Literature review of whole-book reading research from the 1980s to 2024

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Abstract

This study investigates the current published research on whole-book reading from the 1980s to 2024, with the aim of exploring its impact evaluations, approaches, applications in practice, theoretical frameworks, and future research. A comprehensive analysis of the existing literature is conducted to achieve the research objectives. The study highlights the significant role of whole-book reading in enhancing students' reading skills, promoting a reading culture, and broadening knowledge horizons. It also identifies key challenges and opportunities for future research in this domain. It emphasizes the need for further exploration of the underlying mechanisms and effective implementation strategies of whole-book reading, offering valuable insights for researchers, educators, and policymakers seeking to promote whole-book reading in various educational and social contexts.

1. Introduction

Whole-book reading, also referred to as sustained reading in accordance with readers' language ability and cognitive ability, is the practice of reading an entire book from the beginning to the end without interruption. The entire English book can be a picture book with no more than 10 pages and approximately 50 words, or an English literature book comprising over 100 pages and containing around 30,000 words [1]. It emphasizes the immersive experience of reading a complete work, allowing readers to engage with the storyline, characters, and themes in a continuous and uninterrupted manner. It encompasses both in-class and extracurricular reading. It is an organic combination of teacher-guided reading and student autonomous reading [2].

Whole book reading was firstly raised for 1st language learning. Books used language as the carrier of information, integrating knowledge of different disciplines, and expressing thematic meaning through elements including environment setting, plot development, and character portrayal. Whole book reading teaching can effectively break through the limitations of teaching individual chapters or sections, stimulate students' reading interest through comprehensive, situational, and holistic reading activities, cultivate students' strong reading skills, enhance their critical thinking abilities, and develop their core literacy through deeper reflections, more exciting language, and richer reading experiences [3]. The teaching mode of whole book reading can effectively promote students' reading proficiency [4]. In the context of whole book reading, teachers guide students to read an entire English classic work based on their understanding of the background of the book, and grasp the content of the article as a whole. With the theme of the text as the focal point, teachers should help students analyze character relationships, plot structures, and language characteristics. Taking a holistic approach, students apply their acquired language knowledge to express themselves orally or in writing [5].

According to the General High School Chinese Curriculum Standards (issued in 2017, revised in 2022), teachers should encourage students to engage in extracurricular whole book reading and stress the importance of developing a reading habit. By incorporating whole book reading into the curriculum, educators can promote students' overall language proficiency, foster a love for reading, and broaden their knowledge and understanding.

American academic Ken Goodman first put up the idea of whole-language instruction in the middle of the 1970s. He argued against breaking language down into discrete, abstract parts like words, phonetics, and grammar, and instead supported the idea that language is inclusive and indivisible. He emphasized that "the whole is always greater than the sum of its parts" and was against the separate development of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. According to Goodman [6], ideation is language's main purpose, and words and phrases have no value in isolation [7].

This review aims to examine the theoretical underpinnings, research methodology, real-world implementations, impact evaluations, and potential future study areas. Moreover, for scholars, instructors, and legislators looking to encourage whole-book reading in diverse educational and social settings, the review is significant.

2. Development of Whole-Book Reading Research

There have been voices arguing for reading teaching to start in a natural way, using the child's language as a bridge to beginning reading instruction, for at least the greater part of the 20th century. Most research aimed in the exploration of effective teaching methods, including whole language approaches, activity approaches, informal methods, and language experience approaches [2, 6, 8-19]. These terminologies reflect the development of an idea; so, an activity approach as defined by Stone [19], for example, may differ greatly from a whole language approach discussed today. The research from the 1980s to the 1990s focused on the effects of the whole language approach on reading development and students' achievements in an experimental or comparative way, emphasizing that language learning should occur in a natural, holistic context. Most research took young readers as subjects, mainly preschoolers and kindergarteners. Dykes [10] explored the impact of Whole Language parent education on the acquisition of language skills of disabled preschoolers and found the significantly positive influences on language skill development. Similarly, Cirincione [9], Fredrickson [11], and Furst [12]'s research findings supported the notion that the whole language approach fostered literary development and improved reading abilities for learning-disabled students. Becerra-Keller [2] found that whole language instruction significantly enhanced vocabulary and reading comprehension skills of ESL learners. Ribowsky [14] compared two approaches and indicated that the whole language approach yielded more favorable results in emergent literacy compared to a code emphasis approach.

These are also expressions of a fundamental method of teaching reading to kids, which is to concentrate on the communicative role of written language instead of its structure. It is challenging to characterize whole language approaches for review purposes because their proponents stress them as a philosophy rather than a particular technique. The connection between the language experience method employed in the 1960s and 1970s and the entire language movement has been emphasized by these authors as well as others (e.g., [15, 18]). The two methods have a lot in common. First, as a means of bridging oral to written language, both methods emphasize the value of children's own language outputs. Second, as is the case with the majority of basal reading programs, both models criticize the use of skill sequences to structure instruction. Third, training is based on children's literature rather than basic readers in both systems. It should be mentioned that basal readers frequently incorporate children's books, often the same stories, into their writings. The basic reading systems "adapt" the tales while maintaining a degree of linguistic accuracy. Whole language theorists, like Goodman [6], for instance, contended that this kind of adaptation warps language predictability, making stories more difficult to understand rather than simpler (also see [20, 21]). Fourth, unless instruction is provided within the framework of a whole text, both language experience and whole language approaches emphasize the significance of concentrating on the meaningfulness of language and refraining from shifting the focus to parts of nonmeaningful language segments, such as individual sound-symbol relationships. To put it another way, whole language and language experience advocates advise against teaching words or specific sound-symbol associations in isolation, but rather to teach them when necessary to aid pupils in understanding a given text [22].

