

Consistency of Reading Techniques to Enhance Expertised Based Language Proficiency For E.S.L Students

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Abstract : English has become the significant language to access the information, interact and to share our ideas and thoughts with different parts of the world. It ranks the role of international language in various fields such as Medicine, Science and Technology, business, tourism etc., To attain the mastery of the language, students have to be enlightened to utilize skills and strategies to understand the texts. Reading involves the interaction to deal with the texts to extract the information, recognize the writing styles through graphic signs, diagrams etc., and decode the information using their background knowledge. For example, W. Grabe and L.F. Stoller, define reading as “the ability to draw meaning from the printed page and interpret this information appropriately.” [06]. Therefore, the students should be trained to cultivate reading habits, adopt ways to construct the meaning, lexical patterns, grammar and sentence patterns through automatic retention to understand the texts.

Extensive Reading gives an ample scope to develop the language and the relevant schemata to decode the printed material such as fluent reading, fast eye movements, Skimming, Scanning the relevant information to become independent readers. The students have the freedom to select books from a broad variety of books such as Fiction, Biographies, Non-Fiction, comics, animated short stories for general understanding of the language rather than to check the meanings, analyse the Grammar and sentence formations. The research findings have shown that the materials chosen for the second Language Learners have to be graded to implant the regular reading habits to enhance their vocabulary. Graded Readers are the simplified versions of the original texts, light in weight, economical with easy vocabulary to create interest to read further. Reading facilitates the readers to grasp words, syntax and automatic retention of vocabulary takes place as the reader comes across the words repeatedly in different contexts in short stories, comics, Newspapers etc., This can be achieved through practical methods to provide materials which creates interest, enjoyment and the reader’s motivation to select books suited to their level of understanding. Therefore, the students should be trained to flood books on different topics to implant the reading habits which requires various skills and strategies like Cognitive, Meta-cognitive to explore the hidden treasure of knowledge and to avoid reading the books if it lacks interest or beyond the reach of student’s understanding.

This paper tries to focus on students reading habits, comprehension abilities and to utilize the relevant strategies such as skimming, Scanning, analyzing, evaluating the textual knowledge and to enhance the automatic retention of vocabulary. Extensive reading supports the readers to apply the relevant schematic knowledge to grasp the material through mind mapping, graphic signs, decode the information as the reader brings the information, knowledge to the printed material. This involves the fluent reading of enormous printed materials with few follow up exercises as the level of understanding depends on the experience of the reader, reading habits and to utilize the relevant schemata to understand the texts. The more the students read, the more retention of grasping the words, idioms, grammatical structures will automatically build up their confidence, motivation to read further to become independent readers.

Key words : *Cognitive, Meta-Cognitive, Schemata, Skimming, Scanning.*

1. Introduction:

The significance of reading has reached the culmination point in the present world of global Technology. To master the language a certain degree of learning strategies have to be inculcated to focus on the Grammar, vocabulary and syntactical structures of word formation. Most of the students face difficulties to comprehend the texts and to refer the dictionaries proves monotonous and lack of interest in reading. The reading component has a tremendous change in particular fields such as spellings, vocabulary and a positive motivation to enjoy the texts. Students read books for various reasons to improve vocabulary and to get information. Therefore, the readers background knowledge and a fair amount to guess the meaning of the printed material plays a vital role to become fluent readers.

In this respect Dubin states that : “Reading is a multifaceted, complex skill made up of a number of psychological, physical and social elements” [01]. The students should be exposed to read a number of books, Magazines, comics etc to inculcate the habit of reading which requires various skills like cognitive, Meta-cognitive to enhance the maturity of reading. It is an active skill to understand, interpret the printed material to skim and scan the material at a glance as the eyes browse the material. The students skim the material to glance at the text and to understand the overall meaning of the text. Scanning is defined to search for a specific piece of information and read the selected material for information. Compared to traditional approach of Grammar Translation Method such as translating the sentences, refer the dictionaries and meticulously repeat the sentences have become outdated.

The students opt for practical oriented teaching to develop their skills and communication. There are two types of reading Intensive and Extensive Reading to develop the required strategies to improve vocabulary and become efficient readers.

2. Intensive & Extensive Reading :

Intensive Reading includes reading a text under the strict supervision of the teacher, refer the dictionary for the meanings check the grammatical structures, analyse the given information and translate each and every sentence. The students read the same teacher selected material and there is no scope for the student to read for general understanding and may pose difficulty as the level of understanding differ from average to brilliant student. A fluent reader grasps the printed material quickly and the average student cannot understand the material.

Intensive reading builds language proficiency and Extensive Reading practices it. On the other hand ,Extensive reading which is synonymous of pleasure reading where students are exposed to large amount of self selected materials to read extensively especially outside the classroom activity to improve their inherent skills with no help or assistance from the teachers .

