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METHODOLOGICAL JOURNAL****MENTAL ENLIGHTENMENT SCIENTIFIC –
METHODOLOGICAL JOURNAL**<http://mentaljournal-jspu.uz/index.php/mesmj/index>**TIMED READING ACTIVITY FOR IMPROVING EFL STUDENTS’
READING LITERACY IN MIXED- ABILITY CLASSES****Surayyo R. Atadjanova***Senior Lecturer**Urgench State University**Urgench, Uzbekistan***Raykhon G. Bekberganova***student**Urgench State University**Urgench, Uzbekistan**E-mail: bekbergenovaraykhon@gmail.com***ABOUT ARTICLE**

Key words: Reading, reading strategies, fast reading, academic reading, mixed-ability students, reading comprehension, reading literacy, managing time, TRA (Timed reading activity), EFL(English as a foreign language)

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to show the effectiveness of the timed reading activities (TRA) in developing students’ reading literacy and help to all educators with big challenge conducting a lesson for students of mixed-ability classes, especially in English as foreign language (EFL) classes. Additionally, in this work explored the effectiveness of TRA with examples in improving reading speed and reading comprehension of EFL students as well as giving them right directions in order to prevent them of using wrong reading strategies. This can be one of the best approaches for at not only schools and another study places while learning new languages, but also in their daily life as TRA increases empathy for reading skill in general. As after practice test, results show that students who tried TRA approach could manage time better and finish task faster rather than those who did not.

INTRODUCTION

A reading skill is one of the most essential and at the same time difficult skill for students while learning any languages. Students mostly have problems with their comprehension when reading some texts, especially in mixed classes it is more complicated as level of reading differs. In the modern world, there are many methods and approaches for solving this problem and developing students’

reading literacy and skill. One of the best among these is Timed Reading Activity (TRA). Timed reading activity (TRA) is considered as a learner-centered activity, which gives to students a chance to learn at their own step and assess their own progress. It is very useful in helping students in mixed-ability classes as well, where studies students with different levels, to develop their reading comprehension. In addition, by using the TRA in English as foreign language (EFL) reading classes, students could acquire new reading strategies and increase their reading speed.

This research aimed to measure the effectiveness of the TRA in improving EFL students' reading literacy and reading comprehension. The result of this study could provide useful strategies for English as foreign language (EFL) educators to conduct lesson in mixed-ability classes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many researchers consider that classes where learners' proficiency level, skill level and learning style and/or pace are definition to "mixed-ability classes". Various researchers believe they are multilevel or heterogeneous classes (Al-Shammakhi & Al-Humaidi, 2015; Yunusova, 2019; Zakarneh, 2020) [2, 18, 19]. Mixed-ability classes are classes where study heterogeneous students defines Matthews-Aydinli and Van Horne (2006) [12], this is a class where strong students study via weak ones stated Zakarneh. (2020)[19]. This type of classes bring some difficulties for teachers (Yunusova, 2019) [18], as it is difficult to find suitable method to encourage all students (Benmassoud & El Madani, 2019) [4]. Besides that, Khamdamovna and Karimovna (2020) [11] considered for mixed-ability classes teacher should have good time management skill in order to guarantee the opportunity participation off all student in the classroom. This kind of classes need detailed preparation of the teacher (Benmassoud & El Madani, 2019)[4].

It is considered as a big challenge for educators and instructors in English as foreign language (EFL) contexts to conduct lesson for mixed-ability classes where the students have different level of language. (Al-Subaiei, 2017; Bolli, Renold, & Worter, 2018; Khamdamovna & Karimovna, 2020; Naddafi, Vosoughi, & Kowsary, 2019; Wroblewski & Majerova, 2019; Zakarneh) [3, 5, 11, 13, 17,19]. In this kind of classes, the high-level students tend to dominate low-level students and latter ones cannot participate during the lesson (Harmer, 2015; Scrivener, 2012) [9, 14]. However, each student have right to participate and learn by his or her abilities.

Al-Shammakhi and Al-Hamadi (2015) [2] said that teachers should find strategies that can help to ensure all students in a mixed-ability while in reality; students rarely can participate equally in mixed-ability classes. In order to develop students' reading comprehension and speed, educators must prepare wide range of reading activities that guarantees participation of all students said Cheng (2014) [7], Naddafie (2019) [13] added that such activities should be learner-centered and allow students to learn at their individual learning pace. The TRA is a great example to a learner-

centered activity that provide to learn at own rate (Hamersly, 2015) [8]. Moreover, TRA is useful for students in mixed-ability classes to develop their reading skills.

Timed reading activities can be an effective way to help students develop their reading skills and improve their comprehension. It is especially beneficial for mixed-ability students, as it allows them to work at their own pace and challenge themselves.

Timed reading activities involve setting a specific amount of time for each student to read a text. This encourages students to read faster, which can help them become readers that are more efficient. If to give a particular time, students start working more effective. Additionally, it also helps them develop strategies for skimming texts quickly in order to identify the key points. In other case, while not giving a time to students, they did not finish the same task even in 20 minutes.

Different researchers advise some modern solutions to overcome problems that occur on mixed-ability classes. For instance, to build relaxed and positive atmosphere in class. (Wright (2012)) [16], to encourage collaborative learning activities (Hernandez, 2012) [10]. Another recommendation is to include new methods and multilevel teaching strategies (Butterworth, 2010). In addition, to use more learner-centered methods and allow to students to assess their own progress (Treko, 2013) [15].

