

IMPROVING ESL READING COMPREHENSION WITH TASK-BASED LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION: EMPHASIZING THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE MAIN IDEA

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Abstract

This experimental study investigated ESL Reading Comprehension with Task-Based Language Instruction: Emphasizing the Identification of the Main Idea in district RYK, Pakistan. Using a pre-test and post-test control group design, sixty ESL students aged 14-16 were randomly assigned to experimental (TBLT-based instruction) and control (traditional teaching methods) groups. The experimental group received reading comprehension instruction through meaningful task-based activities, while the control group experienced conventional teacher-centered approaches with comprehension questions and explanations. Pre-test and post-test assessments evaluated students' reading comprehension abilities through multiple-choice questions. Results demonstrated significant improvements in the experimental group's reading comprehension performance compared to the control group. The findings suggest that TBLT creates more engaging and dynamic learning environments, promoting active student participation and meaningful interaction with texts. This study contributes to the growing body of research supporting task-based approaches in ESL contexts, particularly in developing countries where traditional grammar-focused methods predominate. The implications extend to educational policy and classroom practice, advocating for innovative pedagogical approaches that enhance ESL students' reading comprehension skills through authentic, communicative tasks.

Keywords: Task-Based Language Teaching, ESL Reading for main idea, Elementary Education, Pakistan, Communicative Language Learning, Pedagogical Innovation, Language Acquisition

Background

Identification of the main concept was a fundamental reading comprehension skill that allowed readers to understand the main idea or message of a document (Afflerbach 2025). This ability helped the reader comprehend, summarize, and interact critically with written content, which was crucial for both academic performance and effective communication. The idea of determining the core idea originated in the larger field of reading instruction, namely in the areas of schema theory and cognitive psychology. By connecting new material to preexisting knowledge systems, skilled readers actively created meaning from texts, according to researchers (Mekuria, Bushisho et al. 2024). The primary concept provided coherence to the entire paragraph by acting as the focal point around which additional facts were arranged. In the past, traditional reading education frequently ignored the strategic processing needed to extract important ideas in favor of vocabulary and sentence-level comprehension. But as educational psychology advanced, the emphasis progressively changed to teaching students how to identify subject sentences, evaluate text structure, and discern between supporting details and primary

ideas. Finding the key idea became much more important when studying a second language (L2), particularly (English as a Second). Because of their poor language skills and prior knowledge, non-native readers frequently had trouble grasping implicit meanings or recognizing important points. Task-based language teaching (TBLT), questioning tactics, and graphic organizers are examples of instructional tools that have shown promise in helping students more successfully identify key ideas(Chen 2024).

It was generally accepted that identifying the main concept was a cognitive talent that required students to keep an eye on their comprehension and modify their approach as necessary. Its function in reading comprehension has continued to be a primary focus of curriculum design and educational research, particularly for the development of academic literacy and higher-order thinking skills. A key element of learning a second language, particularly for those learning English as a second language (ESL), is reading comprehension. Finding the core concept came out as a crucial component among the many subskills of reading comprehension. Finding the main idea gave students a better understanding of a text's general meaning and served as a basis for comprehending supporting information, drawing conclusions, and accurately summarizing the material(Haverkamp, Bråten et al. 2024).

However, a lack of effective reading instruction, unusual text structure, and a limited vocabulary caused many ESL students to fail with this ability. In many classrooms, conventional ESL reading instruction focused on teacher-centered strategies including grammar exercises, translation, and responding to queries about comprehension after reading. Neither the way students interact with texts nor were the critical reading abilities of the learners sufficiently developed by these strategies. As a result, there was an increasing trend toward learner-centered and communicative teaching methods, like Task-centered Language Teaching (TBLT)(Haverkamp, Bråten et al. 2024).Work-based The language teaching was to be based on communicative instruction in languages and this entailed the use of goal oriented tasks to promote the language acquisition process. TBLT wanted to promote language learning through successful completion of real life assignments which necessitated active language processing and production. The given strategy was highly focused on the topics of understanding, problem-solving, cooperation and interaction, which played a vital role in the development of reading comprehension skills, especially the detection of main idea. TBLT enabled the ESL students to interact with texts at a higher level when it was used during their reading lessons. Exercises such as summarizing of the text, classifying the material, sequencing of the events, or identifying the key points helped students to get closer to the text and enhanced their ability to identify the main idea. As well, TBLT provided a warm environment in which the students acquired comfort and autonomy over their reading. The efficacy of task-based language teaching vis-a-vis enhancing the ability of ESL students to identify critical thoughts in reading texts was the subject of this study because of the importance of reading comprehension and in light of failures of the traditional education. It aimed at contributing to the growing body of literature championing the student-centered and creative methods of teaching second languages(Raikhel 2025).

