

Towards Interactive Teaching Strategies in Teaching English Literature

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Abstract—The study examined using interactive teaching strategies to raise the understanding of students in literary texts. The study used reciprocal teaching strategies with undergraduate students at UST University in Yemen. The sample research included 46 female students from the English Department's 4th level in the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences, UST. The study's sample was randomly chosen and divided into control and experimental groups. Both groups were taught the exact content of the literature; the experimental group was taught using novel reciprocal strategies, while the control group received instruction as usual by following the department plan. The development of students reading comprehension was tested using a Pre- and Post-Reading Comprehension Test (RCT) throughout the teaching of literary courses. According to the data analysis, there is a statistically significant difference between the students' accomplishments in the experimental and control groups. It was found that literature courses that included both direct and indirect teaching techniques proved to serve the majority of students better.

Index Terms—teaching, reciprocal strategies, reading comprehension, EFL students, literature

I. INTRODUCTION

Teaching English literature at universities is one of the most challenging tasks. Many undergraduate and graduate students have trouble grasping the literary material's content and fail to learn its terminology. Moreover, many of them trip over such objects. From this current perspective, the study provides new insight into how interactive teaching strategies might improve the reading comprehension process for literature students. This empirical study was implemented with the fourth-level students as a prototype for the remaining university students. Overall, language competency includes the ability to read effectively. According to ALharbi (2014), reading comprehension is the process's primary purpose in academic contexts and other aspects of our everyday lives.

Because of this, English department instructors must develop and enhance their students' literary reading comprehension abilities. Reading comprehension techniques in structured and semi-structured classroom environments activates the schemata required to understand written texts and connect new knowledge to existing knowledge. The need to encourage students to use reading comprehension more actively is emphasized by Fageeh (2014). Reading comprehension is crucial, mainly when using a foreign language (Khaki, 2014).

To increase students' comprehension of literary concepts, teachers must give particular attention to teaching literature. Clandfield (2017) contends that literary courses do not pay greater attention to a range of levels at the secondary or tertiary level. Most of the students have never before studied literary works. Literature is taught as a whole work by teachers via instructive reading. Neves (2009) asserts that literary instruction strives to help students realize their full potential to produce balanced, harmonic, and morally upright human beings. Language teachers often get dissatisfied because students do not easily transmit information, according to Neves (2009). Because readers benefit more from reading in their native language than from reading in a language they are learning, literary language differs from other language domains.

Consequently, new strategies were suggested for a deeper comprehension of literary material and to enhance students' skills. The study suggested employing a reciprocal teaching technique. Through small groups and reading activities, reciprocal teaching is a kind of educational activity in which students assume the instructor's position. By using various techniques to promote proficiency in teaching literature, instructors may improve their students' text comprehension. Numerous scholars have acknowledged the crucial role that reciprocal teaching plays in teaching because of the strong relationships between students and texts. Numerous studies have been done on language learning techniques that EFL students can use to speed up their acquisition of foreign languages (AL-Harethi, 2008; Al-Azzawi, 2012; AL-Zianee, 2014; Al-Harbi, 2014; Fageeh, 2014; Gao, 2007; Zuheer, 2008; and to name a few). The findings of several studies showed that earlier research in this field had been primarily concerned with how to employ reciprocal teaching generally in teaching but that no study had attempted to investigate the consequences of utilizing this method in teaching literature.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Teaching literature is considered one of the most challenging tasks per teachers' and students' concerns. According to Dhillon and Mogan (2014), the text's use of language and topic that may be considered above the students' language proficiency is one of the major obstacles to studying literature. Due to the lack of exposure to the adoption of engaging teaching strategies by instructors, literature is sometimes blamed for being unpopular.

In Yemeni universities, literature is studied in several English-related courses. Studying literature is essential because it exposes students to relevant circumstances, engaging language, and intriguing people. A different reading, analyzing, and writing-related subjects are covered in literary texts. According to Dhillon and Mogan (2014), literature is tiresome because of its complex structural elements and reliance only on language. Many academics who have conducted many studies on teaching literature believe that teaching literature emphasizes the integration of language and literature in the classroom. The students should be provided with the resources they need to analyze a text and provide informed opinions about it (Lazar, 1999). At the same time, Burk (2016) presupposed that literature instruction should be based on varied tactics that improve students' understanding and appreciation of literary works.

A. *Reciprocal Teaching Strategies*

Reciprocal teaching is a style of education where instructors and students converse and debate various aspects of a book. Teachers and students engage socially. Compared to the traditional approach, students in the interactive study have more notable improvements. In the second trial, the experimental group interventions were carried out by volunteer instructors rather than the experimenters. The findings were strikingly comparable to those of the earlier investigation.

