

## **TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE AT ELEVENTH GRADE USING ACTIVE KNOWLEDGE SHARING (AKS) STRATEGY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Active knowledge sharing (AKS) is one of the active learning strategies that encourages students to be active in discussing their knowledge as part of the process of learning English as a foreign language. It is used to enhance students' reading and speaking comprehension abilities. This research was conducted to investigate how active knowledge sharing can be used by the teacher in the English classroom. The researcher collaborated with the teacher conducting the learning process in a class by using a classroom action research design; it used three cycles in implementing the strategy while teaching narrative text in an English class. Each cycle included four stages: plan, act, observe, and reflect. The data were obtained qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitatively, the data used students' and teachers' notes about the class activity, which became a reflection for the researcher in revising the next cycle. Students' achievement in the reading test was the quantitative data. The research showed some improvements in students' speaking participation in discussions, students' reading achievement, and students' vocabulary acquisition.

**Keywords:** Active Knowledge Sharing, Narrative Text, Reading and Speaking Comprehension

## INTRODUCTION

Reading activity for EFL students gives some benefits, enriches vocabulary, improves knowledge, and builds confidence for their personal growth (Royeras & Sumayo, 2024). It not only enhances their linguistic capabilities and vocabulary mastery but also builds their confidence and contributes to their active participation in classroom discussions (Anjela, Eryansyah, et al., 2020). Ideally, students are expected to read actively, engage critically with texts, and use their understanding to interact meaningfully with peers and teachers. Vocabulary mastery can be enriched through reading, which is fundamental to English learning (Kusumaningrum & Lapasau, 2021). Research also highlights a strong correlation between reading proficiency and vocabulary acquisition (Lamadi et al., 2020; Royeras & Sumayo, 2024), suggesting that regular reading should improve comprehension and foster active classroom involvement.

However, observations conducted at one senior high school revealed a significant gap between the expected outcomes and the actual classroom reality. In practice, reading activities are often reduced to mechanical exercises: students are asked to read a passage and answer comprehension questions, a method that limits deep engagement with the text. Many students treat answering these questions as the sole purpose of reading and frequently resort to copying answers from peers. This undermines the development of critical reading skills, reduces vocabulary retention, and fails to stimulate thoughtful dialogue in the classroom.

Furthermore, several contextual challenges exacerbate this situation. The large class size, with 44 students, significantly restricts the teacher's ability to provide individualized support. Limited instructional time and the heavy workload required for planning, classroom management, and assessment preparation leave the teacher overwhelmed, often compromising the quality of instruction and student engagement. These challenges create a learning environment in which reading becomes a passive task rather than an active and meaningful learning experience.

This discrepancy between the ideal teaching practices and the classroom reality highlights the urgent need for an innovative instructional strategy that fosters active student involvement in reading. In response, the researcher and the classroom teacher collaborated to explore the use of the Active Knowledge Sharing (AKS) strategy as part of an action research initiative. AKS is designed to cultivate a collaborative learning environment where students not only acquire knowledge but also share it with their peers. This peer-assisted approach encourages more proficient students to help others, supports differentiated learning, and promotes student confidence and participation. By transforming reading into an interactive and socially meaningful

process, the AKS strategy has the potential to bridge the gap between current practice and the desired outcomes in EFL reading instruction.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Reading is an enjoyable, immersive, and deeply personal activity that brings immense pleasure and can lead to a state of complete absorption. Typically, readers engage with novels, magazines, or tabloids during their leisure time. It offers a means to gain information or derive enjoyment, especially when one has ample free time. Reading for pleasure is inherently driven by intrinsic motivation (Royeras & Sumayo, 2024). In reading, there is a linguistic process (Grabe, 2012). It is impossible to read without making grapheme-phonemic connections, without recognizing the words to be read or the structural phrases organizing the words, and without having a reasonable store of linguistic knowledge (morphological, syntactic, and semantic) of the text language. So, reading as a learning process of EFL students is a process that starts from knowing words and phrases, until getting the writer's idea in the text.

