
The Effects of Using Task-Based Activities to Teach Reading Comprehension via Online Classes

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Abstract: Task-based activities aids the fluency and self-assurance in learning a foreign or second language. This strategy emphasizes giving students practical assignments they must finish in order to learn. In order to increase their overall language ability, students are required to focus on specific language abilities. Researchers and teachers of second and foreign languages have discovered that TBLT can be a helpful teaching and learning method. Investigating how task-based reading instruction affects EFL students' reading proficiency in Kurdistan Region of Iraq schools was the motivation behind carrying out this research. (92) Advanced Kurdish English language learners were the subjects of the study and were randomly allocated to 2 sets: the experimental set and the control set. While the control group engaged in more conventional exercises to hone their reading skills, the experimental group engaged in task-based teaching techniques. In order to gather pre-test and post-test data from students who completed two paper-based IELTS reading test, the researcher created a reading test. Social Research Statistical Package was used to examine the data and determine each student's unique skills and talents. The current study procedure made use of statistic tools, T-test and variation analysis was employed to examine the obtained data. After one month of vocabulary education (February 2023) in which the lessons were delivered for three hours per day, six days per week, the reading test was given. While the experimental group received instruction that relied on pampering the learners with reading comprehension strategies, the control set simply received conventional direction. The analysis of data showed that, at every single level of the Subsequent testing reading skills, there was a considerable variance between the mean scores of the 2 sets, favoring the experimental set. The researcher makes several recommendations in light of those findings that are intended to be useful for ELT, supervisors, and syllabus designers.

Keywords: English Language Teachers (ELT), Task- Base Language Learning, EFL Learners, Reading Comprehension Strategies, Kurdistan Region of Iraq.



1. INTRODUCTION

Stating the Research Problem

Reading skill is a procedure that entails the use of pertinent knowledge and associated linguistic abilities to facilitate the move of info from 1 person to another (Chastain,1988). A fundamental communication skill is reading. It makes it possible for all students to pursue their academic interests across all subject areas. For EFL students, it is essential since it introduces them to the new language and helps them think and express themselves both orally and in writing (Sikiotis, 1981:300). Both native language and foreign language programs emphasize reading. The development and demise of numerous teaching strategies, from grammar translation methods to more communication-focused approaches, have defined the field of language instruction during the previous few decades. A method's success or failure will depend on how instructors use it, what they use it for, who the students are, and what kind of results they anticipate from it. Other factors to consider include the personality traits of the learners, their preferred learning methods, their level of motivation, and the reason they are learning the language. No one can therefore declare a method of teaching a language to be a complete success or a genuine failure. Another point is that the dominant strategy or method in the area of teaching languages no longer exists. The requirements of the students and their capacity to use language in authentic, natural settings are also of utmost importance in language classrooms as a result of the move from teacher focused to more learner focused policy (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). The current study aims at :

1. examining how task-based activities affect college students' reading achievement;
2. developing students' comprehension of reading. The above goals will be met by confirming Assuming that there is a difference involved in the existence of a statistic in the process of achievement in reading between students who are study reading using reading strategies and those who are study reading using traditional procedures. The importance of reading instruction as a crucial component of EFL teaching is what gives the study its worth. Additionally, English language learners, teacher trainers, educators, and supervisors might find this study useful.

1.2. The Limitation

The current study was applied to the third-stage English language students at the faculty of Education/ University of Garmian/ Kurdistan Region of Iraq (whom first language is Kurdish) For the academic year (2022-2023).

Theoretical Background

A. Reading Comprehension

Comprehending a written text means the reader's capability to understand and internalize its meaning (Zangana I.M., 2019. P:5). Reading comprehension is a procedure that entails the use of pertinent knowledge and associated linguistic abilities to facilitate the transfer of info from 1 person to another (Chastain,1988, P:216). With this type of reading, you must ask and respond to questions regarding the book and the author and pass judgment on what the other students have read. Reading comprehension activity is what drives the reader to react to the



text utilizing his/her personal regulations, beliefs or opinions and evaluating the relevance by which come to a better understanding of the text." (Richards and Schmidt 2002:134).

Reading comprehension is a key component of learning a second or foreign language (Zangana I. M., 2019). Students should be able to read expository texts critically from an educational perspective because the skill to reason through reading is one that is heavily emphasized in curricula. In order to deduce word meanings, a critical reader engages in a mental activity on the word form and draws connections between the context and his own personal experience.

