



A Study on the Development of the English Reading Comprehension Skills through Communicative Task among the College Students of Pudukkottai and Coimbatore

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Introduction

The importance of language is essential to every aspect and interaction in our everyday lives. We use language to inform the people around us of what we feel, what we desire, question and understand the world around us. We communicate effectively with our words, gestures, and tone of voice in a multitude of situations. Would you talk to a small child with the same words you would in a business meeting. Being able to communicate with each other, form bonds, teamwork, and it's what separates humans from other animal species. Communication drives our lives and better ourselves. The importance of communication can be often overlooked. Even with the ability to communicate with each other. Misunderstandings happen. Remember, communication is a two way street that should be embraced and not ignored. Believe it or not, some people can be arrogant to believe they can't go to foreign countries without knowing anything of the language or culture of the people in the places they visit. The importance of language is beneficial regardless if you do it for fun or for your career or even just for personal travel. Additionally, there is the psychological aspect of direct communication during your business transactions. Your clients will be more likely to trust what you are saying and

there will be a more intimate relationship than if you were to conduct all communication through a translator. This could be an important step in building strong and lasting business relationships that help ensure the success of your own business. Therefore, it is up to you to create a warm and comfortable environment in which your child can grow to learn the complexities of language. The communication skills that your child learns early in life will be the foundation for his or her communication abilities for the future. Strong language skills are an asset that will promote a lifetime of effective communication. Believe it or not, some people can be arrogant to believe they can't go to foreign countries without knowing anything of the language or culture of the people in the places they visit. The importance of language is beneficial regardless if you do it for fun or for your career or even just for personal travel. Additionally, there is the psychological aspect of direct communication during your business transactions. Your clients will be more likely to trust what you are saying and there will be a more intimate relationship than if you were to conduct all communication through a translator. This could be an important step in building strong and lasting business relationships that help ensure the



success of your own business. Now, it is fit to analyze the need of reading comprehension for language development.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS

English is taught and learnt by the students of Pudukkottai as second language and also by the students of Coimbatore. The students give importance to the literacy skills of English rather than the oral skills of English. So, both Coimbatore and Pudukkottai students must give importance to Reading Skill, hence it is imperative to understand the quantum of competence in the reading skill, acquired by the students of Pudukkottai and Coimbatore and it is also imperative to understand the effectiveness of the task in developing reading skills in English among the college students of Pudukkottai and Coimbatore. The present work is therefore undertaken to study the above issues.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

As Verma K. Shivendra (1995) says that "Every reform in education centers round the teachers and every advance depends almost solely upon their intelligence, character and skills, the teachers are the kingpins of any educational systems."

The progress and standard of any nation cannot be beyond the standards of its educational institution. The standard of any educational institution in turn cannot rise above the level of its teachers. Since education is the most potent instrument for the progress of a nation, the quality of education needs to be improved. It is universally acknowledged that any attempt at improvement in the quality of education is ultimately dependent on the quality of

instruction that defined in terms of the degree in which the presentation, explanation and ordering of elements of the learning opportunities given for a learner. Therefore, teachers who like lamps kindle learning are the crucial people to determine the quality of education. Their education is a prerequisite to the success of any innovation in education. The success of second language learning therefore heavily depends upon the quality teachers of English.

The quality teachers of English can be produced if our institutions have good system of quality teacher education in English. Therefore, teacher education in English is of utmost importance and everything necessary has to be done to ensure that the teacher education institution produce English teachers of high quality at various levels. The proficiency and competency on the part of English plays a significant role in second the learning at all levels of education. Realizing the situation, the study makes an attempt to develop reading skills of college students.

According to the Secondary Education Commission (1953), the present practice of mechanically applying the same methods to dull, average as well as bright children is responsible for the difficulties faced by students at the college level, if these various groups of students at the college level. If these various groups of students are allowed to proceed at their own appropriate place and the method, approaches well as the curricular load are properly adjusted; it will be good for all of them. It will save the dull students from discouragement and the bright students from a sense of frustration.



Thus, the policies and commissions lay great emphasis in providing good quality education to all students. Just as the maxim says, 'a blind can never lead a blind:' an incompetent teacher in English can never produce competent learners in English. This is particularly true in teaching reading in English, because the proficiency in reading is a good sign of good quality education in English. Therefore, the competency on the part of the teachers in reading skills was felt as one of the valuable inputs in English language education. Although time honored traditional methods prove successful results in developing the reading skills of the second language learners, its contribution towards developing the communicative competence in reading is not up to the required level of learning. Therefore, the traditional method of teaching reading is to be supplemented and supported by using various strategies and approaches for successful learning outcomes.

New techniques for teaching reading are to be adopted by the teachers. The researcher felt that the lack of communicative competence in reading comprehension will pose great threat towards language attainment in English in one's life. Therefore, a good and steady effort in this direction is quite essential. Reading comprehension is a complex process, special care and attention at every stage of education should be taken on the development of the reading skills of the learners.

