Improving Reading comprehension Skill through Post-reading Strategies: An Experimental Study on Secondary School Students' English Reading Skill in Pakistani

Dr. Imran Ahmed
Assistant Professor, Govt. Premier College, Karachi, Sindh Education & Literacy Department, Pakistan
4ahmedimran@gmail.com

Dr. Kamran Ali
Associate Professor, Hamdard University, Karachi, Department of Social Science and Humanities
kamran.arsal@hamdard.edu.pk

IRUM FATIMA
HM- School Education & Literacy Department Govt. of Sindh, Pakistan.
usmaniru722@gmail.com

Dr. Zahid Ali
Associate Professor, School of Education, American International Theism University Florida-USA
drzahid.aly@aituedu.org

Syed Waqarul Hasan
Director QEC & Regulatory Affairs from Salim Habib University Karachi
waqarit2015@gmail.com

Abstract

This study regarding reading comprehension sought the effectiveness of post reading strategies and its impacts on grade10 students English reading comprehension skills. The proposed method for teaching English reading skills as a second language contradicts with the outdated methodology, which is employed in majority of Pakistani public schools. The said study was structured on quasi-experimental design. It was based on pretests and posttests comparison groups. Both the groups containing total 95 participants from two different schools of district Korangi, Karachi, who were conveniently selected and labeled as experimental and control group for the study purpose. Both the groups were taught by researcher himself, one with usual traditional grammar-translation method, while the other group was taught by using the interactive reading strategy approach, which emphasizes on summarizing, synthesizing and evaluating for English reading comprehension. Statistical analysis of the data collected from pretest and posttest results were based on SPSS 22. The paired samples t-test and one-way Anova was used to analyze the improvements between pretests and posttests results. The findings of the study proved significant improvements in English reading comprehension skills of the treatment group over the controlled group.

Keywords: *Comprehension, Post reading strategies, Summarizing, Synthesizing, Evaluating*

Introduction

English enjoys the official language status in Pakistan. Considering its fundamental status, it is made compulsory for students up to graduation level across the country (Mushtaque, Anwar, & Zaki,2022). On the contrary students at even undergraduate level in the province of Sindh struggle to comprehend their very own textbooks because of poor reading comprehension skills in English language (Younus & Khan, 2017). Today's educational challenges seek such strategic readers, who can self-modify and self-monitor to read between the lines, to find its rationale and apply critical reflection on the reading text. Therefore, students need to be facilitated with a variety of reading activities that accounted for effective reading comprehension strategies. Students of government schools at secondary and higher secondary levels come across number of problems during English reading comprehension process. These problems arise from insufficient vocabulary, lexical hurdles, structural issues, language incapability, failure in schemata and so on so forth. Students' lack of motivation is another sheer issue in comprehension process. Post-reading may be utilized as tools to overcome reading comprehension difficulties (Al-Jarrah, & Ismail, 2018). The implication of effective post strategies is vital to develop the level of learners' reading proficiency in English language. English language instructors worldwide seek to implement them to improve comprehension results of their students. These strategies may prove great tools for Pakistani public sector school students to enhance their understandability about reading text.

Literature Review

English reading comprehension skill is one of the challenging tasks for the Pakistani public sector schools' students (Fareed, Ashraf, & Bilal, 2016). There is no second thought that reading comprehension skill in English language is the prerequisite for academic endeavors for these pupils. As English is the medium of academic instruction as well as official language of the country. It has been observed by number of researchers that these pupils do not have adequate level of proficiency in English reading comprehension skills (Sultana & Zaki, 2015; Sarwar, Ahmad & Hyder, 2017; Akram, 2017; Idris, 2019; Anjum, Pathan, & Shah, 2021). The aforementioned students are taught English reading skills through traditional grammar-translation approach, which do not effectively assist them developing reading comprehension skills. As a result, students of these schools suffer academically early on and professionally at later stages of life (Younus, et al., 2017).

Post Reading strategies provide platform for self-evaluation and feedback both for teacher and student. It helps the teacher to assess the understanding level of both instructor and the learner. Post Reading strategies support the teachers to alter their lesson plans in light of readers' level. This stage aids teachers understand students' status. Pupils are expected to summarize, discuss, assess, or think back on what they have read. All of these techniques will assist students in putting into writing the critical comprehension and interpretation they have arrived at through their interaction with the written material. Therefore, its role in the improvement of comprehension abilities is undeniable. Post-reading strategies are essential for helping students apply the knowledge they have acquired through reading about the real-world occurrences. This phase supports readers to write down the critical understanding and interpretation that they have deducted while going through the text (Akbari, M., Seifoori, & Ahour, 2018). Therefore, the role of Post Reading strategies in the development of comprehension skills is undenying. These strategies are crucial to facilitate learners to materialized their acquired information out of the printed material and use it accordingly. English reading teachers should focus on problem solving, comparison, collection and description strategies while dealing with texts, which all are Post Reading strategies. Hence, such productive means of activities yields result oriented understanding of the reading text.

