



IMPROVING READING SKILLS THROUGH EFFECTIVE READING STRATEGIES

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Abstract: *Research underscores the importance of teaching reading strategies as a vital component in improving students' comprehension skills. However, many teachers lack a solid foundation for effectively introducing and applying these strategies in the classroom. Therefore, it is essential to prepare educators to design and deliver effective comprehension techniques to their students. This study aims to identify the most effective reading strategies to enhance students' reading skills in language classrooms. Conducted as action research, the study involved 14 intermediate-level students enrolled in an integrated skills course. The central research question was, "Do reading strategies improve my students' reading comprehension?" The findings indicate that students demonstrated significant improvement in their comprehension skills after receiving instruction on reading strategies.*

Keywords: *reading strategies, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, inference, retention, making connections, questioning, predicting, grammatical ability, word-building patterns, IELTS.*

Introduction: Reading is a skill that is valuable both inside and outside the classroom. According to Anderson, reading is a fundamental life skill that plays a crucial role in a child's academic success and overall life achievements. Without proficiency in reading, opportunities for personal success and fulfillment in both work and life are likely to be missed. Despite its importance, reading remains one of the most challenging subjects in education. This challenge is compounded by the growing demand for high literacy levels in a technology-driven society. To fully benefit from assigned reading materials, students must learn to read critically and analytically. The goal is not just to read, but to understand the deeper intention behind the text.

Research highlights the importance of teaching reading strategies as a fundamental aspect of enhancing students' comprehension skills. However, many teachers lack adequate preparation and understanding of how to implement these strategies effectively. It is crucial for educators to be proficient in both creating and teaching effective comprehension techniques. This study aims to explore the most effective reading strategies to enhance students' reading proficiency in language classrooms, focusing on how teachers can effectively deliver these strategies to their learners.

Researchers emphasize that teaching reading strategies plays a vital role in enhancing students' comprehension. However, many educators lack sufficient training in effectively teaching these strategies. As a result, it is essential to equip teachers with



the skills to design and implement effective comprehension strategies in their classrooms. This study focuses on identifying effective reading strategies to improve reading skills in language classes. Conducted as action research, it involved 14 intermediate-level students in an integrated skills course. The core question explored was, "Do reading strategies enhance my students' reading comprehension?" Findings revealed a significant improvement in students' comprehension after receiving instruction in reading strategies.

1.4 Summarizing

Summarizing involves identifying key ideas and condensing them in one's own words . This process helps students distinguish main ideas from supporting details and separate relevant information from irrelevant content. Summarizing also aids in organizing ideas, making it particularly useful for lengthy texts that students often find intimidating.

1.5 Questioning

Questioning is a strategy used before, during, and after reading to promote deeper understanding. It encourages readers to ask questions to build meaning, solve problems, and uncover new information . Students return to the text to seek answers to teacher-generated questions and refine their understanding. This approach also helps students differentiate between factual and prior knowledge, enhancing their ability to connect text segments and improve comprehension .

1.6 Inferring

Inferring is the process of "reading between the lines," requiring students to combine their prior knowledge with textual information to draw conclusions . This skill enables students to make predictions, identify themes, and create meaning from text and visuals, such as pictures, graphs, and titles . Students can be guided to use various textual elements to enhance their inference skills.

2. Action Research Question

This research focuses on enhancing reading comprehension through the application of reading strategies. The teacher-researcher believes that students without a strong foundation in reading strategies may face challenges throughout their academic and professional lives. By teaching these strategies, the researcher aims to raise students' awareness and enable them to have more meaningful reading experiences. The study seeks to explore how the application of reading strategies improves students' reading skills.

English is widely recognized as a global language, serving as a bridge for communication in various fields such as business, politics, science, and entertainment. As a lingua franca, it allows people from diverse backgrounds to interact effectively on a common platform. Its dominance in international trade, tourism, and cultural exchange makes it a critical tool for global cooperation and development.