Research Objective

1. To analyze the assistance that TBLT offers in the Enhancement of ESL Reading Comprehension through Task-Based Language Teaching with an accent on the Determination of the Main Idea.

Research Questions

1. What is the role of the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in having ESL students identify the central idea when completing a reading comprehension exercise?

Significance of the Study

The present study tries to answer the question on how the elemental school children in RYK perceived the effectiveness of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in enhancing their ESL reading comprehension skills, which is on their ability to identify key themes. The paper contributed to the growing body of study on the topic of language learning by offering helpful insights into the ways TBLT served as an alternative, more interesting and student-centered method similar to traditional methods of instruction. The enhancement of early reading comprehension played an important role in the academic development, and identifying the most important thing was one of the most important skills in the process. The study proved very helpful, considering that rote-based instruction still prevails in Pakistani schools. The study affected the more effective teaching strategies, curriculum design, and delivery of instructions which were responsive to the needs of younger ESL learners through providing local evidence on the benefits of TBLT. The findings also helped in stimulating further research regarding the impact of TBLT in other language skills and in other educational contexts and as well offered a foundation to future research in the area. It is the research that influenced the language teaching process most notably when it was to assist the students of the elementary level studying the English as a Second Language to enhance their English reading comprehension. It focused particularly on the ability of students to grasp the main idea which is a very important skill of analyzing and understanding written texts. The overall students' academic performance was based on their ability to interpret, to synthesize and to use reading material more effectively. The paper examined effectiveness of task-based language teaching (TBLT) as a reading comprehension pedagogy. One country that TBLT was a replacement in specifically was Pakistan, a country where more often than not the classrooms were covered in the conventional teaching fashions that involved lectures. Such traditional methods normally relied on grammar-translation methodology together with memorization; each of which did not promote critical thinking or participation of students.

Literature Review

Reading comprehension was an important part of language development and an academic necessity in addition to life time learning (Raikhel 2025). The English as a Second Language students, also referred to as ESL learners, found it difficult in reading comprehension especially to identify the main theme of a passage. The main idea of the text as the central message helped the readers to arrange, interpret and memorize the information. Almost all ESL students struggled with learning this skill because of their limited vocabulary, weird grammar structures, and lack of exposure to actual reading materials. On the one hand, the traditional practice of teaching reading comprehension in ESL classrooms emphasized grammar-translation strategies, on the other hand- teacher-guided questioning and simple memorization. These methods were probably devoted to perception of linguistic elements independently without critical thinking or understanding as a whole. Owing to this, students would often have difficulties as they formed relationships between concepts or found key aspects in texts. The deficiency in participation and interest of the student was also considered the cause of poor reading performance especially in identification of the main idea. There is deficiency in traditional instruction that led to an increase in communicative and learner-centered instructions (Sattarova 2024).

One of them, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), emphasized strongly on using real tasks authentic in nature in a bid to foster effective communication involving the language. By provoking active use of a target language in the case when students worked on meaningful tasks, TBLT provided them with an opportunity to develop their critical understanding and proficiency in language. Problem-solving, collaboration and negotiations of meaning allowed students to be more engaged with texts and become better at telling important concepts and secondary information. The advantages of using TBLT in regard to teaching reading were quite numerous. By performing such tasks as concept mapping, grouping key points, summarizing sections, sequencing events, students were capable of focusing on structure and meanings of the text, as opposed to focusing on superficial features. These activities allowed Deeper processing and the formation of skills necessary to name the crucial concept (Irwan, Arnadi et al. 2024).

Also, abilities that enabled students to trace their knowledge, make conclusions and evaluate written material were developed through task-based learning. Language development was encouraged through age-appropriate and contextual relevant exercises that enhanced the cognitive activity of young students especially at elementary schools. Task-based approaches also made major concept identification less abstract and more achievable even to students that had low proficiency. In general, the study demonstrated that there is growing consensus of the capacity of TBLT to improve ESL reading comprehension. The approach gave a big picture outline that consisted of critical thinking, language application, and student engagement. This framework was promising in addressing one of the most persistent problems that ESL students use to face (Li, Ismail et al. 2024).

