

Integrating Literacy Training and Speed Reading Strategies for Receptive Language Development: A Narrative Review

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Abstract

Receptive language skills are important for reading, learning, and understanding information. Many studies have shown that literacy training and speed-reading strategies improve reading performance. However, these approaches are often studied separately. Therefore, this narrative review examined their contributions to receptive language skills and explored how they can be integrated. This study used a qualitative library research design with a narrative review approach. Journal articles indexed in Google Scholar, published mainly between 2022 and 2026, were reviewed using narrative synthesis, thematic analysis, and conceptual interpretation. The review identified three main findings. First, literacy training develops vocabulary, reading fluency, language awareness, and reading comprehension, which form the foundation of receptive language skills. Second, speed-reading strategies improve reading efficiency when combined with comprehension and metacognitive strategies. Third, integrating literacy training and speed-reading strategies provides a more complete explanation of receptive language development than using either approach alone. This review proposes an integrated conceptual framework showing that literacy competence supports the effective use of speed-reading strategies to improve receptive language skills. These findings provide useful insights for teachers, curriculum developers, and future researchers in designing more effective literacy instruction.

Keywords : *Literacy Training, Speed Reading, Receptive Language Skills, Reading Fluency, Narrative Review*

INTRODUCTION

Language proficiency is a fundamental competency that serves as the foundation for communication, learning, and knowledge development. In linguistics, language skills are classified into receptive skills, namely listening and reading, and productive skills, namely speaking and writing. Among these categories, receptive language skills play a crucial role because they serve as the primary means of acquiring, comprehending, and processing information, which subsequently forms the basis for generating ideas and conveying information to others.

The rapid advancement of science and technology in the digital era has led to an unprecedented flow of information. Information is now widely accessible through books,

scholarly articles, mass media, and digital platforms in enormous quantities. This situation requires individuals not only to be able to read but also to comprehend information quickly, accurately, and critically. Therefore, strengthening receptive language skills has become increasingly essential to enable people to adapt to the continuous growth of information while maintaining the ability to understand texts in depth.

Nevertheless, numerous studies indicate that literacy proficiency in Indonesia continues to face significant challenges. These issues are not limited to school students but also affect adult members of society who have not yet acquired adequate basic literacy skills. Limited access to education, socioeconomic conditions, and insufficient opportunities to participate in formal education are among the factors contributing to difficulties in reading, understanding, and applying information in everyday life. Consequently, these limitations negatively affect the quality of human resources and reduce community participation in social, economic, and educational activities.

One effort to address these challenges is through literacy training programs. Such programs are not merely intended to teach participants to recognize letters and develop basic reading skills; rather, they are designed to foster the ability to comprehend functional information relevant to learners' daily needs. Contextual, gradual, and life-oriented learning approaches have been shown to increase learners' motivation while simultaneously strengthening the basic literacy skills of both students and adult learners.

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated the important role of literacy training and speed reading strategies in improving students' reading performance. Literacy interventions have been shown to enhance reading fluency, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension through structured instructional approaches and sustained learning support (Pallante & Kim, 2012; Hidayat et al., 2025). Similarly, speed reading training has been reported to improve reading efficiency, reading comprehension, and students' motivation by developing eye movement efficiency, skimming skills, and strategic text processing (Sari & Kaihatu, 2023; Leksono & Riyatno, 2025; Tisnasari et al., 2026). Other studies have further emphasized the strong relationship between reading fluency, reading speed, and reading comprehension as fundamental components of reading literacy development (Mutema & Pretorius, 2024; Rosida et al., 2025). Despite these advances, previous studies have predominantly examined literacy training and speed reading as separate instructional approaches using experimental or quantitative designs. Consequently, limited attention has been given to synthesizing how these two approaches can be conceptually integrated to support the broader development of receptive language skills. This fragmentation highlights the need for a comprehensive narrative review that consolidates current evidence into a coherent conceptual framework.