2.1. Early Stage 2000-2010

The majority of studies focused on investigating reading activities at this point. The majority of researchers were from Asia, specifically from China and Korea. Both centered on the 1st language learning and neither directed attention on learning English as a 2nd or as a foreign language.

The idea of whole book reading in China was first promoted by Ye [23]. He advocated in the book, On the Revision of Secondary School Chinese Language Curriculum Standards, that the whole book serves as the theme, while individual short chapters serve as supplements. He highly valued the influence of whole book reading in fostering reading habits [4].

With "whole-book" as a keyword via CNKI search engine, altogether 823 items were located, among which there were 508 items directly related to Chinese instruction, while there were only 23 related to English instruction, particularly in middle schools. As for the research categories, the MA thesis accounted for the majority, about 92.8% of the total. Viewed from the year of publication, from 2000 to 2009, there were only 7 items. The results indicated an inadequate interest in whole-book reading education in China.

In the meantime, in Korea, whole-book reading has also been dealt with as extensive reading. Kim [24] motivated students to prepare reading materials for after-reading discussion and found that the students had a better knowledge of the plot and substance of the book and were more competent in understanding and selecting subjects for discussion.

Hong [25] examined the current status and recognition of Picture Book Reading aloud activities and sought its improvement method by surveying 258 kindergarten teachers and child-care center teachers in G City.

2.2. Mid-stage 2011-2020

According to Li [26] and Li [27], the research articles on whole book reading in the core journals were occasionally involved before 2015, and there was no continuous attention. Starting in 2016, the relevant research articles of the whole book reading have shown a continuity of concern. The proportion of research articles from 2015 to 2019 was 93.3%. The interest in the research of the whole book reading showed a continuous upward trend.

2.2.1. Evolution and Innovation in Research Methods

In this period, the preference for research methods changed. Chinese scholar Liu Lianghua divided education research methods into three categories: philosophical research, empirical research, and practical research. There were almost no research articles on whole-book reading that strictly adopted the method of philosophical research during 2011 to 2020, and only a very small number of articles used the method of empirical research. Most articles in this field favored practical research, the content of which focused on daily education reform, experience summaries, and countermeasure research.

This phenomenon reflects an evolution and innovation process in research methods. The lack of philosophical research might suggest a shift towards more practical and application-oriented approaches. The scarcity of pure empirical research could imply challenges in conducting such research within the context of whole-book reading studies or researchers' preference for methods that are more closely tied to immediate educational practice. The prevalence of practical research methods shows that educators and researchers are highly focused on improving real-world educational scenarios related to whole-book reading, constantly innovating through summarizing experiences and devising new countermeasures to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning in this area. As the educational environment continues to change, we can expect further evolution and innovation in these research methods to better address the complex issues surrounding whole-book reading.

2.2.2. Deepening and Expansion of Research

Whole-book reading research revolves around the construction of a reading curriculum. It refers to integrating whole-book reading into the existing curriculum system. Li [26] and Li [27] carried out the program design for whole-book reading from four aspects, namely curriculum objectives, curriculum planning, teaching strategies, and evaluation schemes, by leveraging the concept of project-based curriculum design. Ren [28] held that the curriculum objectives of whole-book reading should focus on implementing the core competencies of language learning. Wang [29] proposed that whole-book reading should combine the objective model with the practical model and put forward constructive suggestions on curriculum implementation and evaluation.

The release of the Chinese Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education (2011 Edition) emphasized the importance of whole-book reading. Consequently, issues such as how to construct a complete whole-book reading curriculum system have become research hotspots. With the introduction of core competencies in 2014, whole-book reading has been closely associated with cultivating students' core competencies. Therefore, research has begun to focus on how to promote the development of students' core competencies such as language construction and application, thinking development and enhancement, aesthetic appreciation and creation, as well as cultural inheritance and understanding through whole-book reading. Meanwhile, research during this period also pays attention to the fact that the emphasis of whole-book reading varies in different educational stages. All in all, research on whole-book reading during this period is no longer confined to the reading itself but has expanded to its connections with core competencies, the cultivation of students' abilities and habits, and different educational stages

2.3. Recent Stage 2020-2024

Whole-book reading research during 2020 to 2024 centers on teaching strategies. There are issues in teaching the whole book as part of the present core literacy curriculum. Wang [30] suggested a student-centered theory, in which teachers are not paternalistic bosses; rather, they are merely mentors and advocates for their pupils' reading development, but there is a lack of consideration for the needs of the pupils in the book content selection. The majority of these are reading requirements set forth by instructors or schools, which do not encourage pupils to read beyond the assigned works.

What's more, there is a lack of specific advice and an absence of the plan's content. Students in primary school must rely on their teachers to help them create reading plans because they are not capable of doing so on their own. However, due to

their limited teaching time or lack of training in pertinent reading strategies, many teachers often find it difficult to assist pupils in completing assigned reading tasks and most of the reading relies heavily on teachers' good reading skills [30].

