Investigating the Effective Technique Used by Secondary School Students in Strengthening Reading Comprehension

Dr. Elhady Ishag Hmouda Ishag

College of Education- Sudan University of Science and Technology-

Dr. Sabir Mirgani Ali Ahmed

Dr. Abdalla Elfadil Mohammed Abdalhaliem

Faculty of Languages - Sudan Open University

Dr. Tohami Mohammed Hassan Mohammed-Noor

Faculty of Education - University of Dongola

ABSTRACT: *This study aims at investigating the effective technique used by secondary school students in strengthening reading comprehension. The study adopted the experimental method. Pre-posttest test is used as a primary tool for data collection. The population of the study is year students of English- College of Education at SUST. The sample of study drawn from the population consisted of 44 students who were selected randomly. This study used the statistical package for social science (SPSS) program to analyze and verify the hypotheses. The results showed that pre-test and posttest show that there are statistical significance differences among the respondents of experimental group in terms of reading technique. On the other hand, students unable to use scanning techniques while practicing reading in the classroom. Furthermore, students do not use skimming technique for obtaining general information. The study recommended that students should be aware about different types of reading skill. Teachers should consider students' level when using reading techniques.*

KEYWORDs : Brainstorming, Comprehension, Skimming, Scanning, Implementation.

INTRODUCTION

Reading is considered as an activity which is done to get ideas or information of written text. By reading, the readers will acquire knowledge which is significant in activity of daily life. As far as the students are believed, reading is an activity which can motivate them to be active in adding their knowledge and activating their critical thinking process. It is caused that during reading they catch and reach much information about anything from their reading. Reaching much information in reading will help the students have much knowledge, especially related to their study. Further, students are encouraged to do the reading activity and have good ability in it. It is done in order to provide the

students with full of knowledge about everything. Besides, by reading well, the students can increase their background knowledge and experience from reading the text.

Before going further explaining the main points in this study, the writer shows some concepts of reading proposed by some experts. According to Nunan (2003: 68) reading is a fluent process of readers combining information from the text and their own background knowledge to build meaning. Reading ability is very important for daily live and gives information for the students to comprehend the text, because the goal of reading is comprehension. By reading, the students can increase their knowledge such as social, culture, politics, and so forth. In addition, it can also be called as a tool for the students to get a comprehension about what they have already read so far. It does also help the students to refresh their ideas and they can understand many types of words and sentences which can improve their ability in reading.

Statement of the problem
It has observed that second year students at secondary school suffer a lot in terms of understanding reading comprehension. It is badly needed for effective technique to handle the learning of reading skill. This issue prompted the researcher to address the problem.

Objective of the Study
- To investigate whether or not that secondary School Students use effective techniques in their reading comprehension.

Question of the Study
- To what extent do secondary school students use effective techniques in their reading comprehension?

Hypothesis of the study

This Study sets out to test the following hypotheses:
- Secondary school students do not use effective techniques in reading comprehension.

Significance of the Study
The study of this research has a great benefit and importance for both English language teachers and learners. English language teachers can exploit new classroom techniques in teaching reading skill. They can innovate and develop these techniques in order to achieve better benefits. They can also exert great efforts at their jobs as teachers. Students can gain fruitful learning and they can be well -motivated in the classroom.

Definition of Reading
Reading is considered one of the most important activities in education. Reading is not just for pleasure but also for information that has been researched, organized, and documented. Reading brings us new knowledge and new information, and it is also an activity with a purpose (Woolley, 2011). A person may read in order to gain information or verify existing knowledge, or in order to critique a writer's

ideas or writing style. A person may also read for enjoyment, or to enhance knowledge of the language being read.

In teaching reading in the foreign language, the teacher must make sure that the learner or the student understands all concepts. The teacher has to give organized practice to help the learners assimilate both sound and structure directly through the link between language and behavior. Bell (2001) confirms that the main aim of good reading is not a word –for –word translation of the text but rather an understanding of the concepts presented without recourse to the native language.

