INVESTIGATING HOW TO ENHANCE ENGLISH READING COMPREHENSION FOR THE VIETNAMESE TENTH-GRADERS AT HIGH SCHOOLS IN GIA LAI PROVINCE

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Abstract: Although the National Foreign Languages 2020 Project was launched in 2008 to improve the quality of ELT (English Language Teaching) at all levels of education in Vietnam, high school learners of English have encountered many difficulties in mastering communication skills, especially reading comprehension skill. The study examined and analyzed the result of applying speed reading strategies to treat a group of 20 tenth graders at Asian Pacific College School in Gia Lai Province who was involved in 15-week training course after having attended reading practice tests with another group. This experimental approach also showed that the application of fast reading strategies such as skimming and scanning did not only enhance learners' reading speed, confidence, and motivation but also forced them to concentrate better on doing comprehension questions as well. Hence, these strategies should be considered as a strategic choice to speed up reading comprehension skill for high school learners of English, which will surely help widen their knowledge as the foundation for mastering other communication skills in English.

Keywords: Speed reading, strategies, reading comprehension skill, high school learners

1. Introduction

Apart from speaking, listening, and writing, reading is considered to be one of the most important skills for accessing information and for communication. People can hardly deny the significant role of reading brought to human living. As Eskey (2005) pointed out, "many students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), for example, rarely speak the language in their day-to-day lives but may need to read it in order to access the wealth of information recorded exclusively in the language" (p. 563). It is the fact that reading has played a vital part not only in people's daily life but in school life as well. Reading comprehension is perhaps one of the most intensively studied fields in language teaching and learning. For the learners of English, fluent reading is of utmost importance, and one way to improve reading fluency is to do a speed reading course (Chung & Nation, 2006). Speed reading plays a vital role in reading comprehension. The value of reading connects closely to comprehension, not basing on how fast a reader can perform. In other words, speed reading without comprehension is considered as speed looking (Beale & Mullan, 2008).

2. Theoretical framework

This section looks at the underlying theory on the speed reading and the review of the possible effectiveness of speed reading activities that improve reading speed and reading comprehension, then poses the research questions for this study.

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2.1. Reading and reading comprehension skills in learning EFL

The definition of reading is just traced correctly basing on what one intends to do or really can do in dealing with words or discourse. Reading intention might depend on various readers and on different things they read (Nuttall, 1982). Hence, reading for meaning is the central goal of the reading process (Nuttall, 1982). To EFL students, reading and reading comprehension offers them language input and improve their English proficiency. Good readers as EFL students become more autonomous and able to read not only in the classroom but also after leaving school to stay in touch with English. With reading comprehension activities, EFL students do not only improve in their reading abilities but also improve in using and increasing their English abilities and knowledge. Without getting much exposure to reading materials in class, EFL students are unlikely to make much progress (Nation, 2009).

As discussed in the previous section, reading skill plays an essential role in EFL learners to improve their English. For the learners of English, fluent reading is important, and one way to improve reading fluency is to do a speed reading course (Chung & Nation, 2006). Speed reading plays a vital role in reading comprehension. The value of reading connects closely to comprehension, not basing on how fast a reader can perform. In other words, speed reading without comprehension is considered as speed looking (Beale & Mullan, 2008). Therefore, to learn to speed read, the readers need to separate the reading comprehension from fast reading development, then improve the two processes with suitable strategies. The speed reading process comes about when the readers focus on important parts while ignoring less valuable or important parts of the text. To read effectively, readers have to identify and concentrate on the most important parts of the text with proper reading skills (Duggan & Payne, 2009).

2.1.1. Speed reading strategies

Many studies have shown that increasing the reading rate will improve reading comprehension. As Samuels (1976) claims, it can be presumed that when a text is read fast, comprehension may become lower because attention is not involved in the reading process. That means despite the importance of automaticity in the process of fluent reading, attention should be paid on the meaning to comprehend the text. According to Carver (1982), the average reading rate for a college student is about 300 wpm for reading, 200 wpm for learning, and 138 wpm for memorizing. However, reading at a rate between 250 wpm and 350 wpm allows readers to comprehend a text most efficiently (Carver, ibid). Carver (1990) made a distinction between five types of reading: scanning, skimming, rauding (just to understand the message), learning (to acquire the information), and memorizing (to be able to recall the facts) and stated that each type is associated with different reading rates. The main aim of teaching reading is to enable students to comprehend reading from different contents easily. Farstrup (2002) stated that teachers should be aware and knowledgeable of many instructional methods and strategies available to promote students' reading comprehension and motivate students towards reading, promote their interest and encouragement in reading comprehension, develop their reading comprehension skills, and aid them in accomplishing reading comprehension tasks.

Speed reading strategies are reading techniques that help readers read faster than normal, especially by acquired techniques of skimming and controlled eye movements. For language learners as well as native speakers, the two most valuable reading strategies and techniques are skimming and scanning (Brown, 1994). Skimming and scanning, in some ways, make readers more flexible while reading. They read on the purposes of getting information which they need quickly without wasting time. These readers do not need everything but the specific information they want to know by reading with some necessary skills and methods.