Another issue is about the instructional material, which is haphazard and not carefully thought out. The selection of the reading material is a critical component in determining the efficacy of "whole book reading" instruction. It cannot be based solely on the instructors' unilateral judgment; rather, the selection of the reading material should consider the preferences and choices of the students in order to genuinely pique their interest in reading and produce satisfactory results. This is not the case, though, during the actual teaching process. Due of their majors, Chinese teachers have an unspoken tendency to suggest literary novels to their students. It is highly harmful to increase students' interest in reading and broadening their knowledge, that certain picture books and popular science books, both domestically and internationally, that appeal to pupils at this age have been mostly overlooked [30].

2.3.1. Emerging Research Hotspots and Trends

Picture book teaching becomes a key element in children's English enlightenment. It caters to the tendency to satisfy children's interest when choosing reading material. Picture books can be books where the pictures are as important as the words, or books that are solely composed of pictures. Picture books feature bright colors, charming characters, and boundless creativity, which introduce children to reading in an acceptable and even interesting way. What's more, picture book teaching can help children grow their ability to understand stories and identify sequences, enhance children's social-emotional growth, keep children engaged and curious, and so on.

Extensive reading and intensive reading teaching also become a hotspot in language teaching classes [22]. An extensive reading program is an essential part of meaning-focused input. Graded readers are the main teaching material of the extensive reading program which cater to all levels of language proficiency. In fact, extensive reading has various learning benefits. For example, it enables learning of new vocabulary incidentally, establishes known vocabulary, improves reading skills and so on. Intensive reading involves the teacher and the learners working together to understand a text and to help the learning of language features that will be useful in other texts. Intensive reading belongs to the language-focused learning strand. What's more, it not only teaches learners new vocabulary but also imparts learning strategies that learners can use beyond the text. Intensive reading also beneficial. For example, it can help learners have a full understanding of the text, enhance their vocabulary size and depth, acquire learning strategies that will use for their entire study career, and so on.

2.3.2. Research Frontiers and Challenges

With the continuous development of technology, digital reading has begun to become one of the research frontiers in whole-book reading. Digital reading mainly has two meanings. One is the digitization of reading materials, and the other is the digitization of reading methods. According to the "2021 Annual Report on Digital Reading in China", the number of digital reading users in China has reached 506 million, and young people have become the main force in digital reading.

Digital reading has its own unique features. It offers convenience, enabling learners to read anytime and anywhere. Moreover, it has a lower cost-benefit ratio compared to paper books and also meets the requirements of environmental protection. In addition, it has multimedia functions and can be personalized.

However, digital reading also poses challenges to teachers and students. Digital reading requires teachers to improve their digital literacy, including the basic operation ability of digital technology, the ability to acquire and integrate digital teaching resources, the ability to use digital teaching platforms, the instructional design ability for digital teaching, and the awareness of digital security and ethics. Teacher digital quality has become a key breakthrough in cultivating a high-quality, professional and innovative teaching team.

For students, while digital reading can enhance the breadth and depth of their reading, it inevitably leads to distractions, a weakening of reading depth, and vision health problems. Meanwhile, digital reading requires students to have a relatively strong ability to screen and distinguish information, as well as a certain degree of self-control, and not to rely too much on digital reading tools and resources.

Interdisciplinary reading research is also one of the frontiers in whole-book reading research. It means that whole-book reading is no longer limited to the literary field but intersects with other disciplines.

Interdisciplinary reading has numerous benefits. Firstly, it can enhance students' enthusiasm for reading. For example, teachers can specifically select reading materials and design specific projects by getting to know students' disciplinary interests. Secondly, the principles of cognitive psychology play a vital role in helping teachers understand students' reading habits, information processing methods, and attention concentration.

However, interdisciplinary reading also poses certain challenges. Firstly, there are certain differences in the logical thinking modes among various disciplines. When introducing and imparting the knowledge of a certain discipline to readers through English reading materials, readers are required to switch back and forth between narrative thinking and quantitative thinking, which sets higher demands on them. Some readers with insufficient abilities will see their reading interests greatly diminished when faced with such reading materials.

Secondly, it is an important issue that teachers themselves have limited interdisciplinary knowledge and teaching abilities. Most teachers receive education and training under the background of a single discipline and may lack sufficient experience and knowledge reserves for interdisciplinary reading teaching.

Besides, currently, our teaching resources regarding interdisciplinary teaching are relatively scarce and the teaching methods are not yet mature enough.

3. Theoretical Foundations and Research Methods of Whole-Book Reading

3.1. Psychology of Reading

The Psychology of Language, a comprehensive revision and update of the well-liked second edition, includes all the information a student needs to learn about the psychology of language, including how humans learn, comprehend, produce, and store language. New chapters in the third edition cover how children learn to read and how language is used in daily life, as well as recent findings on the effects of novel brain imaging techniques. The writing style is vibrant and approachable, and the information is extensive. It covers every major subject in this intricate discipline with an emphasis on adult and child language reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Along with language creation, language processing is emphasized, and the social foundations of language are covered. The book discusses current connectionist language models and does so in a way that makes difficult concepts understandable. The work explains how children learn to read and acquire language (often more than one) while adhering to a strong developmental theme. The relationship between language and the brain, as well as other facets of cognition, is also illustrated in The Psychology of Language. The Psychology of Language just requires a foundation in the fundamental ideas of cognitive psychology. What did you say most recently? What did you hear last? What did you read most recently? What was the last item you wrote? How did your mind come up with these ideas?