Accordingly, this study aims to synthesize and critically examine the existing literature on the integration of literacy training and speed reading strategies in developing receptive language skills. Rather than evaluating the effectiveness of individual interventions, this review seeks to explain how both approaches complement one another in strengthening reading comprehension, reading fluency, and other

receptive language competencies across educational contexts. To achieve this objective, this review explores how previous studies have explained the contribution of literacy training and speed reading strategies to the development of receptive language skills. Furthermore, it synthesizes existing evidence to examine how these two approaches can be conceptually integrated into a comprehensive framework that supports the development of receptive language skills across diverse educational contexts.

The novelty of this study lies in its integrative perspective, bringing together two strands of educational research that have largely evolved independently. Unlike previous studies that primarily focused on measuring the effectiveness of isolated interventions, this narrative review develops a conceptual synthesis explaining the complementary relationships among literacy training, speed reading strategies, reading fluency, reading comprehension, and receptive language skills. Theoretically, the proposed framework contributes to the refinement of literacy and language learning literature by offering a more holistic understanding of receptive language development. Practically, the findings provide evidence-informed recommendations for educators, curriculum developers, and educational policymakers in designing integrated literacy instruction that simultaneously promotes reading efficiency and comprehension while supporting future research on literacy-based language learning.

METHOD

This study used a qualitative library research design with a narrative review approach. The study aimed to review and synthesize previous studies on the integration of literacy training and speed-reading strategies in developing receptive language skills. The data were taken from scholarly journal articles indexed in Google Scholar. The articles were searched using keywords related to literacy training, speed reading, reading fluency, reading comprehension, and receptive language skills. The selected articles were relevant to the research topic, published mainly between 2022 and 2026, written in English or Indonesian, and published in academic journals. Several earlier studies were also included to support the theoretical background. Data were collected through document analysis by identifying, selecting, reading, and organizing the relevant articles. The data were analyzed using narrative synthesis, including grouping the findings into themes, comparing the results, connecting related concepts, and identifying research gaps. To improve the trustworthiness of the study, clear article selection criteria, comparison across studies, thematic consistency, and careful documentation were applied throughout the review process.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This narrative review examined how previous studies have explained the contribution of literacy training and speed-reading strategies to the development of receptive language skills and how these two approaches can be conceptually integrated. The analysis was based on scholarly journal articles indexed in Google Scholar that were published primarily between 2022 and 2026, with several seminal studies included to strengthen the theoretical foundation. The selected studies represented various

educational settings, including primary schools, secondary schools, higher education, and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. The reviewed literature was analyzed using narrative synthesis through thematic categorization, comparative analysis, and conceptual interpretation to identify recurring findings, conceptual relationships, and research gaps.

Table 1. Summary of Major Findings from the Reviewed Literature

Theme	Main Findings	Representative Studies	Contribution to Receptive Language Skills
Literacy Training	Improves vocabulary, reading fluency, language processing, and comprehension	Pallante & Kim (2013); Hidayat et al. (2025); Ali et al. (2022)	Builds the linguistic foundation for receptive language development
Speed Reading	Increases reading efficiency while maintaining comprehension through strategic reading	Klimovich et al. (2023); Beglar et al. (2022); Leksono & Riyatno (2025); Sari & Kaihatu (2023)	Improves reading fluency and information-processing efficiency
Reading Fluency and Comprehension	Reading fluency, listening comprehension, and reading comprehension are strongly interconnected	Mutema & Pretorius (2024); Brèthes et al. (2022)	Supports higher-level receptive language processing

The analysis revealed three major themes. The first theme concerns the contribution of literacy training to the development of receptive language skills. The reviewed studies consistently indicate that structured literacy instruction improves reading fluency, vocabulary, language processing, and reading comprehension, which together form the foundation of receptive language development (Hidayat et al., 2025; Pallante & Kim, 2012). Recent reviews also emphasize that systematic reading instruction provides meaningful language input and promotes sustained reading engagement, particularly in EFL learning environments (Ali et al., 2022).

