



THE IMPACT OF CONCEPT CHECKING QUESTIONS STRATEGY IN DEVELOPING IRAQI EFL PREPARATORY STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN READING COMPREHENSION

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Abstract. The research aimed to investigate the impact of using concept checking questions strategy on developing Iraqi EFL Preparatory Students' Performance in Reading Comprehension. This study clarified a strategy to enhance student's understanding of English reading comprehension. In English teaching classroom, it is useful to use some strategies to enhance student's achievement in reading awareness effectively. Concept checking questions strategy can be employed in all classrooms learning process.

The participants were assigned as experimental group (EX) and control groups (CG). The EG contained of (32) students taught by using Concept checking questions Strategy while the CG contained of (31) students are taught with the recommended approaches. In order to measure the participants' understanding, the present study used Google Classroom (GC) platform as an educational platform to assist students during their learning process of the course, pre-test and post-test design and a satisfaction survey are adopted in this study. The sample of the study was (63) students intentionally selected from preparatory school in Iraq. In addition, there is a questionnaire is given to 60 English teachers to acquire more information about the effect of CCQs strategy used by the teacher on reading comprehension perception. The study revealed that using of CCQs strategy has had a great effect on the student's performance in reading comprehension.

Keywords: Concept Checking Questions, Reading Comprehension.

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PROBLEMS OF THE STUDY

Reading comprehension (RC hereafter) is an activity by which readers could make ideas, predictions, or information by the written text. By reading students motivate to be more active in-class activity, so through reading they catch much knowledge, understand different aspects of language. The skill of reading comprehension needs to be improved and to increase its effectiveness by using strategies that help students to comprehend the written text. In expansion, Klinger (2007:8) point out that RC (reading comprehension) could be a multi-component, exceedingly complex prepare that includes numerous communication among readers and what they carry to the content (foundation information, technique utilize) as well as factors related to the content itself (intrigued in content, understanding the sorts of content). It can be said that in comprehending the content the readers require their claim foundation information and technique which makes the readers interface to what is studied by them. RC refers to the capacity of a individual to understand well what the writer wants to convey. Comprehension regarded as the essential part and the purpose of reading, meanwhile RC creates an interactive process among the text and the individual who delivers the text (Rivers, 1981:180). This condition is therefore problematical and needs some kind of remedying for improvement, since the development of reading skills is necessary to teach English as a foreign language (EFL). Accordingly, it is indispensable to adopt new techniques for teaching RC.

In this study tries to use a new strategy concept checking questions in teaching reading skills to enhance Iraqi EFL students' performance in this skill. Concept checking are usually carried out using a set of questions pointed to definite that the students understand the target language, to increase attentiveness of its difficulties and teacher ensure that the learners have fully understood it. In addition CCQs help increase consciousness of association and



connotation, and to draw attention to collocations and stuck expressions they're conjointly smart listening observe for learners, and might even lead on to category activities like idea games during which the learners write their questions(Workman:2008:8).

Nowadays internet used as a new technique in teaching ,in addition to, the development of multimedia and information technologies, has create fundamental variations in the old-style procedure of teaching (Wang,2007:501-519). According to Yang and Arjomand(1999:17-29),the Increase in information equipment, has created extra varieties for today's teaching. Programs of educational institutions and schools have documented e-Learning as having the panorama to change individuals, knowledge, skills as well as performance (Henry,2001). One of the techniques that can be used to organize the learning process online is to use Google Classroom(GC). GC is designed to provide a platform of combined schools learning, so as to create assignments simpler and receiving the score to the students in a paperless way(Donald Yates,2017). This technology enables teachers to create and arrange assignments efficiently, receive input effectively, and connect with their students easily online or blend teaching style offers several advantages over the conventional technology style of teaching. The most significant benefits are its ease of access, students' scheduling flexibility, and adaptability for working(J.E.Gallagher,K,2005:1). The achievement of particular goals, such as the simplification of student-teacher communication, and the easiness of delivery and coordination of assignments should be taken in the consideration. Students have chance to submit their homework to their teachers online within the deadlines.

METHODOLOGY

Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores attained by the students of the experimental group (those who study using concept checking questions) and the achievement of the control group (those who study using prescribed method).

Purposes of the Study

This study aims to find out:

- 1- The impact of using concept checking questions on the achievement of Iraqi EFL preparatory school students in reading comprehension.
- 2- The differences between the performance of students in the (experimental group)who are taught reading by concept checking question strategy and that those in the (control group)who are taught by the conventional way.

Population and Sample of the Study

Population study is the adopted in Fourth year students of Preparatory school in Babil governorate in the course of the academic year2019-2020. To accomplish the objectives of this study, the sample population of 63 EFL pupils at Al-Hilla preparatory School. The pupils' ages range from 16-17. Additionally, the researcher adopted EG and CG (experimental and control group) that consisted of 32 candidates for experimental group and 31 control group. The two groups are given a RC (reading comprehension) test to measure the level of achievement.



Group	Section	Number of students
Experimental	A	32
Control	B	31
Total		63

Equivalence of the Two Groups

The two groups are equalized by controlling some variables that might affect the accurateness of the results. These variables are as follows:

1. The age of each students .
2. Parents' educational attainment.
3. students' scores in English language for the previous course.
4. students' general achievement for the preceding year.