Post Reading strategies are also considered memory strategies to memorize, store and retain the details of the reading literature. It comprises of the following strategies;

Summarizing

Making summary is also one of the RS to cut short, coherent and cohesive of the long reading textual description to the essential ideas. It could be either written or spoken statement of the basic points. It usually conveys the most important ideas only. According to various studies instruction and practice in summarizing enhance readers' ability to summarize text resulting their overall comprehension of reading content (Jacob, 2020).

Synthesizing Information

The process of synthesis involves taking pre-existing textual information and merging it with new information from various sources in a manner that is consistent with previous knowledge, yet presented in a novel pattern. Essentially, it is a way of combining old and new ideas to create a cohesive and fresh perspective.

Evaluating

Researchers have classified variety of evaluating strategies. Most of them are of multiple choice items in standardized testing. The study conducted by Arshad, Shakir, & Ahmad, (2020) on question forms and related question-answering methods, three kinds of questions were graded for their answers together with respective positions:

a) Explicit questions in textual forms whose responses remain on the lines.

b) Implicit questions textually whose responses occur between the lines.

c) Implicit scriptual questions whose responses need to be produced across the lines.

According to Zhang, & Yang, (2016) there are two effective test taking strategies; the first strategy is prior taking the test students need to first read questions and answers, which may help the reader to concentrate on the relevant information in the text. Similarly, the second approach advice students to answer every question through elimination for multiple choice questions. The In order to complete Post Reading assignments, English as a Second Language instructors must integrate techniques for problem solving, comparison, collection, and description in texts. Thus, the availability of such reading activities facilitates in teaching the learners a result-oriented means of comprehension. The significance of Post Reading strategies on reading comprehension has been advocated by various empirical studies as well. Discussion-based reading approach flourish students' cognitive skills while keeping them occupied with reflection and question-answering of reading texts. While they make connections between the reading text and themselves, this process keeps well align them to comprehend the reading text. Bani-Khair, (Alshboul, et al.,2017). explored the Post Reading comprehension strategies used by the secondary stage Jordanian students. The findings indicate that Jordanian secondary students employed a variety of reding strategies, including summarizing, asking and answering questions, reading the entire text to understand the main idea, and drawing an illustration of the text. These strategies had an enormous effect on the students' overall comprehension ability. The positive impacts of Post Reading strategies on readers' comprehension skill development have been highlighted through various empirical studies. There is no second thought that interactive reading model helps cognitive abilities grow while engaging them in reflecting and thinking about questions in a reading text. Alzboun (2020) tested post-reading comprehension techniques with Jordanian secondary school students. These included reading the entire text to grasp the main

idea, asking and responding to questions, rereading, summarizing, and creating a picture of the text.

The findings revealed a significant impact on their overall comprehension skill. Similarly, Jameel, (2017) researched reading comprehension to improve reading comprehension through Post Reading strategies like; selection, application, and transfer of appropriate reading strategies with middle school students in the western suburbs of Chicago, Illinois, which according to the findings were extremely helpful to the students. Hence its proportion in the development of comprehension skills is worth knowing.

Figure 1

Types of Memory Strategies (Post Reading Skills)
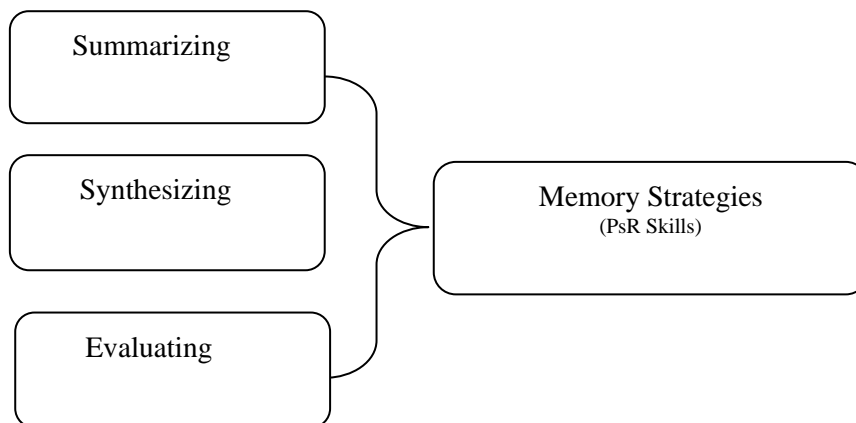
Research Questions

- Is there any significant impact of teaching reading skills in English through post reading strategies on grade 10 student's English reading comprehension skill at public sector schools of Sindh?