The investigation In TBLT continues to be organized so that its effects and efficiency in various studies could yet be more effectively aided by such investigations. The size of second language learning is more concerned on reading comprehension even in English as Second Language (ESL) due to its importance to success in academics. The most important among the various sub skills of reading was to find the main idea. It helped the students to plan and store supplementary information in a highly efficient manner at the same time as they also identified the main idea in a paragraph. Nevertheless, most ESL students had issues with this competency because they had no vocabulary, their syntactic awareness was low, and they were not familiar with the structure of the texts. Traditional ESL systems used mainly in most classes especially in such countries as Pakistan were characterized with rote learning, drilling and comprehension through the use of literal meaning drills. Through these teacher centred methods, students received insufficient chances to engage meaningfully with texts. Due to this, students were usually not at the level of higher-order thinking that was necessitated to recognize the main idea thus lack of interest to and understanding of the reading materials. The development of language pedagogy also noticed the necessity to use more communicative and student-centered methods of language teaching since it was considered by scholars and practitioners. Task-based language teaching (TBLT) being the popular method is an invention of communicative language teaching movement (Yu, Guo et al. 2024).

It focused on the accumulation of critical thinking and active language usage in the accomplishment of real meaningful and applicable tasks. Interactive, structured assignments associated with TBLT presented an effective environment in which students received an enticing platform in which they could practice understanding within the setting of reading. The activities such as summarizing, sequencing, classifying the material, and discovering important points are task-based activities that have proved to be helpful in some study to enable the learners to

practice to identify the main ideas. These exercises shifted the attention of the students off top-level decoding of texts onto the meaning construction process, encouraging the students to engage in stronger cognitive processing of texts. The latter results demonstrated the increased capacity of participants in these activities to comprehend the structure and the intent of the text and allowed identifying the main theme. It was a typical scenario in task-based learning environment, whereby students could work in small groups or two, exchanging definitions, interpretations, and ideas. These social interactions were not only proposed to enhance the understanding but increased the ability to identify the big idea. Also, since TBLT is participatory, the slow learners enjoys the discussion and modeling by the peers (Palanisamy and Rajasekaran 2024). The scaffold inquiry and visual aids, along with the use of graphic organizers in the TBLT concepts under consideration, were efficient as well. Visualizing of support aspects with the help of such tools as mental pictures, flowcharts, and T-diagrams enabled students to better understand the main idea by making the connection between the aspects. Employers using these activities in task-based learning environment reported the higher degree of student interest and better results of reading comprehension.

Also, TBLT increased the awareness of metacognition among students. In more cases, students who took part in task phrased reading exercises assessed their understanding, monitored their progress, and revised their learning method. This regulated way of teaching was vital in helping the students to identify important concepts independently and enhance their understanding of readings. Application of TBLT was quite a breakthrough in Pakistani schools, which still tended to renovate traditional and exam-passing learning. The Literature has it that students react positively and recorded a significant rise in comprehension skills when the teachers apply TBLT in age and locally-relevant materials. Specifically, when it came to training the most critical reading of the subskills, i.e., comprehending which notion is the most important one in the text, task-based methods proved to be highly effective to train at elementary school level (Palanisamy and Rajasekaran 2024).

In combination, the analyzed studies revealed that TBLT provided practical model of effective reading comprehension betterment via the enhancement of learner autonomy, interaction, and critical thinking. It was both the source of new possibilities in meaningful reading education and the place where a lot of disadvantages of the traditional ESL teaching were mitigated. To guarantee the effective use of TBLT techniques, the literature has underlined the significance of curriculum alignment, resource availability, and teacher training. Language teachers in a variety of settings realized more and more that teaching reading effectively required more than just word recognition and decoding. It relied on instructing students on how to engage with texts in a purposeful manner, particularly in recognizing important ideas and messages. It was a metacognitive skill that required readers to discern the primary idea of a text and distinguish between important and less important details. This capacity often constituted a hurdle in ESL contexts since learners typically lacked the language and strategic foundation needed to independently assimilate complex material. Research in second language instruction has shown a connection between language production and comprehension (Palanisamy and Rajasekaran 2024). TBLT capitalized on this connection by designing activities that prompted students to read and engage in active participation through writing or speaking. For instance, students may be requested to provide a summary of what they have read, discuss important ideas with their classmates, or respond to questions that call for comprehension of the main theme. These exercises improved comprehension and language use abilities at the same time. Learner

