the text selection knowledge, needs on integration of reading strategy and ICC learning.

### *The confidence in teaching reading strategy*

According to the collection of qualitative data from five PSTs' interview, they view regarding their teaching confidence in reading strategy instructions and the reading lesson construction was highly determined.

**The PSTs' Restrictions.** First, all five PSTs precisely indicated their limited confidence in teaching reading strategy. All five of them agreed that their restriction on the reading strategy knowledge was served as a primary reason for their uncertainty on teaching. Also, four of the PSTs thought teaching reading strategy was rather complicate to teach while three of them revealed their worry especially in the stages or teaching and the explanation of the reading strategy techniques to students when teaching reading strategy. Further, two of them highly imparted their restriction on the reading strategy lesson design. Last, the PSTs pressed on their restriction on the practicing to teach reading strategy in particular. As a result, they were unsure to teach reading strategy in the classroom.

> I am not sure if I have enough knowledge to teach reading strategy to students. I don't know how to explain the reading strategy to students. (PST-2)

> For me, teaching reading strategy is hard because I don't know how to design the lesson to teach it so I am not sure how to teach it either. (PST-3)

Underlining the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires of the twenty-two PSTs, it significantly supported the student teachers' focus on their reading strategy confidence. To focus on the primary of PSTs' problems in regard on strategic reading confidence, a certain category of reading strategically is included. Seven topics of reading strategies are identified by twenty-two PSTs as their reading problems. And all those issues can be determined by the following figures.

**Figure 7.**

*A Result of PSTs' Reading Strategy Instruction Problems*
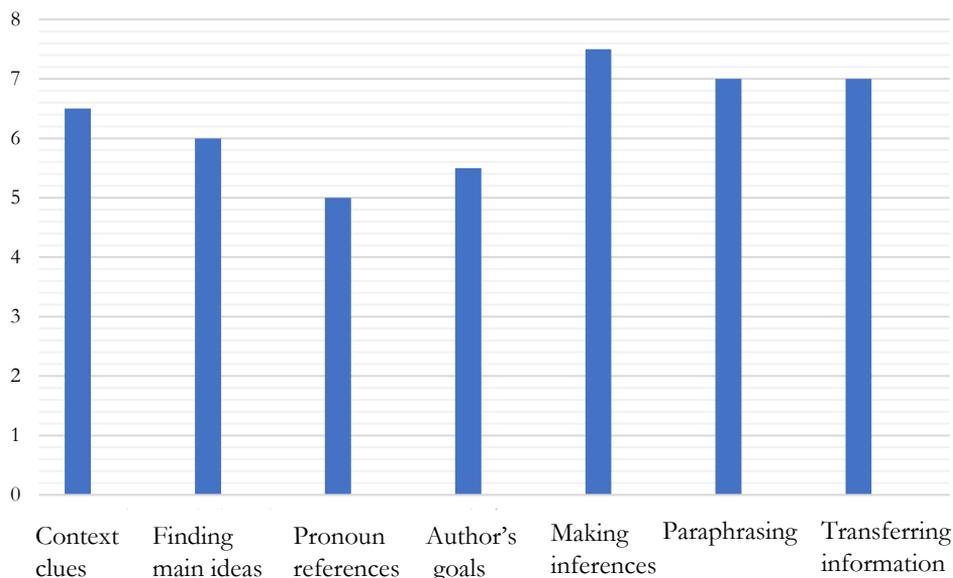


From the figure, the responses to the survey led the PSTs to confront their knowledge and confidence in reading instruction especially strategic reading aspects in "Making inferences" was in the first rate of the PSTs' problems while "Paraphrasing", and "Transferring information" were the second. Moreover, the topic of "Context clues" was ranked the third place and the followings were "Finding main ideas", "Author's goals", and "Pronoun references" for the fourth, fifth, and the last of the PST's reading instruction problems.

**The Knowledge of Text Selections.** In addition, to teach reading strategy suitably, all five PSTs pinpointed that they need special comprehension on the aspects of reading strategy passages. Three of them realized that they needed to know how to notice the strategic reading texts to teach because they would know the topic of reading strategy they need to explain to students. Moreover, two of the PSTs revealed that the knowledge of text selections would be benefit when they choose the passage to teach strategic reading to students. Finally, two of them noted that they had only little knowledge on reading sources for the reading strategy lessons and that was a reason why they needed to know more how to choose the appropriate texts to teach reading strategy.

I am not sure what kind of reading passages should be used
while teaching reading strategy." (PST-4)

**The Need for Knowledge in Reading Strategy Instruction.**
Regarding the research qualitative data, all five PSTs essentially imparted their
need on the reading strategy instruction knowledge as well as the integration
of reading strategy lesson and ICC learning.

