

Efficacy of Amalgamated Approach on reading comprehension of English Language Learners.

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Abstract : The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of using amalgamated Approach on reading comprehension. To achieve the purpose of the study a pre/post test was constructed to measure students 'achievement in English. The sample of the study comprised of 80 students of sixth grade. The sample of the study was divided into four groups according to their intelligence. Forty in the experimental group and forty in the control group. Experimental group was taught by using amalgamated approach and the control group by traditional method of teaching. The findings of the study indicated that the students in the experimental group showed more effective results as compared to the control group students. Also there was significant difference in gain scores of reading comprehension of students when taught with amalgamated approach.

Keywords: Amalgamated Approach, Academic Achievement, Peer Tutoring and Reading Comprehension

Introduction

Efficacy is an interesting word that certainly has implications for education. "Efficacy is the capacity to produce an effect. It has different meanings in different fields." "By 'efficacy' we mean the personal conviction of teachers and administrators that their actions are the primary influences on the academic success of students" (Reeves, 2011).

AMALGAMATED APPROACH

An amalgamated approach is a combination of two or more instructional approaches to get the various advantages of all these approaches together as a whole. In this study, Amalgamated approach is a mixture of two approaches – Conventional as well as Peer-Tutoring. An Amalgamated approach is explained as under:

Amalgamated Approach = Conventional lecturing + Peer Tutoring
(35 minutes) = (15-20 minutes) + (15-20 minutes)

PEER TUTORING

It is a common instructional strategy used in classrooms. Peer tutoring may consist of students of the same learning level working together or students of varying learning levels working together. This can be easily implemented even in a classroom of diverse learners.

Definitions

Topping (2005) defines peer tutoring as "the acquisition of knowledge and skill through active helping and supporting among status equals or matched companions. It involves people from similar social groupings who are not professional teachers helping each other learn and learning themselves by so doing (p. 631).

Mastropieri et al. (2006) described, "Peer tutoring as groups of two or three combining lower achieving students with higher achieving students for assistance."

Kunsch, Jitendra & Sood (2007) defines "Peer tutoring is a term that's been used to describe a wide array of tutoring arrangements, but most of the research on its success refers to students working in pairs to help one another learn material or practice an academic task".

Keith Topping and Shirley Hill (2008) defined "Peer tutoring is a term in which people from similar social groupings who not professional teachers are helping each other to learn and learning themselves by teaching."

Kelsey Horvath (2011) defined "Peer tutoring consists of two or more students working together; teaching each other rather than learning from a teacher's direct instruction."

It is concluded from above definitions that in peer tutoring more than one student work together and learn better.

RATIONALE

A child learns such fundamental things as how to walk, talk, eat, and dress, and so on without being taught these things. Most of what is taught in classroom settings is forgotten, and much of what is remembered is irrelevant. Armstrong (2012) claimed that "traditional education ignores or suppresses learner responsibility". Moreover, UNESCO report 1972 pointed out that "no doubt, the teacher has to implant knowledge, but the more important function is to encourage thinking on the part of the students. He has to devote more time and energy to productive and creative activities; interaction; discussion, stimulation; understanding and encouragement" Hence, there is a need to identify and try out such an approach of teaching through which above mentioned criteria could be fulfilled. An Amalgamated approach seems to be beneficial as it is a mixture of both teacher-centred as well as learner centred approach. The "Amalgamated Approach" to teaching (with both traditional lecture and active learning) would allow many school instructors, the opportunity to explore the advantages of active learning without the concern of losing the benefits of lecturing. Thus, the purpose of this research is to compare various amalgamated instructional model that involve lecturing and active/peer tutoring in school students or English learners.

Review of related literature

Cramer (2004) found that Peer tutoring is one such learning strategy which has been shown effectiveness in increasing reading comprehension scores for all groups of students including those considered at risk students such as the learning disabled or ESOL learners.”

Topping (2008) found that some benefits of peer tutoring for students include higher academic achievement, improved relationships with peers, improved personal and social development as well as increased motivation. In turn, the teacher benefits from this model of instruction by an increased opportunity to individualize instruction, increased facilitation of inclusion/mainstreaming, and opportunities to reduce inappropriate behaviours.

Kazuhiro Ehara(2008) found that reading teachers should use a task-based teaching method with reading questions. If the use of reading questions is already a part of reading teachers’ methodology, they should include not only commonly used textually explicit reading questions but also inferential ones. The study suggests that implementing these changes might help break the cycle of translation-bound reading instruction with its overemphasis on lower-level processing, and might leads students to read texts in a more meaningful, interactive way.