Reading is the ability to draw meaning from the printed page and interpret this information appropriately (Stuart, 2006; William Grabe & Stoller, 2020). It is a process of decoding written symbols, working from smaller units (individual letters) to larger ones, words, clauses, and sentences (Nunan, 2001). As students engage with a text, they encounter a wealth of information that resonates with their existing knowledge. Before they can fully grasp a writer's idea, they must first familiarize themselves with individual letters, progressing to words, then to phrases, and finally assembling those phrases into coherent sentences. This foundational understanding is crucial for deciphering the writer's intended message. Once students have built this framework, they can delve deeper, exploring the meanings of each component within the text. They begin to see how the printed words connect to their own understanding, enriching their comprehension and appreciation of the material.

The teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at the senior high school level continues to face challenges in promoting active student participation, especially in reading activities. To address these challenges, educators are turning toward more interactive and collaborative teaching strategies. One such strategy is Active Knowledge Sharing (AKS), which emphasizes peer collaboration and shared learning responsibilities in the classroom. Active knowledge sharing is a strategy that encourages students to share and assist in solving the questions provided. Active knowledge sharing is introduced by Melvin L. Silberman. Active knowledge sharing is a strategy that can help students prepare for the lesson material quickly. The students can prepare the material before the teacher explains the lesson. It helps the teacher

because they will have the basic information, so they can be brave enough to share or ask the teacher when they encounter difficulties. Silberman mentioned this strategy can be used to see students' capability in addition to forming students' team building (Zaini, Munthe, & Aryani, 2007). The students can help each other with the preparation of the material. Then, they can complement each other. In addition, "This strategy can be used for almost all of the material of study." It can be used in math, science, economics, or other lessons, especially in English.

Active Knowledge Sharing is a strategy to provide an overview of what is taught to students, which can be used to establish a team to learn and share knowledge with other friends (Silberman, 1995). It explains to us that active knowledge sharing can be used to prepare the students before the lessons start and after the students have learned the lesson. They can develop the information from the teacher and friends outside of the classroom. The information will be stickier in their mind because they share and teach with their friends.

Knowledge sharing in education refers to the process by which students and teachers exchange ideas, information, and understanding to build collective knowledge (Amirullah et al., 2019; Rismark & Solvberg, 2011). Active Knowledge Sharing (AKS) extends this concept by integrating it into classroom strategies that encourage students to engage in reciprocal teaching, discussion-based learning, and cooperative problem-solving. AKS fosters a deeper understanding of learning content because students are more motivated to master the material when they are responsible for explaining it to others (Isnawati et al., 2017).

In the context of EFL, especially reading, student engagement is crucial. Reading comprehension involves more than decoding words; it requires critical thinking, vocabulary understanding, and contextual inference (Mahmood, 2022). Traditional reading instruction, which often relies on silent reading and answering comprehension questions, fails to stimulate interaction or reflection. As Edrianti et al. (2017) found, students in passive reading classrooms demonstrate lower retention and comprehension compared to those involved in collaborative reading tasks.

Vocabulary acquisition plays a pivotal role in reading proficiency. A previous study highlighted that vocabulary knowledge, syntactic awareness, and metacognitive awareness reading strategies are strong predictors of reading comprehension and found that EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge plays a significant role in predicting their reading comprehension achievement (Abatyihun, 2018; Li & Gan, 2022). When students work together collaboratively to understand and discuss texts, they are more likely to encounter, negotiate, and internalize new vocabulary, thereby improving their reading skills.

Moreover, the social constructivist approach, as proposed by Vygotsky and adopted by many contemporary educators, supports the use of peer-based strategies like AKS. In this model, learning is considered a social process, and knowledge is co-constructed through interaction (Lenkauskaitė et al., 2020; Stahl, 2006; Visser, 2010). It focuses on the active construction of tangible objects sought to be shared, and in this process, at the mental level, structures of the learner's knowledge are being actively built (Vaičiūnienė & Kazlauskienė, 2022). AKS aligns with this theory by positioning learners as both contributors and receivers of knowledge in group discussions, text analysis, and peer teaching.