3. Significance of the study:

The study focuses on the importance of Extensive Reading to develop the reading skills and the effective ways of learning the background knowledge of the students. This study illuminates on the scientific aspects of practical teaching and to motivate the students to read for pleasure, to analyse the information through overall understanding of the context rather than the language.

4. Methodology:

A Sample study was conducted in three different Engineering colleges at Chilkur Balaji institute of Technology, Global Institute of Engineering and Technology and Hi-point college of Engineering and Technology in Moinabad area. The study consisted of the students who opt English as a second language whose background is from the rural areas and mainly depend on the readymade materials to pass the Examinations. Exceptionally, there are few students who opt English as the First Language possess regular reading habits, grasp the Printed material with some exposure to the English Language. The students were given tasks to read books related to Fiction, Novels, biographies, comics, journals etc., to assess the knowledge and to inculcate the habit of Reading. The students selected their own reading materials

and assured that it is not to take the exam or to gain marks. The workshop was conducted for a week to motivate the students to administer the benefits of the Extensive Reading Programme. The students were tested in grammar, vocabulary, sentence patterns, use of constructive ideas to utilize their cognitive skills to explore the world of reading in their comfort zone of learning. They were asked to learn prefixes and suffixes to understand the overall meaning of the materials rather than to refer dictionary at every level. The materials were graded according to their cognitive levels of understanding. The students were trained to select the materials which are easy in vocabulary, interesting and enjoyable. The glossary of difficult words were given at the end of the lesson to facilitate the students to have easy access to the reading materials.

The students were given a task on “Sports and Health” from Ist year B.tech skills Annexe a short biographical account on” Sachin Tendulkar” (PNO. 130,131) about 300 words. A glossary of difficult words were given below and the students were asked to read the lesson. After reading they were asked to frame sentences on their own and pick out the adjectives, verbs articles, nouns etc., The students tried to apply their own cognitive skills to understand and frame sentences using the words in different contexts. They were tested in grammar using clues to fill up the gaps using the same word as a verb, adjective and noun. For example the word “improve” can be used as a verb and “improvement” as a noun. This has given an immense boost to read with a new innovation to grasp and read further.

Students were also asked to fill in the blanks using clues in various disciplines such as articles, prepositions, verbs etc., to test their understanding in Grammar and vocabulary.

Example :

1. Water ----- at 100 degrees Celsius (Boil, Boils). (Suitable Verb/ Tense)
2. I bought ----- Television yesterday (a, The) (Suitable Article)
3. The students are ----- strike (on, in) (Suitable Preposition)
4. His English ----- is very bad (Accent, Ascent) (Suitable word)

The analysis clearly showed that the students who opt English as the second language tried to apply relevant skills to understand the printed materials with some grammatical Mistakes. The students, English as First Language committed less Mistakes in the areas of spellings, vocabulary and grammatical structures. At the end of the Programme the study revealed there is a consistency of

errors in the usage of prepositions, articles verbs etc., and in the pronunciation of typical or unknown vocabulary.

5. Literature Review :

“An Extensive reading programme comes under different names, such as Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR), Drop Everything and Read (DEAR), Silent Uninterrupted

Reading for Fun (SURF) and the Book Flood Approach (Elley & Mangubhai, 1983)”. [03] The learners should be exposed to varieties of reading materials such as magazines, books, comics, biographies etc., to create an habit of positive attitude towards reading. A fluent reader enjoys reading a lot in his own world of comfort zone, and have a chance of automatic recognition of words, spellings etc., in a regulated pace of learning. The objective of Extensive reading is to encourage students to read books suited to their level of reading easy books for overall information .The students have to be motivated to select books which contains not more than two or three unfamiliar words and do not burden to translate the sentences or look up the dictionary for reference. The exposure of vast printed material gives an ample scope to become fluent readers, guess the meanings from the context, to comprehend the texts using their cognitive skills of printed material identifying the sentence patterns, vocabulary and to adapt with the native speakers of the language.

Palmer, (1921/1964), sees extensive reading as “rapidly reading book after book”. [03] The definition states that the students should be engrossed in reading their self selected materials which contains simple vocabulary, to enjoy books of animated pictures, graphic signs, moral stories having dialogues for overall understanding of the context rather than the language.

Day and Bamford (op. cit.) suggest that “a book a week is probably the minimum amount of reading necessary to achieve the benefits of extensive reading and to establish a reading habit”. [02]. Therefore, the students should cultivate the habit of reading a variety of books to build up their skills with minimum support from outside such as guessing, to utilize their independent strategies and to understand the overall content of the subject instead of referring dictionary at every moment. This will hinder their progress as looking up the dictionary for each unfamiliar word stops their progress of learning. The main objective of Extensive reading is to make them enjoy reading and to select books of their interest and unravel how ideas and information in the texts change their attitude. Students have a difficulty to understand authentic materials which contains vocabulary beyond their level of understanding. The materials have to

be graded according to their level of understanding as it makes the reader lose interest and averse to the materials. The materials should be chosen on a broad variety of reading levels to enjoy independently and give a scope to apply their own strategies to understand the relevant materials.