The four main techniques used in reciprocal teaching are summarizing, generating questions, clarifying, and predicting. As a result, the instructor and student share, switching positions, with the understanding that the teacher's function is to facilitate the conversation. Before reciprocal teaching occurs, the techniques mentioned earlier have been introduced and refined. According to Palinscar and Brown (1984), the main goal of reciprocal teaching practices is to increase reading comprehension in students who can decode but lack sufficient background knowledge to comprehend the text. Students in this curriculum study technical information and active learning techniques essential for autonomous learning.

In cooperative learning environments with scaffolded instruction, reciprocal teaching emphasizes the development of cognitive and metacognitive reading methods. According to Ramita et al. (2015), reciprocal teaching has several benefits, one of which is that it enables students to focus on activities that will enhance their reading comprehension. Allowing students to think freely while engaging and socializing in a group has additional benefits. Each person can bargain, provide criticism, and react to the ideas of others.

It would be excellent to use innovative techniques for teaching literature, such as reciprocal teaching. According to Choo et al. (2011), students' reading comprehension is improved using four cognitive methods known as reciprocal teaching strategies. According to constructivism theory, researchers believe that interactive (dialogue-based) techniques and the reconstruction of ideas might improve the performance of struggling readers.

In view of Choo et al. (2011), reciprocal teaching phases go through several processes. First, the instructor in the classroom delivers the lesson's paragraphs to each student in the group when teaching literature. Second, after reading that passage, each student provides a summary, prediction, explanation, or query on what was just said. Third, the instructor poses a question to the group, which the group leader then advances to the group. The teacher then takes the lead in leading the group member who poses the inquiry. The fourth response comes from a group member who bases their statement on the text. Once a question has been addressed, students take turns asking each other questions. This procedure continues until everyone in the class has had an opportunity to engage in questioning.

Following a study of the literature on reading comprehension, Palinscar and Brown (1984) came to the conclusion that the following six main factors were necessary for good reading comprehension: Understanding the text's explicit and implicit meanings; using pertinent background information; concentrating on important information while avoiding filler; drawing inferences to test predictions, interpretations, and conclusions; critically evaluating the content for internal consistency and comparing it to previously learned information, and employing periodic reviews as part of continuous comprehension monitoring.

B. *Using Reciprocal Training*

The difficulties of reading comprehension are addressed through reciprocal teaching techniques. According to Palinscar and Brown (1984), reciprocal teaching is a guided reading comprehension method that encourages students to develop the intuitive reading and learning abilities of proficient readers using the four methods of summaries, questions, clarification, and prediction. Students use these strategies in various texts when working in pairs or small groups. In reciprocal teaching, it is possible to use text analysis, drama, poetry, and prose.

According to Rosenshine and Meister, educators have power over reciprocal teaching (1994). When the teacher monitors students to switch positions and guides the discussion between them time by time, the student is the leading participant in the text's analysis, interpretation, and study using four leading indicators. Palinscar and Brown (1986)

built on this basis to create the R.T. process, which, in their design, takes place in a social environment where students collaborate in teams of four to five.

Reciprocal teaching is an educational strategy intended to educate students' cognitive processes. It is based on Palincsar and Brown's (1986) modal. Every team has a leader. He serves as a questioner, guiding the class' understanding of the material by posing inquiries. When a passage's meaning is uncertain, the second student underlines such passages and offers to clarify questions. Predictor: The third student gives the text's potential future direction by setting a purpose. The fourth student summarizes the book's key points in their own words. Once the students are comfortable with the procedures and requirements, they may perform the roles naturally and with instructor assistance. With the teacher's assistance, students delegate duties and take the lead in the text discussion.

C. Reading Comprehension

According to Miller (2013), reading comprehension is the ability to swiftly and precisely recognize the words one is reading while profoundly integrating their thoughts and what they are reading. Drawing from these regions is necessary to structure meaning from the context during reading comprehension. Lapp (2009) asserts that reading comprehension, also known as meaning-making, refers to the reader's capacity to engage with information; it involves both the content of the text and the reader's prior exposure to the subject matter and linguistic style of the text.

The relationship between vocabulary growth and reading comprehension reflects how well these two processes work together, facilitating the development of vocabulary and meanings in the text, according to Richard (2007). In the same regard, Longan (2007) asserts that reading skills are the foundation for learning material in various subjects in school and life.

For a comprehensive knowledge of the text, reading comprehension skills entail delving into word meanings, critical analysis, and the connection of ideas and subjects. This demands participatory thinking via debate and discourse and the switching of roles.

