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A DESCRIPTION OF EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUE FOR ENHANCING READING SKILLS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

The study highlights some effective instructional techniques for the enhancement of reading skills of high school students in the light of 2nd standard of the National Curriculum of English for grades IX and X. The qualitative cum quantitative research was focused on one hundred public school 9th grade male and female students by keeping in view standard 2, bench mark 1 and SLO 1 in two phases (each comprising of three sub phases), to know the powerful coaching strategy that could be used to improve their comprehension and reading skills necessary for future academic and professional life. The results reflect that use of authentic material with an understanding of sub skills like skimming and scanning are effective academic instructional strategies for improving reading skills of secondary school students which can block teachers to promote spoon feeding on one hand and enable students to become independent readers/learners, by applying them in the classroom, on the other.

Keywords: national curriculum, secondary level, reading skills, skimming and scanning.

INTRODUCTION

English as a foreign language is taught in Government and Private sectors with an objective to impart required English language skills among the school students according to their grade level by providing them foundation to use English in their future academic and professional life. It is presumed that all the students have to take part in language learning activities successfully in the classroom and when assessed they could demonstrate. For this purpose, much depends on suitable instructional technique/s which might ensure student's performance in the use of English language skills.

It becomes imperative at the same time that school students should be taught in such a way that they may become independent and skillful language users. Though English isn't mother language in Pakistan, however, it has loads of significance and is liked in instructional, reputable, expert and social functions, so, the need of nowadays is to broaden required

talents and abilities with the aid of motivating students in the direction of the learning of second language (English) at secondary level. The research presents some studies that these predictable ranges inside the procedure of language success for bilingual school students (Thomas & Collier, 2002). Hence, the study focuses on the use and benefits of authentic material embedded with suitable instructional strategies to find out whether or not it helps students to improve their reading comprehension and skills.

Objectives of the Study

Following are the objectives of the study:

1. To understand the rationale of bench mark 1 of 2nd standard of national curriculum for grades 9 & 10 for promoting reading and critical thinking skills.
2. To find out and suggest micro suitable instructional strategies to enhance reading skills of the high school students in line with the standard 2 of the national curriculum for grades IX & X by considering into consideration SLO: 1.

Research Question

Which academic technique/s might be suitable for the enhancement of reading skills of secondary level students to attain the targets of curriculum of English for secondary school students?

Review of Literature s

According to Stephanie (2007) reading is analyzing a dialogue between the reader and the writer. For Lakshmi (2007) reading is the manner of the usage of one's eyes and mind to recognize the literal in addition to the hidden which means of what the author was to deliver. Reading is a complicated procedure, as it involves both aware and unconscious movements through the reader (Thomas, 2009).

Comprehension and analyzing pass hand in hand, analyzing comprehension is defined because the potential to understand and decode what has been study. To realise what's read, readers must be able to cognitively procedure the phrases via drawing which means from their own enjoy and information to understand the writer's message (Stephanie, 2007). Comprehension includes the which means of words as they may be associated with each other, it calls for each right vocabulary and words with a view to be powerful (Lakshmi, 2006).

Lems (2010) become also said that reading comprehension is not a static competency. Ahuja (2001 in Mohammad, 1999) point out that there are three ranges of comprehension. The first stage is literal comprehension. Comprehension of this degree involves floor meanings. At this stage, the scholars may be asked to find records and ideas which are explicitly stated within the textual content. The second stage is interpretive or referential comprehension, at this degree college students go beyond what's stated and study for deeper meanings. They have to be capable of examine seriously and examine cautiously what they have got read. This stage includes thinking procedure such as drawing conclusions, making generalizations and predicting results. Finally, the third level of comprehension is vital analyzing where by using ideas and information are evaluated. At this stage, the instructor can take a look at student's ability to distinguish between truth and opinion, the capability to recognize



persuasive statements, and the potential to choose the accuracy of the data given within the textual content. (Apsari, 2017).

Van Dijk and Kintsch (1983) described that reading comprehension is a system of making which means from the textual content. The motive is to get a knowledge of the textual content in preference to accumulate meaning from unmarried words or sentences. According to Moore (2003), reading comprehension entails 3-step sequences namely reading, expertise and remembering. When readers deal with reading text, the first step that they need to do is reading the text to get the statistics. Then, at the identical time, they examine the text and method the records via confirming it to their previous know-how and revel in. Finally, they are able to recall the facts easily in the event that they think deeply and provide some responses to the analyzing textual content.

Another professional, Dechant (1991) emphasised that studying comprehension is a vital questioning and cognitive manner. It requires inference, verifying, confirming and concluding of expectations about the textual content. When the readers study the text, they want to attach the meaning of the text to their earlier expertise. They might not receive the idea at once from the writer. They need to confirm and compare the information they have received. Good readers examine drastically and combine statistics in the textual content with current expertise (Dechant, 1973).

Scanning and Skimming are a part of reading talent, (Harmer, 2007) says that scanning is done for special information the readers may be trying to find. That means they do not necessarily have to read every phrase and line; on the opposite, such a technique might stop them scanning efficaciously.

