

The Impact of Tactics Rules on Media Comprehension Challenges Faced by Non-Native English Speakers

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Abstract

EFL learners who loved to read newspapers but have difficulty in comprehending. Present paper is a study on the significance of special styles of newspapers' writing that may contribute in decreasing reading and comprehension skills for EFL learners and also is primarily concerned with the language and style of newspaper reportage. Skilled readers don't just read, they interact with the text. The present study aims to probe into this important issue by providing formal instruction of the strategies to a group of Iranian EFL learners and comparing their newspapers' reading comprehension performance with another group not receiving such an instruction.

Keywords: Identity, Characteristics, Achievement

1. Introduction

Without comprehension, reading would be empty and useless. In our practicum, we have all witnessed cases where EFL learners are capable of reading the words, but face much difficulty in expressing their comprehension of the main ideas. As educators, we need to have an understanding of the theories behind reading comprehension. The present paper is a study on the significance of special styles of newspapers' writing that may contribute in decreasing reading and comprehension skills for EFL learners. Journalists are trained to use language in special ways that could enhance the overall development of any society, or they may end up tearing the whole land apart if language is not properly controlled. The newspaper stories are been to be highly motivational for EFL learners enjoy the variety of reading and visual material included in the newspaper, teachers will help their students comply with state educational standards and prepare them for both standardized tests and real life situations by using newspaper stories and photos in conjunction with specific strategies and rubrics. One prominent structure of any newspaper is its specific linguistic features in different parts. Newspapers have their own style of writing structure: the words used have to be concise, distractive, and meaningful in order to catch the readers' attention especially in headlines. Conboy (2007, p. 13) stated that headlines "serve three functions. First, they provide a brief summary of the main news, they attract attention, and, third, they often provide an initial indicator, in their content and style, of the news values of the newspaper and are an important part in the way in which the newspaper appeals to its audience". Generally, after having a quick look at the headlines, readers tend to continue pursuing only the news that they judge to be interesting enough and worth reading. Headlines expose social, cultural and national representations. Therefore, it can be concluded that headlines are

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considered more deeply by the audience than the actual news articles. Their impact is likely to be stronger upon the readers due to certain linguistic features which make them memorable and effective (Develotee & Rechniewski 2001, quoted in Javed & Mahmood, 2011). Reading newspapers' comprehension is one of the essential abilities required in English learning and teaching, so the improving of the EFL readings' newspapers' comprehension is one of the major tasks in English teaching and learning. They approach reading passively, relying most often on the use of a bilingual dictionary, so spending infinite hours laboring over direct word-by-word translations. To enhance the reading comprehension ability in English, Alfassi (2004) states that students should "understand the meaning of text, critically evaluate the message, remember the content, and apply the new-found knowledge flexibly". Since reading newspapers and journals are complex cognitive process, it is very important for teachers to train EFL learners to take active control of their own comprehension processes.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

EFL learners are 60 Advanced of speaking learners. Participants are in two intact classes in order to prevent disruption to the normal teaching routine at the institute. One class was randomly assigned, using a random numbers table, to the experimental group (N=30) and the other to the control group (N=30). The ages ranged from 22 to 28 and the sample included of both males (N=30) and females (N=30).

2.2 Instrumentation

The newspapers' Performance Test in English Advanced Level is used to determine the students' newspapers' readings' comprehension in English. This standardized test consists of 50 items based on different parts of a newspaper such as headline, passage and advertisements. Questions are in multiple-choice. This test is used as a pre-test and a post-test.

2.3. Procedure

Group A received some training courses of newspaper reading according to the contents of the reading materials and was introduced briefly about the style of English news writing and wording. Group B was given no instruction before reading. The length of reading time for Group A and Group B was the same.

All participants will take the test during their regular classroom periods and both are taught by the same teacher. Also received the same instructions on how to complete the questionnaire, which are taken on the first day by both groups. The Reading Strategies Questionnaire are followed by the reading comprehension test in English which was used as a pre-test and was administered to both groups. The experimental group received the reading strategy instruction which lasted for 12 sessions. For the control group there is no strategy instruction.

Their lessons are presented in the specific way (strategy development or practice are used). Noticing that they are not provided with the correct answers after the pre-test, even were they to remember how they had answered a question the first time, they had no way of knowing whether that answer was correct. At the end of the 12 sessions both groups are given the same tests (readings' newspapers' comprehension test) as post-test.

2.4. Design

MacMillan and Schumacher (2001), designing quantitative research involves choosing subjects, data collection techniques (such as questionnaires, observations or interviews), and procedures for gathering data and performing treatments. The quantitative research approach is suitable for this study as its design was quasi- experimental, it analyzed data through statistics and the researcher considers a treatment group that is used to measure the impact of the newspapers' reading strategies instruction.

A quasi-experimental, pre-test and post-test control group design is used in this study. According to Moore (2008), a quasi-experimental study is a form of evaluation which aims to determine whether a program or intervention has the intended effect on a study's participant. In this study there are both a control and experimental groups. The newspapers' reading comprehension test scores for each group are compared before and after the instruction. The newspapers' reading comprehension scores are also compared for both groups before and after the treatment.