Phyllis Swan Underwood (2009) found that an accumulating research reveals that children’s reading comprehension is influenced by a reader’s experiences, knowledge, language structure, and vocabulary. Thus, this researcher investigated the construct, culturally-responsive practice, as a way to provide effective learning opportunities for children from non-mainstream cultures, including children living in poverty. Evidence from this study suggests that the most critical component of culturally-responsive practice on students’ reading comprehension is the development and implementation of reading comprehension strategies.

Kristina M. Hansen (2009) found that an analysis of the relationship of vocabulary instruction, reading comprehension, and student retention. Vocabulary can affect comprehension; however the most effective method of vocabulary instruction has yet to be determined. Context, semantic mapping, and a combination of instructional approaches are examined. Many types of vocabulary instruction can have a positive effect on comprehension, particularly when these methods rely on multiple exposures to a word and interactive approaches.

Brandon K Vaughn (2009) investigated study on effectiveness of a “balanced amalgamated” approach to teaching graduate level introductory statistics. Although some research stresses replacing traditional lectures with more active learning methods, the approach of this study is to combine effective lecturing with active learning and team projects. The results of this study indicate that such a balanced amalgamated approach to learning not only improves student cognition of course material, but student morale as well. An instructional approach that combines mini-lectures with in-class active-learning activities appears to be a better approach than traditional lecturing alone for teaching graduate-level students.

Singh Manju (2010) found that a balanced amalgamated approach to learning not only improves academic achievement of students in Hindi language, but their reading comprehension as well. Hence, an instructional approach that combines with peer tutoring appears to be significantly better approach than conventional lecturing or text book method alone for teaching school eight grade students.

Pariser J. (2012) studied on effectiveness of institutional factors for peer tutoring and examined a) institutional factors that administrators see as facilitating peer tutoring programs and b) institutional factors that administrators see as forming barriers to peer tutoring programs.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study is conducted to attain the following objectives:-

- 1) To find out the difference between the post test scores of reading comprehension of experimental and control group of high intelligent students.
- 2) To find out the difference between the post test scores of reading comprehension of experimental and control group of low intelligent students.
- 3) To find out the difference between the gain scores of reading comprehension of experimental and control group of high intelligent students.
- 4) To find out the difference between the gain scores of reading comprehension of experimental and control group of low intelligent students.

HYPOTHESES

- 1) There is no significant difference between the post test scores of reading comprehension of experimental and control group of high intelligent students.
- 2) There is no significant difference between the post test scores of reading comprehension of experimental and control group of low intelligent students.
- 3) There is no significant difference between the gain scores of reading comprehension of experimental and control group of high intelligent students.
- 4) There is no significant difference between the gain scores of reading comprehension of experimental and control group of low intelligent students.

Sample: The sample of the study was consisted of 100 students studying VIth class of Model Middle High School, Ropar (Punjab) affiliated to Punjab School Education Board. The study was conducted only in the subject of English.

Methodology: In order to realize the above said objectives, Experimental method was employed

Research Design

The present study employed on the variable of instructional treatment which was studied at two levels namely experimental group (T1) which was taught by Amalgamated Approach and control group (T2) which was taught by traditional Instruction. The variables of intelligence were also studied at two levels: high intelligence (I1) and low intelligence (I2) levels.

Tools

Tools Used: The following tools were used for the purpose of data collection;

- Jalota's Test of General Mental ability.
- Lesson plans developed on the basis of Amalgamated Approach.
- The Reading Comprehension material was prepared by the investigator.

Procedure

The following procedure was adopted for conducting the study:-

Stage I: Selection of the sample

The present study was conducted on 100 students of class VIth in Model Middle High School Rupnagar, affiliated to Punjab School Education Board. Students were selected for experimentation after administration of Intelligence test on 140 VIth class students. The Intelligence test scores of students were arranged in a descending order and randomly allocated to two group's viz. the experimental group and the control group. Thus, there were 25 students in each group.

Stage II: Conducting the experiment

The experiment was conducted in three phases as given below:--

PHASE 1 Administration of the pre -test

This phase involved the Reading Comprehension in English of students of the experimental and control group.

Phase II Implementing the instructional program

The instructional treatment was manipulated in the form of teaching based on use of Amalgamated Approach and traditional instruction method. The instructional treatment was given for 15 days to the two groups. Students the experimental groups were taught science for 15 days by Amalgamated Approach and students of control group were taught by the traditional instruction. The content taught to both the groups was same. The instructions were conducted through well structured lesson plans on the content selected for experiment. The treatment was implemented by one of the authors in the two groups so as to minimize teacher variable maximize precision.