Hypothesis

- H_1: Post reading strategies have significant impact on grade 10 students' English reading comprehension skills at public sector schools of Sindh.

Research Methodology

This study founded on quasi-experimental research align with pretest posttest approach. It finds it roots on the recommended of Ary, Jacobs, Irvine, & Walker, 2018 for its nature. It started with the formation of two groups of participants; experimental and non-experimental groups comprising 96 pupils of grade (X) from two different public schools of District Korangi,

Karachi. Each group received instruction three times a week for ninety minutes each day. The grade X English textbook by Sindh Text Book Board, Jamshoro was employed for designing reading comprehension activities. There were prose and poetry sections on the test, and there were 11 questions total that needed to be answered in 2.5 hours. Prior to this, the test was piloted to determine its validity and reliability. These tools were used to evaluate students' reading comprehension abilities following the use of post-reading techniques.

Data Analysis

The collected data through pretest posttest results was detailed marked and examined using SPSS. A pretest was used to determine whether there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups, if any, in order to ensure that both groups would benefit from the suggested strategy of teaching reading skills. A pretest was created for this reason, and it underwent reliability and validity testing as well. The validity and intercoder reliability of the same test were examined prior to the experiment. The seven-page test was consisted of prose and poetry that were taken from the students' required text book, which was produced by the Sindh Text Book Board Jamshoro. post-reading strategies were the basis for the activities in the test, which was created with an interactive approach. After the device was tested for validity and dependability, the results of a pretest that was given to both groups are as follows.

Table 1

Comparison of Experimental and Control group in Pretest (based on post reading strategies)

Factors	Group	N	Mean	S.D	df	t	P
Post Reading Strategies	Experimental	48	13.04	4.731			
	Control	48	12.29	5.173	94	0.741	0.460

*p<0.05

An independent sample t-test was conducted to signify the difference between experimental and control group in post reading strategies of the pretest results of ten graders in English reading comprehension skills. The t value is (94) =0.741, whereas p=0.460. Result of the study highlights no significant difference between results of the both groups. Average mean of experimental group is (M=13.04, SD=4.731) as compared to the average mean from control group (M=12.29, SD=5.173).

Table 2

A one-way Anova was conducted to compare the Pretest results in English reading comprehension skills of the both groups.

ANOVA (*Pretest*)		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	f	Sig.
Post Reading	Between Groups	3528.375	1	3528.375	214.608	.000
	Within Groups	1545.458	94	16.441		
	Total	5073.833	95			

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the pretest results of students in English reading comprehension skill of the experimental and controlled groups of public secondary school. An analysis of variance showed that there is a significant difference between results post reading skill, where F (1, 94) =214.608, and p (0.000).

Table 3

Comparison of Experimental and Control group in Post Reading Skill of Posttest

Factors	Group	N	Mean	S.D	df	t	P
Post Reading	Experimental	48	22.52	3.620			
	Control	48	10.40	4.447	94	14.649	0.000*

*p<0.05

An independent sample t-test was conducted to evaluate that there is significant difference between experimental and control group in post reading results. The t (94) =14.649, whereas p=0.000. Results of the study showed that there was significant difference between results of experimental and control group. Average mean from experimental group (M=22.52, SD=3.620) as compared to the average mean from control group (M=10.40, SD=4.447).

Table 4

A one-way Anova was conducted to compare the Posttest results in English reading comprehension of both groups.

ANOVA (*Posttest Final*)		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	f	Sig.
Post Reading	Between Groups	3528.375	1	3528.375	214.608	0.000*
	Within Groups	1545.458	94	16.441		
	Total	5073.833	95			

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the posttest result of students in comprehension skill. An analysis of variance showed that there is a significant difference between results of post reading skill i.e. $F_{(1, 94)} = 214.608$, p (0.000).

Discussion and Conclusion

The finding of the study cements strong with the hypothetical relationships between post reading strategies and reading comprehension. The strategies were based on synthetization, evaluation, summarization and reflection of learners own understanding about the reading text. These strategies were witnessed helping students connecting themselves to the feeling of the authors or to the texts. These strategies were experienced to developed grade 10 students of public secondary schools critical thinking and interpretation skill. Post reading strategies are basically memory strategies, which facilitate to memorize, store and retain the details of the reading literature. The empirical studies by Roomy, & Alhawsawi, (2019) second the notion that Post reading strategies like; summarizing synthesizing evaluating and drawing conclusion help in meaningful comprehension. My observations about Post reading phase are parallel to Akbari, et. al., (2018) that this phase facilitated the treatment group in writing down the critical understanding and interpretation that they had deducted while going through the text. This phase is significant in facilitating the aforesaid students to materialize the acquired information from the printed stuff and employ it accordingly.