**A Need on Reading Strategy Instructions.** Owing to the demands
on how to explain the stages of reading strategies lessons, the types of
strategic reading to teach, the boosting of local context using, and especially
the comprehension on conducting a reading material to teach reading
strategy, all of them were significantly positive for the coaching of the reading
strategy instruction.

I believe that I should be able to teach students each aspect of
strategic reading. Also, I'd like to know the stages of teaching
so that I can properly teach my students strategic reading. (PST-
5)

Likewise, from the research procedure, the quantitative data
essentially supported the PSTs' demands on reading strategy instruction
training.

**Figure 8.**

*The Psts' Needs On Reading Strategy Instruction Training*
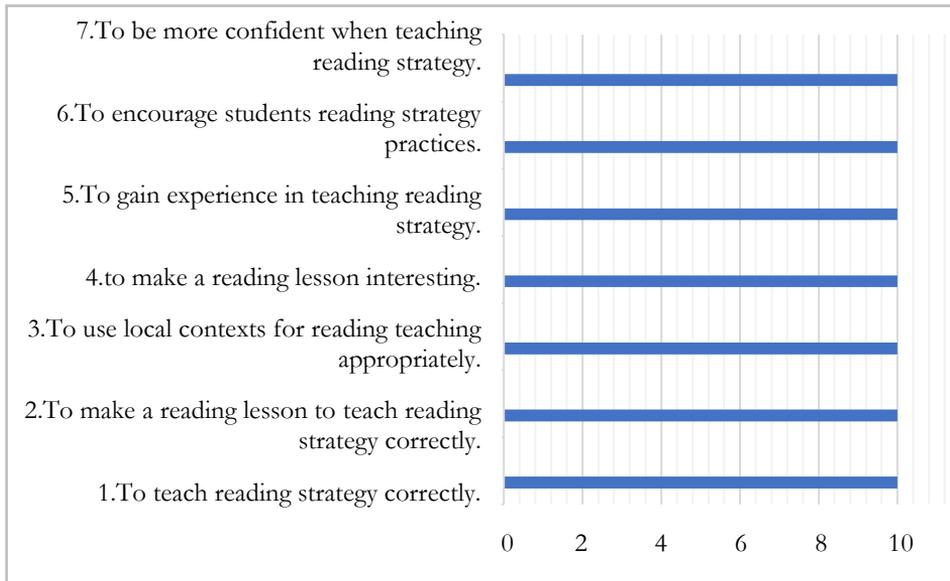


The twenty-two PSTs were highly certain on the confidence in all topics which involve to teach reading strategy correctly, to make a reading lesson to teach reading strategy correctly, to use local contexts for reading teaching appropriately, to make a reading lesson interesting, to gain experience in teaching reading strategy, to encourage students reading practices, and to be more confident when teaching reading strategy.

Furthermore, regarding the topics of reading strategy included in the lesson of reading strategies lesson promotion for the reading strategy instruction training, the PSTs could be determined them as follows.

**A Need on Topics of Reading Strategy and ICC Learning.**
Moreover, based on the qualitative data collection, all five PSTs emphasize the limitation on the knowledge of reading strategy instruction and ICC learning knowledge. And it is necessary to be promoted to the PSTs via a construction of reading lessons particularly in English reading strategy teaching.

> Because reading lessons may be connected with cultural and
> global education through locally based contexts, I wish to get

more understanding about teaching children not just English
but also a variety of cultural learning. (PST-1)

In the same line, the quantitative data derived from the PSTs highly
back up the preservice teachers needs for the topics of reading strategy
instruction training.

