Teachers' Strategies in Teaching Reading Comprehension

Nguyen Thi Lan Phuong[1*]

[1] Tra Vinh University, Tra Vinh City, Vietnam

[*] Corresponding author's email: ntlphuong@hgcc.edu.vn

[*] https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9937-4496

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ABSTRACT

Keywords: Teacher's strategies, reading comprehension, affecting factors

Previous studies have effectively demonstrated that teaching techniques for reading comprehension are crucial to the learning process and may have an impact on students' reading comprehension. To further investigate teachers' strategies in teaching reading comprehension and how their students reacted to such strategies at Hau Giang Community College. The current study adopted a qualitative study design with observation and interviews. The study's participants were taken from five English teachers who teach in HGCC with different experiences and degrees of background knowledge and 31 students in Pharmacy A. According to this study, teachers have been using techniques including questioning, predicting, retelling, and picturing to promote reading comprehension. Additionally, it showed that the majority of the students gave enough feedback on the tactics used by their teachers. According to these findings, teachers should inform students of the instructions before they read the text and utilize tactics for teaching reading comprehension in line with each student's level of ability and personality to encourage greater engagement.

Introduction

Four abilities are involved in teaching English: speaking, reading, and writing. When it comes to enhancing pupils' general knowledge, expanding their vocabulary, and assisting them with further study, one of them is teaching reading. Students read literature for a variety of reasons, from learning to pass the time to having fun. Finding more effective approaches to help students read comprehension is a challenging process encompassing many parts, steps, and variables (Meniado, 2016; Rumelhart & McClelland, 1981).

Regarding the teacher's role in fostering reading comprehension, (Wallace, 1992) makes the case that teachers using effective strategies will watch readers while they read to evaluate the results in the form of responses to the comprehension questions that typically follow a reading assignment.

At Hau Giang Community College, teaching reading comprehension is important, but teaching methods and students' support for reading can be improved. When performing reading activities, students are expected to comprehend the text's structure and language features while reading descriptive, narrative, and expository texts in the oral and written form. However, in my experience, students at the college do not achieve expectations and outcomes for reading comprehension. It becomes hard for them to how to apply the reading strategies effectively.

Although many earlier study reports provided instructional strategies for reading comprehension, the researcher believes it is crucial to investigate further into the strategies employed by teachers and the students' reactions to those strategies. This study examined five English teachers and their students who were instructing and learning reading comprehension at Hau Giang Community College to investigate how teachers may better enhance reading comprehension for students in colleges. The study's problem is stated as follows in accordance with the study's background: (1) What tactics do teachers employ to teach reading comprehension? and (2) What do students think of their teachers' reading comprehension teaching strategies?

Literature review

What is reading comprehension?

In order to effectively teach and learn a foreign language, reading comprehension is crucial. Reading comprehension is the process of concurrently obtaining and building meaning through interaction and involvement with written language, according to the RAND Reading Study Group (2002, p. 11). The interaction between the reader and the text takes place within a larger social environment, as noted by McNamara and Magliano (2009). Reading comprehension was defined by Van Dijk and Kintsch (1983, pp. 21–23) as the process of extrapolating meaning from text. The goal is to comprehend the text as a whole, not to deduce meaning from certain words or sentences. Reading comprehension results in a mental image of a text's meaning paired with the readers' prior knowledge. Grellet (1981, p.3) stated that "comprehending a written text involves getting the required information from it as quickly as feasible" when defining reading comprehension. From this vantage point, Grellet focuses on readers' capacities to interpret written texts in light of their personal experiences. "Reading comprehension is the ability to absorb the material in a text and effectively interpret it," claims Grabe and Stoller (2013, p. 11). According to the analysis above, reading methods or styles are determined by the goals of reading.

