

The Impact of Generative Study Strategies on Prospective Teachers' Reading Comprehension and Recall of Short Stories

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Abstract: Reading and Recalling skill provides support to prospective teachers with new learning ways and practices. The art of generative teaching is knowing how and when to facilitate the learner's construction of relations among the parts of the text and their knowledge. The aim of the study is to find the impact of generative study strategies of the prospective teachers' reading and recall of short stories. Experimental method was adopted in this study. The sample consists of 60 prospective teachers with both male and female of summarization group, question-generation group and control group in Thoothukudi area. Simple random sampling technique was used. R.K.Narayanan's three short stories were selected as the material for the study. The statistical techniques used were mean, standard deviation, t-test and Pearson product moment correlation. The findings were: there was significant relationship between prospective teachers' reading comprehension and recall test of the three groups. There was also positive correlation with respect to gender, locality, medium of instruction in school level and college level, speaking in English and reading English story books among the groups.

1. Introduction

English is regarded as the "key to the store house of knowledge". The second most spoken as well as powerful language of the world is English. A student should learn the language for the purpose of utility. This means that English should be taught as a language not as a literature. Among the four skills, reading occupies a special place in its complexity. Reading is a process of looking at a written or printed symbol and translating it into appropriate sound. Reading Comprehension could be defined as the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning. Reading with understanding is a relationship between the conscious and the subconscious mind like the mother and the child. In generative learning, reader works not only to make a connection between the content being read to his or her prior knowledge. But also, the reader must reorganize that prior knowledge by taking into account the information gained from reading.

2. Need for the study:

English has become a world language rather than the language of only the English-speaking countries. In order to accomplish success, one needs to have good reading and comprehension skills. As reading is the foundation to all academic subjects, the students will struggle to grow without this skill. A result of information that is made meaningful by the learners is improved comprehension, which subsequently results in improved retention and recall. Thus, comprehension occurs by formulating connections, rather than by simply "placing" information or "transforming" information in memory. The art of generative learning is knowing how and when to facilitate the construction of relations among the parts of the text and their knowledge. Generative strategies are intended to promote deep understanding by promoting the learner to put the material into his or her own words, distill its main message, and relate it with another knowledge. Taking this in mind, the two important generative strategies the investigator has taken for the study are summarizing and question-generation to find the impact on prospective teachers' reading comprehension and recall of short stories.

3. Objectives:

1. To find out whether there is any significant relationship between prospective teachers' reading comprehension achievement test and recall test of literary prose texts with Summarization and Question-Generation as two generative study strategies.

2. To find out whether there is any significant difference on prospective teachers' reading comprehension achievement test and recall test of literary prose texts with Summarization and Question-Generation as two generative study strategies with respect to Gender, Locality, Medium of instruction in school level, Medium of instruction in College level, Speaking in English and Reading English story books.

4. Methodology:

In the present study the investigator used the experimental method. Experimentation is the most significantly sophisticated research method. Experimentation is the name given to the

type of educational research in which the investigator controls the educative factor to which of students is subjected during the period of inquiry and observes the resulting achievements.

Population and Sample:

The population for the present study was identified as the prospective teachers. Among the population, 60 prospective teachers were selected as sample. Simple random sampling technique was adopted by the investigator. The sample was selected from V.O.C. College of Education, Thoothukudi.

Tool:

As of the course material, R.K. Narayanan's three short stories were selected as the materials for the research project. The stories were selected after consulting with the panel of experts, in the field of English teaching for establishing its validity. Finally, R.K. Narayanan's "An Astrologer's day", "Father's help" and "Gateman's gift" were selected for further investigation.

After separating the participants to three equal groups (each group consisting of 20 students of both males and females) – namely, the summarization group(A), the question-generation group(B) and the control group (C), the two experimental groups(i.e) the summarization (A) and the question-generation (B) groups) were instructed by the investigator of how to perform their tasks.

The investigator presented each of the short stories to the three groups separately. Then the summarization group was told to reduce each short story to a few sentences, merely including the major events and points of the story in their own words. The question-generation group was instructed how to spot the major information in each short story and then generate questions addressing the major events, characters and points included in the story. The control group was not asked to perform any special generative study strategy to deal with the stories.

One week after the presentation of the short stories and collecting the summaries and questions produced by the two experimental groups, all the participants were asked to take a reading comprehension achievement test with multiple-choice questions developed by the investigator on the content of the stories. The prospective teachers were given a few extracts from each story followed by one comprehension question and were asked to choose the right answer from among the four alternatives related to each question.