Phase III Administration of the post - test

In this phase, after the completion of Instructional programme, the post test of Reading Comprehension in English was conducted for both the experimental and control group students.

Statistical Technique Used: t-test was employed for the analysis of data, mean, S.D. were also computed.

INTERPRETATION OF DATA

H1: There is no significant difference between the post test scores of reading comprehension of experimental and control group of high intelligent students.

TABLE – 4.1

Mean, Standard Deviation, t-test of Reading comprehension of post – Test Scores of High Intelligence of VII Graders.

| | Group | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | t-test | Significant |
|----|--------------------|----|-------|--------------------|--------|----------------------------|
| A. | Experimental Group | 25 | 17 | 1.85 | 4.26 | Significant at both levels |
| B. | Control Group | 25 | 12.35 | 4.56 | | |

Table – I shows the comparison of post-test scores of group A i.e. experiment group and group B i.e. control group. The mean of Group A is 17 and of Group B is 12.35. Their standard deviations are 1.85 and 4.56 respectively. The t value works out to be 4.26, which is significant both at 0.05 and 0.1 level. Thus, the results show that the hypothesis H1 i.e. there is no significant difference between reading level of post test scores of experimental and control group of high intelligence students is rejected. H1 is rejected which reflects that amalgamated approach is very effective as far as increasing the reading level in English is concerned. Thus, the students in experimental group actively participate in the classroom activities and show more effective result as compared to control group. This study is supported by **Singh Manju** (2010). Manju found that a balanced amalgamated approach to learning not only improves academic achievement of students in Hindi language, but their reading comprehension as well. Hence, an instructional approach that combines with peer tutoring appears to be significantly better approach than conventional lecturing or text book method alone for teaching school seventh grade students.

H2 : There is no significant difference between the post test scores of reading comprehension of experimental and control group of low intelligence students.

Table II

Mean, Standard Deviation, t- test of Reading comprehension of post – Test Scores Of Low Intelligence of VIIth Graders.

| | Group | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | t t-test | Significant |
|----|--------------------|----|-------|--------------------|----------|-------------|
| A. | Experimental Group | 25 | 16.60 | 2.24 | 4.23 | Significant |
| B. | Control Group | 25 | 11.65 | 4.74 | | |

Table – II shows the comparison of post-test scores of group A i.e. experiment group and group B i.e. control group. The mean of Group A is 16.60 and of group B is 11.65. Their standard deviations are 2.24 and 4.74 respectively. The t value works out to be 4.23, which is significant both at 0.05 and 0.01 level. Thus, the results show that the hypothesis H2 i.e. there is no significant difference between reading level of post test scores of experimental and control group of low intelligence students is rejected. This study is supported by **Kristina M. Hansen** (2009), **Johnston, Amber M.;** **Barnes, Marcia A. Desrochers** (May 2008), **Kazuhiro Ehara**(2008).

H3: There is no significant difference between the gain scores of reading comprehension of experimental and control group of high intelligence students.

| | Group | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | t t-test | Significant |
|----|--------------------|----|------|--------------------|----------|-------------|
| A. | Experimental Group | 25 | 5.15 | 2.41 | 5.38 | Significant |
| B. | Control Group | 25 | 1.65 | 1.7 | | |

Table – III shows the comparison of post-test scores of group A i.e. experiment group and group B i.e. control group. The mean of Group A is 5.15 and of group B is 1.65. their standard deviations are 2.41 and 1.7 respectively. The t value works out to be 5.38, which is significant both at 0.05 and 0.01 level. Thus, the results show that the hypothesis H3 i.e. there is no significant difference between the gain scores of experimental and control group of high intelligence students is rejected.

H4 : There is no significant difference between the gain scores of reading comprehension of experimental and control group of low intelligence students.

Table – IV Mean, Standard Deviation, t-test of Reading comprehension of post – Test Scores of High Intelligence of VII Graders.

| | Group | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | t-test | Significant |
|----|--------------------|----|------|--------------------|--------|-------------|
| A. | Experimental Group | 25 | 6.02 | 4.3 | 3.47 | Significant |
| B. | Control Group | 25 | 2.01 | 2.8 | | |

Table IV shows the comparison of post-test scores of group A i.e. experiment group and group B i.e. control group. The mean of Group A is 6.02 and of group B is 2.01. Their standard deviations are 4.3 and 2.8 respectively. The t value works out to be 3.47, which is significant both at 0.05 and 0.01 level. Thus, the results show that the hypothesis H4 i.e. there is no significant difference between the gain scores of experimental and control group of high intelligence students is rejected.

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