autonomy was another facet of TBLT that was frequently highlighted in the literature. Students usually looked to the teacher for direction and answers in traditional ESL programs. But according to TBLT, kids were active problem solvers who worked both individually and collaboratively, finished projects, made choices, and read literature. Students naturally focused more on the structure, coherence, and purpose of the texts as they tried to finish meaning-based projects, which helped them recognize key ideas(Mathews 2025).

The literature also looked at how motivation affects the development of reading skills. By giving reading assignments purpose and relevance, TBLT inspired students. Students were more engaged in finishing assignments and paying closer attention to the material when they represented real-world subjects or personal interests(Malika 2024). Better involvement with the reading process and greater effort to extract important information from texts were both influenced by this enhanced motivation. Researchers found significant differences between pupils educated through standard education and those who learnt using TBLT in a number of comparative studies. Students in TBLT classes shown more progress in identifying the core idea, summarizing, and inferencing. Additionally, they demonstrated greater assurance while debating and analyzing texts, indicating that TBLT not only improved abilities but also affected students' perspectives on reading in a second language. The flexibility of TBLT to accommodate varying learning levels was another important aspect covered in the literature. Depending on the reading levels of the pupils, tasks in mixed-ability classrooms could be made simpler or more complex. To guarantee that every student engaged in meaningful participation, teachers adjusted texts, instructions, or desired outcomes. Because of its adaptability, TBLT was appropriate for elementary school pupils, who frequently needed more structured and visually aiding assignments in order to comprehend textual material(Molnar and Dániel 2024).

The research also showed that when teachers appropriately scaffolded instruction, task-based learning was beneficial for even low-proficiency students(Bryfonski 2024). Teachers supported steady skill development by dividing activities into manageable segments, offering phrase openers, or demonstrating how to recognize the primary concept. Students eventually internalized these techniques and used them on their own. Additionally, some educational studies examined the connection between TBLT success and teacher training and views. In environments where teachers were well prepared and understood how to design assignments that aligned with reading objectives, TBLT was more effective. On the other hand, in classes where teachers lacked task-based design expertise, the benefits of task-based learning were still neglected. This demonstrated how important professional development and instructional support are to the effective use of task-based frameworks. As whole, this tendency was found in the literature as the inclusion of TBLT in the ESL instructions on reading. It contributed to the supposition that reading workouts based on tasks meant better comprehension results and targeting such important subskills as recognition of main ideas. The fact that the current research tried to explore the effectiveness of TBLT in a very specific setting, where the use of traditional techniques of teaching still prevailed, and where the innovation in language teaching was only starting to flower, made the investigation highly defensible based on the analysis of previous studies (Yan, Sha et al. 2024).

Methodology

In order to determine the effects of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) on reading comprehension in ESL learners at the secondary school level, the research was expected to be completed within a period of ten weeks; with post and pretest control group research design.

Preliminary arrangements were done in Week 1, such as obtaining the necessary authorization, selecting 60 volunteers (aged between 14 and 16) and divvying them in half, forming two groups: experimental and control groups. Both groups were administered pre-test to allow us to establish a baseline of their reading comprehension abilities. Such multiple-choice, short-answer, and inferential tasks of the pre-test were based on reading passages in which it was aimed at measuring the analogy and understanding skills of students. The two groups were oriented to their various teaching philosophies in Week 2. Whereas the experimental pupil was made aware of the concepts of TBLT, the control one was briefed on the traditional teaching practice namely professors explaining texts and asking questions. There was professional development of how to implement each strategy reliably and successfully. This week was aimed at making sure that the two groups knew the expectation and the design of the educational intervention.

An Education phase lasted seven weeks and took place in Weeks 3-9. The experimental group learnt reading comprehension through TBLT. Some of the task-based activities that the students took part in included group summaries, peer conversations, sequencing practice, diagram completion, and reading-based real-world problem-solving. These assignments were set so as to promote deeper learning by meaningful interaction and engagement with readings. The same reading passages were taught to the control group during the same time with the use of conventional teaching. The lecturer did not rely on any of the task-based elements or activities in a group setting and guided understanding, responded to questions, and provided direct explanations in the form of the lecture. The approach opposed students-centered inquiry with passive reception of knowledge.