As previously discussed, reading is not passive; reading comprehension must be actively working. In order to govern, regulate, and monitor their reading comprehension, good readers are active readers who generate meaning by fusing their past knowledge with new information (Paris & Myers, 1981).

III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

Evaluating the impact of interactive teaching strategies in developing students' understanding of literary texts.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTION

To what extent do interactive teaching strategies develop students' understanding of literary texts?

V. METHODOLOGY

A quantitative methodology was used to collect and analyze the study's data. The post-pre-tests technique was applied to the experimental and control groups, respectively. It is an experimental study intended to examine how reciprocal teaching affects the delivery of literary courses.

A. Participants

Students at level 4 in English make up the study population. Official records by the Faculty indicate that a total of (46) female students are enrolled in the level four general program. Therefore, the study's sample was the whole population. The population was divided into two groups, each with 23 members. The same instructor who taught the two groups of students used traditional methods with the control group and reciprocal teaching techniques with the experimental group. Students at level four are provided with a program syllabus.

TABLE 1
THE ACTUAL SAMPLE SIZE DESCRIPTION

Type of Sample	Total Population	The Actual No of Respondents	Gender
Literature Students	46	46	100% female

B. Instruments

The pre-post test was the tool, as was previously described. The test was divided into parts, each with 20 short passages (20 items) with reading comprehension-based multiple choices. The exam was taken for around (30) minutes for both periods in the pre-test and the post-test.

C. Design of the Test

The researcher created a Reading Comprehension Test (RCT) for this study. The exam was created using the researcher's expertise and knowledge. Additionally, the researcher studied several reading comprehension-related

sources and academics who were experts in linguistics and literature. Fixed criteria for the RCT were established after consulting the academics. First, the researcher chose (11) paragraphs for the test's first draft, which had (20) questions drawn from literary literature. The exam was designed to evaluate the student's capacity for reading comprehension. There are (20) questions in the exam, broken up into four sections: overall (five), information (six), processing (five), and cues and inference (four) (10 items). The exam has a time limit of (30) minutes, during which (20) questions must be answered in the first draft.

The test was then ready for the validity and reliability stage, which included (20) items. Eight qualified professors with more than (10) years of experience instructing literature and linguistics at Yemeni institutions were given the exam. It was enhanced and changed by following the suggestions and notes of the validators. The validators advised replacing several terms in the questions (1, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15), revising sentences, and emphasizing subject-verb agreement. The test's finished form was thus accepted. The four categories were again updated, and the adviser was consulted. The fourth-level pupils who serve as the primary study's representative took the exam three months later. In the two randomly allocated experimental and control groups, 46 female students participated in the research. The pre-test was administered at the first lecture, and the post-test took place after the course of treatment.

D. Validation

Eight English professors with more than ten years of expertise teaching literature and linguistics at Yemeni universities took the exam to ensure its validity. They were asked to assess the test's clarity, correctness, and relevance. As a result, the test was enhanced and changed under the suggestions and notes of the validators. The validation procedure revealed that the validators advised revising a few phrases and a few question-related terms (1, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15) and concentrating on subject-verb agreement. The test was changed in response to the validators' recommendations and comments. The final version of the authorized exam included 40 elements altogether.

E. Reliability

The test's items were calculated using Cronbach's Alpha to guarantee its reliability. The test's outcome was (80%). This proportion was thought to be reasonably reliable. RCT is deemed suitable for the research as a result.

TABLE 2
RELIABILITY OF THE TEST

Category	No of Items	Reliability Degree
Overall	5	79.15
Information	5	0.81
Processing	5	79.9
Inference	5	0.80
Total	20	0.80

F. Procedures

The timetable below describes each step in detail during this study's implementation.

TABLE 3
THE TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTING 1ST PHASE

1st Month		
Group	Lecture	Activity
Control	2	Pre-test Introduction to the novel Overview of chapter one of novel
Experimental	5	pre- test Introduction to the novel Overview of reciprocal strategies used
2nd Month		
Control	2	In some literary texts, students read, and the teacher explains
Experimental	2	Divided students into mini workshop groups Training on using predicting
3rd Month		
Control	2	Students take a short and long paragraph and analyze it Midterms assessment
Experimental	2	Students begin to clarify the reason behind predictable thoughts Elicit information in pairs Mid-term assessment
Total	6	

During the first phase of implementing the treatment for two groups, students learn about novel content, how they use literary terms, and discuss them and the novel's plot. In control groups, students take a pre-test to evaluate their performance before the treatment period. They read and share an idea with others, follow the teacher's explanation and memorize the new literary terms. While in experimental groups, the students take a pre-test to evaluate their performance before using reciprocal training, and they work in mini-groups to develop the skill of predicting and clarifying. They try to predict and expect future events and clarify the vague points and why they explain them in that way. After six lectures, the teacher made a mid-term assessment to evaluate students' progress. Now the second phase was implemented as follows.