Techniques in Teaching Reading

Comprehension Teaching reading how to comprehend is not easy. Teachers should have some knowledge of techniques to make students able to interpret or to understand the idea and thought of the whole text. Technique is implementation –that which actually takes place in a classroom. It is particular trick, stratagem or contrivance used to accomplish an immediate objective. Iskandarwassid and Sunendar (2008) state that there are various techniques that can be applied in teaching reading comprehension, they are:

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is an activity which usually used by teachers before going to the main topic of a lesson. If the teacher is going to teach about reading, this means the teacher will use the brainstorming before going to the reading part as the main topic in the class. Brainstorming is usually used by the teachers to encourage students and to generate the students thinking and mind about the topic which will be discussed. This is used to make the students not really confused about the topic.

According to Iskandarwassid and Sunendar (2008), brainstorming is thrown problem to students which must be answered by them so that the problem rounds into new problem. It is used to generate the flow of ideas in a class. Then, it is also intended to make the students realize their background knowledge about the topic to be read and to activate their memory and expectation since there are a lot of students in a class and this can make a various thinking or idea about something if there is no brainstorming before coming to the main topic or subject. All answer, no matter how wrong they may seem to the teacher or other students. From this explanation, it can be concluded conclude that in brainstorming the readers need to use their memory in order to memorize their previous knowledge related to the topic, so that they may have some expectations and idea that might be discussed in the text.

Summarizing Technique

Summarizing can be highly effective for helping students to identify main ideas, generalize, remove redundancy, integrate ideas, and improve memory for what is the read. In this process, teachers will monitor, evaluate and organize their understanding while reading. After students write what they get in reading, they realize how far they have understood the text. If understanding is impaired, they can read the text. In addition, this technique is usually used after the students reading the whole text in the class, and they have to make a summary of the text so that it can be easier to understand what the text is discussing about.

Close Procedure

Close procedure is a technique in which words are deleted from a passage according to a word-count formula or various other criteria. According to Naseri, Assasi & Zoghi (2013), the purpose of close procedure are to identify students" knowledge and understanding of the reading process, to determine which cueing system readers effectively employ to construct meaning from print, to assess the extent of students" vocabularies and knowledge of a subject, to encourage students" to monitor for meaning while reading, and to encourage students to think critically and analytically about text and content.

Group Work Technique and Technical Communications
According to Iskandarwassid and Sunendar (2008), group work can help students to discuss subjects that they have never talked before about English. Group work technique is the heart of a student–centered course in that they allow students to interact with each other without the interference of the teacher they give students" time and space to learn, to solve the problem, and to make their choices. Because of students" diverse knowledge of English skills, even in stratified class such as "advanced" or "high" intermediate". They can help each other when working together to solve a reading problem. If this group needs the teacher's knowledge, they will ask for it. In order each group does their work, they must know specifically what is to be done. The teacher needs to be clear and detailed in his / her objectives for the groups. If the students understand what to do, they should be able to do it alone.

Semantic Mapping and Reading Comprehension
Semantic mapping is a technique that can be used in all disciplines to demonstrate the relationships between ideas. Semantic mapping represents the knowledge which is related to each other. It is also a visual representation of knowledge, a picture of conceptual relationship. According to Zaid (1995), semantic mapping can be applied not only to improve students' vocabulary but also to improve their reading comprehension and written expression. Semantic mapping also can help the student in the conceptualization of the ideas in the paragraph so that the students easy to read.

Teaching Reading in the Classroom
Teaching reading is a fundamental activity done by the teacher in the classroom. It is an activity to help the students learn to read some words and sentences by giving the knowledge about the meaning of text. It is started from teaching students how to find the topic, main idea, as well as understand about the meaning in all paragraphs in the text. The teacher should guide the students to understand and comprehend the meaning of the text and get some new knowledge from the written text. There are some experts propose their point of view about the concept of teaching reading. Wallace (1992: 7) states that teaching reading is the process in English classroom where there is an interaction between the teachers and the students; the teacher guides the students to get meaning from the text passage.

