



**DEVELOPING READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS FOR STUDENTS IN THE
DEPARTMENT OF MATERIALS MANAGEMENT**

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ABSTRACT

The present paper attempts to enhance the reading comprehension skills of the learners at the Technical Institute in Basrah by using culture-based texts. The study aims to analyze and understand the problems of the learners in reading and understanding English. To carry out this study, the Material department has been chosen.

The study proposes that using culture-based texts at diploma students will help the learners to develop their reading comprehension skills in English.

INTRODUCTION:

The study in hand attempted to enhance the reading comprehension skills of the learners at Technical Institute in Basrah by using culture-based texts. The study aimed to analyze and understand the problems of the learners in reading and understanding English. To carry out this study, the Material department has been chosen.

The study hypothesized that using culture-based texts at diploma students might help the learners to develop their reading comprehension skills in English. This study was being supported with the help of a questionnaire, a pre-test, and a post-test.

In the first section, it addressed the scope of the study, definition of reading, reading comprehension, the importance of reading comprehension, theories of reading, schema theory, and comprehension, the contribution of schema theory to reading comprehension.

The next section explained the design of the research, the background of the study, research questions, and the description of the tools as employed for data collection.

The final section presented, (some concluding remarks) the findings of the study and their implications for further research. It also provided suggestions and some recommendations for teachers, as to how to use, the culture-based texts in the classroom to develop the reading comprehension skills of the learners.

Reading:

The researcher tried to use reading texts which are related to the Arab culture which helps the learners to read and improve their reading comprehension skills in English. The main purpose of this study is to introduce culture-based texts to English learners at the technical institute level to motivate and develop reading comprehension skills.

The present study is based on the schema theory which says that the prior knowledge of the learner helps him/her to read and comprehend the written text. The main argument put



forward here is that the cultural-based texts will help the learners to enhance their reading skills in English.

The fundamental abilities of the English language are LSRW (listening, speaking, reading and writing). Their fundamental aptitudes are required to convey in English viably. Of the four aptitudes reading assumes a fundamental job, in learning English and in understanding the composed content. To see any composed content, cognizance is mandatory. Reading abilities are required to comprehend and fathom any composed content and developmentally. Reading is being characterized as the most significant scholarly language expertise (Carrell 1987), Richards and Renandya (2002: 273) point out the extraordinary center that reading gets in unknown dialect instructing. To them, there are two significant purposes behind the uncommon core interest. "In the first place, numerous unknown dialect understudies frequently have read as one of their most significant objectives". Second, different instructive purposes served by composed writings help reading to get this exceptional core interest.

Even though there have been various meanings of reading accessible, it isn't so natural to characterize reading just in a solitary sentence. Numerous specialists characterized reading in various ways. Some researchers characterize reading as "the capacity to draw importance from the printed page and translate the data properly". Aiderson (2000) questions why individuals read and he records different things that students readers in a standard day. As indicated by the rundown, he contends that readers various things with various points; so, he utilizes various techniques for various assignments.

Reading involves various aptitudes. To ace reading, a student needs to represent a direction over the aptitudes of reading. Alptekin (1993) in his informative schedule configuration had listened to many numbers of aptitudes incorporated into reading. These abilities are:

- Perceiving the content of a language.
- Deducing the importance of lexical things.
- Understanding the expressed data.
- Understanding the data even not expressed unequivocally.
- Understanding reasonable importance.
- Understanding the open worth (work) of the sentences and articulation.
- Understanding relations between the pieces of a content through lexical union gadgets.
- An understanding union between parts of content through syntactic attachment gadgets.
- Recognizing cognizance pointers in talk.
- Recognizing the central matter or significant data in a bit of talk.
- Distinguishing the primary thought from supporting subtleties.
- Extricating remarkable focuses to outline (the content, thought and so forth.)
- Selective extraction of significant focuses from a content.
- Essential reference abilities.
- Skimming.
- Filtering to find explicitly required data.
- Trans-coding data to diagrammatical showcase.



Considering the various parts of reading ability the scientist has managed the expertise of reading perception of the students since it can be seen that the specialized establishment students need understanding content.