TABLE 4
THE TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTING 2ND PHASE

4th Month		
Group	Lecture	Activity
Control	2	Students learn new terms and read chapters of the novel, the teacher asks, and students answer
Experimental	5	Students learn how to use predicting and clarifying skills in groups
5th Month		
Control	2	Students memorize some new items and acquire new knowledge
Experimental	2	Students learn to question and look for the reason behind the events in groups
6th Month		
Control	2	Students develop their skills in narrating the events and grasping the plot of the novel Final assessment
Experimental	2	Students learn to summarize their thoughts and analysis the events Final assessment
Total	6	

After the treatment period, both groups finalized the novel's content, and they could narrate the events and present new thoughts about literary texts. The final assessment was conducted on both groups to evaluate the effect of the two different teaching strategies in developing students' performance.

VI. RESULTS

The paired sample t-test was used to assess the statistical significance of the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. It was used with students in the experimental group. The experimental group students' post-test scores significantly outperformed their pre-test results, according to a study of the test's mean scores.

TABLE 5
THE SCORE TEST OF THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP

RTS	Pre- Test	Post -Test
Predicating	2.83	4.22
Generating questions	2.86	4.26
Clarifying	1.57	3.43
Summarizing	3.13	4.56
Total	10.39	16.47

The table above (Table 5) displays the experimental group's pre- and post-test means. As was observed, the experimental group's overall mean in the pre-test was (10.39), whereas its mean in the post-test was (16.47). The pre-test and post-test findings for the experimental group demonstrated a statistically significant influence since the significant values are greater than (0.00). The mean post-test scores of the experimental group pupils considerably increased compared to the pre-test. According to Table 5, the first strategy, "Predicting," had a pre-test score of (2.83) and a post-test score of (4.22). The second strategy approach, "Generating Questions," had a pre-test score of 2.86 and a post-test score of 4.26. Contrarily, the third strategy's mean, "Clarifying," had a pre-test mean of (1.57) and a post-test mean of (3.43). The fourth strategy's mean, "Summarizing," had a pre-test score of (3.13) and a post-test score of (4.56).

A paired sample test was used to ascertain if there was a significant difference between the pre-and post-test of the English reading comprehension of literary texts. The following table compares the pre-and post-test information for the experimental and control groups.

TABLE 6
THE SCORE TEST OF BOTH GROUPS

Group	Pre- Test	Post -Test
Control Group	10.13	11.83
Experimental Group	10.39	16.47

* The experimental group's pre-and post-test results show a statistically significant effect of 0. 00.

Results from the pre-test and post-test for the experimental and control groups are compared in Table 6 above. The paired sample t-test was used to compare the pre-and post-scores in the two groups. The statistics show that the experimental group's pre-test mean (10.39) whereas the control group's pre-test mean was (10.13). As a result, the control group's post-test mean was (11.83). In contrast, the experimental group's post-test mean was (16.47). Consequently, the experimental group that received reciprocal education and the control group thus showed statistically different levels of accomplishment. The students in the experimental group will receive help from it.

The experimental and control groups' pre-and post-test results and the data acquired from the pre-and post-test The mean scores from the pre-test and the post-test varied somewhat in the control group. In some way, the pre-test's mean of (10.13) is less important than the post-tests mean (11.83). The mean demonstrates no noticeable difference between the performance of the pre-test and post-test results for the control group. The students in the control group saw no improvement in their reading comprehension after the standard six-week study period, while the experimental group had a more statistically significant shift between the pre-and post-test. The post-test mean (16.47) is higher than the pre-test mean (10.39).

The experimental group of students who received instruction using the reciprocal teaching approach had post-test mean scores that significantly varied from their pre-test mean scores, as shown in Table 6 above. The data reveals a significant difference in the experimental group students' accomplishment in the reading comprehension pre-test and post-test, favouring the post-test, with a difference between the experimental group's post-test score of (16.47) and the pre-test score of (10.39). This generates the conclusion that was reached after the experimental group had its treatment. The findings of the pre-test and post-test varied somewhat for the control group, however, as seen in Table 6.

In conclusion, Table 6 above provides an overview of the test findings for both the control and experimental groups. The findings demonstrated that the experimental group lacked much worse reading comprehension abilities than the control group.