Table 2. Comparison between Literacy Training and Speed Reading Strategies

Aspect	Literacy Training	Speed Reading Strategies
Primary Goal	Develop language competence	Improve reading efficiency
Main Focus	Vocabulary, decoding, comprehension	Reading rate, eye movement, strategic reading
Learning Process	Systematic and gradual	Strategy-based practice
Main Outcome	Better language understanding	Faster information processing
Risk if Applied Alone	Slow reading efficiency	Reduced comprehension if literacy is weak
Role in Receptive Language	Foundation	Optimization

The second theme focuses on the role of speed-reading strategies in improving reading performance. Across the reviewed studies, speed-reading training was found to increase reading efficiency by reducing unnecessary eye movements, improving reading fluency, and maintaining reading comprehension when learners applied appropriate metacognitive strategies (Klimovich et al., 2023; Leksono & Riyatno, 2025; Sari & Kaihatu, 2023). Similarly, timed reading and repeated reading activities have been reported to improve reading rate while preserving comprehension among university EFL learners (Beglar et al., 2022).

The third theme concerns the relationship between reading fluency and receptive language skills. Several studies demonstrate that reading fluency, reading speed, listening comprehension, and reading comprehension are strongly interconnected rather than functioning as independent abilities (Mutema & Pretorius, 2024; Brèthes et al., 2022; Guldenoglu et al., 2026). Reading fluency serves as an important bridge between lower-level decoding processes and higher-level text comprehension, while listening comprehension further strengthens learners' ability to construct meaning from written texts.

Although previous studies consistently report positive outcomes, the literature remains fragmented. Most studies evaluate literacy instruction, reading fluency, or speed-reading interventions separately and primarily employ experimental or quasi-experimental designs to measure learning outcomes. Comprehensive reviews that integrate these approaches into a unified conceptual framework for receptive language development remain limited. This finding highlights the need for a broader synthesis that explains not only whether these instructional approaches are effective, but also how they complement one another in supporting receptive language development across different educational contexts.

The first major finding indicates that literacy training serves as the fundamental basis for developing receptive language skills. Across the reviewed studies, literacy training consistently improves reading fluency, vocabulary knowledge, language processing, and reading comprehension, all of which are essential components of receptive language development (Pallante & Kim, 2012; Hidayat et al., 2025). Structured literacy instruction that combines phonological awareness, vocabulary learning, guided reading, and comprehension activities enables learners to process written information more efficiently while constructing deeper meaning from texts. Likewise, literacy-oriented instruction in EFL classrooms has been found to strengthen learners' comprehension by encouraging active reading strategies and meaningful interaction with texts (Ali et al., 2022). Furthermore, systematic literacy intervention provides continuous opportunities for learners to develop automatic word recognition and comprehension simultaneously, resulting in more effective receptive language acquisition (Hidayat et al., 2025). These findings suggest that literacy training should not be viewed merely as an activity to improve reading ability but as a comprehensive instructional process that develops the cognitive and linguistic competencies required for successful receptive

language learning. Therefore, literacy training represents the instructional foundation upon which other reading strategies can be effectively implemented.

The reviewed literature also indicates that the effectiveness of literacy training depends on instructional quality rather than the amount of reading practice alone. Studies consistently report that guided instruction, teacher feedback, repeated reading activities, and differentiated learning support produce greater improvements than independent reading without instructional guidance (Pallante & Kim, 2012; Ali et al., 2022). This finding supports the view that literacy development is an active learning process requiring systematic instructional design to facilitate learners' cognitive engagement and language development.

The second major finding highlights the important contribution of speed-reading strategies to reading fluency and reading comprehension. Most reviewed studies demonstrate that speed-reading training improves reading efficiency by increasing reading speed while maintaining an acceptable level of comprehension when appropriate reading strategies are applied (Klimovich et al., 2023; Leksono & Riyatno, 2025; Sari & Kaihatu, 2023). Common instructional techniques include reducing subvocalization, minimizing unnecessary eye fixation, identifying keywords, applying skimming and scanning strategies, and practicing timed reading. These strategies enable learners to process written information more efficiently and allocate greater cognitive resources to text comprehension.