Reading Comprehension:

Reading perception is defined as the degree of comprehension of composed content. Capable reading relies upon the capacity of the readers to perceive words rapidly and normally. On the off chance that word acknowledgment is troublesome, understudies utilize a lot of their handling information and ability to read individual words, which meddles with their capacity to appreciate what is read.

Numerous instructors in the USA accept that understudies need to figure out how to break down content even before they can read it all alone. Some different US instructors consider this reading way to deal with be totally in reverse for little youngsters, contending that the kids must figure out how to disentangle the words through phonics before they can break down the content itself.

During the only remaining century, appreciation exercises ordinarily contained understudies responding to educators' inquiries, composing reactions to the inquiries all alone, or both. The entire gathering adaptation of this training additionally, regularly incorporated into "Round-robin reading", wherein educators approached singular understudies to read so anyone might hear a bit of content. In the last quarter of the twentieth century, proof developed that the read-test techniques surveyed perception more than they instructed it. The related routine with regards to "round-robin" reading has likewise been addressed and expelled by numerous instructors.

Research studies have inferred that there are considerably more successful approaches to show understanding than the read-test technique. Many numbers of studies have been done in the region of showing amateur readers a bank of "reading methodologies," or apparatuses to translate and investigate a content. There is no single conclusive arrangement of systems, yet some basic ones incorporate condensing what is read, observing reading to ensure that it bodes well, and examining the structure of the content (e.g., the utilization of headings in science content). A few projects show understudies how to self-screen whether they are understanding or not, and give understudies apparatuses for fixing cognizance issues.

Guidance in the understanding procedure utilizes frequently included the continuous arrival of obligation, wherein educators at first clarify the model systems. After some time, they give understudies increasingly more obligation regarding utilizing the systems until they can utilize them freely.

Reason for reading:

Reading is a movement with a reason; an individual may read to pick up data or check existing learning, or to contemplate an author's thoughts or composing style. An individual may likewise read for delight, or to upgrade information of the language being read.

The reason for reading additionally decides the suitable way to deal with reading, for instance, an individual who has to know whether he/she can stand to eat at a specific café



needs to understand the estimating data gave on the menu, however, doesn't have to perceive the name of each starter recorded. An individual reading verse for delight needs to perceive the words the artist utilizes and the manners in which they are assembled, yet doesn't have to distinguish primary thought and supporting subtleties, an individual utilizing a logical article to help a feeling has to know the jargon that is utilized, comprehend the realities and cause-impact groupings that are exhibited, and perceive thoughts that are displayed.

Reading examination demonstrates that great readers:

- Read widely.
- Integrate data into the content with existing learning.
- Have an adaptable reading style, contingent upon what they are reading.
- Are roused.

Importance comprehension of Reading:

Reading appreciation is a significant aptitude for some reasons. On the off chance that an individual can read the content, and not ready to translate what is read into down to earth data, he has not increased much. By definition, reading perception includes understanding what is read, and without comprehension, there isn't much point in reading a lot of words on a page. Reading cognizance is an open to instruction ability, as a rule, however, it must be rehearsed and educated through reiteration and expanding on aptitudes that have just been scholarly. Reading cognizance assumes a significant job in understanding content. We can say that reading helps a reader in creating and gaining learning from anyplace on the planet. To pick up information a reader ought to have appropriate appreciation capacity generally misconstruing will occur.

The diagram hypothesis has been characterized by numerous scientists as "a psychological portrayal of an average case which encourages individuals to comprehend the world all the more rapidly because individuals see new encounters by initiating pertinent construction in their brain". Johnson (2004:282) characterized it as "a psychological system dependent on past encounters created as methods for obliging new actualities, and consequently understanding them". Some researchers portray one form of mapping hypothesis as "a perspective on the methods by which presuppositions are remotely developed and force outer compels in transit in which we get messages". As for Rumelhart (1978:80), "a pattern is information structure for speaking to the nonexclusive ideas put away in memory. There schemata speaking as far as anyone is concerned pretty much all ideas; those fundamental articles, circumstances, occasions, activities, and successions of activities. A pattern contains, as a component of its particular, the system interrelation that is accepted to typically hold among the constituents of the ideas being referred to". For Winfield and Bames-Felfeli (1982), a blueprint is "a psychological structure develops which considers the association of the data in long haul memory" (1982: 34). He characterizes composition as the mind invigorated by catchphrases or expressions in the content or by the substance that actuates past learning (p. 69). Widdowson accentuation that the subjective qualities of diagram enable us to relate approaching data to recently known data.