With the purpose of checking all these theories has been conducted experiment with the 9th grade students of school number 3 in Urgench city. To students was given time for reading text (10 min), and then answering to the questions from it.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Text

Brendan's best friend is Tip. Tip and Brendan are inseparable. They teach each other things and they look after each other. Tip has helped Brendan become more responsible, more caring, and a better friend. Brendan is a nine-year-old boy, and Tip is a ten-year-old dog. Brendan and Tip are an example of how owning a dog can have a positive effect on a child's development. Having a dog develops a child's sense of responsibility, broadens his capacity for empathy, and teaches the nature of friendship.

Having a dog helps a child learn how to act responsibly. As a dog owner, the child must take care of the animal's daily needs. The dog must be fed and exercised every day. A dog is completely dependent on its owner for all its needs, including the need for good health and a safe environment. Therefore, being responsible for a dog also means taking care of the dog so that it stays healthy. Furthermore, the owner must take responsibility for the safety of the dog and the safety of the people it meets. If the child forgets any of these duties and responsibilities, or ignores any of the dog's needs, the dog will suffer. This teaches the child that his responsibility to the dog is more important than his desire to play with his toys, talk on the phone, or watch TV. This is true not

only for the care of a dog, but also for the care of oneself, another person, or one's job. Learning how to take responsibility for the health and welfare of a dog leads to learning how to take responsibility for oneself.

Another lesson that a child can learn from having a dog is how to be empathetic. Empathy is the ability to put oneself in another person's, or in this case, another creature's, situation and imagine that person's or creature's feelings or problems. A dog cannot express itself with speech, so its owner must learn how to interpret its behavior. The child must learn to understand what the dog's behavior means. Is the dog frightened, aggressive, or sick? The child needs to understand what is going on in the dog's mind. Understanding a situation from the dog's perspective helps the child understand why the dog is behaving in a certain way and what the dog needs. The result of learning to read a dog's behavior is that the child develops empathy. By learning how to empathize with a dog, the child also learns how to empathize with other people. This leads to the child becoming a more considerate and caring person.

Being considerate and caring are important characteristics in a good friend. One of the most significant benefits of owning a dog is the example of true friendship that a dog provides. A dog gives unconditional love to its owner. A dog will not stop loving its owner because of a little anger, indifference, or neglect. The dog will wait patiently for its owner to pat its head and say a few kind words. This acceptance of the negative qualities and appreciation for the positive qualities of its owner provide a wonderful model of how to be a good friend. A child soon realizes that his dog will always listen to him, will always be ready to play with him, will always protect him, and will always forgive him. A child who has learned to be even half as good a friend to others as his dog is to him will have learned one of the most valuable lessons in life.

Questions

1. The dog's name is _____.
 - A. ✓ Tip
 - B. ? Brendan
 - C. ? Brennan
 - D. ? Kip
2. Which of the following have a positive effect on a child's development?
 - A. ? feeling responsible
 - B. ? feeling empathy
 - C. ? building friendships
 - D. ✓ all of the above
3. A child learns how to be responsible for a dog by _____.
 - A. ✓ taking care of the dog's daily needs

- B. ? taking away a safe environment
- C. ? feeding the dog weekly
- D. ? becoming dependent on the dog
4. Learning how to care for a dog can help children _____.
- A. ✓ to take of themselves
- B. ? to choose the dog over playing
- C. ? to get welfare
- D. ? to ignore the dog's needs
5. Children can learn how to _____.
- A. ✓ understand the dog's needs
- B. ? only care about themselves, and not others
- C. ? get rid of the dog they don't want to take care of it
- D. ? be irresponsible
6. The dog's owner must interpret which of the following from their dog's behavior?
- A. ? fear
- B. ? happiness
- C. ? illness
- D. ✓ all of the above
7. Which of the following is a positive result of learning how to interpret a dog's behaviour?
- A. ? becoming selfish
- B. ✓ becoming empathetic
- C. ? becoming arrogant
- D. ? being thoughtless
8. What kind of love does a dog provide?
- A. ? shallow
- B. ? one-sided
- C. ? conditional
- D. ✓ unconditional
9. Which of the following is NOT a benefit of a child owning a dog?
- A. ? companionship
- B. ? reliability
- C. ? friendship
- D. ✓ neglect
10. In what ways is a dog loyal?

(It is able to tolerate the negative qualities of humans. It will protect people. It neglects its owner)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results of the experiment show that strong students with high reading comprehension could manage with task in the given time, in general 10 minutes with question and answers, while weak ones needed more time (table).

Student	Questions	Time
Strong	8/10	5 min
Weak	4/10	5 min

Table

CONCLUSION

In Conclusion, the impact of TRA in EFL reading classes to improve reading speed and reading literacy for students with mixed abilities is far essential. As students can truly work at their own pace, determine their own reading speed, and assess their own level of reading comprehension, TRA is an appropriate educational method for mixed ability classes. The TRA approach includes flexible teaching and learning activities that is need to have mixed-ability EFL classes, because teachers could shorten the distance between strong and weak students via using them. This can definitely help them to make close friendship relations as well.

Besides that, timed reading activities are not only beneficial in academic settings but can also be used by anyone who wants to improve their reading literacy. The studies show that TRA lessons are the major factor of developing the reading skill itself, as they make EFL learners more confident and responsible for their own study. After TRA lessons, students' understand the real value of reading in learning not only English, but also all languages. By challenging ourselves with timed readings, we can become a better reader and increase our knowledge of the subject at hand.

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