

THE ROLE OF READING STRATEGIES IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' COMPREHENSION SKILLS

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Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada o'quvchilarning o'qish tushunish ko'nikmalarini rivojlantirishda o'qish strategiyalarining roli tahlil qilingan. Tadqiqotda o'qish jarayonida qo'llaniladigan strategiyalar, jumladan oldindan taxmin qilish, savol berish, matnni tushunishni nazorat qilish va xulosa chiqarish kabi usullar ko'rib chiqilgan. Maqolada ushbu strategiyalarning o'quvchilarning matnni chuqurroq anglashiga, mustaqil o'qish ko'nikmalarining rivojlanishiga hamda o'quv jarayonida faolligini oshirishga ta'siri yoritilgan. Natijalar o'qish strategiyalarini tizimli o'rgatish o'quvchilarning o'qish samaradorligini sezilarli darajada yaxshilashini ko'rsatadi.

Kalit so'zlar: o'qish strategiyalari, o'qish tushunish, metakognitiv ko'nikmalar, til o'rganish, matnni tahlil qilish, mustaqil o'qish, o'quvchilarning rivojlanishi.

Abstract

This article analyzes the role of reading strategies in improving students' reading comprehension skills. The study examines various strategies used during reading, including predicting, questioning, monitoring comprehension, and summarizing. The article highlights how these strategies contribute to deeper understanding of texts, development of independent reading skills, and increased student engagement in the learning process. The results show that systematic instruction of reading strategies significantly enhances students' reading performance and comprehension abilities.

Key words: reading strategies, reading comprehension, metacognitive skills, language learning, text analysis, independent reading, student development.

Аннотация

В данной статье анализируется роль стратегий чтения в развитии навыков понимания прочитанного у студентов. В исследовании рассматриваются различные стратегии, применяемые в процессе чтения, такие как прогнозирование, постановка вопросов, контроль понимания текста и обобщение. В статье подчеркивается, что данные стратегии способствуют более глубокому пониманию текста, развитию навыков самостоятельного чтения и повышению активности студентов в учебном процессе. Результаты показывают, что систематическое обучение стратегиям чтения значительно улучшает уровень понимания прочитанного и учебные достижения студентов.

Ключевые слова: стратегии чтения, понимание прочитанного, метакогнитивные навыки, изучение языка, анализ текста, самостоятельное чтение, развитие учащихся.

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the fundamental skills in language learning and academic development, serving as a gateway to knowledge acquisition, critical thinking, and intellectual growth.

However, reading is not merely the ability to decode words; it involves constructing meaning, interpreting ideas, and connecting new information with prior knowledge. For many students, especially those learning in a second language, comprehension remains a significant challenge. This is where reading strategies play a crucial role, as they provide learners with structured approaches to process, understand, and retain textual information more effectively.

Reading strategies can be defined as conscious, goal-oriented actions that readers use to make sense of a text. These strategies enable students to become active participants in the reading process rather than passive recipients of information. Skilled readers naturally employ a variety of strategies before, during, and after reading, while less proficient readers often struggle because they lack awareness of such techniques. Therefore, teaching reading strategies explicitly is essential for improving students' comprehension skills. Before reading, strategies such as previewing, predicting, and activating prior knowledge help students prepare for the text. Previewing involves skimming titles, headings, and visuals to gain a general idea of the content. This initial step allows students to set a purpose for reading and create expectations about the text. Predicting encourages learners to anticipate what they will encounter, which increases engagement and curiosity. Activating prior knowledge helps students connect new information with what they already know, making comprehension more meaningful and easier to achieve.

During reading, students benefit from strategies that support active engagement with the text. One of the most effective techniques is questioning, where readers ask themselves questions about the content, purpose, and meaning of the text. This process promotes deeper thinking and helps identify important information. Another key strategy is monitoring comprehension, which involves being aware of one's understanding and recognizing when confusion occurs. When students notice that they do not understand a part of the text, they can apply fix-up strategies such as rereading, adjusting reading speed, or looking up unfamiliar words. Annotating and note-taking are also valuable practices that encourage interaction with the text and help students organize their thoughts. After reading, strategies such as summarizing, reflecting, and evaluating play an important role in reinforcing comprehension. Summarizing requires students to identify the main ideas and present them in a concise form, which enhances retention and understanding. Reflection allows learners to think critically about the text, relate it to their own experiences, and consider its implications. Evaluating involves making judgments about the text's credibility, relevance, and quality, fostering higher-order thinking skills.