According to Maxwell (1969) cited in Diaz, S & Laguado, J (2013), skimming as getting the primary concept or gist of a ramification fast in a written textual content wherein the pupil increase powers of inference thru systematic exercise which inspires them to expect of a textual content. So, skimming can assist the scholars to locate the important thing words that permit them to infer the general sense of a text to interpret text quicker and advance the studying procedure.

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received. Good readers examine drastically and combine statistics in the textual content with current expertise (Dechant, 1973).

According to Liao (2011), skimming is a reading method wherein the readers study the passage quickly and look through whole the passage to get the main ideas. The readers don't want to take note of the details. Nuttall (1996) said that skimming way glancing rapidly through a text to decide its gist. It means that skimming is a way to examine as speedy as feasible to get the factor of the passage being examine. It also offers readers the advantage of being able to predict the purpose of the passage, the primary topic, or message and in all likelihood a number of developing or supporting thoughts.

Nuttall (1996) described that scanning means glancing rapidly through a text to look for a selected piece of information. So whilst scanning, we handiest try to locate unique statistics and frequently we do not even observe the linearity of the passage to do so. In other phrases, we really look our eyes through the whole textual content to advantage precise phrase or records together with name, region, 12 months, date or much less specific piece information. According to Grellet (1986), each skimming and scanning are specific analyzing techniques essential for quick and green analyzing. Skimming is a greater thorough activity which requires an universal view of the textual content and implies a definite analyzing competence even as scanning is on the opposite. It is a ways greater constrained because it simplest manner retrieving what statistics is applicable to our cause. Yet it is ordinary to utilize those two activities together when reading a given textual content.

Nason and MacDonald (1964) in a study of over 6,000 college students mentioned that 90 percent did not range their reading price no matter commands to examine for exclusive purposes and regardless of variant in the problem level, fashion and content material of the textual content. They concluded that analyzing charge seems to be routine and invariant. Other researchers have confirmed that flexibility may be taught although outcomes have now not constantly been positive. Rankin and Hess (1971) these days said that "if most readers are not bendy and flexibility may be improved with schooling, we ought to count on that this isn't always being taught very well inside the lecture room.

Methodology and procedure

The qualitative cum quantitative research was conducted on one hundred male and female grade 9 students of public school who were engaged in reading exercises by providing them opportunities, without enabling them know what are skimming and scanning skills, to read the text of grade 9 randomly selected and their proficiency/reading skills were checked by giving 3 to 10 marks: 3 for the lowest score and 5-7 satisfactory and 8-10 best.

The activity was conducted in two phases: the first phase was based on students' reading their textbook without having any understanding about skimming and scanning and before phase two students were briefed about skimming and scanning and their purposes for reading the text. During phase two authentic material by associating them with skimming and scanning skills with the direction to word out their understating of the given text was used such as to analyze passages in the text to identify the theme/ general subject, key idea/central thought (a statement about the general subject), and supporting details, SLO: 1).

Grade 9

Standard 2:

All students will read and analyze literary text to seek information, ideas, enjoyment, and to relate their own experiences to those of common humanity as depicted in literature.

Bench Mark. 1: Analyze patterns of text organization, and function of various devices used within and beyond a paragraph in a text.

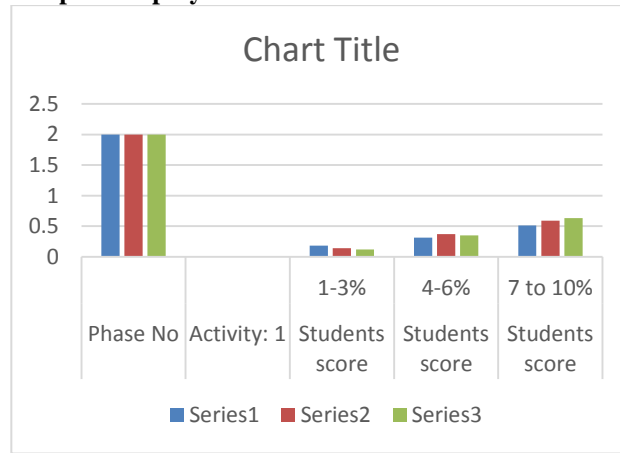
SLOs: 1

Analyze passages in the text to identify the theme/ general subject, key idea/ central thought (a statement about the general subject), and supporting details.