After that, two weeks later, the participants were given a recall test on the content of the stories, again developed by the investigator. In this test, the participants had to rely on their memories and choose the right answer from among the four alternatives related to each question of what they remembered of the stories.

Statistical Techniques:

Mean, Standard Deviation, t-test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were used for the study.

5. Data Analysis

Hypothesis 1: *There is no significant relationship between Comprehensive Achievement Test and Recall Test for Summarization Group, Question-Generation Group and Control Group.*

Table 1: Correlation between Comprehensive Achievement Test and Recall Test

Group	No	“r” value		Remarks
		Calculated Value	Table Value	
Summarization Group	20	0.760	0.444	S
Question Generation Group	20	0.741	0.444	S
Control Group	20	0.829	0.444	S

It is inferred from the above table that there is significant relationship between the effect of prospective teachers’ reading comprehension achievement test and recall test among the three groups.

Hypothesis 2a: *There is no significant relationship between Comprehensive Achievement Test and Recall Test for Summarization Group, Question-Generation Group and Control Group with respect to Gender.*

Table 2a: Correlation between Comprehensive Achievement Test and Recall Test with respect to Gender

Group	Variable	Category	No	“r” Value		Remarks
				Calculated Value	Table Value	
Summarization Group	Gender	Male	4	0.820	0.950	NS
		Female	16	0.489	0.497	NS
Question Generation Group	Gender	Male	3	0.866	0.977	NS
		Female	17	0.769	0.482	S
Control Group	Gender	Male	3	0.945	0.977	NS
		Female	17	0.844	0.482	S

It is inferred from the above table that there is significant relationship between reading comprehension achievement test and recall test of prospective teachers for the Question-generation group and Control group in the ‘Female’ category with respect to gender.

Hypothesis 2b: *There is no significant relationship between Comprehensive Achievement Test and Recall Test for Summarization Group, Question-Generation Group and Control Group with respect to locality.*

Table 2b: Correlation between Comprehensive Achievement Test and Recall Test with respect to Locality

Group	Variable	Category	No	“r” Value		Remarks
				Calculated Value	Table Value	
Summarization Group	Locality	Rural	7	0.882	0.754	S
		Urban	13	0.665	0.553	S
Question Generation Group	Locality	Rural	6	0.409	0.811	NS
		Urban	14	0.778	0.532	S
Control Group	Locality	Rural	2	1.000	0	S
		Urban	18	0.782	0.468	S

It is inferred from the above table that there is significant relationship between reading comprehension achievement test and recall test of prospective teachers for the Summarization group and Control group and also in the ‘Urban’ category of Question-generation group with respect to locality.

Hypothesis 2c: *There is no significant relationship between Comprehensive Achievement Test and Recall Test for Summarization Group, Question-Generation Group and Control Group with respect to Medium of instruction in School level.*

Table 2c: Correlation between Comprehensive Achievement Test and Recall Test with respect to Medium of instruction in School level

Group	Variable	Category	No	“r” Value		Remarks
				Calculated Value	Table Value	
Summarization Group	School Level	English	11	0.428	0.602	NS
		Mother Tongue	9	0.916	0.666	S
Question Generation Group	School Level	English	10	0.653	0.632	S

		Mother Tongue	10	0.804	0.632	S
Control Group	School Level	English	13	0.853	0.553	S
		Mother Tongue	7	0.741	0.754	NS

It is inferred from the above table that there is significant relationship between reading comprehension achievement test and recall test of prospective teachers for the Question-generation group and in ‘Mother-tongue’ category of Summarization group and in ‘English’ category of Control group with respect to medium of instruction in school level.

Hypothesis 2d: *There is no significant relationship between Comprehensive Achievement Test and Recall Test for Summarization Group, Question-Generation Group and Control Group with respect to Medium of instruction in College level.*

Table 2d: Correlation between Comprehensive Achievement Test and Recall Test with respect to Medium of instruction in College level

Group	Variable	Category	No	“r” Value		Remarks
				Calculated Value	Table Value	
Summarization Group	College Level	English	18	0.771	0.468	S
		Mother Tongue	2	1.000	0	S
Question Generation Group	College Level	English	18	0.741	0.468	S
		Mother Tongue	2	1.000	0	S
Control Group	College Level	English	10	0.448	0.632	NS
		Mother Tongue	10	0.937	0.632	S

It is inferred from the above table that there is significant relationship between reading comprehension achievement test and recall test of prospective teachers for the Summarization group and in ‘Mother-tongue’ category of Control group with respect to medium of instruction in college level.

