

MODERN TRENDS IN TEACHING READING TO B1 STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This article reports on the effectiveness of modern trends and strategies to improve B1 learners' reading skills. These days, teaching reading is taken into consideration in not only Uzbekistan but also, over the world. Because, reading is one of the skills that many students feel troubled while doing. It is also considered one of the most important skills. That's why, improvement in this field requires lots of studies. And our research studies what counts as an improvement in reading skills for B1 learners; examines theoretical and empirical issues in measuring improvements in reading skills.

Keywords: teaching reading, modern trends, B1 learners, Reading-writing relationship, Content-based reading, Task-based reading, Sustained-silent reading, Social reading

Introduction

Reading has always been considered one of the most important skills. However, have you ever wondered why this is so? The reason is that it is through reading that a person will be able to discover new ideas and concepts. It develops your communication skills and expands your knowledge and concepts around you. Reading is one of the most useful and practical skills for all learners while this is the most challenging one. That's why, lots of linguists dealt with this skill and how to conduct it for students effectively so far. According to Urquhart and Weirth (2009), reading is the process of acquiring and interpreting information from a written text; in other words, it is the process of receiving information and understanding it. Johnson (2008) states that reading is a complex activity that requires the use of language to create meaning from written words. Based on the definitions, the purpose of reading is to gain information, verify existing knowledge, enhance knowledge of the language being read, or to keep informed on fields in which we read. Reading plays an important role in language skills. It was explained above that reading is a complex process, and teaching reading should be started as early as possible.

Therefore, B1 students need to be taught how to accomplish reading tasks effectively. Firstly, who is B1 learner? B1 learner is the third level of English proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). In everyday speech, such a student can be called an "intermediate student". It is clear that B1 learners have proficiency in reading. Moreover, B1 learners are regarded as teenagers, namely who study at 10 and 11 grades in Uzbekistan schools. Teachers should be skillful and find best ways of teaching reading to these learners because of behaviors in their ages. Current days, the modern trends are widely used to improve the ways to teach reading to students who learn English as a foreign language. These trends are also important in teaching reading B1 learners. Because these learners can keep bored easily from traditional teaching methods. Teachers

should use these modern teaching trends in reading skill in order to encourage students to deal with reading tasks.

The purpose of this study is to present the benefits and importance of reading skill, as well as effectiveness of modern trends in teaching reading to students of 10-11 grades in Uzbek schools. The analysis of the questionnaires in the practical part of this article shows that by being exposed to modern teaching trends in reading students overcome their previous difficulties in understanding reading material.

Literature Review

Reading has an important role in all language skills. Therefore, a great many researchers gave their opinions on teaching reading.

According to Fahimsyah (2008), the basic steps to teach reading are to activate background knowledge, set purpose for reading, have students read for these purposes, and evaluate. With words of Gerlac, Ely, and Melnick, the teacher should use various techniques in teaching reading to make the students more understand about the material, and the teacher must be able to encourage their students to make reading as their habit and make them accustomed to reading. This, in due course, makes teachers of English as a foreign language apply a different set of methods and approaches until they find one which works the best for their students to solve problems they encounter in reading.

Different researchers have suggested numerous trends to improve reading comprehension and task completion based on reading passages. The modern teaching reading trends are as follows:

- a. Reading-writing relationship
- b. Content-based reading
- c. Task-based reading
- d. Sustained-silent reading
- e. Social reading

Reading-Writing Relationship.

This trend indicates that we read in order to put what we read into practice. Reading for writing is emphasized here because students tend to write from what they read. It is essential that developing knowledge of learned language requires the ability to read and write. The relationship between reading and writing has been studied from the same cognitive perspective and believers of the idea that reading influences writing claim that reading inspires and informs students' writing. It is to say that reading and writing were considered as separate acts before theories of causal relationships were studied. Goen and Gillotte-Tropp (2003) set six principles for teaching basic writing and reading together. The influence of reading on writing is often said to be a positive one, as learners get a number of benefits from reading a text, including new styles, new vocabulary and expressions, or even correcting their false ideas or grammar mistakes.