Empirical studies on knowledge sharing have shown positive impacts on student motivation, engagement, and academic performance. For instance, AKS-based reading instruction increased students' willingness to read, ask questions, and contribute ideas during classroom discussions (Amirullah et al., 2019; Isnawati et al., 2017). Similarly, two studies about English teaching mentioned that students who participated in structured knowledge-sharing activities developed stronger reading comprehension and more positive attitudes toward English learning (Eukaristia et al., 2023; Vini Wela Septiana et al., 2022).

The integration of Active Knowledge Sharing into EFL reading instruction is supported by various recent theoretical and empirical studies. It offers a promising solution to overcome passivity in reading classes and promotes a collaborative, engaging, and linguistically enriching learning environment.

## **METHOD**

The form of action research in this study was classroom action research. The research purpose was to improve students' reading skills by using Active Knowledge Sharing for EFL students. This idea further supports the notion of classroom action research, which states that collaboration among classroom teachers occurs greatly in this type of research. There are four steps in classroom action research: plan, act, observe, and reflect. An action plan was developed to measure the formulated hypothesis. The action plan is implemented in the form of action steps in a systematic and detailed manner. The actions were carried out in controlled, careful practice variations and contain innovation and renewal. At the stage of observation, researchers observed and recorded important points of the teaching and learning process during the execution of the action. The data are collected by using the teacher's notes, students' notes, and recordings. Reflection is intended to identify deficiencies in both the process and the result to show maximum results. The subjects of the study were English teachers and EFL students in the eleventh grade.

The original steps to teach used active knowledge sharing, according to Zaini (2007), and the researcher modified the steps into the following: 1) the teacher chose a text related to the material of the lessons taught. The researcher and teacher collaboratively set some instructions or questions that were followed by the students. The instructions were delivered by a leader to the group members; 2) the teacher gathered the students and provided clear instructions. She emphasized the importance of identifying unfamiliar vocabulary and encouraged each student to individually jot down these words. Once the lists were collected, the group leader facilitated a discussion, inviting members to share their insights about the terms; 3) Before reading the text, the teacher had prepared a set of pre-reading questions aimed at sparking curiosity about the title and any prior experiences with the material. The classroom buzzed with anticipation as students openly shared their thoughts, while one attentive student diligently recorded the responses from their peers; 4) The teacher instructs the students to read the assigned text individually within their small groups. After everyone has completed the reading, they convene to collaboratively tackle a series of post-reading questions designed to deepen their understanding of the material. This approach encourages each student to reflect on the text independently before sharing their insights and perspectives with their peers, fostering a more engaging and comprehensive discussion; 5) The teacher instructed the students to settle back into their chairs, then handed out an individual test on the recent material.

## FINDING

This section presents the results of the implementation of Active Knowledge Sharing (AKS) in three cycles, followed by a discussion of the improvements, patterns, and reflections observed throughout the process. The data are derived from teacher observations, student reflections, task scores, and classroom participation.

### *Cycle I: Initial Implementation and Challenges*

The first cycle revealed a combination of enthusiasm and confusion among students. The teacher involved the use of a video explaining narrative texts and a reading task on the story "Malin Kundang."

The teacher's observation notes revealed that students struggled with the pace of the video, which they found too rapid for effective comprehension. Additionally, the speaker's volume was notably low, making it difficult for many to grasp the narration. While students expressed enthusiasm for mimicking the pronunciation, they needed the video to include pauses, allowing them time to read along and take notes thoroughly. During group discussions, the focus of the students primarily centered on defining

vocabulary words, often at the expense of fully engaging with the text's content and its deeper meanings.

During the first cycle, students' reflections revealed several key insights. In the first meeting, they reported gaining new knowledge about the definition and purpose of narrative texts, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Their interest was notably drawn to the use of video as a learning medium. However, they experienced difficulties such as weak audio and limited vocabulary, which made comprehension challenging. They expressed a desire to improve their pronunciation, vocabulary, and reading ability in future lessons.

