

An Examination of The Actual Methods Employed to Instruct First-Year Students in Reading Comprehension Within the English Language and Literature Department of Al-Zaytoonah Private University of Jordan.

Ihtisham Hussain

Assistant Professor at University of Peshawar at-ihisham@gmail.com

Abstract

There is a new perspective emerging in the field of second language training that prioritizes reading as a receptive skill over the more conventional "production" abilities of speaking, listening, and writing. There is a growing consensus among educators that prioritizing literacy is crucial when considering effective methods for teaching foreign languages. Developing reading skills is essential for children as it can enhance their linguistic proficiency. Reading is an essential skill that is both enjoyable and fulfilling, allowing individuals to enhance their knowledge. Reading, therefore, involves more than simply repeating words and making sure you understand their meaning within a given context. Engaging in reading activities expands an individual's viewpoint. Also, as the semester goes on, the practice helps students probe deeper and deeper into the author's goal. In order to surmount this hindrance, it is important to acquire comprehension beforehand. Hence, a key objective of English instruction is to enhance pupils' capacity to comprehend written text. When students attain reading comprehension competency, they are able to actively participate in course content and explore their interests in various academic fields. Therefore, it is crucial to emphasize the importance of students' understanding abilities throughout the educational journey.

Keywords: Real life: teaching first-year kids how to understand what they read

Introduction

The four pillars of language learning are the abilities to speak, listen, read, and write. Curriculum designers for the study of a second language agree that reading comprehension skills must be emphasized (Dublin, 1982, p. 14). Reading, argues Rivers (1981: 259), provides pupils with a priceless opportunity to consider the ideas of significant people from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. Students' horizons are broadened and their cognitive skills are honed as a result. Thiele and Herzic's piece (1983:277) provides further food for thought. Predicting a student's second-language

comprehension skills relies heavily on their reading comprehension. An individual's eventual success or failure in learning a foreign language is strongly influenced by their ability to read written information, a vital requirement for obtaining knowledge.

A look at the linked literature

Reading comprehension is a cognitive ability that relates to the capability to comprehend written information and make sense of what is read. An effort that is both difficult and continuing is being made to provide a precise definition of reading comprehension. The issue is brought about by the inherently difficult nature of reading comprehension. The topic touches on a wide variety of academic fields, including cognitive psychology, psycholinguistics, and linguistics, to name just a few. In addition to this, it incorporates a variety of additional mental operations. Significant attention is placed on this particular subject by the authors Spiro, Bruce, and Brewer (1980: XV). People who are interested in learning modern perspectives on understanding will have a barrier due to the interdisciplinary nature of the research that is being conducted on this subject. It is not easy to obtain a thorough synopsis of essential material within the wide fields of linguistics, reading education, artificial intelligence, and cognitive psychology. These fields are interrelated and interdependent. The text provided by the user is already scholarly. There is no need to rewrite the piece. For the purpose of clarifying the concept of "reading comprehension," a scholar will normally provide a definition for each of the basic components that make up the concept. This is a customary practice that has been around for a long time. There are a great deal of different interpretations of what is meant by the word "reading" that can be discovered by looking through the various works that have been produced by academics and researchers that have devoted their efforts to the investigation of reading. There are two primary categories that these definitions might be placed into. Reading is sometimes characterized as a straightforward activity that entails nothing more than the articulation of words, which is a representation that is accurate for those who are just beginning their reading journey. However, reading is much more complex than that. In addition, other definitions lay a focus on the idea that the fundamental goal of "reading" is to attain comprehension of the information that is being read; this is what justifies the existence of these particular definitions. Reading can be described as the process of comprehending words that are composed of letters on a printed page, according to Flesch (1955:110). This definition does not take into account any other

aspects of the reading process. This definition has a chance of being included within the primary category if it is deemed appropriate. Reading is described as the process of obtaining meaningful interpretations from written or printed verbal signals, as stated by Harris (1970:3). The term "reading" was coined by William Shakespeare. As a result, the degree of precision in "reading" is dependent on the reader's subjective interpretation and comprehension of the language used by the writer, which in turn influences the reader's ability to understand the message that was intended. According to Smith (1963: 257), the term "comprehension" refers to an all-encompassing concept that encompasses a variety of cognitive processes that are involved in the act of reading. As a consequence of this, defining the concept of "reading comprehension" poses a number of difficulties for academics working in the field. According to Lunzer and Dolan (1980: 257), the evaluation of a student's capacity and inclination to engage in meaningful analysis of the information that is being read is what is meant when the term "comprehension" is used. This provides evidence that the act of reading engages the reader in not one but two distinct forms of cognitive activity: the literal act of reading, as well as the cognitive activity of comprehension, or maybe other forms of cognitive engagement. The two distinct ideas that come together to form the idea of "reading comprehension" have a close connection to one another, despite the fact that they each have their own unique meaning. According to Fairbanks (1937:81), there is an unmistakable connection that can be drawn between the two activities of "reading" and "comprehension." The researcher made the observation that less proficient readers demonstrated an average of 5.8 faults in their spoken English, despite the fact that skilled readers made just 2.1 errors per 100 words on average when reading aloud. Errors that were made by readers with poor reading skills almost always led to a shift in meaning, but errors that were made by readers with strong reading abilities did not lead to the same kind of shift in meaning. In addition, it was noted that readers with higher levels of skill had a larger inclination to recognize and correct their own errors, in contrast to readers with lower levels of proficiency, who had a lesser tendency to do so. According to Fairbanks, a key worry shared by those who have low reading skills is a lack of comprehension. Therefore, the process of reading competently requires not only the decoding of the author's intended message from written symbols, but also the active pursuit of underlying and implicit significances in the text that one is reading. The viewpoints and concepts that have been explored up until this point offer

compelling proof that the primary objective of reading is comprehension. It is advised that reading instruction at all educational levels should prioritize the development of comprehension abilities in order to make the most of this fact, as stated by specialists. In order to capitalize on this fact. According to Tinker and McGullough (1975: 197), the primary purpose of educating people to become nature readers is to equip them with the literacy skills necessary to comprehend any form of written material, regardless of the degree to which it is complicated. Fostering overall oral competency, gaining a wide range of words through visual identification, and expanding the capacity to identify and understand written symbols are all done with the primary intention of improving comprehension and interpretation of the meanings that are being communicated.