The language's ability to integrate words from other languages, as highlighted by James Nicoll, shows its adaptability and dynamism. English's role as a unifying force



in the global economy and culture is essential, as noted by scholars like Stevenson and Rohde, who emphasize its unparalleled influence in history.

The universal acceptance of English has been driven by societal progress and advancements in technology, education, and politics. It facilitates not only practical communication but also the sharing of knowledge and innovation across borders, making it a cornerstone of international interaction and understanding.

Method

Reading proficiency is essential for academic success and is considered one of the most crucial skills for learning in school. Studies, such as one conducted in the United States, have shown a strong connection between proficient reading skills and personal as well as professional achievements . This importance motivated me to undertake this action research. As action research involves projects where practitioners aim to bring about change. Typically conducted in a school setting, emphasized that the true value of action research lies in improving everyday practices rather than generating generalized findings. It is a reflective and practical process that helps instructors address immediate concerns and implement meaningful changes.

The primary goal of action research is to resolve real issues in schools and enhance student success. The process enables educators to assess needs, document inquiry steps, analyze data, and make well-informed decisions for desired outcomes. The stages of action research include planning, acting, observing, and reflecting . Research indicates that students improve their comprehension when they evaluate the strategies they use and understand how these strategies contribute to text comprehension.

3.1. Data Collection Instruments and Research Process

The research aimed to assess students' reading awareness levels and enhance their use of reading strategies. Six strategies were implemented: predicting, making connections, visualizing, inferring, questioning, and summarizing. Initially, the study found that 9 out of 14 students were unaware of these strategies.

To address this, the teacher-researcher first modeled the strategies for the students. Subsequently, these strategies were practiced as a whole class, in small groups, and then independently. After introducing the strategies, the Metacomprehension Strategy Index (MSI) was used to determine whether the strategies improved students' understanding of reading. This tool evaluates familiarity with reading strategies applied before, during, and after reading. Additionally, the teacher-researcher utilized four reading texts from the coursebook to reinforce the practice of these strategies.

Literature Review: is a summary of previously published research on a specific topic. It can refer to an entire scholarly paper or a section within a book or article. Its primary purpose is to provide both the researcher and the audience with an overview of existing knowledge on the subject. A well-crafted literature review helps ensure that the research question is well-defined and that the chosen theoretical framework and methodology are appropriate. In essence, a literature review places the current study within the broader context of related research and provides background for the reader.



Typically, it is presented before the methodology and results sections in a scholarly work.

Writing a literature review is often a requirement for graduate and postgraduate students, especially when preparing theses, dissertations, or journal articles. Literature reviews are also commonly included in research proposals or prospectuses, which are approved before starting a thesis or dissertation.

In some cases, a literature review functions as a type of review article. As such, it is a scholarly paper that summarizes current knowledge, including major findings and theoretical or methodological contributions to a specific field. Literature reviews are secondary sources and do not present new experimental findings. While they often appear in academic journals, they should not be confused with book reviews, which may also be published in the same journals. Literature reviews are essential for research in nearly all academic disciplines.

Results and Conclusion:

Reading awareness assessments and my observations revealed that at the beginning of the study, my students lacked knowledge and experience with reading strategies. However, after conducting an in-depth investigation, their performance showed significant improvement. Initially, I was apprehensive about implementing the methods in the classroom. Nonetheless, this research journey turned out to be highly rewarding for both my students and me. The action research results boosted my confidence in integrating these strategies into my curriculum. My students' reading comprehension has improved, and they now have a better understanding of reading techniques.

The action research proved to be a valuable experience, and with my enhanced understanding of reading comprehension strategies and the progress my students have made, I plan to continue using these methods in my curriculum. Future studies could involve a larger, randomized sample and utilize tools such as checklists to monitor each student's progress weekly, tracking their engagement and the strategies they use most effectively.

THE FINDING EMPHASIZE THAT

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