

READING ENHANCEMENT THROUGH RECIPROCAL TEACHING TECHNIQUE

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Abstract

Reading comprehension is a foundational skill that directly influences learners' academic success. Reciprocal teaching technique has emerged as an effective instructional strategy that enhances students' comprehension through collaborative dialogue and metacognitive engagement. This study explores the impact of reciprocal teaching on reading enhancement among school learners. This article is the report of an experiment in enhancing reading comprehension, speed, and vocabulary through reciprocal teaching technique. The conclusions are drawn from the results of a post-test on two equivalent groups which were treated respectively to the conventional method and the reciprocal teaching technique in reading. The reciprocal teaching technique has been found to be more effective than the conventional method on all the three dimensions.

Introduction

Reading is an essential academic and life skill, enabling learners to access and interpret information across subjects. However, many students struggle with reading comprehension due to limited vocabulary, insufficient background knowledge, and lack of metacognitive awareness. Reciprocal Teaching Technique (RTT), introduced by Palencsar and Brown (1984), offers an interactive strategy that equips learners with tools to monitor and regulate their understanding of the text.

Reading occupies a special place in the complexity of language skills. Reading is the process of using one's eyes and mind to understand the literal as well as the hidden meaning of what the writer attempts to convey.

Listening, speaking, writing, and reading are the four skills that should be prioritized when learning the English language (Richards, 2008; Khamkhien, 2010; Sadiku, 2015; Liu et al., 2016; Piniel & Albert, 2018; Burns & Siegel, 2018; Cho & Krashen, 2019). Those are crucial for English learners, but it's vital to learn more about them. Reading comprehension is one of the four language skills with the goal of pupils not only reading a range of texts independently but also reading with comprehension in order to extract and process information quickly (Gately, 2008; Lipka & Siegel, 2012; Wexler et al., 2018). Reading is the simplest and cheapest approach to obtain knowledge (Atayeve et al., 2019; Rosnaeni et al., 2020), as it can assist in understanding basic information to more sophisticated information. Furthermore, the ability to grasp what they have read is the most vital quality that readers should possess. Reading is a crucial aspect of learning English (Orland, 2001; Moghadam et al., 2012; Guan et al., 2018; Rastle, 2019; Brevik, 2019), despite the fact that there are other English abilities that are examined. It may be observed in the final exam, which is almost entirely based on reading skills. Another aspect of this research is reciprocal teaching. Reciprocal teaching is a teaching method that focuses on improving text comprehension. Reciprocal teaching is a scaffolded discussion technique founded on four 218 Satriani et al, Reciprocal Teaching Strategy on Reading Comprehension ... strategies that readers use to

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grasp text: predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing (Yang, 2010; Ahmadi & Gilakjani, 2012; Oczkus, 2018).

Moreover, reciprocal teaching strategy is a strategy for understanding a text that involves the teacher and students working together to develop their interpretations of the text utilizing four strategies. The reciprocal teaching strategy is an excellent way to teach children how to deduce significant ideas from reading while also reviewing vocabulary, developing ideas, and summarizing data. Furthermore, it was shown that reciprocal teaching improved students' reading comprehension (Spörer et al., 2009; Okkinga et al., 2018). Reciprocal technique was used to teach pupils how to read the narrative text and improve their comprehension. It also showed that learners who employed the reciprocal teaching technique scored higher on reading comprehension than those who did not.

Literature Review

Reciprocal teaching is an instructional strategy to help students improve their reading comprehension skills (Spörer et al., 2009; Yang, 2010). Teachers often use reciprocal teaching as a pre-set collection of processes without understanding why the strategies are beneficial. Moreover, reciprocal teaching is a strategy that can be utilized in the classroom to help students have a better comprehension of the class topic. Reciprocal teaching is a method of instruction in which students learn by sharing in the construction of meaning amongst themselves and with the instructor (Okkinga et al., 2018). According to those definitions, reciprocal teaching is a model or strategy for teaching reading comprehension that allows students to exchange their experiences and ideas about the material they've read. In this sub-chapter, the Components of Reciprocal Teaching, Using Reciprocal Teaching, Strategies of reciprocal teaching, and Purpose reciprocal teaching will be examined in relation to reciprocal teaching. Reciprocal teaching is a guided reading comprehension technique that enables students to practice the abilities that effective readers and learners do without thinking about it (Soonthornmanee, 2002; Myers, 2005; Alfassi et al., 2009; Stricklin, 2011; Hashey & Connors, 2013), including (summarize, question, clarify, and predict to respond to what they are reading). Reciprocal teaching consists of four essential components: Predicting: Readers predict what will happen next or what they will learn based on their prior knowledge and hints from the visual of text.