Consider the procedures that go into speaking with someone else. We need the required biological hardware, which is: To produce the appropriate sounds, we require an articulatory apparatus. Additionally, our brain is necessary for controlling the movements of the apparatus's parts and for determining what to say and how to say it. A language sophisticated enough to communicate any potential message is also required. Both the words and the proper word order must be known to us. Somehow, young children pick up this language. Lastly, we need to be conscious of the social context in which we create and interpret these messages: We must be conscious of the opinions and backgrounds of others, as well as how others could understand the things we say [31].

3.2. Linguistic Education Theory

Theory and description are typically contrasted by linguists. While theory contains more fundamental concepts about how language functions and how we could study it, description includes the specifics of a language's lexicon, syntax, pronunciation, and so forth. For example, how a language's speakers say the word "dog" is a matter of description; nevertheless, more general inquiries concerning the relationship between pronunciation and meaning, as well as inquiries concerning the methods of studying pronunciation and meaning, fall under the purview of theory.

3.2.1. Education and Linguistic Theory

There are clear and essential connections between language and education:

The primary educational medium is language. Language proficiency, or literacy, is one of the cornerstones of education. One of the most popular indicators of academic achievement is verbal intelligence. The curriculum of schools has historically placed a high value on teaching foreign or second languages. Education has a significant impact on language. These relationships raise the possibility of similarly intimate ties between the relevant research communities: linguists searching for applications (or confirmation) of their theories in education, and educationalists on the lookout for practical new theories about how language develops and functions. But the real world is not like that. Linguists frequently see no connection between their work and education, whereas educationalists typically find theoretical linguistics obscure and unimportant [32].

3.2.2. Literary criticism theory

Literary criticism was once thought to as a kind of poetry writing, advising poets rather than readers. This view persisted for centuries. Since the seventeenth century, literary criticism has been used to describe, defend, analyze, and evaluate artistic works. Today's criticism is categorized in a variety of ways. In the Mirror and the Lamp, Abrams [33] discusses four distinct critical theories: The mimetic hypothesis is applied when a critic analyzes art in terms of the universe or imitation. The critic is employing a pragmatic approach that was popular until the end of the eighteenth century, when he shifts the focus to the reader and considers art in terms of its impact on the audience. However, the focus switched to the poet in the nineteenth century, and poetry developed into "a spontaneous overflow of powerful feeling" of the poet. A piece of art in this context is basically the internal made external. Thus, a critic employs the expressive theory when he understands art in terms of the artist. The focus switched to the artistic creation in the 20th century, particularly as a result of the New Criticism. The objective theory is applied by the critic when he sees the work essentially in its own terms, as a self-contained entity.

A few critics have discussed applied, practical, and theoretical criticism. The goal of theoretical criticism is to identify the overarching ideas of art. These concepts are applied to artistic creations through practical criticism. Other forms of critique have also been discussed by literary critics: a piece of art is examined in the context of its historical setting, the author's biography, and the period. The focus of impressionistic criticism is on the critic's emotional response to a piece of art. Textual criticism reconstructs the original version of a work of art using scholarly methods. Analytical criticism examines a piece of art's components and arrangement in detail in an attempt to understand the essence of the piece as an object. A work of art is evaluated by judicial criticism using a defined set of criteria. A piece of art is assessed morally in light of human life. The study of archetypes and archetypal patterns in a piece of art is known as mythic critique [7]. Greek literary critique is the oldest, but not much of their writing has survived. Drama is the primary focus of Aristotle's Poetics, while Plato's thoughts on literature hardly amount to literary critique. The two most important works written by the Romans are Quintilian and Cicero's writings on rhetoric and Horace's Ars Poetica. Louginus's On His Sublime is the first significant critical essay written in the Christian era. Dante was the first notable medieval critic, addressing the issues of language suited for poetry in his De Vulgari Eloquentia.

With the belief that the ancients had to be correct, Renaissance writers and critics mostly adhered to Classical principles, but there were some attempts at originality. For instance, Lope de Vega's New Art of Making Comedies (1609); du Bellay's Défense et Illustration (1549); and Vida's Poetica (1527), a treatise on the craft of poetry. Before Puttenham's The Art of English Poetry (1589) and Sidney's Apologie for Poesie (1595), there isn't much noteworthy criticism in England. These works are significant because they offer a thorough analysis of the craft of poetry as well as a study of the state of English poetry at the time.

The major critical works that emerged over the course of almost a century tended to support the rules and traditions of classical literature. Among the principal pieces were Boileau's L'Art Poétique (1673), Pierre Corneille's Discours (1660), and Ben Jonson's Timber; or Discoveries (1640). However, with Dryden in his Essay of Dramatic Poesy (1668)—not to mention his dedications, prefaces, and spirit of openness—his critical essays stand alone as masterpieces. If anyone could have shown how to use criticism to help people, it was he.

The historical approach to literature was first popularized in the eighteenth century by the Italian philosopher and critic G.B. Vico. Over time, historicism, as it is known, fundamentally altered critical approaches. It made people realize that, according to Dr. Johnson's viewpoint, there were no unchanging principles and standards by which literature could be evaluated, and that the guidelines that applied to Classical writers do not always apply to modern writers.

