

EFFECTIVENESS OF COLLABORATIVE LEARNING ON READING COMPREHENSION OF GRADE VIII STUDENTS

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Abstract

The importance of English as a means of international communication has been recognized all over the world. Today, it is difficult to estimate the number of the people in this world who have acquired an adequate working knowledge of English. It is widely used all over the world as a first language, second language or as a third /foreign language. It is now days an effective means of communication.

Keywords: Collaborative learning, learning, reading, reading comprehension

The four basic skills required to learn any language are known as LSRW i.e. Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. A child learns very informally any language taught to him/her in the initial years of the life through listening and speaking. But an extra edge is needed for the development and growth of an individual which comes from developing the skills of reading and writing. The ability to read is generally regarded not only as the basis of education but also as an essential possession of the citizens of civilized countries of all the valuable skills the average person learns in his life time, the ability to read is the most important since it is the most universal and the most useful for everyone today. Reading helps the individual to understand society and his role as a citizen, as a worker and individual's own personal needs and problems. Reading involves the whole personality, promising countless personal and social values. It is essential for personal development and enrichment of life.

Different strategies for enhancing reading comprehension in English have been advocated by many educators from time to time like skimming, scanning, intensive and extensive reading etc. which have been useful for different types of readers. Certain strategies have specifically been advocated for use for second language learners. In the present times, educationists have started giving weightage to collaborative learning over individualistic learning because of its benefits in academic, social as well as psychological domains.

Collaborative learning has been defined by different educationists. Some of the definitions have been presented below-

“An activity involving a small group of learners who work together a team to solve a problem, complete a task, or accomplish a common goal”. (Artzt and Newman1990)

“A task for group discussion and resolution (if possible), requiring face-to-face interaction, an atmosphere of cooperation and mutual helpfulness, and individual accountability”. (Davidson1990).

As the importance of reading as well as English language has been established for the growth and overall development of the individual, the researcher tried to focus on it by pairing it with collaborative work. Hence, the present study was undertaken to ascertain the effectiveness of collaborative learning on reading comprehension of the students who learn English as their second language.

Collaborative Learning can be defined as a structured, systematic, instructional strategy in which small groups work together towards a common goal.

Reading Comprehension is simply another expression for 'understanding' or is considered a way of talking about whether or not an individual has understood what he/she has read.

Objectives

The following objectives were formulated for the present study-
To study the English textbook of Grade VIII.

To prepare the lesson plans for reading comprehension based on collaborative learning.

To implement the lesson plans for reading comprehension based on collaborative learning.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the lesson plans for reading comprehension based on collaborative learning.

To study the feedback of the students on the implementation of the lesson plans for reading comprehension based on collaborative learning.

Hypotheses

Based on the above objectives, following hypotheses were formulated-

There will be no significant difference between mean achievement scores of the students in pre-test and the post-test.

There will be no significant difference between mean achievement scores of the boys in pre-test and the post-test.

There will be no significant difference between mean achievement scores of the girls in pre-test and the post-test.

Variables

The following variables were identified for the study.

Independent Variable : Collaborative Learning

Dependent Variable : Achievement Scores

Delimitation

The present study was delimited to Gujarat State Education Board schools where English is taught as a second language. The study has also been delimited to only one strategy of collaborative learning i.e. Collaborative Strategic Reading

Research Design

The present experimental study has been conducted utilizing “Single Group Pre Test, Post Test design.” The population of the present study comprised of all the Upper Primary Schools of Nadiad. The sample of the present study comprised of 30 students in the experimental group selected from standard VIII of New English School, Nadiad through convenient sampling technique. The numbers of boys in the group were 17 and the numbers of girls were 13. Self

constructed tools namely Achievement Test and Feedback Form were used as tools in the present study for the purpose of data collection. A module for the intervention programme based on collaborative strategic reading lesson plans to improve the reading comprehension of students was also prepared. t-test was used to analyze the data.

Testing of the Null Hypotheses

Given below are the hypotheses which were formulated and the result of the hypotheses testing-

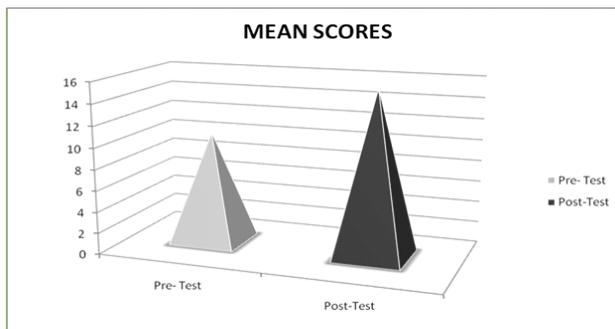
1.1 Significance of Difference between Mean achievement Scores of Pre-test and Post-test

Experimental Group	N	Mean	S.D	df	t'
Pre-Test	30	10.23	2.22	29	16.06*
Post-Test	30	15.53	1.87		

*Significant 0.01 level

In light of this, the null hypothesis no. 1.1 formed earlier that “there will be no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of students in pre-test and post-test” is rejected.

Graphical representation of significance of difference between Mean achievement scores of Pre-test and Post-test.



1.2 Significance of Difference between Mean achievement Scores of Pre-test and Post-test of Boys

Experimental Group	N	Mean	S.D	df	t'
Pre-Test	17	9.94	2.36	16	10.67*
Post-Test	17	15.06	1.89		

*Significant at 0.01 level of significance

In light of this, the null hypothesis no. 1.2 formed earlier that “there will be no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of the boys in pre-test and post-test” is rejected.

1.3 Significance of Difference between Mean achievement Scores of Pre-test and Post-test of Girls

Experimental Group	N	Mean	S.D	df	t'
Pre-Test	13	10.62	1.94	12	12.00*
Post-Test	13	16.15	1.65		

*Significant at 0.01 level of significance

So, the null hypothesis no. 1.3 formed earlier that “there will be no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of girls in pre-test and post-test” is rejected.

Analysis

In order to triangulate the data, the researcher has also taken feedback from the students. The purpose of this was to

know students opinion about the teaching. The researcher wanted to know about student’s perception about the tasks and activities done by the researcher.

For Feedback Analysis, percentage scores were found.

Findings

The analysis of the data obtained for assessing the effectiveness of the intervention programme i.e. reading comprehension through collaborative learning in standard VIII shows a positive impact on the experimental group. The performance of the students of the experimental group who were exposed to the Collaborative Strategic Reading was found to be improved to a great deal. Not only their achievement increased but also their confidence level increased and they felt satisfaction and capable of even applying the strategy for reading any kind of textual material.

Conclusion

Overall it was found that the Collaborative Strategic Reading proved to be beneficial for enhancing the reading comprehension of the students of grade VIII. While carrying out the research, the researcher developed research insights and also developed the skill of implementing cooperative learning in real classroom setting. The research proved out to be an enriching experience for the researcher.

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