In the second meeting, students shifted their focus to sharing knowledge with peers, which helped build their confidence and supported vocabulary development. Although they appreciated the peer interaction, they struggled with understanding what content to share and were distracted by classroom noise. Their expectations remained consistent, aiming to enhance vocabulary and pronunciation through this collaborative learning approach. These reflections indicated that while students were engaged, structured support was still needed to guide effective knowledge sharing.

The performance data in cycle I provides valuable insight into the initial effects of implementing Active Knowledge Sharing. A substantial majority of students demonstrated comprehension of narrative texts, with 94% identifying the purpose of the text and 96% correctly recognizing its generic structure. These high percentages suggest that students could grasp fundamental concepts when supported by multimedia and structured input. However, this strong foundational understanding was not matched in their vocabulary acquisition, where only 29.55% of the students scored above the minimum success criterion. This discrepancy highlights a gap between passive comprehension and active vocabulary mastery. Additionally, only 55% of students passed the reading comprehension task, indicating that while students could identify structural elements, they struggled to extract and articulate meaning independently. These findings underscore the need for clearer guidance in group tasks and more focused vocabulary-building activities in subsequent cycles.

Although engagement was visible, students lacked structure in their discussions. Leaders dominated group work, and members contributed minimally. AKS had potential, but students needed guidance on what to share.

#### *Cycle II: Structuring Student Collaboration*

In the second cycle, AKS implementation was refined with clearer guidelines. Students used the text "Why Do Hawks Hunt Chicks" and were directed to discuss vocabulary, pronunciation, structure, and meaning.

Peer collaboration during Cycle II showed noticeable growth in both structure and student involvement. Initially, students were unsure about what to share in group discussions, but with clearer task directions, their conversations became more goal-oriented. They began referencing the reading texts more accurately and attempted to correct one another's pronunciation and interpretations. This shift marked the transition from surface-level engagement to deeper academic discussion.

Group leaders played a crucial role in this improvement. Unlike in Cycle I, where they tended to dominate discussion, in Cycle II, they began functioning as facilitators. They prompted questions, involved quieter members, and helped guide the group back on track when discussions went off-topic. This shift not only empowered the leaders but also helped democratize participation within each group.

Despite these positive developments, some misconceptions about vocabulary usage and text structure still circulated among groups. For instance, a few groups confused verbs in the past tense with present forms and needed clarification on character traits versus plot elements. These instances highlighted the ongoing importance of teacher monitoring and timely feedback, especially when learners are given more autonomy in collaborative settings.

The results of Cycle II indicated moderate progress in students' language skills and engagement. In the vocabulary task, 56% of students achieved a score above the minimum standard, with 15 students earning a perfect score of 100. This improvement, compared to cycle I, reflected a more focused vocabulary-building process during group discussions. The clarity of what to share and how to explore new vocabulary collaboratively appeared to benefit overall student understanding.

Meanwhile, reading comprehension showed a slight dip, with 54% of students meeting the expected threshold. Although this was lower than the vocabulary success rate, it suggested that students were still adapting to interpreting textual meaning in a group-based learning model. Some students relied heavily on peer input rather than developing their own interpretations, which could explain the slower progress in comprehension.

Participation data also showed an encouraging rise, with approximately 65% of students actively engaging in discussions. This increase indicated that clearer roles and structured points for sharing, such as discussing pronunciation, vocabulary, and main ideas, gave students more confidence to speak up. Students were more likely to contribute when they understood the expectations and had specific responsibilities within their groups. Overall, the structured approach of Cycle II supported incremental improvement in both performance and engagement, setting a stronger foundation for the next phase.



Reflections indicated growth in learner confidence, especially in peer explanation and correction. Students began to appreciate learning from one another, but some over-reliance on group leaders persisted.

*Cycle III: Achieving Learner Autonomy*

The third cycle saw more independent student performance and higher engagement using "The Snow Maiden" as the reading material. Passive students became more active, and peer collaboration flourished.