As a result, there was a backlash against Neoclassicism, a rise in interest in literatures other than those of Greece and Rome, and a wider range of viewpoints regarding literature, appropriate language, and the author's creative and imaginative processes. The novel perspectives were articulated in various works by Wordsworth (1800), Coleridge (1817) in his Biographia Literaria (1817), Shelley (1820) in Defense of Poetry (a response to Peacock's satirical discrediting in The Four Ages of Poetry (1820) and The Philosophy of Composition (1846), and Matthew Arnold (1865, 1888) in Essays in Criticism. Critical thinking was greatly influenced by Walter Pater's writings on culture and art, particularly The Renaissance (1873) and Appreciations (1889).

Studying aestheticism, the idea of art for art's sake, and the poetry of the Symbolists reveals that by the second half of the 19th century, a wide variety of critical perspectives had started to spread. When more and more writers experimented, there were less restrictions of any type. Simultaneously, the most accomplished critics carried on Vico's legacy and approach. Sainte-Beuve, with his vast knowledge base and astute sense of critical and prudent distance, was the epitome of historicism. Major critics like Abrams [33] accomplishments demonstrate how recent criticism has grown to be more and more analytical in its assessment and interpretation of literature [7].

4. Impact Assessments and Reflections

4.1. Improvement in Students' Reading Skills

Being able to read is a talent that you should employ in school and throughout your life. Reading is a fundamental life skill, according to Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, and Wilkinson. It is essential to a child's achievement in school and, in fact, in life. Opportunities for both career success and personal fulfillment will undoubtedly be lost if one cannot read proficiently. Reading is one of the hardest subjects in the school system, despite its significance. This issue is made even more urgent by the growing demand in our technologically advanced society for high levels of literacy. Students' perspectives on why they should read have an impact on their reading proficiency as well. Students must develop their critical or analytical reading skills if they are to get the most out of the materials they are assigned. The concept here is that the goal of reading anything is to attempt to decipher the author's intentions. There are two levels of reality that we come across when reading: the visible and the invisible. Consequently, the goal of reading is to reveal and make obvious the underlying meaning, or invisible layer. According to Teele, comprehension of what is read should be the aim of every reader. According to research, proficient readers actively engage with the text and are conscious of the strategies they employ to comprehend what they read. By teaching reading skills to students, teachers can aid in improving their comprehension. Research has indicated that the following tactics can help in reading comprehension: questioning, summarizing, visualizing, inferring, and making connections. Teaching strategies involve naming the technique and outlining its intended application, thinking aloud, practicing in groups and with partners, and using the strategy independently [34].

4.1.1. Making Predictions

Effective readers have a purpose for reading because they know that in order to be effective readers, students need to create goals for their reading. Predicting lets the reader create a goal for their reading, which is one method for increasing comprehension. Studies have indicated that proficient readers use their prior knowledge and experiences to anticipate and conceptualize what they read. More student involvement, which raises interest and deepens their comprehension of the material, is another benefit of this technique. Comparing the results in the real text with the prediction process is crucial since it will help the student grasp the material better.

The prediction process loses all relevance in terms of enhancing pupils' comprehension without this component. Using graphic organizers, post-it notes, partner prediction, teacher modeling, and predicting throughout the text are some methods for teaching prediction. One prediction method is to use the title, table of contents, images, and key words. Another important prediction technique is to have students make predictions at predetermined intervals in the text, assess their guesses, and make revisions as needed.

4.1.2. Imagining

Visualization is another method that proficient readers use to understand a book. In order to visualize, the reader must create an image of what they have read. The reader retains this image in their mind as a symbol of how they understand the

text. Instructors might encourage their students to picture the locations, people, and activities in a story, and then prompt them to write or draw the picture that emerges in their minds as they imagine the text.

4.1.3. Creating Links

Another technique for the reading process is to make connections. By drawing connections, students are able to draw on existing knowledge and relate the concepts in the text to personal experiences. When a reader makes connections between the concepts in the text and their own experiences, beliefs, and current events, reading takes on new significance. A technique called "Text-to-Text, Text-to-Self, Text-to-World" aids in pupils' connection-making. Students can use writing, charting, or drawing to relate texts to themselves. Teachers may ask students if they have ever had any experiences similar to those described in the text. Students can use graphic organizers, writing, charting, sketching, and other methods to create connections between texts. These text-to-text links may be based on the relationships between parts of the tale or characters within the story. Students can use graphic organizers, writing, charting, sketching, or other methods to connect text to the real world. Text-to-world linkages can be made by contrasting the content of the text with current events or by comparing fictional characters to contemporary figures. Asking pupils to make connections between the ideas they read will help them better understand the text's concepts.

4.1.4. Recapitulating

In order to summarize, a reader must decide what material is crucial to read and then condense it into their own words [35]. Students will be able to separate the primary concepts from the supporting ideas while they are summarizing. Separating relevant information from irrelevant information is another step in the summarizing process that will improve students' ability to comprehend texts.

Summarizing is a tactic that aids pupils in organizing their thoughts, even in lengthy reading portions that they often view as dangerous.