2.5. Data Analysis

A t-test was used in this study. The t-test is one type of inferential statistics. It is used to determine if there is a significant difference between the means of two groups. In the current study the t-test is used to determine whether the mean scores of the experimental and control group differed reliably from each other. Cohen's effect sizes are used to calculate the difference between two means.

3. Discussion and Results

To sum up the final results of the study, this study will attempt to seek answers to two research questions and testing two research hypotheses. The questions will be restated and the answers, based on the findings of the study, will be provided below.

Does tactic rules significantly enhance the students' comprehension ability?

It could influence EFL learners reading comprehension sufficiently and do make statistically significant improvement in the students' reading comprehension. Findings of this study pointed to a difference in the experimental group participants' consciousness of the reading comprehension as shown by using the reading comprehension questionnaires at the initial and final stage of the experiment.

Which tactics are used the most by EFL learners?

Here's the research found something very few people realize: Reading news stories isn't particularly difficult.

The most frequently used tactics are: The Five "W"s and the "H"

This is the crux of all news - you need to know five things:

Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

Any good news story provides answers to each of these questions. You must drill these into your brain and they must become second nature.

The Inverted Pyramid

This refers to the style of journalism which places the most important facts at the beginning and works "down" from there. Ideally, the first paragraph should contain enough information to give the reader a good overview of the entire story.

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It's About People

News stories are all about how people are affected. He is doing, or how the supporters are feeling.

Have an Angle

Most stories can be presented using a particular angle or "slant". This is a standard technique and isn't necessarily bad - it can help make the purpose of the story clear and give it focus. eed of Funds"

Keep it Objective

EFL learners are completely impartial. If there is more than one side to the story, cover them all.

Quote People

For example: "We're really excited about this competition,"

Don't Get Flowery

Sentences and paragraphs are short.

The results of this study indicate that a well-developed reading strategy instruction programme can have a strong positive effect on the advanced learners' reading comprehension and reading strategies development. In other words, the results indicate that using reading tactics can and do make a contribution in increasing the reading comprehension .The learners in the experimental group improved their performance in the comprehension test significantly after the intervention, whereas the learners in the control group did not improve their performance on the comprehension test. Thus, the findings portray the intervention as a viable tactics and rules for enhancing the readings' newspapers' comprehension of advanced learners.

To determine whether the instruction affected the use of the readings' newspapers' comprehensions' tactics, the frequencies with which the participants used reading tactics before and after instruction were compared in

both groups. Findings also revealed that explicit instruction in the use of reading strategies was essential to bring about increased use of reading strategies for learners in the experimental group. Considering that the more the strategies were used the better the results for students in the experimental group demonstrated that there was a need to promote strategy awareness and application in the learning and teaching of the English language. Specifically, the following reading strategies were utilized more frequently by EFL learners in the experimental group:

- Briefly skim the text before reading.
- Often look for how the text is organized and pay attention to headings and sub-headings.

These results are congruent with previous research confirming the positive effect of explicit strategies instruction on reading comprehension achievement (e.g., Li 2010; Cubukcu 2007; Van Keer & Verhaeghe 2005; Pressley et al., 1989). The results of this study also indicated that the learners' ability to use reading tactics is the most critical factor determining their reading comprehension. Thus, the close relationship between tactics use and reading comprehension provided support for the possibility that educators should enhance learners' reading comprehension through explicit reading tactics instruction.

3.1. Conclusion and Implications

The results show that using tactic Instruction can lead to the use of an extended range of reading by the learners. However, the results pointed to the fact that learners' awareness of tactics and their ability to use them while reading do increase, the reading comprehension and enhance the students' reading

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performance significantly based on the results of a reading comprehension test given to the participants at the end of the program.

The findings of this study offer several pedagogical implications for teaching reading comprehension in EFL contexts. Consciousness-raising can play an important role in b reading comprehension as the findings suggest. Therefore, teachers can implement this technique in the process of teaching reading and help the learners make significant improvements.

4. Conclusion

In the above discussion an attempt was made to address the two research questions on which the study is based. The major important outcome of this study is that the use of reading strategy instruction and learners' reading strategy awareness play a tremendous role in improving their reading comprehension. In other words, learners who receive strategy training generally read better than those who do not. As for the relationship among perceived strategy use and reading comprehension, this study revealed that strategy use did positively affect reading comprehension. Thus, teachers should assess learners' awareness of strategy use, raise awareness of the importance of strategic reading and of the repertoire of strategies available to aid reading comprehension.

The study further revealed the importance of training students in the use of reading strategies. The literature has shown that strategic awareness and monitoring of the comprehension process are critically important aspects of skilled reading. As a result of the reading strategy instruction, some strategies were utilized significantly more frequently by learners in the experimental group after the intervention. Thus, this study provided the English Second

Language teachers with a better understanding of the benefits of reading strategy instruction.

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