Original Research Paper

English

"IMPACT OF ICT BASED TECHNOLOGY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF READING COMPREHENSION OF ENGLISH SUBJECT AMONG IX CLASS STUDENTS"

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ABSTRACT The fundamental task of reading is to understand the concept with various strategies, which enable learners to elaborate, transform, contrast and critically rebuild knowledge that develops reading skills. ICT based Technology performs a specific action to make the learner better in learning a foreign language or a second language as English. Selection of strategy is based on problems the learners encounter in the process of understanding the target concept in the language. These problems are needed to be solved for an effective learning. Applying strategy focuses on learner's efforts and reading ability of student should practice more and more through various lessons and paragraphs for the improvement of wide reading capacity. The teacher helps students to facilitate their reading ability and to be more effective in learning the target text. Teacher should be aware of the use of strategies for improving reading ability of learners. In the present study, the researcher has done an experimental study on a sample of 40 students from class IX in order to study the impact of a selected ICT based Technology on the comprehensive ability. A pre-test and post- test on reading comprehension was conducted and then the achievement scores were statistically analyzed, taking into consideration certain selected variables. The major finding of the study revealed a significant improvement in the achievement scores, thus, showing a positive impact of the interim ICT based Technology.

KEYWORDS :

1.1 English language in the present day context

English language affords better job prospects throughout the world. A major factor in the spread of English has been the spread of commerce throughout the world. Much travel and tourism is carried on around the world, in English. A great deal of academic discourse around the world takes place in English. It is often a lingua franca of conferences. In the western world, at least, English is a dominating language in popular culture. Entertainment in the form of music, films and literature is in English. It is the predominant language in publishing industry, which allows authors writing in English to have a much better translation than those in other language. English serves as a link language among nations and with in India and promotes economic and social growth. It offers innumerable opportunities for advancement in the field of science and Technology. English has a wealth of literature and knowledge enshrined in it.

1.2 Strategies to develop reading

"Reading strategies should promote skills in reading for understanding" -Francoise Grellet

These are a number of considerations to be born in mind while developing reading skill among students. The teacher should understand the underlying principles involved in reading comprehension activities. The strategies to develop by using ICT tools for reading must be taken care of in order to make the learners independent and efficient readers.

1.3 Need and Importance of the Problem

Three R's are considered as basic and fundamental learning tools. But, education today, with the advancement of science and Technology, has extended far beyond learning the three R's- Reading, writing and Arithmetic. Unfortunately, there exists a mis-match between the goals laid out by education and the skills attained by the students. The researcher from a careful study on the learning abilities of school students, especially from a rural background identified a serious lag in the basic reading comprehension abilities among the students. This could perhaps be due to the failure in adoption of an accurate ICT based Technology and adequate motivation from the teacher's end, though there could be other reasons like, lack of parental support, conducive home environment, relevant curriculum, failure in the conduct of related co-curricular activities, etc. Having realized the importance of adopting relevant and suitable ICT based Technology that could help the students in improving their comprehension abilities, the researcher thus made an attempt to study the impact of a suitable ICT based Technology in the development of reading comprehension.

1.4 Objectives of the study

1. To know the achievement of IX class students with respect to reading comprehension before technology is applied.
2. To find out and apply an appropriate strategy to develop reading comprehension among IX class students.
3. To find out the improvement of the students in reading comprehension after applying ICT based Technology.

1.4 Limitations of the study

1. The present study is restricted to secondary school children of IX class only.
2. The Study is restricted to a sample of 80 students only.
3. The Study is restricted to IX class students of government (Rural and Urban) schools only.
4. The Study is restricted to schools of Ranga Reddy District only.

1.5 Operational Definitions

Reading Comprehension: Reading comprehension is the ability to test, process it, and understand its meaning. Although this definition may seem simple, it is not necessarily simple to teach, learn or practice.

ICT based technology: A Plan of action designed to achieve a long term like used Audio Visual Aids and Web based tools.

Impact: a marked effect or influence.