4.1.5. Asking Questions

Before, during, and after reading, readers can make use of questioning. In order to create meaning, improve comprehension, identify solutions, solve issues, find information, and discover new knowledge, readers must engage in the questioning process. Using this method, students keep coming back to the text to find the answers to the questions the teacher poses before, during, and after the reading. Using this technique, students practice distinguishing fact from fiction, inference from inference, and questions that rely on readers' past knowledge. Text parts are combined, and reading comprehension is subsequently enhanced by employing the student-generated inquiry technique.

4.1.6. Deducing

Reading between the lines is referred to as inferring. To come to their own conclusions, students must combine information from the book with what they already know. Students will be able to infer through inference to draw conclusions, formulate hypotheses, recognize underlying themes, utilize details to interpret text, and interpret images. Pupils can be taught how to draw conclusions using titles from the text, graphs, photos, dates, and associated language [34].

4.2. Enhancement of Teachers' Teaching Capabilities in Reading

Teacher accountability for literacy instruction has witnessed some significant developments in public education. Current educational initiatives include the Common Core Standards, which emphasize reading for primary and career preparedness for young pupils, as well as modifications to state-specific professional teaching standards. Because of this, teaching students to read and developing their capacity to use reading abilities successfully across all subject areas are more crucial than ever, especially as they move through the grade levels.

The "No Child Left Behind" Act (NCLB) mandates that general education teachers adapt certain parts of their instruction to take into consideration every student in their classes, regardless of aptitude, ethnicity, or other identifiable diversity factors, even pupils who are progressing in reading. Students must receive teaching in the "core academic areas" and are held to the same performance standards and metrics as students enrolled in general education. Given the ramifications of such laws [36], the results of the National Reading Panel [37] and the Common Core state that educators working with students in need should incorporate instruction in the development of literacy skills like reading comprehension. This requirement necessitates that general education teachers possess the know-how and abilities to help students provide appropriate accommodations and instructional strategies. In curriculum areas like social studies, where students are expected to develop the information and critical thinking abilities necessary to be active, productive citizens, teaching usually consists of students reading textbooks and responding to questions about what they have read and understood. These methods are most noticeable in elementary school settings, where text is frequently used as a teaching tool. Despite having received preparation from a range of programs and possibly possessing discipline-specific knowledge, the majority of teachers lack the skills necessary to help students improve their comprehension or incorporate reading strategies into their lessons.

There is little information available about how to implement reading comprehension instruction, particularly at the early grade level. The advantages of using reading comprehension are demonstrated throughout the importance of various types of instruction, such as explicit instruction of reading strategies within the content curriculum. This area has been shown to improve the reading skills and understanding of the content for many types of learners. For the topic area of reading, especially in the development of reading comprehension, it is critical that primary school teachers employ evidence-based

techniques because they bear the responsibility for both the specific content of instruction and the achievement of all students [38].

4.2.1. Techniques and Reading Development

Researchers have considered ways to address the issues of reading comprehension for struggling readers while examining the topic of reading strategies and interventions. Following that investigation, two intriguing strategies for tackling the reading comprehension issue in schools were identified [38].

4.2.2. Methods Particular to Classrooms

Rather than only teaching children the material found in the many disciplines, elementary literacy education should focus on helping them develop comprehension and literacy within the subject matter. Teachers should devote just as much, if not more, attention to making sure that students can understand the language and context of discipline-specific materials as they do to specific subject matter and facts (e.g., dates of historical events or stages of the scientific method in science). Teachers must concentrate on comprehension techniques that enhance students' grasp of the subject matter they teach.

At the elementary level, comprehension instruction ought to revolve around more cognitively based techniques. Students should be taught new strategies for communicating difficult concepts and language, like word study exercises to pick up terminology that is context-specific but foreign to them.

Simple comprehension in the primary grades seems insufficient due to the complexity of content-specific texts; instead, more specialized comprehension strategies that concentrate on content-specific material will allow for better knowledge acquisition and retention [38].

Teachers using reading comprehension strategies in primary content classes should concentrate on giving students access to content through self-monitored comprehension of reading materials. They should also ensure that they are explicit in their instruction and in how they apply the strategies they use to enhance comprehension. This means that teachers must educate students on the significance of the technique and how it might aid in their understanding of the reading materials, rather than just providing them with tools like graphic organizers to fill out or complete. Inform students of the motivations behind their actions. Students can more easily and independently apply reading strategies in their future encounters with content-specific texts when they comprehend how these techniques operate. Teachers should allow their pupils to ask questions and utilize vocabulary related to the material they are reading, involving them in a discussion of the specific material they are reading (e.g., scientific and math formulas, settlement patterns in social studies).

Giving students the chance to evaluate written or oral content-specific resources in a conversation helps them become more familiar with the subject, which improves their comprehension of the contents [39]. Instructors must understand that students require assistance not only with the content but also in accessing the lessons given in the classroom [38].

4.3. Betterment of Social Reading Culture

Etim [40] defines basic literacy as the capacity to read, write, and communicate in English. The foundation of learning is reading.

Reading is reasoning that involves the meaningful interpretation of words, phrases, and sentences. It calls for all kinds of thinking, including critical, analytical, creative, imaginative, evaluative, judgmental, and problem-solving thinking [41]. Okwilagwe is quoted in this passage. The practice of reading regularly is known as a reading habit. The development of a mindset and the possession of abilities are what make reading a joyful, consistent, and ongoing activity. The single most significant factor influencing a student's success in school and in our contemporary, complex culture is their reading habit. The practice of instilling a love of reading in youngsters and students over time is known as a reading culture. A person is considered to have a reading culture if he or she routinely and habitually reads books and other informational resources that are not necessary for them to advance in their profession or career.