However, the reviewed literature consistently emphasizes that reading speed alone does not guarantee successful comprehension. Students who read rapidly without strategic processing often experience reduced comprehension, whereas learners who combine speed-reading techniques with metacognitive monitoring achieve better learning outcomes (Rosida et al., 2025; Mutema & Pretorius, 2024). Similar findings reported by Klimovich et al. (2023) indicate that speed-reading interventions are most effective when learners continuously monitor comprehension while adjusting their reading rate according to text difficulty. These findings suggest that the primary purpose of speed reading is not simply to maximize reading speed but to improve reading efficiency by maintaining a balance between speed and comprehension. Consequently, speed-reading strategies should be integrated with comprehension-oriented instruction rather than implemented as isolated technical skills.

Table 3. Proposed Integrated Framework for Receptive Language Development

Stage	Instructional Focus	Main Competencies Developed	Expected Outcomes
Stage 1	Literacy Training	Vocabulary, phonological awareness, decoding, comprehension	Strong literacy competence
Stage 2	Speed Reading Strategies	Reading fluency, eye movement efficiency, metacognitive monitoring	Efficient reading process
Stage 3	Integrated Application	Strategic reading using strong literacy competence	Improved receptive language skills

The synthesis of the reviewed literature indicates that literacy training and speed-reading strategies are complementary rather than competing instructional approaches. Literacy training primarily develops foundational language competencies, including vocabulary, decoding, reading comprehension, and language processing, whereas speed-reading strategies optimize the efficiency with which these competencies are applied during reading activities (Pallante & Kim, 2012; Klimovich et al., 2023). In other words, literacy training strengthens learners' linguistic competence, while speed reading improves the effectiveness of information processing.

This conceptual relationship suggests that receptive language development occurs through a sequential yet interconnected process. Learners first require adequate literacy competence to understand written texts, after which speed-reading strategies help increase reading efficiency without sacrificing comprehension. Without sufficient literacy skills, speed reading may encourage superficial reading and reduce comprehension. Conversely, literacy instruction without efficient reading strategies may limit learners' ability to process increasingly complex information within limited time. Therefore, integrating these two approaches creates a more balanced instructional model that simultaneously develops reading fluency, reading comprehension, and receptive language skills.

Compared with previous studies, the present review extends existing knowledge by proposing an integrated conceptual perspective instead of examining literacy training and speed reading independently. Rather than focusing solely on the effectiveness of individual instructional interventions, this review demonstrates that the interaction between foundational literacy instruction and strategic reading efficiency provides a more comprehensive explanation of receptive language development. This conceptual integration offers a basis for designing literacy programs that combine systematic language instruction with evidence-based reading strategies to improve learners' overall receptive language competence across different educational contexts.

The synthesis of the reviewed studies suggests that receptive language development is best understood as a progressive and integrated learning process. Based on the reviewed evidence, this study proposes a conceptual framework consisting of three interconnected stages: foundational literacy development, strategic reading efficiency, and receptive language achievement.

The first stage focuses on literacy training as the instructional foundation. Through systematic literacy activities such as vocabulary instruction, phonological awareness, guided reading, and comprehension exercises, learners gradually develop the basic linguistic knowledge needed to understand written texts (Ali et al., 2022; Pallante & Kim, 2013). These competencies provide the cognitive basis for efficient reading because learners become more familiar with vocabulary, sentence structures, and textual organization.

The second stage involves the application of speed-reading strategies. Once learners possess sufficient literacy competence, instructional strategies such as timed reading, skimming, scanning, reducing subvocalization, and improving eye movement

efficiency help increase reading fluency while maintaining comprehension (Klimovich et al., 2023; Beglar et al., 2022; Sari & Kaihatu, 2023). At this stage, learners shift from decoding individual words to processing larger units of meaning more efficiently.

The final stage represents receptive language achievement. The reviewed studies indicate that learners who combine strong literacy competence with effective reading strategies demonstrate higher levels of reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, information processing, and overall receptive language performance (Mutema & Pretorius, 2024; Brèthes et al., 2022). This conceptual framework therefore suggests that literacy training and speed-reading strategies function as complementary instructional components rather than independent interventions. Literacy training develops learners' language competence, whereas speed reading improves the efficiency with which this competence is applied during reading activities.