Steps for gathering data

A questionnaire was used in the research so that the researchers could achieve their goal. The investigation at hand is being investigated, hence the questionnaire covers a broad variety of topics, and it comprises a total of twelve questions covering those topics. The examination has been modified in such a way as to cater to the level of linguistic competence possessed by students in their first year of study. With regard to the First Appendix In order to conduct an analysis of the instructional environment in relation to this specific topic, the purpose of the questionnaire is to collect responses from students assessing the usefulness of reading comprehension classes. To put it another way, the purpose of the questionnaire is to gain an understanding of the specific difficulties that students have while enrolled in "reading comprehension courses." In addition to this, the purpose of the questionnaire is to investigate the students' perspectives on the teaching methods utilized by the instructor. In addition, there are questions that have been carefully created to elicit the viewpoints of students regarding particular topics that are discussed in the textbook, with the purpose of developing greater reading comprehension. The final goal of the investigation is to determine whether there are any places in which the "reading comprehension" lesson may be improved, as well as any obstacles that the students might have encountered throughout the duration of the class. Each question has a set of potential responses that can be selected from, often ranging from three to six different alternatives. The intrinsic qualities of the enquiry will determine the number of viable alternatives that are available to investigate. In the following paragraphs, we shall talk about the subject

of subjects. As a result of the fact that the questionnaire was completed by a total of 92 students, it became the primary focus of the investigation. It is essential to recognize, however, that the total number of students does not correspond with all of the inquiries. This is because the answers to a number of the questions are strongly dependent on the findings of the earlier parts.

5.2 The Structure of the Organization

Before the questionnaire was distributed to the kids, it was first given to a select group of educators for them to go over and provide feedback on. Because of this, they were able to make changes to the book, so enhancing its coherence and incorporating or removing aspects that were deemed to be superfluous. Before the questionnaire was ever distributed, however, the purpose of the survey was explained to the group of first-year students in a way that was clear and understandable. In order to reduce the likelihood of erroneous interpretations and guarantee the delivery of accurate results, the researcher who conducted the study meticulously reviewed and thought upon each question and its related options personally, using their own terminology throughout the process. Instructions instructing the participants to black out their names and other identifying information from copies of the questionnaire were given to them in the hopes of eliciting responses that were more reliable.

6. An analysis and interpretation of the results

In order to conduct an analysis of the questionnaire data that is up to the researcher's standards, he or she must respond to each individual question in a unique way. The primary purpose of this preliminary investigation is to determine the extent to which the students understand the value of being instructed in reading comprehension skills. In the document, could you please add Table 1? According to the information shown in Table 1, students are aware of the need of taking "reading comprehension courses." Reading comprehension classes are seen as either extremely important or on par with the significance of other academic fields by a sizeable proportion of the participants (93 percent), who all agree that they are necessary. According to the data, a sizeable percentage of students, particularly 7%, have the misconception that reading comprehension classes are of significantly less significance when compared to the significance of other academic topics. As a consequence of this, one could draw the conclusion that students' levels of motivation improve whenever they take part in reading comprehension lessons. Following that, an investigation was carried out to investigate the factors that influence the degree to which students understand the relevance of reading comprehension instruction.

Please place Table 2 in the following location. Table 2 presents empirical evidence indicating that a significant proportion of students have the belief that reading comprehension courses are of the utmost importance due to their efficacy in facilitating the understanding of word meanings and facilitating familiarity with English grammatical structures. This is indicated by the fact that there is a significant proportion of students who hold the belief that reading comprehension courses are of the utmost importance. It is possible to draw the conclusion that their point of view involves the conviction that acquiring knowledge of word semantics and grammatical structures is sufficient for the undertaking of reading comprehension if one considers the preceding statement to be true.

Conclusion

The primary goals of this study were to (a) catalog the unique challenges faced by first-year English majors at Al-Zaytoonah Private University in Jordan, and (b) examine the underlying causes of these challenges and propose more effective methods of instruction to boost students' "reading comprehension." The following are the results of the investigation: 1) It's obvious that many introductory-level pupils lack the "reading comprehension skills" necessary to fully grasp the material presented to them in written form. Reading comprehension relies on these abilities. For instance, many students struggle to answer problems that necessitate the use of higher-order thinking skills. Less emphasis is placed on teaching students to think critically and deduce meaning from context. Questions 4 and 5 on pages 18 and 19 of the survey suggest that literal-level skill transmission is the primary focus of classroom inquiry and activities. The fact that this stage receives the bulk of the focus is indicative of this. The textbook fails to give students the necessary cultural grounding to aid them in becoming teachers (see the response to question 9 on pages 23-24 for more information on this). First-year students' answers to the second question (found on pages 16 and 17) show that they do not fully grasp the concept of "reading comprehension." Many people think that decoding is the mental process that allows them to understand what they read. They don't really try to dig deeper than the surface level of knowledge. It has been observed that first-year college students' reading comprehension skills are not yet fully developed. This finding may support the argument that secondary school reading education has not given students enough practice in developing their reading comprehension skills.

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