Thus, reading culture is fundamentally the type of culture that embraces reading and learning as the cornerstones of development. It is the kind that observes students, adults, and youngsters reading information resources consistently and devotedly in order to acquire knowledge that will be used realistically for development. Reading makes one's mind sharper, helps one reason logically and impartially, and inspires greatness in life. Scholastic Inc. refers to readers as leaders for this reason.

In general, development refers to the enhancement of people's lives through better, more useful education; increased earnings; the development of skills; and satisfying work. People need to be literate in order to be considered developed. This is a concern in Africa since, including Nigeria, the majority of people still lack literacy. Investing money in education is a wise investment.

This is so that the country can flourish through the productivity that an educated labor force provides. To meet the requirements of its current generation without jeopardizing the potential of future generations to meet their own, Nigeria requires this kind of growth. This is how sustainable development is embodied.

4.4. Limitations on Cultural Reading

Libraries have always aimed to promote learning and literacy. It is quite unfortunate that such an important institution has been marginalized in recent years. Reading, education, and libraries have the power to transform lives and will play a significant part in shaping our society's future. Libraries are essential to education, and studies have indicated that the current state of poor reading proficiency is caused by the underfunding of libraries and the services they provide.

While bemoaning the typically inadequate condition of library materials and facilities in the majority of Nigeria's primary and secondary schools, according to Fadero [42], a prevalent illness affecting education in Nigeria is the lack of

libraries in schools. Schools across the nation, from east to west and from north to south, typically lack libraries that might aid in curriculum development and instruction. Since there is no set procedure for funding school libraries, these facilities are typically underfunded and lack appropriate furnishings, trained staff, and pertinent information resources like books and other teaching aids. In agreement with Unagha [43] emphasizes in her case study of Universal Basic Education (UBE) that the lack of school library funding in the execution of government programs is the reason why Nigerian governments' efforts to advance literacy and education have failed. In a study on the use of school libraries in Nigeria, Odusanya and Amusa, according to Lawal [44], found that: "Some primary and secondary schools were visited to see physically the condition of the libraries in such schools. The results demonstrate that while few secondary schools have what might be called reading rooms, primary schools hardly ever have libraries. Elaturoti et al. [45] found that there were more inspections of school libraries than there were for the actual delivery and processing of library items in their assessment of school library services since the beginning of the library profession in Nigeria. Many elementary and secondary schools have such subpar libraries that they hinder rather than aid in education. Some situations, such as when there is not enough room set aside for libraries, when libraries are used inappropriately, when they are ill-stocked and ugly, etc., have little chance of inspiring people to read for pleasure or information. Most of these schools don't have libraries, at least not in certain situations. The same rule applies to public libraries, as [46] found that the practice of governments giving public library boards far less money than what was authorized in a given year has an impact on the caliber and quantity of materials obtained as well as the caliber of services provided. These instances are counterproductive and seriously hinder Nigeria's efforts to achieve sustainable development. According to Nssien [47] a lack of interest and relevant reading materials, distractions from watching television and movies, a slow comprehension rate, a slow reading rate, difficulty differentiating important ideas from unimportant details, a lack of vocabulary or word power, and poor reading habits are the reasons behind Nigerian students' poor reading skills. There are several different reasons why Nigerians have such poor reading habits and culture. Gbadamosi [41] lists the following as part of it:

- Modifications to Nigeria's value system. The pursuit of material affluence has diminished enthusiasm in learning new things.
- Financial difficulty is a common occurrence in many households. The majority of parents are able to cover their children's tuition but neglect to purchase books for them.
- The people can no longer afford books and other knowledge sources due to their astronomical pricing. Due to the lack of encouragement for local authors to publish books, there is a low supply of indigenous novels in addition to the high cost of books.
- The price of publishing a book is likewise very high. Indigenous authors lack motivation since they might not have the money to pay for the expensive publishing of their books.
- Introduction of home video, movie theaters, and other technological devices.

What is known as literary neo-imperialism, literary apartheid, and enslavement are further barriers to the growth of reading culture. The majority of the nation's bookstores favor stocking works by foreign authors. It is rare to find native books in their bookstores. Bookstore owners would decline requests from Nigerian authors to sell their works, even when they approach them with such requests. Because of this, the majority of authors now have to market their books on their own. This is unacceptable in Nigeria, a growing nation [48].

5. Conclusion

5.1. Summary of Main Findings and Contributions of Literature Review on Whole-Book Reading

Research on whole-book reading has gone through different stages of development.

In the early stage from 2000 to 2010, most of the studies focused on reading activities. Many of these studies were from Asia (China and South Korea), and they mostly revolved around first language learning. In China, although there was a certain number of relevant studies under specific searches, there were relatively fewer studies related to English teaching. In South Korea, there were studies on the preparation of reading discussion materials and the current situation and improvement of picture book reading activities.

During the mid-stage from 2011 to 2020, there were changes in the number of research articles and the level of attention. In terms of research methods, there was a preference for practical research, which centered around the construction of reading courses. It was closely related to and further expanded upon the Chinese Curriculum Standards for Compulsory Education and core competencies.