Factors Affect Reading Comprehension

Numerous factors affect students' reading comprehension. Vocabulary proficiency, prior knowledge, metacognitive understanding, and reading techniques are some of these factors (Koda, 2007). Other elements, according to Trehearne and Doctorow (2005) have an impact on students reading comprehension abilities. These include the reading habits of the students,

practical instruction in comprehension techniques, adaptability, text type, and knowledge of various reading comprehension techniques.

Background knowledge is one of the aspects that affect students' reading comprehension. Research on the impact of prior knowledge on reading comprehension skills was conducted by Nguyen (2007). The results of this study showed that students who had prior knowledge could comprehend the text with ease. However, when students encountered unfamiliar readings, they struggled mightily to understand them and needed to read the texts more than once to do so. When good readers begin reading, their schema is activated. Readers' comprehension and responses to a text are influenced by the initial schema text (Pichert & Anderson, 1977). Schemas Reading comprehension benefits greatly from schemas. Knowing how a text is structured can aid learners in better understanding that text (Armbruster et al., 1987). According to Pham, U. M. (2021), if the reading habit is maintained and reading is done for a variety of reasons, such as recreation, studying, extending imagination, understanding different points of view, obtaining new information, reducing stress, and forming personalities, reading comprehension achievement will be improved.

Effective strategies for reading comprehension.

When choosing to read different types of literature, readers need to employ diverse reading techniques. Predicting, forecasting, deducing, summarizing, scrutinizing, and assessing are some effective reader tactics. The teacher might employ a variety of techniques when teaching reading. Choosing the right approach could impact how well kids understand what they read. According to (Harmer, 2007), a strategy is an action the teacher employs to meet one or more of her teaching-learning objectives. The learning process and the students reading comprehension both benefit from effective teaching tactics for reading comprehension. Teaching strategies can make a range of teaching approaches and techniques for reading instruction easier to adopt, according to (Brown, 2004). Therefore, effective teachers who focus on teaching reading comprehension are aware that there are several ways to teach reading.

By speaking with two English teachers, Nurdianingsih (2021) described how teachers instruct pupils in reading comprehension. The teacher's methods included QAR, individual and group learning, and texts that could be understood. The findings demonstrate that teachers' tactics for teaching reading comprehension were successful since they enabled students to understand the material and discuss it with friends. The study's drawback, though, was the absence of student reactions to the tactics used by the teachers to teach reading comprehension.

In a junior high school in Riau, Antoni (2010) investigated the tactics used by EFL teachers to teach reading comprehension and the student's reactions to those strategies. A variety of methods, including surveys, interviews, and classroom observations, were used by the researcher. The teachers employed pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading stages to teach reading comprehension skills, and the student's answers to these stages were satisfactory. The findings showed that teachers must expand their knowledge and expertise in

this area to advise students on teaching methods and comprehend the concepts, applications, and justifications for employing them in teaching reading comprehension. The study did, however, have certain drawbacks, including the small sample size (a few students each session) and the absence of major English students.

Wibowo et al. (2020) did an analysis of the methods used by English teachers in Bengkulu, Indonesia, to teach reading comprehension. Two English teachers are taking part in the study. The researcher employed an observation checklist as part of a mixed-methods research design. The study's findings indicated that the teachers only employed a limited number of reading comprehension teaching techniques. The study of instructors' tactics, however, was not utilized by English teachers in a larger context. Therefore, the outcome wouldn't be more beneficial or applicable to a broader area.

Huynh, D. P. (2022) explored students' perceptions of ER and its benefits on reading comprehension. A 3-Likert scale questionnaire and a semi-interview about study-related topics were used to gather information from 36 participants who are master's candidates at a university in Southern Vietnam. The study's findings demonstrate the benefits of ER through the skills children learned, including how to understand reading passages and draw conclusions or predictions. The researcher recommends that future research concentrate on elements that impact ER procedures and carry out experimental trials to assess ER benefits.