B. Reading Strategies

Reading comprehension is evaluated more frequently than it is taught. According to research, students can use effective metacognitive techniques to check and enhance their own knowledge. These techniques are named strategies:

1. **Activating:** Students use their prior knowledge and/or experiences to the material in order to better understand it. (For instance, text connections.)
2. **Restating the objective and meaning of a piece in their own words is known as summarizing.** (For instance, magnet summaries.)
3. **The Monitor and Clarify:** Learners assess their comprehension of the text. They made explanations and solutions if necessary both during and after reading a text if there are any ambiguities. (For instance, text coding.)
4. **The visualiz and the organize:** Students imagine themselves reading the material in their heads. Also, students can create ideas from texts by using the drawing organization., which also serve to offer structures. (A graphic organizer is an example.)
5. **The search and select:** Students obtain info from a range of references and select what will help them define important term, respond to inquiry, or resolve issue. (For instance, a claim, supporting data, and logic.)
6. **Questioning:** Students ask themselves questions while reading the book, formulate questions about the text, and respond to various levels of inquiries about the text posed by their classmates and/or teachers. (For instance, a question-and-answer exchange.)
7. **Inferring:** Students analyze the material and make deductive inferences. (For instance, say-mean-matter.)

C. Task Based Learning (TBL)

The numerous publications published in the field of TBT according to Ganta, T. G. (2015: 2760), demonstrate the popularity of TBL in the contemporary setting. The task-based approach emphasizes communication and message delivery.

The origins of task-based learning may be traced back to the 1980s, when Prabu, Prabu (1987), as cited by Ahmed, R. Z. & Bidin, S. J. (2016), launched an initiative in India to teach communicative language. Prabhu (1987), who was working with schools in Bangalore, Southern India, at the time, is quoted by Harmer (2001: p.86) as saying that he believed students were more likely to learn languages if they were thinking about a nonlinguistic problem than if they were focusing on a specific language form. Little wood (2007: p.243) cited Richards



(2005: p.29) as saying that both task based and control based instructions is extension of the CLT movement, but they follow different paths to the same end: developing learners' communicative competence.

Therefore, task based learning is an evolution of CLT. Task based language teaching (TBLT) is another name for task based learning (TBL). According to Nunan (2003), who was cited by Little wood (2007: p.243), teachers are already being urged to abandon the earlier form of (CLT) and adopt task-based language teaching (also known as TLT or task based learning, and henceforth referred to as (TBLT).

Task-based learning, as defined by Willis (1996: p.34), is a GCA with a specific objective that places the emphasis on exchange meaning rather than developing particular language forms. It indicates that the assignment is an activity for the learners that uses language to accomplish a particular goal.

D. Task Based Learning (Tbl) Learning Advantages.

Many scholars emphasized the benefits of TBL as the most cutting-edge of foreign language teaching. Willis (1996: P.35) claimed that TBL had various benefits, including :

1. It gives the students the courage to test their understanding of a language in the relatively private setting of a pair or small set without fear of making a mistake or receiving feedback in front of the class .
2. It allows students to practice spontaneous communication, which entails thinking of words and meaning units in real time and constructing what they wish to say.
3. It offers the chance for the student to gain insight into similar meanings that can be expressed. According to research, they are more inclined to rectify one other's mistakes than to accept one another's mistakes when given the opportunity.
4. It encourages students to use language strategically and collaboratively, focusing on creating meaning rather than just using it to show off.
5. It requires active participation from the student, not simply a few isolated sentences. They are in charge of negotiating the opening and closing, as well as new phases of direction change. These kinds of conversation abilities are probably only learned through engagement.
6. It allows students more opportunities to practice communication techniques like asking clarifying questions, paraphrasing to avoid using an unfamiliar word, rephrasing other people's views, and providing words and phrases for another speaker.

E. E-learning:

E-learning is not a new approach to language in particular and education in general The term appeared at the early nineties (Basak, Wotto & Be' langer, 2018, P.201).

The concept of "e-learning" refers to much more than just online, virtual, distributed, network, or web based learning (Chitra & Raj, 2018, p.11). Lots of "technology temptations" " first originated as supplemental tools to enhance traditional teaching methods like television, as can be shown from looking at the historical evolution of the pedagogical implications that underlie E-learning. However, E-learning took a sharp turn toward more important didactic roles in the 1960s and 1970s (Moore, 2015). Although their capacity to use technology was rather brittle,



teachers and students were able to participate in virtual classrooms and engage with the teaching-learning processes in an interactive manner. The definition of E-learning is expanded upon by Nichols and Anderson (2005) in a more systematic and interactive manner. E-learning was outlined as a collection of technologically upgraded methods that the learners often utilize to complete tasks, discover about, and address subjects on their own or in groups by the New Zealand Ministry of Education. The term "technologized" can be interpreted as synchronous and asynchronous online presence as well as offline computer-based tools like CD-ROMs. In other words, E-learning is a dynamic educational continuum in which teachers and students collaborate to create knowledge, rather than just serving as a mechanical "tool" for teaching and learning.

Numerous studies show that technology boosts student achievement. According to the studies, a variety of factors influences how technology affects student achievement (Chirco, 2018, p.13). E-learning is described as a broad range of applications and procedures by the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), which includes web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual classrooms, and digital. The net, intranet, audio and video, satellites transmission, TV interactive, and CDROM are all used to distribute a large portion of this content (Patel, 2016, p.1).

