



Article

The Impact of Pre-Reading Activities on Students' Reading Comprehension

Baxodirova Maxliyo

1. Asia International University, Teacher

* Correspondence: [✉](#)

Abstract: Reading comprehension is one of the most essential skills in second language learning; however, many learners encounter difficulties when attempting to understand written texts. These difficulties often arise due to limited vocabulary knowledge, insufficient background knowledge, and a lack of preparation before reading. Pre-reading activities are instructional strategies designed to prepare students for reading tasks by activating prior knowledge, introducing key vocabulary, and encouraging predictions about the content of the text. This article examines the impact of pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. Classroom-based observations and instructional practices implemented with secondary school learners were analyzed to investigate how activities such as prediction tasks, vocabulary previews, and topic discussions influence students' understanding of texts. The findings suggest that students who participate in structured pre-reading activities demonstrate stronger comprehension, higher engagement, and increased confidence during reading tasks. The study indicates that incorporating purposeful pre-reading strategies can significantly improve reading comprehension and support more effective interaction with texts.

Keywords: pre-reading activities, reading comprehension, EFL learners, vocabulary activation, student engagement, language learning

1. Introduction

Reading plays a central role in language learning because it exposes learners to vocabulary, grammar structures, and diverse forms of discourse. Through reading, students develop both linguistic competence and critical thinking skills. However, many students in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts experience difficulties when working with written texts, particularly when those texts contain unfamiliar vocabulary or concepts. Without sufficient preparation, learners may struggle to understand the main ideas and relationships within a text. One effective approach to addressing these challenges is the implementation of pre-reading activities [1]. Pre-reading activities are tasks conducted before the reading process begins in order to prepare learners for the content and language of the text. These activities can include predicting the topic, discussing background knowledge, and reviewing key vocabulary [2]. Educational research suggests that reading comprehension improves when students approach a text with prior knowledge and a clear purpose for reading. Pre-reading activities help learners establish connections between new information and their existing knowledge, which facilitates deeper understanding [3]. Additionally, these activities encourage learners to become active participants in the reading process rather than passive recipients of information. This article explores the influence of pre-reading activities on students'

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reading comprehension and engagement in EFL classrooms. It also examines how these strategies support more effective interaction with reading materials [4].

The Role of Pre-Reading Activities in Language Learning

Pre-reading activities perform several important functions that support comprehension and engagement during reading tasks. One of their primary purposes is activating students' prior knowledge, often referred to as schema activation. When learners connect a new text with their existing experiences or knowledge, they are better able to interpret the information presented in the text. Another important function of pre-reading activities is vocabulary preparation. Many learners struggle with reading comprehension because they encounter numerous unfamiliar words in a text [5]. When teachers introduce key vocabulary before the reading process, students are able to focus more effectively on understanding the overall meaning rather than concentrating solely on decoding individual words. Prediction is another valuable strategy in pre-reading instruction. By examining titles, images, or headings, students can generate hypotheses about the content of a text. This process encourages curiosity and prepares learners to evaluate whether their predictions are accurate as they read. Furthermore, pre-reading discussions can significantly increase student motivation. When learners discuss a topic related to the text, they become more engaged in discovering information during the reading process. As a result, reading becomes a more interactive and meaningful learning experience [6].

2. Methodology

This study employed a qualitative classroom-based observational approach to investigate the influence of pre-reading activities on students' reading comprehension in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. The research was conducted with a group of secondary school students over a six-week instructional period [7].

First, classroom observations were used to examine students' reading behaviors, participation, and comprehension during reading lessons. Twenty-eight tenth-grade students participated in the study. During the observation period, a range of structured pre-reading activities was implemented, including vocabulary previews, prediction exercises based on titles and images, guiding questions, and small-group discussions related to the topic of the reading text [8].

Second, comparative analysis was used to evaluate students' engagement and comprehension before and after the introduction of pre-reading activities. Particular attention was given to changes in students' ability to identify main ideas, participate in discussions, and interpret textual information [9].

Finally, reflective analysis of classroom interactions and student feedback was conducted to assess the perceived effectiveness of pre-reading strategies. Students' responses regarding their reading experience were considered in order to evaluate how these activities influenced motivation, confidence, and comprehension during reading tasks [10].

This methodological approach allows for the examination of instructional practices in a natural classroom environment and provides insights into how pre-reading strategies support effective reading comprehension in EFL contexts [11].

Classroom-Based Observations

The observations for this study were conducted with twenty-eight tenth-grade EFL students over a six-week instructional period. The purpose of the observation was to examine how structured pre-reading activities influenced students' comprehension and participation during reading lessons [12]. Several pre-reading strategies were implemented regularly during classroom instruction. These strategies included guiding questions related to the topic of the text, introduction of key vocabulary items, prediction activities based on titles and images, and short brainstorming discussions in pairs or small groups. At the beginning of the observation period, many students showed limited

confidence when reading longer texts. Some learners focused primarily on translating individual words rather than attempting to understand the general meaning of the passage. Classroom participation during reading discussions was also relatively low. After several weeks of consistent implementation of pre-reading strategies, noticeable changes in student behavior and comprehension were observed [13].

3. Result and Discussion

Results and Reflections

The implementation of pre-reading activities produced several positive outcomes in the classroom. First, students demonstrated improved understanding of the main ideas presented in the reading texts. Because they were familiar with the topic and essential vocabulary before reading, they were able to focus on comprehension rather than translation. Second, student engagement increased significantly during reading lessons. Prediction tasks encouraged curiosity and motivated students to read more attentively in order to confirm or revise their expectations about the text. Third, participation in classroom discussions improved. Students were able to summarize ideas, explain information from the text, and express their opinions more confidently. Several students who had previously been reluctant to participate began contributing more actively during reading activities. Approximately seventy-five percent of students reported that pre-reading activities helped them understand texts more easily and made reading tasks more interesting. These responses suggest that pre-reading preparation reduces cognitive difficulty and allows learners to concentrate on meaning and interpretation [14].

Discussion

The findings of this study correspond with existing research emphasizing the importance of activating background knowledge in reading comprehension. Scholars such as Anderson (2003) argue that comprehension is enhanced when readers connect new information with existing knowledge structures. In EFL contexts, this process is particularly important because learners may encounter unfamiliar cultural or academic content in reading materials. Pre-reading activities provide an opportunity for teachers to bridge this gap by preparing students conceptually and linguistically before they engage with a text. Moreover, these activities promote collaboration and interaction among learners. Through discussions and predictions, students actively participate in constructing meaning rather than relying solely on individual interpretation. However, it is important for teachers to select pre-reading tasks carefully. Activities should be directly related to the content of the text and should not be excessively complex. Effective pre-reading tasks should be concise, engaging, and supportive of the reading objective [15].

4. Conclusion

Reading comprehension is a complex skill that requires both linguistic knowledge and cognitive preparation. Pre-reading activities play a significant role in preparing students to engage effectively with written texts. By activating prior knowledge, introducing key vocabulary, and encouraging predictions, these strategies help learners approach reading tasks with greater confidence and understanding. The observations presented in this study indicate that consistent use of pre-reading activities can improve students' comprehension, increase classroom participation, and enhance motivation for reading. When teachers integrate these strategies into their reading instruction, they create a more supportive and interactive learning environment. For these reasons, pre-reading activities should be considered an essential component of effective reading instruction in EFL classrooms.

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