

Enhancing Reading Skills of Engineering Students



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Abstract: *The paper presents how reading skills and vocabulary can be improved through the approach of task based learning. As a result of which multiple activities are presented in order to enhance vocabulary. The paper also foregrounds of how student's inclination towards reading can be intensified through the activities.*

Keywords: *Vocabulary, bottom-up reading, top-down reading, speed reading levels*

I. INTRODUCTION

The paper focuses on various activities that aid in students' interest of reading. Students ought to understand that only through reading any text one can learn a language. Newspaper paves as an important source. Newspapers provide a wide range of topics where learners can choose a text. They are used globally to reach and learn an English language. Newspapers present the contemporary era's use of language. It enhances vocabulary and the communication skills of the students.

It is observed that many engineering students are unable to understand or comprehend what they read. Due to continued reading, in order to understand the text, students tend to loose interest. Students can be categorized in different levels based on reading proficiency levels of students such as low, average and high. There are several factors that influence reading inability of engineering students. The reasons include socio-economic, gender difference, government and private schooling background, teaching methodology and learning environment. The vital barriers of reading texts for engineering students are due to inadequate vocabulary, word-by word reading, poor pronunciation, poor word structures and inadequate comprehension.

Bottom-up and top-down reading models describe comprehensive concerning the event of reading comprehension and reading speed if these are followed in classroom practices. The bottom-up theory creates the elemental aptitudes that are known with syllables, letters, and words in content structure for beginning level readers. This

suggests that translation of such messages is by decoding the words enclosed within the article to urge the importance out of it. Appropriately, there is possible fragile to easily neglect what the reader has fathomed from the content. In this way, recognition is accomplished by the students comprehension of every articulation utilized in the subject. The more characteristic the reader with a specific articulation, the more undeniable the whole hugeness of the text is to him/her. This advances nature with reading. Furthermore, understanding is achieved once the reader has deciphered the magnitude out of every articulation through its definition, hence procuring a general idea about the article.

On the other hand, researchers are in vulnerability of its model disregarding its legitimacy ensuing that there is a certain unpredictability incorporated the connection between the spelling and the sound of the expression. Although top-down theory is utilized for dealing with intellectual point of view of perusing by building up the piece of establishment discovering that is accessible in the printed substance. Top-down reading theory underscores from thoughts to text of readers who study their methodology centering on the text of the content by contradicting the real substance of the text. The foundation of this model uniquely lays on earlier knowledge of the readers which expels indisputable substance identified with the formed substance.

This model transforms into a ground-breaking viewpoint for readers, especially when expelling the gauge, setting indications, and the rule considerations of the text by the students. This model emphasizes the subjectiveness of having diverse understanding materials and unmistakable degrees of language inconvenience that are noteworthy to the need of the learners or students.

II. ACTIVITIES FOR READING SKILLS

A. Activity on Reading Letters to the Editor Column

Through the activity students are exposed to the contemporary use of words. The activity also enables them to understand a text according to the context. Also through the activity, students are exposed to wide range of new words.

B. Activity on Reading Newspaper Articles

Through the activity students learn business vocabulary. The researcher briefly explains how to read the article, what are the words and points to be noted. In the activity, students are asked to identify new or unknown words in the first reading.

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Enhancing Reading Skills of Engineering Students

They are asked to identify the meaning of the unknown words and write the summary of the article. Students are asked to read the summary.

C. Activity on Reading a Short Story

Short Stories are easily accessible resources that can be used in an English Classroom to teach language. It is the domain in making language learning interesting. Students have been presented with select three short stories and are asked to choose a story of their choice. They are also asked to prepare a wordlist from the story to be presented in the class. Through the activity students initiate the habit of reading books. It sparks the interest of reading for pleasure amongst the students. They initiate and enhance the reading skills amongst the engineering students.

D. Activity on Reading a Novel

Through the activity arousal of interest in reading and learning vocabulary is established. Students have been asked to read a book of their interest. They are asked to prepare a review of the book. It has been observed that students were unable to read the novel in the given duration. This is due to lack of reading habit. The paper also highlights on how students enjoy reading shorter texts rather than reading books or novels. The activities serve as an eye opener for students in order to develop their reading skills.

E. Research Methodology

Students of first year, second year and third year of KSRM College of Engineering are taken for the study.

F. Research Instrument

In order to improve reading skills among engineering students, they were given activities like reading newspaper articles, reading novels, reading short stories and reading select letters to the editor column. The tasks engage students to improve their vocabulary and spark their interest for reading.

G. Data Analysis

Activities described in the paper were conducted with all the participants. The activities centre on the difficulties students encounter while attending interviews.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Through the practical learning activities, students have shown considerable improvement in vocabulary. Students also have shown considerable interest in reading different sources and understanding their context.

IV. CONCLUSION

From the results in the present research, it is noticed that metacognitive systems are useful to extend Engineering students' understanding skill. Following which, the accompanying proposals are recommended. 1) Engineering students should be occupied with basic deduction in order to empower their cognizance of writings. 2) When students face issues with difficult words, their educators should assist them with anticipating the significance or search for the importance from dictionary 3) Familiarizing students with the usage of

different approaches would reinforce them improve their psychological methods.

The choice of successful metacognitive techniques would decrease their errors and botches consolidating difficulties in perusing. 5) When students develop critical reasoning, students choose metacognitive systems that comprehend their understanding challenges and light up their cognizance of the writings.

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Dr. Shreeja Ghanta, is a Ph.D. graduate from VIT University, Vellore Campus. Prior to which she graduated her M.A from Auxilium College in first class. Dr. Shreeja has 6 Scopus indexed publications to her credit. Her research interests include Ecological Marxism and Ecocriticism. She is currently working as Assistant Professor, Department of English, Koneru Lakshmaiah Education Foundation, Hyderabad Campus.