VII. DISCUSSION

Pre- and post-test results for the experimental group's students were compared, showing a statistically significant difference between the two. The adoption of reciprocal teaching practices, which increased the students' reading comprehension, was the key to the study's finding that the treatments had a significant positive impact on students' performance.

Predicting helps students develop their ability to extrapolate and forecast from a text. Students who ask questions quickly are better able to decode and recode the meaning of the material quickly. Results showed that in the following treatment period, students established their style of question generation. The Mean score for the Generation Questions method on the Pre-test was (2.86) while the Post-Test was (4.26).

Students are more adaptable when coming up with questions on their own. Students acquire skills in problem-solving, logical thinking, and presenting evidence via clarification. This outcome showed that students could explain the motivations behind such inquiries. Students get the ability to organize the events and offer a summary of the subjects when they summarize.

Students learn to identify a text's key concepts, filter out unimportant material, and coherently combine them. The mean scored (4.56) on the post-test, whereas the mean scored 3.13 on the pre-test. This finding demonstrated that students had prior summarizing experience before treatment, but this capacity also increased after the treatment.

Students were instructed to comprehend different literary styles using the four fundamental reciprocal teaching strategies. These are predicting, generating questions, clarifying, summarizing, and when and how to employ them. The experimental group's post-test mean scores were much higher than the control group's. This finding demonstrates that reciprocal teaching outperformed standard instruction in boosting English reading proficiency.

Students understand how to identify the major concepts, but they feel more specific if they comprehend every line in a paragraph. Use various strategies, including eliciting information, asking for clarification, hinting, repeating, and employing codes and symbols. Researchers also observed that reciprocal teaching improved students' reading comprehension. According to the results, all the reading methods were utilized more often following training by the members of the reciprocal teaching group.

This finding is consistent with Yoosabai's (2009) study, which found that the experimental group's students used reciprocal teaching strategies more frequently after teaching than before, which increased their awareness of the reading and enhanced their reading comprehension performance. Students successfully use the four critical methods and influence reciprocal teaching techniques (RTS) to comprehend literary works. Students who have not benefitted from traditional reading teaching approaches are encouraged to increase their reading comprehension skills. The results of the

present study are consistent with those of Sarasti (2007), who discovered that the four teaching techniques of predicting, summarizing, questioning, and clarifying help students better understand the literature.

The findings of the study also indicate that RST is a promising educational method for enhancing reading comprehension. Small groups of students seem to be the ideal target for utilizing this teaching technique, as recommended by Palincsar et al. (1989). Reading treatment was delivered to small groups of students (between 6 and 10) employing reciprocal teaching in earlier research by Fung et al. (2003) and Palincsar and Brown (1984).

Students in the experimental group and control group post-test outcomes were compared. The t-test was used to see whether the two groups were equal before the treatment. The experimental group's mean rose significantly from the pre-test value of (10.39) to (16.47) after treatment. This reduction in the gap's favourable direction demonstrated how RTS assisted students in improving their reading comprehension skills.

The experimental group's performance noticeably increases after two months of treatment. Students fill in the knowledge gaps brought on by their lack of familiarity with literary genres. The experimental group outperformed the control group, which got traditional training by a wide margin. RTS also enhances the kids' ability to comprehend texts and learn new material.

The findings showed that students in the control group continued while somewhat improving their reading comprehension skills. According to Table 4, the experimental group significantly improved its students' reading comprehension scores between the pre-test and post-test. The experimental group seems to have outperformed the control group on the post-test, as seen by the results for the control and experimental groups, which show a substantial difference in favour of the experimental group.

That was supported by Yoosabai et al. (2009), in terms of substantial differences between the experimental and control groups after the treatment. This conclusion is in line with their findings. The findings of the study also support those of Harethi (2008), who indicated that the trained student groups outperformed the untreated control group by a significant margin.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Students are more open to dynamic modern methods centred on discussion and interaction than traditional methods based on remembering and listening, particularly in teaching literature to undergraduate students or literature groups. Teaching literature takes skill, in-depth knowledge of modern methodologies, and knowledge of bringing literary ideas closer to students' minds so that they can comprehend the content and its significance to teach literature successfully. The students in the experiment group who studied the novel using the reciprocal method showed a significant improvement in comprehension and enhanced reading comprehension compared to their counterpart group taught using traditional techniques. The results of this research will thus aid Yemeni institutions in creating their literary courses. The students' understanding of literary ideas significantly increased. Qualified teachers may use such techniques for teaching literary courses and improving students' understanding of literary texts.

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