The classroom dynamics in Cycle III demonstrated a significant transformation compared to earlier cycles. Students began to operate in groups with minimal teacher prompting, indicating a growing level of independence and ownership over their learning. Unlike in previous cycles, where leaders took dominant roles, the interactions in Cycle III were more democratic and inclusive. Each student contributed insights and asked clarification questions, showing a mutual respect for peer input. This balance of interaction not only distributed responsibility across the group but also nurtured a collaborative learning environment.

Another notable improvement was the students' confidence in expressing their thoughts. They began asking more meaningful questions and actively used language structures discussed in previous cycles. For instance, they applied past tense verbs accurately in oral explanations and corrected peers using appropriate expressions. These developments reflect how repeated engagement in AKS helped build both linguistic accuracy and communicative confidence.

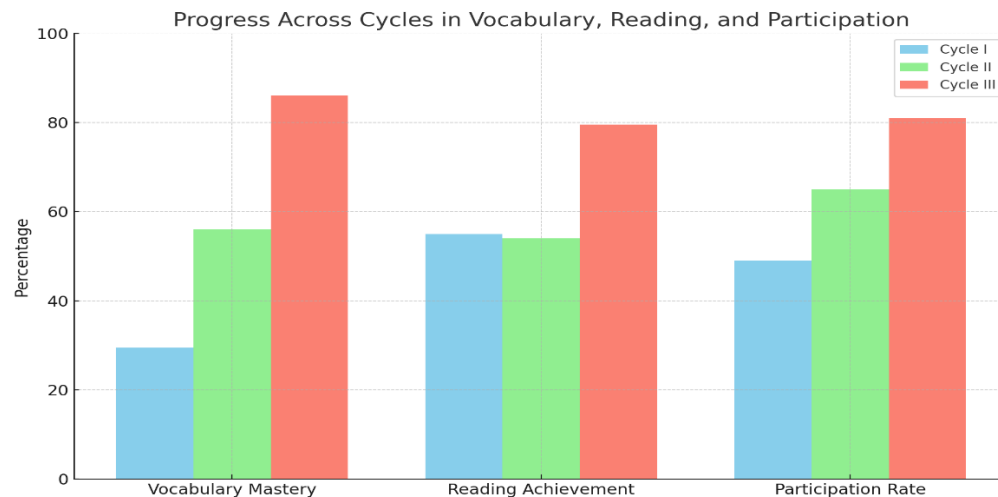
Student outcomes in Cycle III marked the most substantial progress throughout the study. In the vocabulary task, 86% of students surpassed the minimum success threshold, with 32 students earning a perfect score. This high achievement suggests that students not only remembered new words but were also able to retain and use them accurately. The consistent exposure to peer explanations and vocabulary-focused discussions likely contributed to this significant gain.

Reading comprehension results also improved considerably, with 79.5% of students scoring above the expected level, and 25 students categorized in the very good level. These scores reflect students' improved ability to decode meaning, identify narrative structure, and engage with the content critically. The ability to discuss plot, characters, and moral values of the text also increased, showing a deeper level of reading engagement.

Furthermore, participation levels rose above 80%, indicating that most students felt motivated and empowered to share ideas. This shift from passive reception to active contribution is a strong indicator of the effectiveness of AKS. It also suggests that when

given the right structure and encouragement, students in large EFL classrooms can thrive in learner-centered settings.

Student performance and participation progress across three AKS implementation cycles are described in this graphic:



## DISCUSSION

The findings discussed in the previous sections underscore the critical role that vocabulary mastery plays in reading comprehension, as evidenced by various studies, including those by Abatyihun (2018). Students with a robust vocabulary are better equipped to understand and engage with texts. This relationship is particularly important in today's educational landscape, where literacy skills are essential for academic achievement and personal development. The implementation of AKS over three cycles demonstrates that structured peer learning can significantly enhance language skills in an EFL setting. Initial confusion was addressed by refining group roles and discussion points, resulting in improved student outcomes.