In addition, teaching reading is an instruction to help the students to acquire the ability to understand the text. Hence, Linse (2005: 71) argues that teaching reading comprehension is teaching students how to derive meaning as well as analyze or synthesize what they have read. It indicates that teaching reading comprehension means not only teaching the students how to read well, but also teaching them how to gain the deep understanding from what they read. The teacher also teaches the students how the way to comprehend and catch the meaning of the text. It helps the students to understand to get the meaning of the passage. In teaching reading, there are three main activities that should be considered by the teacher. Brown (2007: 121) argues that the activity of teaching reading includes:

Pre- reading activity

In this activity the students do not come into the reading activity yet, the teacher tries to activate students' knowledge about the topic being discussed. The students are lead to recognize the topic and some stated information through skimming and scanning activities. The students are also guided to be familiar with some vocabularies included in the reading text. This activity is done only to attract students' interest, motivation and enthusiasm till the end of reading activity.

Whilst-reading activity

This activity is usually assumed as the core of reading process. The students start to read the text and comprehend all information in the text. The students are also guided to identify main ideas on each paragraph, grasp all information comprehensively and try to make some clues of the vocabularies. In this activity the teacher encourages the students to focus on reading, so that the students will be easy to understand and know what they have read so far.

Post-reading activity

It is the end of reading section. In this activity the teacher tries to evaluate students' comprehension of the reading text. The valuation includes vocabulary, grammatical, meaning and summarizing of the author's purpose. In addition, to know these items, the teacher gives an exercise toward the students. Consequently, it can be stated that teaching reading comprehension is the activity that is done by teacher language learning. The teacher will guide the students to derive meaning from what they have read. In teaching reading process, a teacher should pay attention to the three activities that will be applied, namely pre-reading, whilst-reading, and post-teaching activity. Besides, it is also a crucial thing for the teacher to think a process of developing knowledge in reading which can help the students to transfer knowledge; how to be a good reader and realizing that reading itself should cover both understanding and comprehension.

METHOD OF THE STUDY

Researchers used a descriptive analytical method to conduct the study. A diagnostic test is used as the primary tool for collecting the information relevant to the study. The data will be analyzed statistically by using the SPSS programme. The population of this study is the four year students at College of Education- SUST. The sample is drawn from four year students at College of Education who were selected randomly.

Data Analysis of the Test

Reading Test
Table (4.24) T-Test Result Showing Group Means of the Experimental Group

Valid	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Scale
Pre-test	1.92	1.412	-8.730	24	.000	Significant
Post-test	5.04	1.767				

Source: IPM SPSS 24 package

The value of (T) test calculated to signify the differences between the numbers of individuals of the study for the hypothesis was (-8.730) with signify value (0.000) which is less than the level of significant value (0.05) These refer to the existence of differences statistically for the Post-test.

Table (4.25) T-Test Result Showing Group Means of the Control Group

Valid	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Scale
Pre-test	3.72	1.061	-6.422	24	0.00	Significant
Post-test	5.44	0.961				

Source: IPM SPSS 24 package

The value of (T) test calculated to signify the differences between the numbers of individuals of the study for the hypothesis was (-6.422) with signify value (0.000) which is less than the level of significant value (0.05) These refer to the existence of differences statistically for the Post-test.

DISCUSSION

In this section, the data is analyzed and discussed in terms of the results of the questionnaire. There was one question and one hypothesis to be answered and tested respectively. The respondents, on whom the diagnostic test was applied, were 44 respondents. The method used to analyze the data was descriptive statistics (frequency and percentages)

Statistical Package for the social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data. Chi-Square tests were applied to examine the observed differences in the frequency distribution of responses on all the items of the diagnostic test in order to guarantee their statistical significance.

Results of the Study

From the analysis and discussion of the data in the previous subsections, the following results are obtained:

1. Generally the result of pre-test and posttest show that there are statistical significance differences among the respondents of experimental group in terms of reading technique.

2. It is found that the students unable to use scanning techniques while practicing reading in the classroom

3. The findings also show that students do not use skimming technique for obtaining general information.

Recommendations

In the light of the results of the study, the followings are recommended:

1.   Teachers should consider students' level when using reading techniques.

2.   It recommended that students should be aware about different types of reading skill.

3.   The study recommended that teachers should be well-trained in teaching reading skill.

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