Questioning:

The query terms who, what, why, when, where, how, and what if are used by readers to develop the main concept and inference questions. Clarifying: Readers recognize difficult or perplexing words, phrases, or ideas. As kids read, they learn how to use fix-up tactics to overcome difficulties. Readers develop an overall meaning of a text selection by offering a clear, short summary of what they've read.

Background of the Study

Generally speaking, of all the language skills, reading has got some imperative role. Carrying such saying of significant value; it is highly regrettable to locate our country sides schools (Pakistan), where such skill has not been developed since longer .By and large in rural areas such proficiency is being ignored to great extent when the students reach to the intermediate level, they remain incapable of producing a good piece of paraphrasing. Many theorists and psychologists worked on this essential part of the skill. Bloom's taxonomy or Vygotsky's comprehension models, Gagne's instructional model or Pearson responsibility model; keep vibrant role in reading comprehension at various levels. In these circumstances to prevail the importance of reading habit, various strategies can be demonstrated. Alan and Jay (2008)

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contributed much for the development of Vocabulary Instruction. They consider it as a critical component for skillful Reading. In their Edition *What Research Has to Say about Vocabulary Instruction*, the authors deliberately gave detail studies of theory, Research and instructional guidance for the development Reading and vocabulary construction. Robert Gagne worked on verbal instruction gives a unique way of language instruction. He verified the innovative way of instructional model for reading comprehension as well as other language skills (Gagne, 1970). Studying second Language acquisition; the Linguist theorists constructed different approaches in order to make it easier for nonnative speakers being able to learn all the four skills (Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing) by practicing such approaches in class room environment. They used Audio lingual, Grammar translation, Natural approach and interactive approach for the improvement of Reading and Speaking second Language. Even then the result had not been remained satisfactory especially in Pakistan. (Teaching English, 2012). Reciprocal teaching is an excellent reading device in the field of self-directed learning which helps to improve reading comprehension and also assists teachers in the teaching practice. “Reciprocal is an instructional activity in the form of a conversation amid teacher and students concerning part of content in which participants take turns assuming the role of a teacher” (Palincsar, 2010).

It was Palincsar who introduced this technique for the first time and presented a very good model of reading comprehension in the form of predicting, questioning, summarizing and clarifying strategies, happened to be useful in class practicing. Rationally speaking, being a researcher such topic was selected in order to bring about some innovative changes among students, in reading plan as critical thinking, clear vision and high proficiency of speaking power and verbal communication could be developed. The researcher sought to facilitate and motivate students towards reading phenomenon in self-directed learning, as it may provide a clear contour to distinct it from conventional method of reading. It was much difficult task to motivate them towards such a new way of learning. Even then the students enjoyed participating in these classes. The researcher (as participant observer) made it possible to inculcate all this procedure alone being sure of the stumbling block.

Reciprocal Teaching as a Reading Intervention

The discovery of Reciprocal Teaching was based on cognitive science research, and its record of validation was bona fide; students’ reading comprehension improved in every trial and the results remained constant over time. Among the reading experts and practitioners, the technique had been heralded as effective in helping students improve their reading ability in pre-post trials or research studies. It is reported that Reciprocal Teaching helps novice readers learn and internalise in a short time the strategies that excellent readers employ, and they are able to retain these skills and apply them to other content-area subjects. Hence, an experiment was planned and carried out to establish the effectiveness of Reciprocal Teaching in enhancing the reading skills of secondary level students.

Theoretical Foundations

RTT is grounded in Vygotsky’s social constructivist theory, which emphasises learning through social interaction with in the zone of proximal development (ZPD). Through guided practice with the teacher and peers, students internalise cognitive processes and gradually take ownership of learning. Meta cognition thinking about one’s thinking is central to RTT as learners continually reflect on their understanding and apply corrective strategies. Implementation of Reciprocal Teaching in the classroom

Stage -1 – Teacher Modeling

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The teacher demonstrates each strategy by thinking aloud and showing how to apply the four steps during reading.

Stage – 2 : Guided Practice

Students practice the strategies collaboratively with structured teacher support.

Stage -3 Student -Led Discussions

Learners take turns being the “discussion leader”, applying the four strategies to understand the text.

Stage – 4 – Independent Application

Students develop greater autonomy in using RTT during individual reading tasks.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the present experimental study is to find out the effectiveness, if any, of Reciprocal Teaching of reading over the Conventional Method of teaching reading in English to the students of secondary level.

The major objectives are:

- To study the extent of advantage, if any, of the Experimental Group over the Control Group with regard to Reading Comprehension, Reading Speed and the Enhancement of Vocabulary.
- To find out the effectiveness of Reciprocal Teaching in relation to certain selected variables such as Language Interest, Socio-economic status and in terms of the reaction of the students to Reciprocal Teaching.