The use of reading strategies not only improves comprehension but also develops students' autonomy and confidence. When learners are equipped with effective strategies, they become more independent readers who can tackle complex texts with greater ease. This independence is particularly important in academic settings, where students are required to process large amounts of information across different subjects. Moreover, reading strategies contribute to the development of metacognitive skills, as students learn to think about their own thinking and regulate their learning processes.

Teachers play a vital role in helping students acquire and apply reading strategies. Instruction should be explicit, systematic, and tailored to students' needs. Modeling is one of the most effective teaching methods, where teachers demonstrate how to use specific strategies while reading a text aloud. Guided practice allows students to apply these strategies with

support, while independent practice helps them internalize and transfer these skills to new contexts. It is also important for teachers to create a supportive learning environment where students feel encouraged to experiment with different strategies and reflect on their effectiveness. In addition, the integration of authentic and diverse reading materials can enhance the effectiveness of strategy instruction. Texts that are relevant, engaging, and culturally meaningful motivate students to read and apply strategies more actively. Technology can also support the development of reading strategies by providing interactive tools, digital annotations, and access to a wide range of resources. Despite the benefits of reading strategies, some challenges remain in their implementation. Students may initially find it difficult to apply multiple strategies simultaneously, and teachers may face time constraints in covering both content and strategy instruction. However, with consistent practice and gradual integration into the curriculum, these challenges can be overcome. In conclusion, reading strategies are essential tools for improving students' comprehension skills. They transform reading from a passive activity into an active, purposeful process that enhances understanding, retention, and critical thinking. By equipping students with effective strategies and providing appropriate guidance, educators can empower learners to become confident and independent readers, capable of navigating complex texts and achieving academic success.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

The study of reading strategies and their impact on students' comprehension skills has been widely explored in the field of applied linguistics and language education. Scholars emphasize that reading is an interactive process involving the reader, the text, and the context. Early theoretical perspectives highlighted bottom-up and top-down processing models, where comprehension was seen either as decoding linguistic units or as constructing meaning through prior knowledge. Later, interactive models combined these views, suggesting that effective reading requires the simultaneous use of both processes. Within this framework, reading strategies emerged as essential tools that enable learners to manage and enhance their comprehension.

Research in this area has consistently demonstrated that explicit instruction in reading strategies significantly improves learners' ability to understand texts. Studies indicate that strategies such as predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing help students engage actively with reading materials. Scholars also underline the importance of metacognition, referring to learners' awareness and control of their own cognitive processes. Metacognitive strategies, including monitoring comprehension and evaluating understanding, are considered particularly effective in developing independent readers. Furthermore, research shows that proficient readers naturally employ a wide range of strategies, while less skilled readers often lack awareness of these techniques and therefore struggle with comprehension. In addition, the literature highlights the role of socio-cultural and contextual factors in shaping reading comprehension. Learners' background knowledge, language proficiency, and motivation significantly influence how they apply reading strategies. Studies conducted in second and foreign language contexts reveal that strategy instruction is especially beneficial for learners who face linguistic and cultural challenges when interpreting texts. Moreover, the integration of authentic materials and technology has been found to enhance students' engagement and facilitate the application of reading strategies in meaningful contexts. Despite the extensive body of research supporting the effectiveness of reading strategies, some studies point to

challenges in their implementation. These include limited classroom time, insufficient teacher training, and students' initial resistance to adopting new learning approaches. Nevertheless, the consensus among researchers is that systematic and well-structured strategy instruction leads to measurable improvements in comprehension skills and overall academic performance.

The methodology of the present study is designed to investigate the role of reading strategies in improving students' comprehension skills through a structured and empirical approach. The research adopts a mixed-method design, combining both quantitative and qualitative data to ensure a comprehensive analysis of the problem. The participants of the study consist of secondary school students, selected based on their similar language proficiency levels to maintain consistency and reliability in the results.