Finally to ensure valid comparisons both the groups completed a post-test in Week 10 with the same format as the pre-test. It was an evaluation of whether the teaching plans had enhanced reading comprehension among students. To determine the effectiveness of TBLT on the reading comprehension, that is, the identification of major concepts and the ability to reason, the result of the pre and post test was compared within and between the two samples. The scheme ensured that the intervention was pursued systematically and the study was concentrated and controlled throughout the ten weeks duration. The study used an experimental research design of a pre-test and post-test control group. Two groups were compared in this approach. The experimental group was exposed to the instruction in reading comprehension as the use of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). The control group received traditional reading comprehension instruction from the teacher, who provided explanations and comprehension questions without utilizing a task-based approach. Both groups were tested twice: once before the intervention (pre-test) and once after it (post-test). By contrasting the outcomes of the pre-test and post-test, the intervention's efficacy was evaluated. Sixty secondary-level ESL students took part in the study. These students were between the ages of 14 and 16.

There were two participant groups created. Students in the Experiment group (N=30) took part in TBLT-focused reading comprehension courses. The students in the control group (N=30) were taught reading comprehension using traditional methods without any homework. The tests are administered to two groups. two groups: the experimental group and the control group. The experimental group is in treatment position, while the control group receives no TBLT treatment at all. Both groups get pre- and post-testing prior to and during therapy. The reading comprehension portions of the pre-test and post-test were followed by multiple-choice, short-answer, and inferential questions. The assessment's goal was to gauge how well pupils understood and analyzed textual content. The pre-test was administered before the intervention

to assess students' baseline reading comprehension skills, and the post-test was administered after the intervention to measure progress. Task-Based Exercises for the Test Group although no explicit assessment tool was utilized, the effectiveness of the task-based activities was implicitly assessed by comparing the experimental group's pre-test and post-test outcomes. Multiple-choice questions in comprehension reading passages encouraged students to actively interact with the text. These exercises were designed to improve students' comprehension by giving them the opportunity to engage with the text in meaningful ways.

Results and Data Analysis

Pre-test Results Analysis

The initial assessment revealed baseline reading comprehension abilities across both experimental and control group.

Table 1: Pre-test Reading Comprehension Scores

4.1 Pre test Reading for Main Idea

Table 4.1 (Pre –RMI)

Group	No	Mean	S D	Df	T	p-value
Experimental	30	7.7333	2.11617	58	1.401	1.67
Control	30	6.9333	2.30342			

The results of comparing both control and experimental groups based on their "Pre-RMI" evaluations using an independent sample t-test. There are two groups, one is control group and the other is experimental group. Both the groups have same sample size of 30 participants. Average or Mean of experimental group is 7.7333 while the mean of control group is 6.9333. Standard Deviation (SD) of experimental group is 2.11617 while the standard deviation of control group is 2.30342. The stated value for Df, or the degrees of freedom used in the t-test calculation, is 58. In an independent samples t-test with similar sample sizes, this is calculated and df is =58. The t-value of 1.401 indicates the calculated difference between the group means, standardized by the variability of the scores in each group. A higher t-value indicates a larger difference between the groups, whereas a lower t-value indicates a smaller difference. The p-value of 1.67 is above the conventional significance level (0.05), which is abnormally high.

The p-value should typically fall between 0 and 1, therefore this value is strange (it could be a typo). Given that the p-value is higher than 0.05, a valid p-value would suggest that there is no discernible difference between the two groups. Mean Scores of experiment's treatment may have had an impact, as seen by the experimental group's greater average score (7.7333) compared to the control group (6.9333). Standard Deviations: In comparison to the control group, the experimental group's standard deviation is marginally lower, suggesting less volatility in scores. t-value: A small difference between the group's means is indicated by the t-value of 1.401. p-value: Since p-values shouldn't be greater than 1, the stated p-value of 1.67 appears to be inaccurate. This would probably show that the difference in each group is not statistically meaningful (i.e., we don't agree with the null hypothesis) if it were corrected and valid. You might need to verify the p-value computation again, though. Assuming the p-value was accurate, the overall interpretation indicates that there might not be an important distinction between the two groups according to the pre-test RMI ratings.