In order to make students learn reading comprehension skills perfectly, the approach or techniques to be adopted should be creative, interesting, enjoyable and above all innovative. Keeping this in mind, the investigator

has been on the lookout for a suitable approach for developing the reading skills of the college students. Accordingly, designing task based approach in developing reading skills seemed to be an authentic approach. This has led the investigator to carry out the present investigation.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Teaching of English at college level aims to develop the communicative competence of the learners both in spoken and written aspects of the language. To achieve their end, the teachers should be trained in such a way to adopt various pedagogical interventions and techniques to meet the communicative needs of the learners.

Most of the students leave the college with poor reading skills. This is because of the teachers who do not pay enough attention to the skills and ability of reading. The planned teaching on the part of the teachers using innovative teaching methodology becomes very essential. It is against this context, the present study aims at the use of task based approach in developing reading skill of the college students who are the future citizen to the nation.

In order to develop the reading skill of the students, the researchers has developed different task based approach. The researcher has designed the task for competencies which develop the skill of reading among the college students.

The task based approach has been framed in order to understand the components of different skills of reading. These tasks call for effective training because real-life reading is purpose driven it involves highly complex set of processes.

The main focus of the present



study is to measure the effectiveness and advantages of task based activities in developing the reading skills of the students in English. For this, the students studying in Rathnavel Subramaniam College of Arts & Science and H. H. The Rajah's College, Tamil Nadu are selected for the study. The investigator feels that the task based approach will be more effective in developing the reading skills, because the college students are unable to communicate better in different situations. So, the investigator has made an attempt to use task based approach in developing the reading skills of the college students. Further this attempt is an innovative method. Hence, this new and challenging task based approach to develop the reading skills of the college students for their better performance in reading skills is selected.

The study aims to measure the extent to which task based approaches enable the learners to achieve mastery level in reading English. It also aims to find out the significant difference in the achievement of the college students in terms of gender and locality.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives of the present study;

- To analyze the significant difference between the pre-test mean values of control group and experimental group students of Pudukkottai and Coimbatore in developing reading skills in English.
- To study the significant difference between the effectiveness of task based approach and traditional method of teaching in developing reading comprehension skills in English among college students of Pudukkottai and Coimbatore.

➤ To compare the significant difference between pre-test and post test mean values of both the countries.

➤ To compare the effectiveness of task based approach in developing reading comprehension skills in English between Coimbatore and Pudukkottai students.

To measure the mean values of Pudukkottai and Coimbatore students in developing reading skills in English with respect to sex and locale.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

There have been significant developments in the theories and practices of reading, in the world in the last three to four decades. It is important to examine those developments for insights that can help us bring about significant changes in reading pedagogy. English is one commonly used as a medium for the communication. In the twenty first century, education becomes an important thing. All the educational institutions in the world, give attention to English language, because they know the market value of English. English language is highly essential for gaining knowledge. In this computerized world, the academic qualification is valued by English knowledge.

Based on these things, this investigation is an experimental study of the effectiveness of task based approach with the particular reference to reading comprehension at the college level. This study throws light on the specific learning activity based on task based approach. The changes in educational practice, measurement theory, and language testing research necessitate bridging that division to meet current and future classroom needs. All classroom materials, whether they are for teaching,



assessment, or both, need to be constructed and administered in a manner that ensures their appropriate use. One of the reasons for learners' errors is the interference of his mother tongue, which is described as the negative transfer, which happens when the forms of the target language and those of the learners' mother tongue are different from each other; when there are similarities; there is positive transfer between mother tongue and the target language. But the reading has its role to play in the teaching and learning of English. Whenever there is a doubt about the use of expression, reading helps to make the decision. Learners make few errors in grammar in the early classes because most of the time they imitate the teacher's sentences. But in later classes, they make errors in their production as they begin to produce on their own. The best way to remedy these errors is reading, because the errors are due to wrong learning or lack of understanding the items. The teacher has to be the observant, identify the errors and correct them tactfully with the help of these kinds of tests.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study has the following limitations.

- Besides the limitations imposed by time, the present study is confined to the college students of R.V.S. College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore and H. H. Rajah's College, Pudukkottai, Tamilnadu.
- Owing to certain practical difficulties, the study is restricted to study the effectiveness of task based reading comprehension.
- The samples of the study are restricted because it may hinder the result

of the test. Therefore, researcher has selected 40 samples in each group.

- The availability of students is restricted to Tamilnadu state.

CONCLUSION

Communication is an essential tool to convey information. Reading skill is one of the communication skills in English. When students possess good reading skill, they can easily acquire the information through reading. Traditional method of teaching may not develop reading skill effectively among college students. Hence there is a need for introducing new approaches, Task-based opportunities to all students to develop reading skills in English. In this study, the investigator made an attempt to find out whether the Task based Approach is effective in developing comprehension-reading skill in English among college students of Pudukkottai and Coimbatore.