Methodology, Instrumentation and Sample

Post-test Equivalent-Groups Experimental Design was adopted. The experiment was conducted on a cluster sample of 200 students of the secondary school level. They were divided into two intact groups and the two hundred students were randomly assigned either the Experimental Group or the Control Group.

One group was treated to Reciprocal Teaching. The other group was taught reading by the Conventional Method.

For the purpose of pre-testing and post-testing, a Reading Skills Test developed and validated by the investigator was used. Besides, a Socio Economic Status Scale, a Study Skills Inventory, a Language Interest Inventory, and a Reaction Scale for Students were also used

The data collected were subjected to appropriate descriptive, differential and inferential statistics. The quantitative analyses of data were also supplemented with qualitative analysis of verbal of verbal data such as diary analysis, Network Analysis and Content Analysis were used.

Results and Discussion

As the main objective of the study is to compare the relative effectiveness of the Conventional Method and Reciprocal Method of Teaching Reading in English, null hypotheses were formulated and t-test was applied to ascertain it.

There was significant difference between the Pretest Reading Comprehension reading speed and vocabulary scores of the Control Group students and those of the Experimental Group

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students. The following tables reveal a comparative picture of their performances and the relatively higher effectiveness of the reciprocal teaching.

Null Hypothesis -1

There will be no significant difference between the means of the Reading comprehension scores of the control group and the experimental group students as measured by post-test.

In order to find out whether the difference in the means of the reading comprehension scores of the control group and the experimental group the 't' test was applied.

Table -1 – Difference between the means of the reading comprehension scores the control group and the experimental group as measured by the post-test

Group	N	Mean	S.D	S.E	t
Control Group	100	4.44	1.36	1.56	2.00
Experimental Group	100	7.34	1.54		

As Table-1 shows, the mean reading comprehension score of the control group was 4.44 while that of the experimental group stood at 7.34. the respective standard deviations are 1.36 and 1.56. the computed 't' value (2.00) reveals that the difference between the means of the reading comprehension scores of the control group and the experimental group is significant at 0.05 level. Compared to the control group, the experimental group students have scored higher in the subtest on reading comprehension. This indicates the effectiveness of reciprocal teaching technique over the conventional method. Hence, the formulated null hypothesis is rejected.

Null Hypothesis – 2

There is no significant difference between the means of the reading speed scores of the control group and the experimental group students as measured by the post-test.

In order to find out whether there is a significant difference between the mean reading speed scores of the control group and the experimental group as measured by the post-test, the null hypothesis was formulated and the 't' test was applied.

Table – 2 - Difference between the means of the reading comprehension scores the control group and the experimental group as measured by the post-test

Group	N	Mean	S.D	S.E	t
Control Group	100	114.18	5.35	5.9	2.38
Experimental Group	100	126.39	4.84		

The mean reading speed scores were 114.18 and 126.39 respectively for the control group and the experimental group. The standard deviations calculated were 5.35 and 4.84 respectively. The computed 't' value (2.38) indicates that the difference between the mean reading speed scores of the two groups is significant at a probability level of 0.05. when compared with the control group the experimental group students have recorded higher reading speed scores. This established the effectiveness of reciprocal teaching technique over the conventional method. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Null Hypothesis -3

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There is no significant difference between the means of the vocabulary scores of the control group and the experimental group students as measured by post-test.

In order to understand the nature of the existence of the difference in the mean vocabulary scores of the control group and the experimental group students as measured by the post-test, the null hypothesis was formulated and to test this, the -t- statistics was used.

Table -3 – Difference between the means of the vocabulary scores of the control group and the experimental group as measured by the post-test

Group	N	Mean	S.D	S.E	t
Control Group	100	4.74	1.17	1.33	2.03
Experimental Group	100	7.42	1.45		

The mean vocabulary scores of the control group stood at 4.74 and that of the experimental group at 7.42. the respective standard deviations were 1.17 and 1.45. the computed 't' value 2.03 shows that the difference between means of the vocabulary scores of the control group and of the experimental group is significant at 5% level. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. Compared with the control group the experimental group students have scored higher in the subtest on vocabulary. This indicates the supremacy of reciprocal teaching technique over the conventional method.

Major findings

The students of the experimental/group have scored consistently higher than those of the control group in reading comprehension, reading speed and vocabulary. The differences in all the three subtests are statistically significant.

Though the English medium students have scored higher in the post test in reading comprehension, reading speed and vocabulary than the Telugu medium students, the differences are not significant. This clearly reveals the equal effectiveness of reciprocal teaching technique on both Telugu medium and English medium students.

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