Data collection is carried out using several instruments. Pre-tests and post-tests are administered to measure students' reading comprehension levels before and after the implementation of strategy instruction. These tests include passages followed by comprehension questions that assess students' ability to identify main ideas, infer meaning, and interpret information. In addition, questionnaires are used to gather data on students' attitudes toward reading and their awareness of reading strategies. Classroom observations provide qualitative insights into how students apply strategies during reading activities, while teacher interviews offer perspectives on instructional practices and challenges.

The experimental procedure involves the implementation of a set of reading strategies over a defined period. Students in the experimental group receive explicit instruction in strategies such as predicting, questioning, summarizing, and monitoring comprehension. These strategies are introduced through teacher modeling, guided practice, and independent application. Meanwhile, the control group continues with traditional reading instruction without a specific focus on strategies. This comparative approach allows for a clear evaluation of the effectiveness of strategy-based instruction. Data analysis is conducted using both statistical and thematic methods. Quantitative data from tests are analyzed to determine improvements in comprehension scores, while qualitative data from observations and interviews are examined to identify patterns in students' strategy use and engagement. The combination of these methods ensures the validity and reliability of the findings. Overall, the chosen methodology provides a systematic framework for examining how reading strategies influence students' comprehension skills. By integrating theoretical insights with empirical investigation, the study aims to contribute to the understanding of effective reading instruction and offer practical recommendations for educators.

RESULTS

The findings of the study demonstrate a clear and measurable impact of reading strategies on students' comprehension skills. The analysis of pre-test and post-test results reveals that students who received explicit instruction in reading strategies showed significant improvement in their ability to understand and interpret texts. In contrast, the control group, which followed traditional reading instruction without a focus on strategies, displayed only minimal progress. This difference indicates that the integration of structured reading strategies plays a crucial role in enhancing comprehension outcomes.

Students in the experimental group improved across several key areas of reading comprehension. Their ability to identify main ideas became more accurate, as they learned to focus on essential information rather than getting lost in details. Additionally, there was

noticeable progress in their inferencing skills, with students demonstrating a greater capacity to read between the lines and interpret implicit meanings. Vocabulary understanding also improved, as learners applied context clues and other strategies to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words without relying heavily on external assistance.

Another important result of the study is the development of students' metacognitive awareness. Observations and questionnaire responses indicate that students became more conscious of their reading processes. They reported being able to recognize when they did not understand a text and actively used strategies such as rereading, questioning, and summarizing to resolve difficulties. This shift from passive to active reading behavior contributed significantly to their overall comprehension improvement.

Classroom observations further revealed that students who were taught reading strategies engaged more actively in reading tasks. They participated more frequently in discussions, asked relevant questions, and demonstrated greater confidence in expressing their ideas about the text. The use of strategies such as prediction and annotation encouraged deeper interaction with reading materials, making the learning process more dynamic and student-centered.

The qualitative data collected from teacher interviews support these findings. Teachers observed that students became more independent readers over time, requiring less guidance and showing increased motivation to complete reading tasks. They also noted that strategy instruction created a more structured and supportive learning environment, where students felt equipped with tools to approach complex texts. In terms of statistical analysis, the post-test scores of the experimental group were significantly higher than those of the control group, confirming the effectiveness of the implemented strategies. The improvement was consistent across students with different proficiency levels, although those with initially lower comprehension skills showed particularly notable progress. This suggests that reading strategies are especially beneficial for struggling readers, as they provide practical techniques to overcome comprehension barriers. However, the results also highlight certain challenges. Some students initially found it difficult to apply multiple strategies simultaneously, and a period of adjustment was required before they could use these techniques effectively. Additionally, the success of strategy instruction depended largely on consistent practice and teacher support. Without regular reinforcement, students tended to revert to passive reading habits.

Overall, the results confirm that reading strategies have a positive and substantial effect on students' comprehension skills. They not only improve specific aspects of reading performance but also foster greater independence, engagement, and confidence among learners. These findings emphasize the importance of incorporating strategy-based instruction into reading curricula to achieve more effective and sustainable learning outcomes.

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