The Impact of Motivation on Reading Comprehension Ability of Iranian EFL Learners Receiving Reciprocal Teaching and Cooperative Grouping Intervention Program

Naeemeh Kharaghani
PhD Candidate of TEFL, Department of English Language, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran
Behzad Ghonsooly[1]
Professor of Teaching English as a Foreign Language, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran
Parviz Birjandi
Professor of TEFL, Department of English Language, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

Extended abstract
1. Introduction
For many students reading is the most important of the four skills in a foreign language. If we consider the study of English as a second or foreign language around the world and the situation in which most English learners find themselves, we recognize that reading is one of the main reasons why students learn the language (Richards & Renandya, 2002).Researchers believe that there are some common factors which influence L2 reading comprehension.One of them is individual factors which include "L1 knowledge, language proficiency, the use of strategy, knowledge of different text types and pragmatics, metalinguistic knowledge, background knowledge, and motivation"(Alderson, 2000, p.60 as cited in Orbea & Villabeitia, 2010).However, according to Dornyei (2005), the effect of individual differences (ID) is produced in interaction with the environment, including classroom instruction and interaction with teachers and classmates. Therefore, the present study is designed to shed light on the effect and interaction of Iranian EFL learners' level of motivation (as one of the factors of individual differences) with the type of instruction based on receiving reciprocal teaching and cooperative grouping intervention program. The results showed that the intervention changed motivation for reading efficacy, reading challenge, reading curiosity, competition in reading, recognition for reading, reading for grades, social reasons for reading and compliance.

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1 Corresponding Author: ghonsooly@um.ac.ir

2. Methodology

This study was based on a quasi-experimental, pretest/posttest design. The participants were not randomly assigned to groups but rather belonged to whole classes.There were four groups of participants. The control groups received the typical reading instruction and the experimental groups received the intervention.The study took 14 sessions of 90 minutes during a semester. Meanwhile, in order to control the effect of the text type on reading comprehension, the textbook of all groups was the same.

3. Discussion

The results of the study show that the type of intervention is effective on reading comprehension ability of Iranian English learners. Therefore, the significant feature of the intervention which includes interaction between the teacher and the students could be considered as a key point in the process of instruction. Meanwhile, the results highlight the great influence of scaffolding as the fundamental element of the intervention. Scaffolding in the process of instruction provides opportunities for learners to improve their language knowledge and to become autonomous (Ellis, 2003).In this regard, Walqui (2006) suggests six main types of instructional scaffolding. One of them is modeling which is used in reciprocal teaching and cooperative grouping intervention program.

In addition, the study reminds us of the significant role of motivation. The intervention changes motivation for reading efficacy, reading challenge, reading curiosity, competition in reading, recognition for reading, reading for grades, social reasons for reading and compliance. Therefore, as Guthrie, Cox, Knowles, Buehl, Mazzoni, & Fasculo (2000) mentions, language learners with high intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy as well as competition and challenge are moderately active readers and high achievers in the process of reading comprehension.

4. Conclusion

This study highlights the significant role of interaction and cooperation .The related literature in educational field shows that there is a significant relationship between applying reading strategies(through reciprocal teaching and cooperative grouping intervention program) and improvement in reading comprehension ability of language learners(Topping, Thurston, Tomlie, Christie, Murray, & Karagiannidou, 2011).The results would be highly beneficial for instructors and course designers since they could form authentic and real-life contexts in which the learners would be more involved in problem solving tasks and critical thinking activities. This area of attempt needs special attention in Iran since educators do not focus on the importance of interaction and negotiation; therefore, we face reluctant readers who prefer to work individually. The practice of reciprocal teaching and cooperative intervention program would facilitate the relation between teacher and students and between students themselves.

On the other hand, learners with different features learn in different ways and give different feedback to the instruction. Therefore, instructors should prepare the learning contexts by considering learners' individual differences in a way that the environment would satisfy each learner's needs. Each learner with his/her own unique characteristic would like to know the course objectives and the instructor's plan during the course. Therefore, preparing a concise lesson plan with all the explanations and details improve learners' level of motivation and enable them to complete their tasks including reading ones in the process of instruction. Meanwhile, lack of motivation and interest towards the reading activities in the classrooms would be the result of the instructional techniques which are employed. Therefore, instruction should include a selection of appealing activities .Also, the content should be related to the learners' educational backgrounds and level of motivation so that they could become more motivated and encouraged in the process of learning (Tomlinson, 2003).

Key Words: motivation, reading comprehension, reciprocal teaching and cooperative grouping.

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