This supports Silberman's (2009) assertion that active learning is most effective when learners are responsible for their own and their peers' understanding. The improvement in vocabulary mastery and participation is also consistent with Lenkauskaitė's (2020) findings that collaborative reading fosters deeper processing and language development.

Moreover, the increase in student autonomy suggests that AKS can transition classrooms from teacher-centered to learner-centered environments. While early stages required intensive scaffolding, long-term benefits included stronger learner independence, vocabulary retention, and speaking fluency.

One key implication of these findings is the need for educators to prioritise vocabulary instruction within the curriculum. Traditional approaches to reading instruction often focus primarily on decoding skills, neglecting the importance of vocabulary development. By recognising the interconnectedness of vocabulary and reading comprehension, educators can design more effective curricula that foster both skills simultaneously. For instance, incorporating vocabulary instruction into reading lessons can provide students with the necessary tools to navigate complex texts, ultimately leading to improved comprehension outcomes.

Furthermore, the integration of technology in vocabulary instruction presents a valuable opportunity for enhancing student engagement and learning. With the rise of digital learning platforms, educators can leverage interactive tools and resources to create dynamic vocabulary lessons. This not only caters to diverse learning styles but also prepares students for the demands of a technology-driven world. As highlighted by Kemmis and McTaggart (2000), the use of technology can facilitate personalized learning experiences, allowing students to progress at their own pace and revisit challenging vocabulary as needed.

In addition to instructional strategies, ongoing assessment of vocabulary mastery is crucial for identifying students' needs and adjusting teaching methods accordingly. Regular assessments can provide insights into students' vocabulary knowledge and comprehension skills, enabling educators to tailor their instruction to address specific challenges. This data-driven approach can lead to more effective teaching practices and improved student outcomes.

Finally, future research should continue to explore the nuances of the relationship between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension. While existing studies provide valuable insights, there remains a need for longitudinal research that examines how vocabulary development impacts reading comprehension over time. Additionally, investigating the effectiveness of various instructional strategies in diverse educational contexts can inform best practices and enhance vocabulary instruction across different settings.

In conclusion, the correlation between vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension is a critical area of study that has significant implications for educational practices. By prioritising vocabulary instruction, integrating technology, and employing ongoing assessments, educators can enhance students' reading comprehension skills and contribute to their overall academic success. Future research will be essential in further elucidating this relationship and informing effective teaching strategies.

## CONCLUSIONS

The Active Knowledge Sharing strategy has proven to be an impactful pedagogical approach for improving reading and speaking performance in EFL classrooms. The steady growth across three cycles shows that, when properly structured, AKS fosters student motivation, confidence, and academic achievement. These findings are particularly relevant for teachers managing large classes or seeking to implement student-centered approaches in Indonesian EFL contexts. Future studies could further explore AKS implementation in other skills or educational levels.

There are some strengths and weaknesses of teaching reading by using Active Knowledge Sharing to the eleventh-grade students. The strength was that the teacher could cover the whole class of students when teaching reading. In the conventional strategy of teaching reading, the teacher asked the students to read the text and answer some questions as their task. Unconsciously, the students lack the knowledge to read. They read the text to answer the questions. It caused several of them to read the text, but they did the task. It occurs when the teacher asks them if they can fully understand what they read and why they read the text. Second, the teacher's energy was saved when teaching reading to the students. Some of the students have known about the material that is given by the teacher. It was one of the reasons why the students played with their friends when the teacher explained the lesson. Some students said that they had some courses outside the class and had prior knowledge before the teacher's explanation. On the other hand, several students needed a deeper explanation of the lesson. The third is that the students can improve their knowledge through reading and sharing.

The weaknesses of the active knowledge strategy in teaching reading were that the strategy needs much time to conduct, the students need time to share, while the teacher has limited time. The second weakness was that the teacher needed to be careful with the information shared by the students. Some students have the wrong information when sharing their information. It can cause misunderstandings between the text and the students who read it.

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