Hypothesis 2e: *There is no significant relationship between Comprehensive Achievement Test and Recall Test for Summarization Group, Question-Generation Group and Control Group with respect to Speaking in English.*

Table 2e: Correlation between Comprehensive Achievement Test and Recall Test with respect to Speaking in English

Group	Variable	Category	No	“r” value		Remarks
				Calculated Value	Table Value	
Summarization Group	Speaking English	Sometimes	18	0.741	0.468	S
		Rarely	2	1.000	0	S
Question Generation Group	Speaking English	Sometimes	17	0.762	0.482	S
		Rarely	3	0.984	0.997	NS
Control Group	Speaking English	Sometimes	18	0.871	0.468	S
		Rarely	2	1.000	0	S

It is inferred from the above table that there is significant relationship between reading comprehension achievement test and recall test of prospective teachers for the Summarization group, Control group, and in ‘Sometimes’ category of Question–generation group with respect to speaking in English.

Hypothesis 2f: *There is no significant relationship between Comprehensive Achievement Test and Recall Test for Summarization Group, Question-Generation Group and Control Group with respect to Reading English story books.*

Table 2f: Correlation between Comprehensive Achievement Test and Recall Test with respect to Reading English story books

Group	Variable	Category	No	“r” value		Remarks
				Calculated Value	Table Value	
Summarization Group	Reading English story books	Frequently	9	0.747	0.666	S
		Rarely	11	0.750	0.602	S
Question Generation Group	Reading English story books	Frequently	5	0.517	0.878	NS
		Rarely	15	0.758	0.514	S

Control Group	Reading English story books	Frequently	8	0.901	0.707	S
		Rarely	12	0.741	0.576	S

It is inferred from the above table that there is significant relationship between reading comprehension achievement test and recall test of prospective teachers for the Summarization group and Control group and in ‘Rarely’ category of Question–generation group with respect to reading English story books.

6. Findings:

There is positive correlation between the reading comprehension achievement test and recall test of literary prose texts in the performance of the three groups. This shows that the use of generative study strategies is very helpful for their long-term retention. Moreover, the results indicate that it may be due to the capture of key points or gist of the prose text material and summarize it in their own words. It is also due to question-generation in which they independently and actively participate in developing their own questions. By generating questions, the prospective teachers could keep the events, characters and important points in their memory for a long period. So, it is easy for them to recall or recollect the important events from their long-term memory. Thus, the study revealed that there is a positive correlation between the reading comprehension achievement and recall of literary prose texts with respect to gender, locality, medium of instruction in school level and college level, speaking in English, reading English story books.

7. Recommendations:

- ★ Teachers should ensure that learning is a generative process. This leads the students to begin with believing in themselves.
- ★ The primary goal is to engage the learners in active processing of the information with meta-cognitive skills.
- ★ Teachers should motivate the students to provide strategies to improve their recall, integration, organization and elaboration.
- ★ Instructional activities such as note-taking, concept mapping, graphing and mnemonics should be used to enable students to mentally “play with” information.
- ★ One might consider a “web model” for learning in which short-term memory is a place where new ideas are not only placed and erased, but also connected to existing knowledge for recall solutions.
- ★ Incorporate and assess the effect of adaptive support for students’ use of learning strategies and comprehension monitoring process.
- ★ Teachers must justify employing summarization and question-generation as effective generative strategies in the classroom practices.
- ★ Proper sequence of learning strategies should be developed which helps to ensure longer retention of the content.
- ★ Generative strategies must be helpful for children who have learning problems and have trouble with organization of their thoughts.

8. Conclusion:

Learning how to read is probably one of the most important skills that a child will acquire in his/her life time. Mastering this skill takes years and the processes involved in achieving success in this area are numerous. The reading of English in B.Ed colleges until today is in a miserable state. The most unfortunate fact was the lack of any attainable aim of reading the language. So, the teacher educators should enhance the reading by introducing generative study strategies to prospective teachers. This brings prior experiences and knowledge to the classroom and it is useful to be aware of situations where the understanding of new concepts may be impeded by prospective teachers’ prior schema. Generative learning techniques can be a way of tapping into the prospective teachers’ experience and knowledge and bridging it with the new content when the educator is presenting. The technique of question-generation can provide insight into the motivation, attention and thinking of the reading material for effective learning outcomes. Thus, the importance of study strategies in reading comprehension should be recognized effectively in the future.

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