Instrumentation

The researcher used pre-test and post-test for the control and experimental groups, the tests consist of thirty items are given in the formats: multiple choice, true/false, completion, and short answer questions. The test is planned according to Bloom's Taxonomy of educational objectives. The allocated time for the reading comprehension test is 30 minutes, questions range from easy to difficult. Moreover the questionnaire used in this study include 15 items about the using of concept checking questions, the questionnaire is given to 60 English teachers. The questionnaire is divided to a five- point scale (strongly agree; agree; neutral; disagree; and strongly disagree). The statistical analysis of obtained data from the pre-post reading comprehension test were arranged in terms of tables and graphs by stating the interpretation of these data in percentages to make them clear and understood.

Procedures

The researcher has selected Google classroom platform and telegram application group to manage his experiment about concept checking questions strategy, she employed pre-test to both groups, a control group being taught by using of the prescribed method in teaching. The experimental group was taught through using CCQs strategy in reading comprehension teaching.

In the beginning, the researcher gave the students new narrative text, after reading the text the researcher asked concept checking questions to illustrate the new aspect of language in the given text, The researcher then asked several referential questions(RQ) to check whether the students understand the grammar and the new vocabulary or not. Then they asked to prepare their exercises. At the following session, their home work was reviewed by the researcher, and then the researcher asked the students some CCQs to test their comprehension. At the end of the experiment, post-test was accomplished to see how much the language was learned and to see whether or not the marks of the two groups are different .

Example

He hesitated before jumping.

1-Did he jump immediately?(No)

2-Did he wait a short time and then jump?(Yes)

3 Why?(He was uncertain, worried)

Validity of The Test

"Validity" is the scope in which interpretations made from the suitable result of assessment, meaningful, and beneficial in forms of the assessment purpose (Gronlund,1998:226). Therefore Richards and Schmidt (2002: 575) point out that 'Test Validity' is the first concept that should be checked when administrating a test. Every test despite of being informal or formal, short or long, it should be as valid as the designer can make it.

After designing pre and post-test, the tests were exposed to qualified experts in the field of TEFL and Linguistics to make sure the tests are applicable with what the present study is concerned. The specialists were asked to give their opinion and write comments about the efficiency and suitability of the tests. They approved the efficiency and suitability of the test. Some items and procedures modifications suggested by experts have been taken into consideration.

RESULTS

The T-test formula is used to designate students score in pre-test and post-test and if there is any substantial difference between pre and posttests scores or not. To achieve the research aims, a null hypothesis is formulated.

The results showed that the null hypothesis is rejected because there is a statistically significant difference at the level of (0.05) as it clarified in tables below:

Table (1) The Students' Scores in Pre-test and Post-test for Control Group.

Group	N	Mean	SD	DF	t-value		Level of significant
					Computed	Tabulated	
Pre-test	31	18.29	5.617	30	1.522	2.04	0.05
Post-test	31	20.48	6.066				

With the regard to the CG the mean scores of the pre-test was (18.29), while that of the post-test was (20.48). The results showed that the computed

t-value was (1.522) whereas the tabulated t-value was (2.04). This mean that there is a little difference between them.

Table (2) The Students' Scores in Pre and Post-tests for Experimental Group.

Group	N	Mean	SD	DF	t- value		Level of significant
					Computed	Tabulated	
Pretest	32	20.21	5.386	31	5.073	2.04	0.05



Post-test	32	25.03	4.638				
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The mean scores of the experimental group in the pre-test was (20.21), while that of the post-test was (25.03). The results showed that the computed t-value was (5.073) whereas the tabulated t-value was (2.04). This denoted that the pre-test and post-test are significantly different at (0.05) level of significant and at 30 degree of freedom. Namely, the post-test of the experimental group is much better than the pre-test.

Table (3) The Students' Scores of the Post-test for both Groups

Group	N	Mean	SD	DF	t-value		Level of significant
					Computed	Tabulated	
Experimental Group	32	25.03	4.638	61	3.349	2.00	0.05
Control Group	31	20.48	6.066				

By comparing the mean scores of the experimental groups and control groups in the pre-test and post-test. The mean score of experimental group was (25.03), while the mean score of the control group was (20.48). The calculated t-value found to be (3.349) at (61) degrees of freedom and (0.05) level of significance. This, in turn, means that the strategy is determined and used by the researcher is more fruitful and effective than the traditional strategies concerning vocabulary comprehension and retention.

Major Findings and Discussion

The researcher concluded in the light of the statistical manipulation of data that concept checking questions strategy is useful for improving English language understanding and it simplified reading comprehension, also data showed that concept checking questions can help comprehend new vocabulary to a certain degree and the use of CCQs strategy can improve students' enthusiasm. The students' progress during teaching reading comprehension perception activity by using concept checking questions strategy is better. The students' mastery in English reading comprehension can be improved; it is stayed by the result of the pre-test scores that are lower than the result of score of the post-test score. Also, The results indicated that CCQs strategy suggested and adopted by the researcher in his experiment has proved to be effective in improving the students' understanding of reading comprehension.

RECOMMENDATION

Depending on the results of this study, it can be recommended that:

- 1- English language teachers in the preparatory stage have to follow new and various techniques to help students gain a improved understanding of the target material.
- 2- English language teachers should follow concept checking questions technique in their lessons because it also improves their language skills.
- 3- English teachers should be in touch with the development courses during the service so that they can communicate with the new teaching methods.



4- Using concept checking questions technique to teach EFL learners reading and communicative skills because CCQs provide EFL learners with good opportunities to negotiate meaning.

5- Concept checking questions technique requires a very qualified teacher who does his best to make reading comprehension skill and CCQs fruitful.

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