

IMPROVING READING SKILLS THROUGH EFFECTIVE READING STRATEGIES

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ABSTRACT

According to research, teaching reading methods is a crucial part of helping students enhances their comprehension. Many educators, however, lack a strong foundation for introducing these reading comprehension techniques. Teachers must therefore be prepared on how to create efficient understanding strategies and how to instruct. Giving their students these techniques, therefore, the goal of this study is to examine the most efficient reading techniques in order to enhance students' reading abilities in language classes. The study is an application of action research to a group of 14 students taking an integrated skills course at the intermediate level. The main question of the study is 'Would reading strategies help my students' reading comprehension studies? The result of the study indicate that the students had an improvement to a great extend have been tutored about the reading strategies.

Keywords: Reading strategies, predicting; visualizing; inferring; making connections; questioning; action research.

INTRODUCTION

Reading is a skill that may be employed both in and out of the classroom. Reading is a fundamental life skill, according to Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, and Wilkinson. It is essential to a child's academic and overall success in life. Lacking proficiency in reading, chances for personal Success at work and fulfillment will inevitably be lost (1985). Reading is one of the most difficult subjects in the educational system, despite its significance. This issue is made even more urgent by the technology society's constant desire for high literacy levels (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998). If students want to get the most out of the materials they are assigned, they have to learn to read critically or analytically. The idea here is that when we read something, the purpose is to try to understand what the intention is. When dealing with reading, we encounter two layers of reality: one that we can see and one that we

cannot see. Therefore, the purpose of reading is to make the invisible layer, the underlying meaning, visible and clear)¹. Teele asserts that the goal of all readers should be to understand what they read (2004, p. 92). According to research, proficient readers actively engage with the text and are conscious of the strategies they employ to comprehend what they read. Through the teaching of reading skills, teachers can aid students in improving comprehension. According to studies, the following techniques can help readers better understand what they are reading: predicting, finding connections, picturing, inferring, questioning, and summarizing (Block & Israel, 2005). The utilization of think-aloud exercises, group practice, partner practice, and autonomous application of the strategy are all crucial components of effective strategy instruction (Duke & Pearson, 2005).

Excellent readers have a reason for reading because excellent readers should create goals for their reading in order to become better readers. Predicting is a technique for increasing comprehension because it aids the reader in establishing reading goals. It has been discovered through research that proficient readers create thoughts and predictions as they read (Block & Israel, 2005). More student involvement is made possible by this method, which raises attention and helps students comprehend the content (Oczkus, 2003). The learner's knowledge will be improved by comparing the outcome in the real text with the prediction procedure. Without this aspect of the prediction process, it becomes meaningless to improving student's comprehension. Some of the approaches for teaching predicting are teacher modeling, predicting throughout the text; with partners, with a graphic organizer, or using post-it notes throughout the text. Using the title, table of contents, pictures, and key words is one prediction strategy. Another key prediction strategy is to have students predict at specific points through the text, evaluate the prediction, and revise predictions if necessary (Teele, 2004).

Visualization is a different method used by skilled readers to understand a text (Adler, 2001). In order to visualize, the reader must create an image of what they have read. As a representation of the reader's interpretation of the text, this image is retained in the reader's memory (National Reading Panel, 2000). Teachers might encourage students to picture the locations, people, and events of a tale before asking them to sketch or write about the picture that appears in their thoughts after visualizing the text.².

¹ Adler, C. R. (Ed.). (2001). Put reading first: The research building blocks for teaching children to read. Jessup, MD: ED Pubs.

² Harvey, S., & Goudvis, A. (2000). Strategies that work teaching comprehension to enhance understanding. York, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.



Another reading method is to create connections between ideas. By drawing connections, students can draw on existing knowledge and relate the text's ideas to their own experiences. When a reader makes connections between the concepts in a text and their own experiences, beliefs, and events taking place in the outside world, reading becomes meaningful. Text-to-Text, Text-to-Self, and Text-to- connect. Students can connect their own experiences to the text by writing, charting, or drawing. Teachers may inquire of pupils whether they have ever gone through anything like the things described in the literature. Students can use visual organizers, writing prompts, charts, drawings, and other methods to build text-to-text links. These text-to-text links may be based on the relationships between characters in the story or the connections between other stories' plot aspects. Students can use graphic organizers, charts, notes, or drawings to build links between the text and the real world. Text-to-world links can be made by contrasting fictional characters from a novel with contemporary individuals or by contrasting the text's subject matter with contemporary issues (Teele, 2004).G would assist them better understand the concepts in the text by asking them to look for connections.

Summarization calls for the reader to prioritize what they are reading and to summarize the material in their own terms (Adler, 2001). The pupils will be able to separate the primary concepts from the supporting ideas while summarizing. Making the distinction between connected and unrelated pieces of information is another step in the summarizing process that will aid students' ability to increase their text comprehension. Summarizing is a technique that enables pupils to arrange their thoughts even in lengthy reading sections, which are typically intimidating to them..

METHODS

The most essential skill for academic achievement and learning to read well is reading comprehension. A research conducted in the United States found a strong correlation between reading proficiency and how much a person may accomplish in both their personal and professional lives (Block & Israel, 2005). This is the rationale for my decision to do this action research. Action research, according to Brown and Dowling (2001), is a phrase used to describe programs in which practitioners aim to alter An action research is often conducted in a classroom. According to Corey (1953), the importance of action research lies more in the transformation of daily practice than in its generalization to a larger audience. Action research is a reflective method that addresses the issues that are important to the educators personally and enables them to effect change. Finding answers to actual issues that arise in schools and looking for



strategies to increase student achievement are the key goals of action research. Educators may make well-informed judgments that can result in the intended results by using the action research method to assess requirements, document the phases of inquiry, analyze evidence, and make conclusions. Planning, acting, observing, and reflecting are the only steps of an action research, according to McNiff (1988: 22). According to research, students' understanding increases when they consider the method they are employing and how it contributes to the text's overall meaning. 3.1. The research's methodology and data gathering tools Finding out the pupils' degree of reading awareness and enhancing their reading methods were the goals of this study effort. Six techniques were employed by the teacher researcher: anticipating, creating connections, picturing, inferring, questioning, and summarizing.

RESULTS & CONCLUSION

The findings of the reading awareness measure and my own observations indicated that my students' understanding of reading strategies was lacking at the start of the research. The children lacked reading strategy knowledge and experience, but following a thorough investigation, their performance improved. As the researcher, I was first concerned about how to use the methods in the classroom. Both my students and I found this research adventure to be quite fulfilling. The action research findings gave me the assurance I needed to incorporate the ideas into my curriculum. The kids' reading comprehension has increased, and they have a greater knowledge of the techniques. The action research was beneficial, and now that I know more about reading comprehension methods and that my students' reading comprehension has improved, I want to keep incorporating them into my curriculum. Future studies on the updated reading techniques are likely to use a bigger random sample. The researcher can make notes using a variety of tools, such as a check list, to record each student's progress on a weekly basis based on involvement and the tactics they employ most frequently.

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