1.6 Sample

A Sample is a small portion of population selected for observation and analysis. Sample in the present study constituted 80 students, where, 40 students were from Government (Rural) secondary school; (20 Boys and 20 Girls) and 40 students were from Government (Urban) secondary school; (20 Boys and 20 Girls). Two schools were selected randomly from Ranga Reddy Dist.

1.7 Development and standardization of the tool

For the development of the tool on reading comprehension, as there was no standardized tool, it was self constructed. An achievement paper with an objective to test the reading comprehension of IX class students was prepared. The test paper was corrected and refined by the mentor and subject experts. A pilot study was conducted and the test paper was administered to a sample of 25 students from class IX. The scores were registered, tabulated and subjected to further analysis to establish reliability and validity.

In the present research study, test retest reliability method was used. Reliability was calculated to be 0.78. validity; - Tests were checked by experts. And - Changes were made according to suggestions given by experts. Score of Validity is 0.88

1.8 Description of the tool

The achievement test paper was for 25 marks and it constituted five sections, each with five questions related to Reading Comprehension. First and fifth section called for descriptive responses, while in second, third and fourth sections, four options were given to every question. The test paper consisted of a total of 25 questions. In the same lines, two test papers were constructed, on two different lessons, one for pre-test and one for post-test. Both the papers are reflected in the appendix.

1.9 Hypothesis Testing
Hypothesis 1:
There is a significant improvement in the Reading Comprehension Achievement scores after introducing technology.

Table 1:Mean and SD values for Achievement Scores

Achievement Scores	N	Mean	S.D	't' value	Significance
Pre – test	80	25.08	9.38	9.42*	0.05
Post – test	80	37.30	6.83		

Interpretation
As the calculated 't' value 9.42 is significant at 0.05and 0.01 levels, the hypothesis is accepted. This shows that there is a significant difference in the achievement scores in the pre-test and post-test on reading comprehension.

Hypothesis 2:
There is a significant difference in the Reading Comprehension Achievement scores with respect to gender after applying the technology.

Table 3:Mean, and Standard Deviation values in the post-test based on Gender

Variable	N	Mean	SD	't' value	Level of Significance
Boys	40	17.07	4.00	4.03**	0.01
Girls	40	20.20	2.83		

Interpretation
As the calculated' value 4.03 is significant at 0.01 level, the hypothesis is accepted. This shows that boys and girls did not differ in their achieving scores in the post-test on the reading comprehension

Hypothesis 3:
There is a significant difference in the Reading Comprehension Achievement scores with respect to locality after applying the technology.

Table 5 Mean, Standard Deviation values based on locality.

Variable	N	Mean	SD	't' value	Significance
Rural	40	19.97	4.98	2.69**	0.01
Urban	40	20.30	3.82		

Interpretation
As the calculated't' value 2.69 is significant at 0.01 level, the hypothesis is accepted. This shows that there is a significant difference in their achievement scores in the post-test on reading comprehension based on locality.

1.11 Major findings
- On the whole the students are facing many difficulties in finding suitable answers for different paragraphs and texts.
- Most of the students have illiterate parents so they unable to grasp the appropriate answer for various types of questions.
- Most of the students committing mistakes in understanding the passage and its accurate   meaning.
- Many of the students are coming from rural back ground. There is less possibility in acquiring   knowledge from beyond the text book.
- There is a significant difference in the achievement scores on reading comprehension among IX class students. The students scored better in the post- test when compared to the pre-test.
- Gender males a significant difference in the achievement scores in the post-test on reading comprehension
- Locality makes a significant difference in the achievement scores in the post-test on reading comprehension.
- Type of Management did not make a significant difference in the achievement scores in the post-test on reading comprehension.

Discussion on results
From the findings of the present study, the researcher observed that the students have been facing difficulty in finding suitable answers for different paragraphs and texts in a reading comprehension, perhaps because an ideal strategy on reading was not adopted in the regular classroom English language teaching. The researcher through the experimental method, introduced a selected ICT based Technology and trained the students for a period of 30 days in improving their reading comprehension ability. The findings in the post- test confirmed an improvement in the scores, which shows that there is a significant difference in the achievement scores on reading comprehension after introducing the technology. The finding thus reflects on the importance of using the most appropriate strategy for the sake of desired results.