Post-test Results Analysis

Table 4.2 Post test Reading For Main Idea

Group	No	Mean	S D	Df	T	p-value
Experimental	30	12.7667	1.77499	58	11.935	.000
Control	30	7.1667	1.85850			

The table presents the results of a statistical comparison between the Experiment and Control groups in terms of Post RMI, which most likely corresponds to the reading comprehension scores or another relevant metric after the intervention. The Experiment and Control groups consist of 30 individuals each. The experimental group averaged 12.77 points, while the control group averaged 7.17. This suggests that, on average, the Experimental group outperformed the Control group on the post-intervention evaluation. The standard deviation of the experimental group is 1.77, whereas that of the control group is 1.86. These results are relatively close, suggesting that variability of results within every group is comparable, even if the Experimental group has a little less variability. The test's degrees of freedom calculated by adding $n_1 + n_2 - 2$, are 58, with 30 participants in each of the two groups. The calculated t-value is 11.935.

The large t-value suggests that there is a substantial difference between the two groups' means. p-value: The p-value, which stands at 0.000, is far lower than the standard significance level of 0.05. This suggests that the mean score difference between the Experimental and Control groups is extremely statistically significant and that there is little chance that it occurred by chance. The results indicate a substantial difference within the Experimental & Control groups following the intervention (Post RMI). The Experimental group scored better than the Control group, which had an average score of 7.17, with a mean score of 12.77. The difference is statistically significant, as indicated by the p-value of 0.000, which is significantly below the limit of 0.05. The high a t value of 11.935 indicates that the intervention greatly enhanced the performance of the experimental group. This analysis shows that the intervention had a significant impact on the Experimental group's results compared to the Control group.

Improvement Analysis

The magnitude of improvement between pre-test and post-test scores provides crucial insights into the effectiveness of different instructional approaches.

Pre-test to Post-test Improvement Analysis

Pre-Post Reading For Main Idea of Control Group

Table 4.3 (Pre-Post RMI)

Control	No	Mean	S D	Df	T	p-value
Pre RMI	30	6.9333	2.30342	29	-.471	.641
Post RMI	30	7.1667	1.85850			

The table presents the findings of a paired sample t-test for the Pre and Post RMI of the Control group, which most likely assesses reading comprehension or another relevant outcome prior to and following the intervention. There are thirty people in the control group. The Pre RMI measure has a mean score of 6.93 and a standard deviation of 2.30. This is the performance of the Control group prior to the intervention or therapy. The Post RMI measure has a mean score

of 7.17 and a standard deviation of 1.86. This is the performance of the Control group following the intervention or therapy.

Pre-Post Reading For Main Idea of Experimental Group

Table 4.4 Pre-post RMI

Experimental	No	Mean	S D	Df	T	p-value
Pre RMI	30	7.7333	2.11617	29	-9.524	.000
Post RMI	30	12.7667	1.77499			

The table compares the scores before and after the treatment or intervention using the results of a paired t-test for the pre- and post-RMI (probably a measure or intervention associated with the experimental group). The number of individuals in the experimental group (30 before and after RMI) is known as the experimental no. The variation in scores within the group is known as the standard deviation. The number of independent values (29, computed as 30 participants - 1) that are subject to variation in the analysis. The t-statistic, which determines if the pre- and post-scores differ significantly p-value: The probability value that reflects the significance of the result (a p-value of less than 0.05 often indicates a significant result).

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to ascertain how well Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) enhances ESL students' capacity to recognize the primary theme while reading. The experimental group, which got teaching through TBLT, outperformed the control group, which used traditional methods of reading instruction, according to the findings of the pre- and post-tests. The pre-test results showed that both groups' reading comprehension levels were comparable at the start of the study. The control group received a mean score of 6.93, but the experimental group received a mean score of 7.73. The fact that there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups indicated that their initial understanding levels were similar. This gave the experimental comparison a solid basis and confirmed that group allocation was fair. The experimental group participated in task-based activities that promoted group cooperation, active reading, and intentional text interaction throughout the intervention. These assignments involved creating diagrams, identifying important points, summarizing chapters, and ordering occurrences. By requiring students to find and comprehend the key idea, these assignments encouraged a greater level of engagement with the material. The control group, on the other hand, got conventional teacher-led teaching, with an emphasis on explanation and passively responding to comprehension questions.