The findings of this review generally support previous research demonstrating that literacy instruction improves reading achievement and language development across different educational contexts (Ali et al., 2022; Pallante & Kim, 2013). Likewise, previous studies consistently report that speed-reading strategies contribute to greater reading fluency and reading efficiency when learners apply appropriate comprehension strategies (Beglar et al., 2022; Klimovich et al., 2023). These findings confirm that both instructional approaches make meaningful contributions to receptive language development.

However, this review extends the existing literature in several important ways. First, previous studies have mainly investigated literacy training and speed-reading strategies as separate instructional interventions. Most empirical studies focused on measuring the effectiveness of a single teaching method through experimental or quasi-experimental designs, while limited attention has been given to explaining the conceptual relationship between these approaches. This review addresses that gap by integrating findings from both research areas into a single explanatory framework.

Second, this review emphasizes that reading fluency should be understood as an outcome of both language competence and strategic reading behavior. Rather than viewing reading speed as the primary objective, the reviewed studies indicate that efficient reading should always be accompanied by comprehension monitoring and meaningful language processing (Mutema & Pretorius, 2024; Klimovich et al., 2023). This perspective refines earlier interpretations that often treated reading speed as an isolated performance indicator.

Finally, the review highlights the need for instructional models that integrate literacy instruction with evidence-based reading strategies. Such integration provides a broader explanation of receptive language development than models focusing exclusively on either foundational literacy or reading efficiency.

The findings of this review have several theoretical and practical implications. From a theoretical perspective, the proposed conceptual framework expands current understanding of receptive language development by positioning literacy training and speed-reading strategies as complementary instructional processes. Instead of treating these approaches independently, the framework explains how foundational literacy

competence supports the successful application of strategic reading techniques, ultimately leading to stronger receptive language performance.

From a practical perspective, educators should consider integrating systematic literacy instruction with speed-reading activities in classroom practice. Literacy instruction should focus on developing vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension, and language awareness, while speed-reading activities should emphasize strategic reading rather than reading speed alone. Such balanced instruction may help learners become both accurate and efficient readers.

Curriculum developers may also benefit from this integrated perspective by designing learning materials that combine foundational literacy activities with reading fluency practice. In addition, teacher education programs should provide professional development on how to integrate these instructional approaches effectively in different educational settings, particularly in EFL classrooms where learners often experience limited language exposure.

Methodologically, this review demonstrates the value of narrative synthesis for integrating findings across different educational contexts and research designs. Rather than comparing statistical outcomes alone, narrative synthesis enables researchers to identify broader conceptual relationships and generate new theoretical perspectives from existing evidence.

This narrative review synthesized previous studies examining literacy training, speed-reading strategies, and receptive language development. Three major findings emerged from the reviewed literature. First, literacy training provides the essential linguistic foundation for receptive language development by improving vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension, and language processing skills. Second, speed-reading strategies enhance reading efficiency when implemented together with comprehension-oriented learning strategies. Third, integrating these two instructional approaches offers a more comprehensive explanation of receptive language development than examining either approach independently.

Overall, the reviewed evidence suggests that receptive language development is a cumulative process in which foundational literacy competence and strategic reading efficiency continuously support one another. This integrated perspective contributes to the literature by proposing a conceptual framework that connects literacy instruction with speed-reading strategies in a single model of receptive language development. Future research may further examine this framework through longitudinal, mixed-method, or intervention studies across different educational levels and cultural contexts to strengthen its empirical foundation and practical application.

CONCLUSION

This narrative review concludes that literacy training and speed-reading strategies play complementary roles in developing receptive language skills. Literacy training builds the linguistic foundation through vocabulary development, reading comprehension, language awareness, and reading fluency, while speed-reading strategies improve reading efficiency without reducing comprehension. By integrating

findings from previous studies, this review addresses the limited conceptual connection between these two approaches and proposes an integrated framework in which literacy competence supports the effective use of strategic reading to strengthen receptive language development. These findings suggest that educators should combine systematic literacy instruction with evidence-based speed-reading strategies, particularly in EFL classrooms. Future research is encouraged to validate the proposed framework through empirical studies and to examine additional factors, such as digital literacy, metacognitive awareness, reading motivation, and artificial intelligence-assisted learning, in supporting receptive language development.

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