Research gaps

Briefly, most earlier studies had effectively demonstrated that teaching techniques for reading comprehension are crucial to the learning process and may impact students' reading comprehension (Brown, 2004; Harmer, 2007; Wallace, 1992). Some researchers (Antoni, 2010; Nurdianingsih, 2021; Wibowo et al., 2020) looked into the tactics used by teachers to teach reading comprehension and how their students reacted to such strategies. Additionally, little study has been done on the teaching methods with bigger sample size.

Research Questions

The survey was designed to provide information on the following research questions in order to achieve the study's objectives:
1. What instructional methods do the instructors employ to teach reading comprehension?
2. How do the students feel about their teachers' reading comprehension teaching methods?

Methods

Pedagogical Setting & Participants

Hau Giang Community College (HGCC), in Vi Thanh City, Vietnam, is where the study was conducted. Five English teachers who instruct at HGCC and have a range of backgrounds and experiences made up the study's participants. Additionally, 31 students in Pharmacy A were polled to see how they felt about the methods their teachers used to teach reading comprehension.

Design of the Study

A qualitative study design was used in the current research. In this study, teachers' tactics for teaching reading comprehension were observed and examined, along with the students' reactions to those strategies. The interviews produced qualitative data. Then, as the research design comprises the study's clear background, pertinent supporting theories, data collecting, data analysis, and conclusions, the entire design of this qualitative case study was carried out.

Data collection & analysis

Instruments

This study used qualitative research. Therefore various data collection approaches were meant to be used to analyze the traits and a phenomenon of a single instance. Interviews and observations were placed in the classroom.

Classroom Observation

The classroom observation was conducted to identify the strategies used by English teachers and also to identify the student's responses to their teachers' strategies in teaching reading comprehension. The researcher conducted the classroom observation for two weeks and directly observed the teachers' strategies in teaching reading comprehension and the student's responses to their teachers' strategies to get valid data as writing the field notes.

Interview

The interview had two people interacting with the interviewer with the purpose of gathering research, with both people having an equal influence on the other (Cohen & Manion, 1994). Before the classroom observation, an interview was conducted to ascertain teachers' tactics to teach reading comprehension. The items noted in the classroom observation should be connected to the interview questions because the observation was only utilized to support the information from the interview. Every time, only one teacher showed up, and the interviews lasted ten minutes each.

Findings and discussion

The Teachers' Strategies in Teaching Reading Comprehension

Teacher	Teachers' strategies	Teachers' difficulties when applying strategies
T1	preview, predicting, asking questions, retelling	Learner's background
T2	asking questions, visualizing, predicting, retelling	Students lack information.
T3	scanning, skimming, asking questions, retelling	Students lack vocabulary knowledge
T4	SQ3R, reciprocal teaching, visualizing, predicting, retelling, asking questions	Students lack cooperation
T5	asking questions, read aloud, predicting, visualizing	Don't have suitable strategies to read

The researcher performed the interview to get information on English teachers' reading comprehension instruction tactics. Whether or not the use of reading comprehension techniques could assist the pupils' performance? All teachers agreed on this point because, by putting the methods into practice, they might aid students in developing their reading comprehension skills and influence their level of engagement. According to the researcher, ten instructional strategies for reading comprehension were utilized by the five English teachers. But out of the ten tactics, the researcher discovered that asking questions, making predictions, recounting stories, and visualizing are the four most frequently employed by English teachers. Additionally, the fact that each student's level of competency varied presented challenges for the teachers as they tried to implement the tactics.

Asking questions

According to five teachers, the method of questioning the pupils piqued their interest in the teaching and learning process. In order for the students to gain more comprehension and moral value from reading the material, the teachers emphasized that the students not only read the text but also responded to the question from it. The reader can decide where they will go for the solutions to the queries they have about a book by posing inquiries. They can better relate to the book and develop views about it thanks to it. According to Brown (2001), one of the tactics for reading comprehension includes scanning the text for specific information without reading the entire text. When students start using the think-aloud technique to raise questions about their comprehension, teachers can set an example for them and keep emphasizing it. They can then exercise by asking their peers to respond to questions. "Thinking aloud" intentionally focuses attention on reading comprehension components that could otherwise be overlooked" (Clarke et al., 2013).