**Types of Composition:**

Many reading analysts expect to subcategorize the term composition, with the most prominent classification being the qualification among formal and substance mapping. However, there is no single classification for mapping.

To comprehend the effect of foundation information on reading understanding, Carrell, and Eisterhold (1983), Carrell (1987) draws a qualification between schemata types. By formal pattern, they point to foundation information identifying with the formal and allegorical hierarchical structures of various sorts of writings. Carrell (1985) says reading cognizance is influenced by the reader's formal schemata associating with the representative association of a content.

The content pattern is characterized as foundation information of the substance territory of the content that a reader brings to a content. Carrell and Eisterhold suggested that fitting substance composition is gotten to through printed prompts. The readers need learning about the substance of the section to have the option to get it.

Carrell called attention to that social schemata are created "...in the setting of our fundamental encounters". He refers to social schemata and he characterizes it as ".the foundation information about social parts of the language being learned..." Ellis (1985) characterizes social composition as culture-explicit world information. To fathom a content, fitting society schemata and contents are viewed as essential.

Schema theory and reading comprehension:

Research on the hypothesis of blueprint had an incredible effect on understanding reading cognizance in the first and second dialects. It presented the defense clear that understanding the job of composition in the reading procedure gives bits of knowledge into why understudies neglect to appreciate content material. Most, if not all, look into around there appear to concur that when understudies know about the point of the content they are reading (i.e., have content pattern), mindful of the discussion level and basic make-up of the class of the content (i.e., have formal diagram), and apt in translating the highlights expected to perceive words and perceive how they fit together in a sentence (i.e., have language outline), they are in a superior situation to fathom their appointed reading. Lack in any of the above diagrams will bring about a reading cognizance shortfall. As Carrell (1987) brings up, "understudies' clear reading issues might be issues of inadequate foundation information substance, formal, and etymological". In any case, he likewise contends that the understudies may have adequate schemata, yet unfit to appreciate the content if such schemata are not fittingly actuated.

The component of composition hypothesis, concerning reading, is that content doesn't without anyone else's input convey meaning. The reader brings data, information, feeling, and culture as schemata, to the printed word. It demonstrates that examination has demonstrated that reading is just by chance visual. More data is contributed by the reader than by the print on the page. This would all appear to point to the way that our comprehension of content relies upon what amount related diagram we, as readers, have while reading. Thusly, readers' the two locals and non-locals, disappointment or perplexity to



understanding content is brought about by their absence of fitting schemata that can undoubtedly fit with the substance of the content. This absence of suitable schemata can be either formal or substance-based. Flood (1984) characterizes these two as pursues: content schemata incorporates what we think about individuals, the world, culture, and the universe, while formal schemata comprise of our insight about talk structure.

Maybe one of the most significant compositions that posture a quick danger to understudies is content or topical mapping. As Smith (2004) states "if the subject ...is outside understudies' understanding or base of learning, they are uncontrolled to an obscure ocean". Methods for initiating content construction, I accept, is a territory that necessities further investigation.

The Contribution of the Schema Theory to the Field of Reading in Language Teaching and Learning:

There are numerous commitments made by mapping hypothesis in the field of reading understanding. Students have not detached readers all the while. They cooperate with the content and endeavor to utilize their schemata to comprehend the content; anyway, these endeavors will come up short if the reader can't get to the proper schemata important to comprehend content. reading appreciation depends hence significantly on the reader's capacity to relate data from the content to his/her current foundation information.

Carrell and Eisterhold (1983:562) point out the way that educators should be delicate to reading issues that outcome from verifiable social information forced by the content. An audit of writing in the ESL approach demonstrates that the job of social learning is a factor in reading understanding and has been an issue for quite a while.

Bensoussan (1998:283) claims that "Students of a subsequent language need practice in initiating schemata in cognizance; else they are probably going to take part in base up preparing just, which will damage their capacity to fathom expediently and maturely." She calls attention to that culture construction might be socially explicit. The suggestion is that L2 students should be furnished with suitable schemata on the off chance that they are to appreciate appropriately.