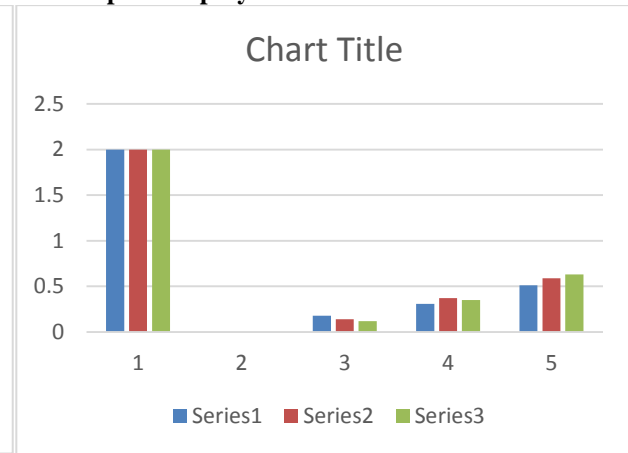
Findings:

Phase No	Activity: 1	Students score 1-3%	Students score 4-6%	Students score 7 to 10%
1	Reading of early chapters of grade 9 textbook randomly without knowledge about skimming and scanning.	67%	20%	13%
1	Reading of middle chapters of grade 9 textbook randomly without knowledge about skimming and scanning.	63%	22%	17%
1	Reading of closing chapters of grade 9 textbook randomly without knowledge about skimming and scanning.	57%	27%	13%
2	Reading of authentic material based on kids' story books, etc., randomly with knowledge about skimming and scanning.	18%	31%	51%
2	Reading of authentic material based on essays, etc., randomly with knowledge about skimming and scanning.	14%	37%	59%
2	Reading of authentic material based on simplified short stories, etc., randomly with knowledge about skimming and scanning.	12%	35%	63%

Graphic display of results of Phase 1:



Graphic display of results of Phase 2:



Discussion

The study was designed to know that what could be possible suitable instructional techniques to improve high school students' reading skills which ultimately generate their critical thinking and for that very objective national English curriculum for grades IX & X, standard 2, bench mark 1 and SLO 1 were considered which are given below.

Standard 2:

All students will read and analyze literary text to seek information, ideas, enjoyment, and to relate their own experiences to those of common humanity as depicted in literature.

Bench Mark. 1: Analyze patterns of text organization, and function of various devices used within and beyond a paragraph in a text.

SLOs: 1

Analyze passages in the text to identify the theme/ general subject, key idea/ central thought (a statement about the general subject), and supporting details.

The results of the study show that high school students' reading skills could be enhanced by focusing on some of the sub skills of reading skills such skimming and scanning which SLO 1 expects the students of this level to know and demonstrate. The findings of the study answer our research question; which academic technique/s might be suitable for the enhancement of reading skills of secondary level students to attain the targets of curriculum of English for secondary school students?

We have seen that when the students are asked to read textbook in a traditional way their score is not encouraging because they were reluctant, less motivated and confused about the textbooks' matter and their comprehension of the text very was not up to the mark as expected in the SLO 1. Even, during the second round of phase one of the implementation plan more or less results were the same with slight variation as the students were aware about skimming and scanning. But we have observed that when the subjects were given training/briefing about skimming and scanning and why they are used while reading they felt charged, motivated and appeared confident when exposed to unknown and unseen matter written in English. It's possible that they were taught about the suitable reading

skills' strategies which could help them understand language intricacies according to their grade level and, hence, they might have been passive and were only engaged in finding the equivalents or meaning in their own language.

The study manifests that instead of bringing a bulk teaching strategies for the enhancement of reading skills a minimum set of instructional techniques be applied so that after assessment further action could be taken if the results are not according the objectives set by the SLO. Moreover, in light of the results we are in a position to state that skimming and scanning are the best sub skills of reading skills which provides the high school students opportunities to become confident and independent readers which will resultantly generate their critical thinking without which they will have academic inconvenience during higher studies. We can finally say that for promoting reading and critical thinking skills at high school level reading skills' instructional strategies such skimming and scanning are the way out to produce smart perspective professionals.

Conclusion

The study concludes by suggesting that teachers engaged in teaching high school students in the Public sector could further the strategies of teaching reading skills to improve their critical thinking by using skimming and scanning which the students can effectively use to enhance their reading speed and comprehension which, in fact, is the target of national curriculum for grades IX and X and first SLO of standard 2: "analyze passages in the text to identify the theme/ general subject, key idea/ central thought (a statement about the general subject), and supporting details". As it has been seen, in the results that the reading skills of the students were continuously enhanced during second phase and it was due to their training in skimming and scanning which they didn't use during first phase. So far as high school students are concerned, they are recommended to apply skimming and scanning approach to improve their comprehension skills due to the fact that skimming can help them to realize trendy records fast and browsing can assist them to comprehend unique facts fast. Finally, this study's results can be treasured facts for the future researchers who face the same trouble in improve the reading skills of their students; it will solve the issue by using skimming and scanning method.

Hence, our research question: which academic technique/s might be suitable for the enhancement of reading skills of secondary level students to attain the targets of curriculum of English for secondary school students? is answered in light of the conclusion of the study that skimming and scanning are some of the effective pedagogical strategies for high school students to enhance their reading and critical thinking skills.

Suggestions:

1. There must be some extra efforts in the form of using new instructional strategies from the teachers to ensure comprehension of the text/matter which is the ultimate goal of teaching reading skills.
2. Skimming and scanning, as instructional techniques, should be frequently used in the classroom by engaging the students read authentic material instead of textbook reading.
3. Students may be engaged in holding challenging tasks for their peers to promote reading skills.

4. Reading aloud should be minimized in the classroom and silent reading must be encouraged to make students independent readers/learners.

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