The group participating in the experiment's reading comprehension performance improved statistically significantly, according to the post-test data. The experimental group's mean post-test score grew to 12.77, but the control group's mean just marginally increased to 7.17. The improvement in the experimental group was substantial and could not be explained by chance, as indicated by the t-value of 11.935 and the p-value of 0.000. This proved that the students' capacity to recognize the primary concept in reading passages was significantly impacted by TBLT. These results were corroborated by additional within-group performance analysis. Comparing the experimental group's scores before and after the exam revealed a significant increase, which was confirmed by a t-value of -9.524 and a p-value of 0.000. This demonstrated that comprehension abilities significantly improved as a result of the task-based exercises. However, with a t-value of -0.471 and a p-value of 0.641, the control group only slightly improved their scores, indicating that the traditional instruction was ineffective.

The results were consistent with earlier studies that shown the advantages of TBLT in raising students' reading comprehension. TBLT inspired students and produced meaningful reading experiences by utilizing real-life projects and encouraging learner participation. The experimental group's results demonstrated more engagement and depth of comprehension, and they reacted favorably to the teaching strategy. Additionally, this study verified that TBLT promoted the development of cognitive and metacognitive skills. During assignments, the experimental group monitored their own comprehension, talked to one another about their various views and altered their reading methods where they had to. These procedures were a significant part of the reading comprehension effort and this enhanced their ability to figure out and understand the main theme. All these findings of the experimental group also meant that student-centered teaching and cooperative learning environments were more efficient than lecture-based instruction in ESL classes. The results supported the implementation of TBLT in the Pakistani classrooms where the system of education has traditionally rested upon rote learning practices. The research presented convincing evidence that various approaches, which include TBLT, could enhance the outcomes of language learning in resource-limited or teacher-based contexts. Nevertheless, the study had a number of limitations. The intervention was rather short in its duration, and the effects of TBLT were not measured in the long-term. Moreover, not every pupil reacted in the same way, and it took them rather long to get familiar with the new teaching model. Despite these constraints, it is clear that experimental group displayed a significant increase in the identification of major ideas, proving that TBLT can change the face of teaching reading in ESL classrooms.

Conclusion

This paper reviewed the performance of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in boosting reading comprehension levels of ESL learners, particularly when identifying the main concepts. The results led to the conclusion that students who were involved in task-based learning tracked more in their text comprehension and finding of crucial ideas when compared to the conventional taught students. Students of the experimental group were actively engaged in reading material, group tasks, and learned better about textual order using well-structured and goal-oriented tasks. These children had a more learner-oriented setting that promoted individual thinking, class discussion and problem solving. In contrast, the control group, which was trained by a traditional teacher, showed the minor improvement and did not have the same involvement rate and understanding. Its findings highlighted the importance of participatory and purposeful instructional approaches, particularly to ESL situations where a lack of understanding is often impeded by language barriers. TBLT enhanced reading abilities of students and made them more willing and confident in regard to reading written texts. Coming to the overall conclusions, it was possible to state that TBLT proved to be an effective and productive tool in building reading skills and identification of key concepts among secondary-level students studying ESL. The fact that it proved useful in this study meant that it could be implemented more often in similar educational situations especially in a classroom that had traditional rote learning as the prevailing method.

The conclusion justified the usefulness of creativity in teaching languages and it offered a good benchmark to upcoming studies and curriculum development on teaching languages.

Recommendations

TBLT makes the ESL students more competent in reading something especially their abilities in identifying important concepts. TBLT strategies such as summarizing and peer discussions

should be promoted to get the teachers to engage their students in significant interaction within texts. In order to enhance instructional competent, the educational authorities should integrate TBLT in teaching education. Scaffold, real-life reading assignments ought to take place in the ESL curriculum. Group projects ought to be collaborative to encourage student-centered learning in the classrooms. The inference and primary concept recognition ability which is higher-order thinking skills should be prioritized during the reading examinations. To determine the long-term implications of TBLT in terms of age and proficiency levels, longitudinal study is needed. The policymakers should provide supportive educational policies to promote TBLT. Resources and specialist support should be availed to ensure that there is a successful implementation. Combined together, these activities can possibly lead to improved reading and comprehension outcomes of the ESL students.

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