Content-Based Reading

According to this trend, we tend to integrate our prior knowledge of a topic with what we are reading right now. With words of Saint Augustine, the concept of content-based teaching refers to how teaching programs are organized around topics rather than linguistic topics. In this case, content was the core,

not grammar, function, or any other linguistic unit."It is the teaching of content or information in the language being learned with little or no direct or explicit effort to teach the language itself separately from the content being taught" Richards and Rodger stated (2009).

Task-Based Reading

A learner needs to do certain things with a reading text according to this trend. In this condition, teachers focus on doing some reading-based tasks instead of developing their students' reading abilities. It is believed that task-based reading increases students' ability to learn better when their attention is focused on the task instead of the language. Learners should focus on meaning and the activity should reflect real life; they can use any language they prefer. Ellis (2002) explains that TBLT relies on getting learners to perform tasks to help them develop knowledge and skills in a second language in a similar manner to their own language learning mechanisms.

Sustained-Silent Reading

This reading trend involves students and teachers reading free or silently for brief periods of time every day. Free reading or reading for pleasure is a trend that is gaining popularity these days. In other words, sustained silent reading is a form of school-based entertaining reading that allows students to select their own books and does not require testing for comprehension or book reports. According to Stephen Krashen, SSR has been shown to lead to gains in several literacy domains, including reading comprehension, vocabulary, writing skills, spelling, and knowledge of literature, science, and "practical knowledge".

Social Reading

This trend supports the idea of cooperative reading which is reading in a social context. It deals with students as members of a group when engaged in reading.

According to some researchers such as Chen, Cordon-Garcia, Alonso-Arevalo, Gomez-Diaz, Linder, social reading is a reader-centered mode of reading and focuses on the facilitation of readers' sharing and interaction encourages expressions of ideas and promotes collaborative survey. With the words of Hadwin, Jarvela, Miller, Chen, considering that social reading is a format of collaborative learning, it is necessary to connect the cognitive gaps among students and help them learn strategic control of their actions, thinking, and beliefs in the process of social interactions. In other words, social reading is a new reading style that puts emphasis on sharing, interaction, communication and social contact. As said by Wu, different from traditional paper-based reading, the rapid development of social reading has a great impact on readers' consumption of texts. Moreover, social reading puts more interest in social interaction during and after reading, encourages readers' self-generated content, and promotes the circulation and dissemination of information (Swann and Allington, 2009).

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated based on the theoretical basis and the aim of the study:

1. To what extent are modern trends in teaching reading effective in the development of reading skills of B1 learners?
2. How can the new trends in reading improve adults' interest in reading tasks at Uzbek state schools?

Methods

A total of thirty teachers from state schools in Tashkent participated in the research. Questionnaires were delivered to these English teachers. Three teachers of them got a MA degree and two teachers have almost an experience of 20 years in teaching. The other teachers got bachelor degree with experiences from 1 to 10 years. The descriptive method has been chosen to analyze the teachers' questionnaire. Sixteen questions were part of a larger study containing more other questions and statistical procedures to investigate the effectiveness of using reading modern trends. These questions were addressed to Reading techniques of teaching B1 learners.

Procedure

The teachers were asked to fill in the questionnaire about teaching reading using modern trends. The questionnaire contained two sections: Section one; general information, and section two; reading techniques. Most questions were open-ended questions when teachers are asked about their thoughts or explanations. Data were collected at the end of the second term before the holidays of New Year and after the teachers have finished checking the final exams of students. They were given enough time (a week) to answer the questionnaires, considering their responsibilities; some took more than a week to give them back, while others returned them in the same day.

Analyzing Results

For this research, we investigated the data collection from the questionnaire. Based on the results, we can reflect that modern trends in teaching reading to B1 learners are effective. Let's observe the answers of teachers who participated in the questionnaire.

Section1: general information

1. What is your full name?
2. How long have you been teaching?
3. Do you have a degree in IELTS, CEFR or others?
4. Do you have a degree in teaching (Bachelor\ Master\ Ph.D.)?

According to the questions above, the teachers gave full information about their personalities and teaching experiences.