Hedgcock and Ferris (2009)” believe that L2 learners' exposure to L2 input through interaction with native speakers, listening to teacher, radio, and television may improve their comprehension and confidence.”[04] Extensive Reading gives a broad scope for the students to various activities

such as listening to speech of eloquent speakers, watch and download video clips and record their voices and hear their conversation. The teachers have wider aspect to check their spellings, vocabulary and correct their grammatical errors then and there. The teachers can allot a task of picture description and ask them to write the relevant story with moral ending. Teachers can record the voices of the students and play them and create a scope to correct their grammatical errors and progress of their learning in pronunciation, vocabulary to build up their confidence and fluency in reading.

“Research suggests that ER boosts overall language competence, including vocabulary, grammar and spelling knowledge, reading skill, and writing ability, as well as overall knowledge of the world “(Krashen, 2011; Renandya, 2007).[05]

Extensive Reading which is mostly done outside the classroom activity can give a lot of scope to read extensively and browse through e-books (Electronic books) such as novels, magazines, biographies and short stories to read their self selected materials and to gain proficiency in reading and the control over the language. The more the students get exposed to the printed material would create a scope to build up their vocabulary, communicative skills and to understand the relevant information of the writers opinion. Reading gives a lot of enjoyment, pleasure and to engross into the world of knowledge and get acquainted with the usage of words, idioms, sentence patterns of vast variety of printed texts. Students can watch television news of different channels to observe the pronunciation, usage of words in different situations and download the videos related to animated stories, comics etc through the click of the mouse on the internet and adopt ways to apply in day to day life. Extensive reading which is mostly done outside the classroom activity especially for the students of English as a second language helps them to develop their background knowledge to express their ideas on their own and interact

with the idea of writer's opinion. This will accelerate the readers' fluency in reading, understand the material which contains a few or negligible follow up exercises and not to burden with difficult vocabulary or grammar exercises. The exposure to printed material automatically develops the necessary background knowledge, to express their writing and communicative skills on different aspects of word formation, idioms, vocabulary input and the idea of expressing in a plain, accurate and a logical way. This will automatically capture the interest of learner to facilitate the books which are interesting, easy with more practical orientation such as moral stories, debates, biographies, animated short stories with a glossary mentioned below. Therefore, the extensive reading provides the environment to the students to select books of their choice with negligible support of the teachers or dictionary.

Limitations:

A study was conducted on the rural areas of Moinabad. Mostly the students lack proper reading skills. The students were exposed to one week workshop on Extensive reading Programme to develop their latent skills and to expose their ideas through reading variety of books such as comics, magazines, biographies etc., The study revealed that students lack in certain areas of grammar, like spellings, prepositions, verbs etc. The teachers have to analyse the errors and give them a scope to read further to fully grasp the style of presentation, writing ability and an habit of constant reading to become fluent readers. The process of learning begins through questioning, reading and social interaction with others. The materials designed for the students of English as a second language should contain a glossary of difficult words at the end of each chapter with a few follow up exercises to create a low anxiety environment.

6. Suggestions:

Extensive reading provides a platform for the learners to build their language proficiency, vocabulary and essential requirements to improve their reading and writing abilities. The study has clearly indicated that the students with English as a First Language committed less mistakes than the students opt English as a Second language, in the areas of spellings, verbs, articles etc., Teachers should pay attention, motivate the students to expose themselves in reading elaborate books with practical orientation on communication, debates, letter writing, stories with moral endings. Compared to traditional ways of academic orientation practical approach is best suited to motivate the students to bring out their inner talents and boost their confidence to read on their own and apply latest technology like internet and various sources of self selected material. The study has clearly elucidated that Extensive reading

plays a vital role to capture the learner's attention to read in their own comfort zone. Extensive Reading has been adopted in many countries to engage students to read through practical orientation through debates, group discussions etc and create a platform to understand the language through reading books with easy vocabulary and discard the texts which are too difficult. Therefore, students should be exposed to a large variety of easy and amicable reading materials to choose and read extensively whether it is through printed materials or internet. The main goal is to create interest in reading and make students to apply their own cognitive skills to comprehend the texts and become life-long readers.

7. Conclusion:

The study was conducted for a week on Extensive Reading to identify the students reading habits to motivate them to become independent readers. The reading materials were graded according to their level of understanding so that the students enjoy reading at their own comfortable zone. The research on Extensive reading promoted overall performance in the areas of spellings, vocabulary, grammar and writing skills and exposed the immense output of latest trends of learning the outside world.

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