In an investigation with forty undergrads Brazilian EFL understudies, Taglieber et al. (1988:455) demonstrate that outline hypothesis may clarify why pre-reading exercises improve reading understanding. As indicated by their discoveries, which means is developed through a connection between the reader's schemata and the content. They found that pre-reading exercises encourage EFL understudies' appreciation. The investigation upheld Horiba's (1996) dispute that understudies may utilize their experience learning about a reading area to abrogate issues they face with language.

Teaching Culture:

Jalilifar and Assi (2008) characterize culture as a lifestyle that portrays a gathering of individuals in a given timeframe as per their thoughts, traditions, aptitudes, expressions, and instruments. As of late, Grellet (1981) talks about the social premise of instructing English. Grellet states that the developing number of non-local speakers of English makes this language unmistakable and that outcome in showing English in a multilingual setting since



non-local speakers want to learn the way of life of local speakers. That is additionally like what Alptekin (1981) proposes. Turning into a universal language has made English denationalized.

Alptekin (2002; 2003) examines the need for showing society for EFL students. He suggests that on the off chance that it was not English but rather some other language on the planet, at that point it is conceivable to show the way of life with the language; however, that isn't the equivalent for English as it is a worldwide language. The language of Bulgaria has a place with Bulgarian, the language of Dutch has a place with the Netherlands; however, the language of English doesn't have a place with Britain anymore. It has more non-local speakers than the local ones. Alptekin presumes that instructing English culture is beyond the realm of imagination since the idea culture itself is hazy. Based on the concise survey of the different conceptualizations of the hypotheses of reading cognizance, it might be considered, for this investigation, that the way of life-based writings will improve the inspiration of our students in creating reading perception. On the off chance that we incorporate the claim culture of the students in instructing English, it will persuade the students to learn English. With regards to reading, if the writings depend on the students' way of life, students will get the required inspiration towards reading. The data which the students have in their pattern will help the students in reading and understanding the given content. The content ought to be in English with social based data.

The empirical study:

The present examination endeavors to discover the issues of the given students in reading cognizance of English. The primary point and motivation behind the present investigation are to look at the accompanying angles identified with the instructing of reading aptitudes in genuine homeroom by utilizing society based writings:

- a) The upsides of showing reading abilities to understudies.
- b) the issues in reading aptitudes in English among the given students.
- c) an endeavor to utilize social-based messages in creating reading cognizance abilities of specialized foundation students.

The speculation for the present investigation is that utilizing of culture-based content causes the students to upgrade their reading cognizance aptitudes in English.

The research selected a famous story in the Arabian culture and literature. The story was "*Ali Baba and Forty Thieves*" which posted on <https://www.chess.com/clubs/forum/view/ali-baba-legend>

The selected story is widely known for all Arabian people.

The research question which was being asked for the students was "For each unknown word in the given text, how do you understand its meaning? By dictionary, or by its context, or according to your cultural information about the story of "*Ali Baba and Forty Thieves*"?"

The students who were under the test were studying in the department of Materials Management at the Technical Institute in Basrah, Iraq. The number of students was 120.

In the first place, the researchers asked the students about what they knew about the selected story. Then, asked them about the summary and most characters of it. Next, the English text



of the story was handed out to the student with highlighting by bold the target vocabularies of the investigation. After silent reading for 15 minutes, the researcher started reading the text while the students were following the reading word by word and in the full stop of each sentence that involved highlighted targeted word, the students were being asked to write in their answer sheet the word in English and what they expected the meaning in Arabic as well as the reason for their expectations. At the end of the class, their answer sheets were collected for statistical purposes of the study in hand.

CONCLUSION:

The result of the students' answer sheets mentioned that 54% of the correct Arabic meaning was expected based on the prior knowledge of the students about the selected story. The context helped them in inferring 37% of the targeted vocabulary but the researchers think that the prior knowledge also had a crucial role in identifying the actual meaning in the context. The rest of the targeted vocabularies were only known by a dictionary. These words composed only 9 %.

The research recommended the language teachers to use cultural texts from the culture of the learners who were written in the target language to enhance the learners' abilities in reading.

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