5. Do you come across difficulties while teaching reading?

The aim of this question was to understand the difficulties of teachers in teaching reading. Almost all the teachers questioned face difficulties while teaching reading. They complained as follows:

- mother language interference,
- lack of reading practice,
- no desire to read;
- lack of interest and motivation,
- teachers' more attention to teaching grammar, vocabulary than reading

- pupils' irresponsibility,
- pupils are not patient while reading exercises;

6. Where do you see severe problems of your students in reading?

Especially, they have informed about students' problems like slow reading speed, not understanding text passages fully.

Section 2: teaching reading techniques

7. Do you aware of modern trends in teaching reading?(Reading-writing relationship, Content-based reading, Task-based reading, Sustained-silent reading, Social reading)

The purpose of this question was to know the teachers' awareness of the modern trends and innovative teaching styles in education. It is known from the answers that nearly all the teachers are familiar with these trends and they use them during the lessons.

8. Do you use the trends during reading lessons? Which one?

According to the teachers' answers, almost all the teachers use Content-based reading and Task-based reading trends more than other trends during the reading lessons. One of the teachers says, "Content-based reading works well to encourage my students to read because reading passage contains interesting content. For example, it can be about culture, geography, history of English-speaking countries or any topic in which students are interested. I use task-based reading as well to improve students' reading skills such as skimming, reading for gist, for details, summarizing, etc." Besides, another respondent state, "Reading - writing relationship, I try to make use of this trend while teaching reading intending to do focus not just for reading but also writing. I get students to read a piece of text and understand it and do rewriting on what they understand from it."

9. If students read a text in order to write about it, they remember it well. Do you agree? And do you use this method in your lessons?

Most teachers already use this method during the lessons. One of the young teachers replay as follows: "Sure! If students see the reading text as a source for their writing, they automatically try to remember it "word to word" mode". Also, one of the teachers who never use this method in the lesson support this idea, writing as following: "Absolutely agree. But I have never applied this method. Maybe in future, after some research about the principles of this method, I will implement it."

10. Do you encourage your students to read novels, short stories during the lesson? Do you think they like this type of reading

All the respondents gave positive answers. And their students are active during this type of reading. Nevertheless, they claim that this type of reading takes much time and they prefer students to read novels, short stories at home and they have discussions about them in the class in order to economize the time.

11. Students are fond of reading about social events and sharing their opinions on social websites like telegram, Instagram. Do you agree?

All the teachers state that their students are active in using social websites. Even if, some older teachers ask help from their students in order to how to use them, the students show them effortlessly.

12. If we lay the reading tasks on social websites (telegram, Instagram,...), students do the tasks eagerly. Do you agree? Why or why not?

Most teachers don't agree with this point. They don't prefer their students to use phones or other gadgets when doing their tasks. Few teachers agree with this method, supporting this opinion "I think

yes. One factor should be taken into consideration, one is spending their most time on social media because it is comfortable and engaging. So, this side of social media is used as a key to the problem that students stopped to read. However, they have no time for the traditional type of reading, give them that reading in the form of messaging in telegram or in Instagram, they will do, even unintentionally.” Similarly, another teacher points out “I agree with this viewpoint as the current generation is addicted to gadgets and social media. But it puts a huge responsibility on the teachers. What is more, not all of the students will complete this kind of task especially when it is an extended or long text/task. However, if it is given in small portions such as a telegram poll or Instagram quiz students will be more motivated. So, teachers should think about the form of delivery, i.e. how to organize reading via social networks.”

Conclusion and Recommendations

In this paper, we give emphasis to the role of modern trends in teaching reading. After analyzing the teachers’ questionnaires, we could come out with some recommendations concerning the need for integrating reading and writing, sometimes teaching reading in social media where students pass through different ideas. During these stages, the teacher’s role is important, directing them to the full meaning using reading comprehension strategies. Some teachers criticized their students as ‘lazy and irresponsible’ and whatever method they utilized to encourage them to do reading tasks did not work at all, while others insisted on the necessity to renew the curriculum and the practice of reading in their students. To improve the interest of students for reading, this is mainly due to instruction and the time devoted to reading. It is to say that both in-class and at-home readings help students become good readers.

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