Based on All Above it Could Be Ended That E-Learning:

First, high majority of teachers as well as learners of English language agree that E-learning online learning enables learners to access the material repeatedly as they desire, unlike traditional classroom instruction. This is especially necessary while revising in order to prepare for the test (Chitra & Raj, 2018, p.12). Second, (DL) is the umbrella that holds (E) and (M) under it. Finally, one of the most benefits of E-learning is the its interaction

Interaction" which can fall into four main types, namely: Interaction between the learners because they are encouraged to converse with one another, share knowledge, and cooperate to improve learning results. Interaction between teachers and learners: this kind of interaction is highly expanded due to the nature of the educational platforms which enables teachers to speak with the learners and read their letters even if the targeted students are not online at the same time. In addition, the teacher manages to engage with each student individually. In the same vein, it has been noticed that when teach and learn are implemented online, students are routinely motivated to modify their attitudes and the way they accomplish assignments. They are likely to consult additional online resources, do assignments at their own leisure, refer back to task instructions at any time, and receive various audio visual materials that they can watching and listening to repeatedly (Chuo, 2007; Wichadee, 2013).

2. METHOD

A. Experiment

The two groups were chosen randomly as part of the experiment's design. A pre test and post test was administered by the resercher and applied to both groups. While the control group received traditional reading coprehension instructions, the experimental set were pompered



with vocabulary through the use of reading comprehension strategies. In order to determine whether there were any sign differences between the 2 sets, the scores from the two groups were compared.

1. The Pre- Test Outcomes:

The researcher used the a peiece of an ELTS reading test before starting with the experiment procedure to make sure the sample individuals were comparable in their prior English language skills. The individuals' results were noted and statistically analysed by using the t-test. The mean and standard deviation of each sets prior EL are displayed in Table (1). The findings of the analysis show that, at the (0.05) level, both experimental and control groups did ont show a significant differences statistically.

Table 1. Mean, SD and T-Value of the learners Pre-test completion process

Set	Numbers	M	SD	Df	T-Value	
					Calculate	Tabulate
EG	46	15.11	3.1	89	0.98	1.87
CG	46	14.89	3.8			

2. How the Test is Validated?

When buliding a test, many crucial elements should be taken into the researcher consideration. Most prominent factor is enssuring (validty). Since psychological features are usually challenging to observe, the most traditional definition of validity—which continues to be applied today—is the range to which a test fact measures the phenomenon that it is meant to evaluate (Garrett, 1937; Smith & Wright, 1928, Sireci & Sukin, 2013). It is the range to which a test meets the prospects of those implicated in its use, e.g. administer, teacher, candidate, and test score user (McNamara (2000, p.48) According to Heaton (1988:160), face validity is regarded as the most significant sort of test validity by the majority of communicative test designers.

3. How the Test Is Reliabil?

The reliability of test findings is guraranteed by consistency of measurements across various test items, test formats, and raters, as well as other elements of the measurement context. (Lado ,1972, p.30). A good test should produce consistent results (Harmer,2001, p.22). In actual practice, test reliability is improved by ensuring that test conditions are constant, limiting the potential for answer diversity, and making sure that test instructions are crystal clear.

4. The Post-T Outcomes:

The post-T outcomes concerning the students achievements showed that the (EG) scores average was (20.143) and their standard deviation (SD) was (4.61), it was clear to the researcher that those values were greater than that of the (CG), which was (14.060) with a SD (4.92). Because the computed value is (6.91) and the tabulate t-value is (1.87) at the P>0.05 and a DF



of (89), the difference between the 2 averages is statistically significant. This shows that the reading proficiency of the (EG) and the (CG) clearly differ from one another. The outcomes of the post-test for both SETS are described in detail in Table (2) below.

Table 2. The Post-test Outcomes

Test	Set	No.of students	SMA	SD	DF	t-test (Calculated)	t-test value (Tabulated)
No.	EG	46	20.143	4.61	89	6.91	1.87
No.	CG	46	14.060	4.92			

2. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings above, the following conclusions have been made:

1-Task-based learning exercises have proven to be good teaching methods for advancing and improving students' reading abilities.

2-The findings analysis shows that reading comprehension exercises helped struggling readers improve their reading ability.

3- The learners are motivated in the Learning process by TB. They apply the new knowledge and share solutions and answers which leads to the generalization of the new vocabulary understanding.

4- Reading comprehension strategies enables the learners to read more quickly than peers who get instruction in traditional old reading techniques .

5- The recall of new vocabulary by EFL students can be significantly improved by teaching them five reading comprehension skills, and,

6- Reading comprehension helps students remember, evaluate, and categorize the concepts in the passage.

Recommendations

According to the findings and appropriate literature, the researcher suggests that:

1. English language learners should be fostered to use a cognitive approach in reading a text, that's to say: critically processing text vocabulary that may appear in the text to extract their meanings within the text context. As a result, reading activities will improve the learners communicative skills.

2. It is advised that instructors choose texts for reading comprehension based on the background knowledge, needs, and interests of their students.

3. Assist pupils in realizing that reading comprehension is a very interactive process.

4. Utilize the most recent and effective instructional strategies for reading comprehension while attempting to get over any obstacles.



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