Predicting

Four teachers reported using the forecasting method to draw on the student's prior understanding of the text and their inherent curiosity. According to Gibbons (2002), asking students to guess the type of literature and its subject by having them write the title is one technique to get their input. From the discussion above, it can be inferred that teachers used titles as a predictor of what would happen next or that they had read the first few pages of an illustrated book and asked students to anticipate what would happen next as a strategy to forecast what the students would learn from the text. This method works well for keeping students interested in the book, especially if they anticipate being asked whether their predictions came true (Klingner et al., 2010).

Retelling

One type of verbal rehearsal technique is retelling. Retelling allows students to "create relationships with text material" (Gambrell et al., 1991) and encourages them to summarize the key points of the original text, discuss prior knowledge of the text's subject matter, and rebuild what they have just read without rereading the passage (McCormick & Cooper, 1991). Four teachers stimulated students' background knowledge by having them recount the text.

Visualizing.

According to the interview's findings, only three teachers employed the visualizing method when teaching reading. "A visual display helps a reader absorb, organize, and retain some of those thousand words" when it comes to an understanding (Duke & Pearson, 2009). By pausing while reading aloud and sketching (on a whiteboard, smart board, or large sketchpad) the images that come to mind as you read, you can serve as a role model for the technique of "sketch-to-stretch" and reinforce it with a "think-aloud" conversation. This tactic allows students to pause their reading and make drawings on a mini-whiteboard.

Students Responses toward Their Teacher Strategies in Teaching Reading Comprehension

The information acquired from the classroom observation is primarily concerned with the reactions of the students to the teacher's methods for introducing reading comprehension. The majority of the time, the teachers' strategies were well received by the kids. Responses from the pupils fell into two categories. Students with limited previous knowledge had low-level association responses and required explicit concept training from teachers. The pupils with solid prior knowledge might require some teacher assistance, but they are probably fully capable of doing the reading assignment.

The research discovered that most of the tactics teachers utilized were indicated in their past knowledge and experience based on the data and the discussion above. These techniques were thought to help pupils' comprehension quite well. This indicates that instructors' knowledge and experience can be expanded by learning reading comprehension strategies from theories and actual teaching practice. Therefore, when teaching reading comprehension, English teachers should use these techniques.

Conclusion

The researcher has drawn some conclusions about the methods used by English teachers to teach reading comprehension based on the findings of the interview and analysis from classroom observations. In order to teach reading, the teacher employed four different methods: questioning, predicting, retelling, and visualizing. The techniques worked well for teaching reading comprehension because they helped students deepen their understanding of the meaning of the material they were reading. It would be simpler for pupils who struggle with reading to grasp reading comprehension. Before pupils read the book, teachers should explain the directions to them. Nearly all of the students thought that each teacher had developed some sort of method for teaching reading methods. They understood that, in addition to being understandable to them, the teachers' tactics might aid in their comprehension of the reading selection. In order to encourage students to engage in more active learning, teachers should adapt their tactics for teaching reading comprehension to the student's skill levels and personality traits.

It should be pointed out that two limitations of the current study ought to be considered in future studies. First, relatively small sample size was used. Future investigations should test the claims made here using a larger sample size. Second, the time to research was short. Future investigations might take a long time to study.

Acknowledgments

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Biodata

Nguyen Thi Lan Phuong is a graduate student at Tra Vinh University. She has been teaching English at a Community College in Hau Giang province for more than 10 years. She ran into several problems because she lacked teaching experience, so she decided to pursue this career out of desire. Now that Phuong is comfortable and enthusiastic about her teaching, she chose to enroll in a Mater's course that would provide her with a thorough understanding of the teaching profession.