In the recent stage from 2020 to 2024, the research has focused on teaching strategies. There are problems such as insufficient consideration of students' needs in the application of the student-centered theory, a lack of autonomy and specificity in reading plans, and random selection of teaching materials without taking students' preferences into account. Meanwhile, emerging research hotspots include picture book teaching, extensive reading and intensive reading teaching. It also faces challenges brought by digital reading to both teachers and students, as well as challenges and scarcity of resources in interdisciplinary reading.

Its theoretical foundations cover multiple aspects, including the psychology of reading, linguistic education theory (which includes education and linguistic theory and literary criticism theory). It is of great significance for improving students' reading skills, enhancing teachers' teaching capabilities in reading, and improving the social reading culture. Although there are limitations in some aspects, such as in Nigeria where the social reading culture faces issues like insufficient library resources, shortage of funds, and many obstacles in cultivating reading habits, overall, the research on whole-book reading

has provided important reference bases and directions for relevant research and practice in the field of education in many aspects.

5.2. Implications for Future Research

Future research in whole-book reading could focus on several aspects. Firstly, regarding the teaching strategies, more efforts should be made to develop student-centered teaching strategies that truly meet the diverse needs and preferences of students. This may involve conducting in-depth investigations into students' interests and abilities at different educational levels and backgrounds, and then designing personalized reading plans and selecting appropriate teaching materials accordingly. For example, research could explore how to use modern educational technology to create customized reading materials and teaching activities for individual students.

Secondly, in the face of the challenges of digital reading, future studies could aim to develop training programs and resources to enhance teachers' digital literacy. This would enable them to better integrate digital reading into the teaching process and guide students to use digital reading tools effectively. At the same time, research could also focus on how to help students improve their digital reading skills, such as information screening and critical thinking in the digital environment, and address the issues of distractions and weakened reading depth.

Thirdly, for interdisciplinary reading, future research could explore ways to bridge the gap between different disciplines and develop interdisciplinary teaching models and curricula. This might include training programs for teachers to improve their interdisciplinary knowledge and teaching abilities, as well as the development of interdisciplinary teaching resources and textbooks. Additionally, research could investigate how to design reading activities and projects that promote students' interdisciplinary thinking and learning, and evaluate the effectiveness of such interventions.

Finally, considering the importance of a social reading culture, future studies could explore strategies to promote the establishment and development of a good reading culture in different regions and communities. This could involve research on the impact of community reading programs, library services, and family reading environments on individuals' reading habits and attitudes. For example, studies could examine how to encourage the participation of parents and community members in children's reading activities and how to improve the accessibility and quality of library resources in underprivileged areas.

5.3. Guidance and Value for Practical Applications

For educators, understanding the different stages of whole-book reading research can help them design more effective teaching activities. For example, in the early stage, the focus on reading activities in Asian countries like China and South Korea indicates that engaging students in various forms of reading interactions is beneficial. Teachers can organize group discussions similar to those in Korean studies on reading discussion materials preparation, which encourages students to think deeply about the text and express their opinions. In the mid-stage, with the emphasis on curriculum construction and the connection to core competencies, educators should align their teaching goals with the overall educational standards. They can design curriculum objectives, planning, and evaluation schemes following the ideas proposed in relevant research, such as Li [26] and Li [27]'s project-based curriculum design for whole-book reading, to ensure students' comprehensive development in language learning and other core competencies. In the recent stage, being aware of the issues in current teaching strategies, like the lack of consideration for students' needs in student-centered theory, teachers can make adjustments. They can actively involve students in the selection of reading materials and the formulation of reading plans, and pay attention to the diversity of teaching materials, including more picture books and popular science books according to students' interests.

Regarding the emerging research hotspots in picture book teaching, teachers can utilize the vivid and interesting features of picture books to attract young students, especially in children's English enlightenment. They can create a lively and interactive reading atmosphere, which helps children improve their language perception and story understanding abilities. For extensive and intensive reading teaching, educators can design appropriate teaching programs. In extensive reading, they should provide a large number of graded readers suitable for different language proficiency levels to help students expand their vocabulary and reading skills incidentally. In intensive reading, the focus should be on guiding students to deeply understand the text, analyze language features, and master learning strategies that can be applied to other texts.

In the context of digital reading, schools and educational institutions should provide training for teachers to enhance their digital literacy. Teachers can then introduce digital reading resources and platforms to students, teach them how to screen and use information effectively, and at the same time, pay attention to protecting students' vision and guiding them to avoid distractions. For interdisciplinary reading, schools can encourage teachers from different disciplines to cooperate and develop interdisciplinary reading projects [49]. For example, in a project related to environmental protection, language teachers can guide students to read relevant literary works, science teachers can provide scientific knowledge and data, and art teachers can help students express their understanding and feelings through artistic creation, which helps students develop interdisciplinary thinking and comprehensive abilities.

In terms of social reading culture, libraries and community organizations can play an active role. Libraries can improve their collection and service quality, organize various reading promotion activities, and provide a good reading environment for people of all ages. Community organizations can encourage families to establish a reading atmosphere at home, such as setting up family reading time and sharing reading experiences. At the same time, efforts should be made to address the limitations in some regions like Nigeria, such as increasing investment in library construction and improving the affordability of books, to promote the popularization and development of reading culture.

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