The posttest based on Post reading skills conducted during the intervention period signify that they helped grade 10 students to develop cognitive skills. The treatment group has been observed to grow more critically, cognitively and linguistically as compared to the control groups. Furthermore, these Post reading strategies also enhanced the learners verbal and presentation skills as well. Therefore, it will not be exaggerated to say that these Post reading strategies switched the grade 10 students of public secondary school to the next level of critical thinking, where they can independently evaluate, summarize, synthesize and over all enjoy variety of English language literature more confidently. The key findings of teaching comprehension skill through Post reading strategies to enhance reading proficiency of grade 10 students at public school seeks such interactive way of teaching, where students are engaged for meaningful comprehension.

References

Akbari, M., Seifoori, Z., & Ahour, T. (2018). Enhancing comprehension and production of argumentation through critical thinking awareness-raising. *Linguæ &-Rivista di lingue e culture moderne*, *16*(2), 111-130.

Al Roomy, M., & Alhawsawi, S. (2019). Understanding RS of EFL Saudi Students. *English Language Teaching*, *12*(6), 33-44.

Al-Jarrah, H., & Ismail, N. S. B. (2018). RC Difficulties Among EFL Learners in Higher Learning Institutions. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, *8*(7),32-41.

Alwi, S. K. K., Rauf, M. B., & Soomro, S. (2016). Effects of cross and same age peer tutoring on reading attitudes of primary school students. The Sindh University Journal of Education-SUJE, 45(1)

Alwi, S. K. K., Samson, A., & Shahzadi, S. (2019). Role of Peer Tutoring and Methods To Boost Reading Skills At The Urban Sector Primary Schools. *New Horizons (1992-4399)*, *13*(1)

Alzboun, B. K. A. (2020). The Inclusion of Reading Strategies in Action Pack 6 Textbook. *Academic Journal of Research and Scientific Publishing*, *1*(9), 112-131.

Anjum, S., Pathan, H., & Shah, W. A. (2021). Teaching English through Critical Pedagogy (CP): Challenges and Coping Strategies in Pakistani EFL Classrooms.

Arshad, A., Shakir, A., & Ahmad, M. (2020). A Review on the Principles of a Reading Comprehension Test Construction to assess the Test Takers at different levels. *Psychology and Education*, *57*(8), 1290-1302.

Ary, D., Jacobs, L. C., Irvine, C. K. S., & Walker, D. (2018). *Introduction to research in education*. Cengage Learning.

Bani-Khair, B., Alshboul, N. M., Al-Khawaldeh, N., Al-Khawaldeh, I., & Ababneh, M. (2017). Violence patterns in Peckinpah's the wild bunch (1969): Critical Reading. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, *6*(3), 210-214.

Fareed, M., Jawed, S., & Awan, S. (2018). Teaching English language at SSC level in private non-elite schools in Pakistan: Practices and problems. *Journal of Education and Educational Development*, *5*(1), 80-95.

Idris, M. (2019). Developing the Reading Comprehension by Using Grammar Translation Method.

Jacob, J. (2020). Building Better Readers: The Role of Reading Strategies. *The English Language Teachers' Association of India was registered on August 7, 1974 by the late Padmashri S. Natarajan, a noted educationist of our country. Periodicity*, *62*(4), 32.

Jameel, A. S. (2017). The Effectiveness of POSSE Strategy on Improving Reading Comprehension of the EFL University Students. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, *2*(4), 239202.

Mushtaque, S., Anwar, R. H., & Zaki, S. (2022). Exploring Pakistani ESL Learners' Investment Practices in learning the English Language. *Sciences*, *10*(1), 1-16.).

Sarwar, S., Ahmad, N., & Hyder, S. I. (2017, November). Academic writing deficiencies of business management students: causes, effects and solutions. In Proceedings of ICERI2017 Conference, 16th-18th November.

Sultana, M., & Zaki, S. (2015). Proposing Project Based Learning as an alternative to traditional ELT pedagogy at public colleges in Pakistan. International Journal for Lesson and Learning Studies.

Younus, M., & Khan, I. (2017). The effects of strategy-based reading instruction on RC and reading strategy use. *Journal of Education & Social*, 106-120.

Zhang, D., & Yang, X. (2016). Chinese L2 learners' depth of vocabulary knowledge and its role in reading comprehension. *Foreign Language Annals*, *49*(4), 699-715.