**Figure 9.**

*The PSTs' Perspectives on Topics of Reading for the Training of Reading Strategy
Instruction Promotion*
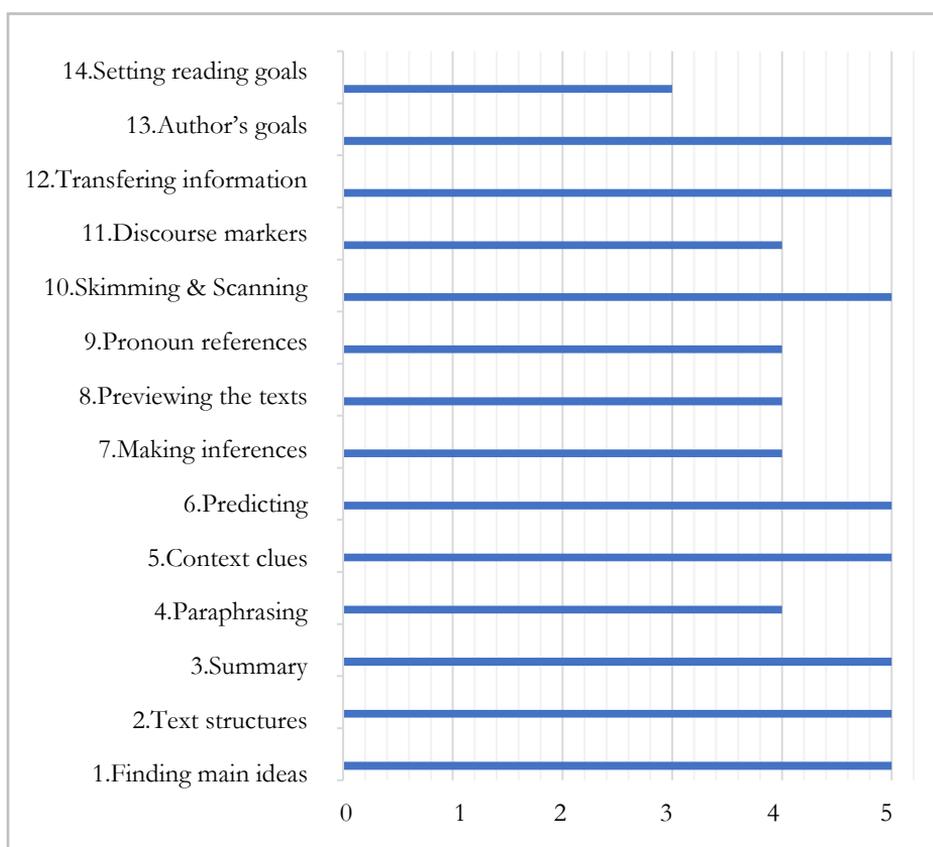


It is noted that the PSTs viewed on the topics of "Finding main
ideas", "Text structures", "Summary", "Context clues", "Predicting",
"Skimming and scanning", "Transferring information", and "Author's goal"
in the highest relevant. Moreover, for the topics about "Paraphrasing",

"Making inferencing", "Previewing the texts", "Pronoun references", and "Discourse marker" were followed as the high relevant. Finally, "Setting reading goals" came the last of all.

**Figure 10.**

*PSTs' Perspectives on Local Context Topics for Reading Strategy Training*
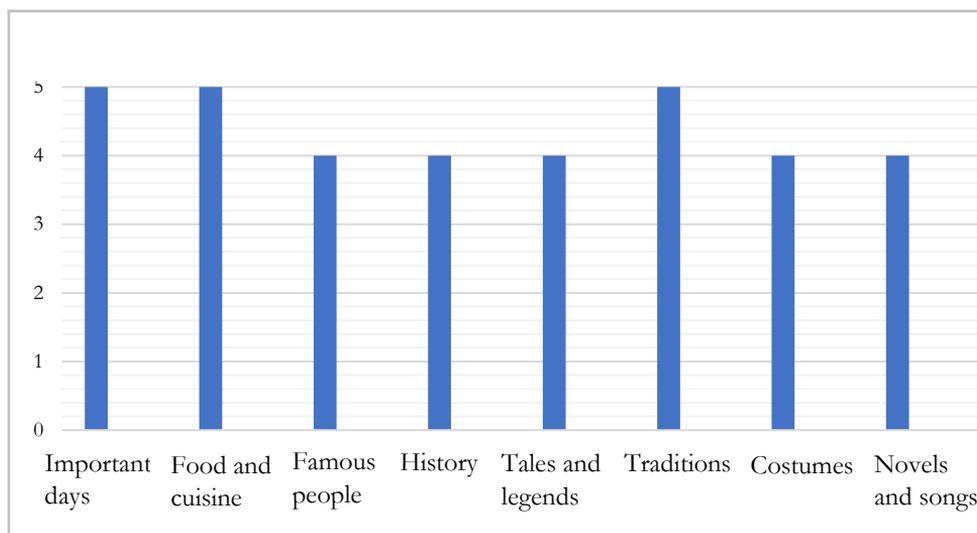


From the above figure, it can be noted that the PSTs' views particularly in the topics of "Important place", "Food and cuisine", and "Tradition" gained the rate of 5 the highest relevant meanwhile the other topics were in the rate of 4 for, the high relevance.

**Discussion**

According to the research outcomes, it highly reflects the stakeholders as well as the PSTs' regards particularly in the problems and needs emphasizing on strategic reading instruction ability. It is noted that the preservice teachers' restriction on the knowledge and practice of reading strategy instruction about stages of teaching, explanations of reading strategy aspects, lesson planning, and activities turned as a crucial problem for their confidence and frequency of their reading teaching.