Findings of the study further reveal that locality makes a significant difference in the achievement scores in both the pre-test and post test on reading comprehension. The reason perhaps could be that most of the students coming from rural back ground have illiterate parents who would be unable to guide their children appropriately. Most of the students commit errors in understanding the passage and the meaning. They fail to arrive at the appropriate answer for various types of questions. There is lesser possibility in acquiring knowledge from beyond the text book.

Gender and type of management did not make a significant difference in the achievement scores in the pre-test as well as post- test on reading comprehension.

1.12 Educational implications
1. The findings of the present study reflect on the importance of using the most appropriate strategy for the sake of achieving comprehension ability among students. If an ideal strategy on reading was not adopted in the regular classroom English language teaching, students find difficulty in finding suitable answers for different paragraphs and texts in a reading comprehension passage.
2. Findings of the study further reveal that locality makes a significant difference in the achievement scores in both the pre-test and post test on reading comprehension. So. Teachers from rural areas must concentrate comparatively more improving comprehension ability of students, as most of the students coming from rural back ground have illiterate parents who would be unable to guide their children appropriately.
3. Gender and type of management did not make a significant difference in the achievement scores in the pre-test as well as post-test on reading comprehension. It could be inferred that the teachers of both government and private schools are adequately trained in adopting suitable strategies in improving the comprehension ability of students.

Suggestions to teachers
1. Teacher should help students to develop interest in understanding the text in accurate manner.
2. The aim of education is the harmonious development of three H's: heart, head, and hand. But now a day the effort is made only for head development.
3. The aim of reading a text or a passage is to understand the whole meaning.
4. Reading a passage in English language should have clarification and spontaneous practice or   habit formation.
5. Explicit teaching techniques are particularly effective for comprehension strategy instruction. In explicit instruction, teachers tell students why and when they should use strategies, what strategies to use, and how to apply them.
6. The teacher should explain to students why the strategy helps in reading comprehension and when to apply the strategy in understanding the text or passage.

Suggestions to parents
Since English language is global language it can provide many opportunities all over the world. So parents should encourage their children from childhood onwards to learn English. At the same time they should not neglected their practice.

Parents are concerned only about the marks now-a-days but they are least concerned about the knowledge of that particular subject. This attitude should be changed. Parents should treat their children as living beings with various weaknesses and feelings. They should not treat them as robots while learning. They should concern them and they should develop language skills with pay full activities rather than monotonous way of learning.

Parents play vital role in student learning because in many ways they influence their children so they should have proper reading habits and they should be their children's role models rather than burdensome. They should share with their children their experiences in order to motivate them and to create a friendly relationship between them.

Healthy attitude towards learning should be developed in their children instead of forcing them to obtained excellent marks.

Suggestions to students

Many students can't continue their studies only because of lack of language skills. So from childhood onwards he/she should develop his/her knowledge in English reading for better understanding the text for better opportunities.

No student should make their minds or think that it is possible for me to understanding English text. If he/she makes his/her mind in that manner he/she can't concentrate on English reading comprehension though they were taught properly. So, a student should develop a positive attitude towards reading comprehension in English.

A poor student always complains this attitude should not be developed. A student should agree his/her mistakes in understanding a text comprehensively and should strive to come out of his/her weaknesses and should develop a positive attitude towards reading comprehension.

A good student always thinks positively to learn how to understand a given text or passage comprehensively.

CONCLUSION

Reading comprehension is an essential component of higher education success, yet, Reading comprehension instruction receives short shrift in higher education. This short shrift is not due to a lack of research in Reading comprehension – there is a plethora of research regarding the teaching and learning of Reading comprehension strategies, as well as the positive effects of these strategies, on comprehension and critical thinking. Improving Reading skills build the capacity to learn independently and to absorb information on a variety of topics. Hence, the primary objective of Reading instruction is to give the students the tools they need to understand difficult materials. The strategies used in this research are therefore not an end in themselves but the means to developing sound ability in Reading comprehension. Teachers should encourage students to use a variety of strategies like ICT that would help them understand and retain what they read, and thus become independent resourceful readers.

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