Importantly, the results of those PSTs' problems vitally reflect the high needs for a certain course to help them build their proficiency and confidence in teaching reading strategy effectively. The research findings

significantly indicate the course elements that can support the PSTs' reading strategy teaching and material conduction improvement in several dimensions.

First, according to the genuine goal of English education curriculum to cultivate the qualified graduates for the English language teaching in Thailand, it is a duty of the curriculum to resolve the PSTs' teaching uncertainty particularly in reading strategy development and promote the them the effective teaching reading knowledge for their further teaching practices. Second, to achieve the goal of professional reading instruction development, the PSTs crucially require not only the knowledge of ELT principles and methodology, but they also essentially need a great number of practices in various English teaching methods in order to fulfill their teaching experiences. As a result, lesson planning as well as materials for teaching are remarkably unavoidable. Since teaching materials are an important learning guideline for both the PSTs' proper teaching and their students' engaged learning (Tomlinson, 2014), there is no doubt that the knowledge of reading strategy material construction is highly determined for the training. Third, regarding the reading strategy material developing especially in the EFL students' reading improvement, it needfully relates to students' sociocultural background in which they can use their real-world environment to help in learning and comprehending English texts accurately. Consequently, using locally and globally setting reading can be significantly benefit for the EFL students' learning. Since the knowledge that they can gain from the reading English will serve as their English lexical repertoire. It is will be useful for their further English actual communication outside class.

Importantly, for the both research questions, the finding deriving from two stakeholders of the English teaching experts, the ELT instructors, the school mentors, and the alumni, vitally reflects their significant concurrence on the PSTs' reading strategy instruction problems. Likewise, the needs for the PSTs' particular course for the encouragement of the reading strategy instruction knowledge and the reading material development using locally and globally-based setting contexts are highly indicated.

## Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Future Research

The research findings highlight the critical need for equipping PSTs with effective reading strategy knowledge and appropriate instruction materials. This combination enables them to develop suitable teaching

guidelines and serve as exemplary models for EFL students to achieve successful reading outcomes. Consequently, enhancing PSTs' knowledge of material construction cannot be overlooked withing the English education curriculum. This skill is a significant requirement to address Thai students' reading difficulties and effectively improve their reading proficiency.

It is important to acknowledge that the relatively small sample size of participants in each stakeholder group presents a potential limitation of this study. Future research in this field could benefit from a larger and more diverse participant pool. Additionally, while the study employed a mixed-methods approach utilizing surveys and interviews, it also presents a potential limitation. Future research might consider incorporating additional methodologies to further strengthen the findings.

The implications of the work can be divided into two main areas: PSTs development and curriculum development for the teaching profession. Firstly, it highlights the critical importance of reading strategy proficiency for EFL students' reading ability. Consequently, English teachers require both reading strategy knowledge and instructional skills to effectively guide students. As emphasized by Hetherington (1985), the reading context significantly impacts EFL students' learning, particularly withing their real-life backgrounds. Students can leverage their personal experiences to gain a deeper understanding of texts compared to those from Western backgrounds (Hetherington, 1985, p.43).

Secondly, incorporating EFL students' personal experiences into English courses benefits their real-life learning experiences (Moll & Greenberg, 1990). This integration also serves as a bridge for cross-cultural learning in real-world English communication situations. As Hofstede (2010) posits, intercultural communication competence (ICC) can be taught, and training specially focused on ICC awareness is essential (Hofstede, 2010). Consequently, PSTs' knowledge of cultural and intercultural English teachers' knowledge of cultural and intercultural aspects for effective instruction of EFL students. Studies by Yeh (2011) on US EFL PSTs and Souzadehfar and Ibrahim (2023) on the impact of EFL contexts in English teaching highlight the significant benefits for students' psychological, academic, and personal development, including increased self-esteem, creativity, and positive self-perceptions in English communication. These findings reinforce the crucial connection between aligning cultural and intercultural contexts with EFL students' learning (Kramsch, 2014).

Clearly, equipping EFL PSTs with the knowledge of integrating both English and cultural/ intercultural contexts into their reading instruction is paramount (Nguyen & Dang, 2020; Prapinwon, 2018; Oeamoum & Sriwichai, 2020; Aziz et at., 2020). Therefore, in Thailand, English teacher education faculties should prioritize incorporating courses that equip PSTs with both reading strategy instruction knowledge and the ability to utilize students' cultural information for effective EFL reading instruction.

## About the Authors

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