Beale (2013) wrote ideas about speed reading strategies as "people who know how to skim and scan are flexible readers. They read according to their purpose and get the information they need quickly without wasting time. They do not need everything, which increases their reading speed. Their skill lies in knowing what specific information to read and which method to read" (p. 1).

Skimming is reading a text or a passage quickly to get a general idea. When using skimming reading, learners do not need to read every word; therefore, this strategy is usually used in a timed reading task and to encourage speed. Skimming is helpful in stages of pre-reading, reviewing, and reading processes. With skimming strategies, learners do not need to read everything in a limited time, as teachers set a timed task and encourage speed (Beaver & Bower, 1970).

Scanning is a strategy of reading to cover several materials rapidly to identify a specific aspect or piece of information. It is useful to point out a particular name, date, statistic, or fact without reading the whole text (Johns, 2007).

Skimming and scanning help in improving the students' speed and help in improving their abilities of comprehension. Broughton et al. (1980), Beaver and Bower (1970) agreed that if the learners who want to be faster in reading comprehending should need to practice skimming and scanning.

In EFL teaching and learning in Vietnam educational system, strategies of skimming and scanning are mainly used to teach EFL students to improve their reading speed and reading comprehension also. Therefore, in this study, skimming and scanning are the major component techniques in speed reading strategies used in the training course.

2.1.2. Timed reading and paced reading activities

Timed reading involves having students read under time pressure to improve reading speed to an optimal rate that supports comprehension rather than developing speedy readers. In addition, "time limitations may enhance reading comprehension by promoting mindfulness in students, a construct which involves the exertions of more effort and motivation" (Walczyk et al., 1999, p. 156). The favored approach, at least in EFL, seems to be timed reading (Atkins, 2010, Taferner & Murray, 2013), and some evidence suggested that for intermediate-level EFL learners, timed reading leads to more significant gains in reading speed. The standard approach to timed reading instruction is described by Nation (2009).

Another kind of speed reading activity is paced reading. Paced reading is referred to one of the ways to increase students' reading speed, which accelerate reading (Anderson, 1999;

Cushing-Weigle & Jensen, 1996 cited in Chang, 2010), and it has students read the texts under some degree of time pressure. Meyer (1999) stated that timed reading and paced reading activities contributed to developing learners' reading fluency with the ability to read text rapidly, smoothly, effortlessly, and automatically with little attention to the mechanics of reading such as decoding. To support the approach from previous studies, Magno (2010) stated that fluency in reading is a mark of reading proficiency.

2.2. Previous studies

Several studies have been carried out to explore the effectiveness of timed reading or speed reading in order to improve reading fluency in various learning contexts (Utsu, 2004, 2005; Chung & Nation, 2006; Crawford, 2008; Atkins, 2010). However, as a component of timed reading activities, whether time affects the improvement in speed and comprehension level has still been debatable.

Maxwell (1972) conducted a study to examine skimming and scanning improvement and to focus on the need for these skills. The study consequently concludes that the best way for students to meet the effects of the information explosion on school reading task lists is to become a competent and confident skimmer and scanner.

Farstrup and Samuels (2002) commented in their book that teachers should acknowledge and be proficient in many available instructional methods and strategies to help their students enhance reading comprehension and to motivate them to learn reading well. He also stated that teachers' awareness and knowledge of the instructional methods strategies help to promote students' interest and encouragement in reading comprehension and to develop their reading comprehension skills as well as to improve their competence in reading comprehension tasks.

Chung and Nation (2006) examined the influence of a speed reading course on EFL learners in a university in Korea. The study included 40 participants who did 23 timed reading texts for nine weeks. The researchers found significant improvement in nearly all the subjects which participants studied with an average increase of 52% of reading rate, from 141 words per minute to 214 words per minute. However, the researchers stated one limitation of the research, which was the lack of a control group; a second was absence of measure of reading comprehension was included. Nation (2009), in his article, reading faster, concludes that it has been suggested that reading too slowly can have adverse effects on comprehension.

Chang (2010) carried out a research study on enhancing reading fluency throughout the timed reading. An experimental 13-week timed reading activity was integrated into a normal curriculum aiming to improve students' reading rates. Eighty-four college students as participants were emplaced in an experimental and a control group and pre-tests, and post-tests as test instruments were used on reading speed and comprehension. Results indicated that students doing the timed reading activity increased their reading speed on average by 29 words per minute (25%) and comprehension by 63 (4%). Moreover, students who did the timed reading activity became confident in and concentrated on their reading (Walczyk et al., 1999).

In Vietnam, as in many other countries, EFL learners seem to read much more slowly than in their native language. The fact is that, in every English test at school, students have to do at

least 20% of the reading test section of the total test (MOET of Gia Lai, 2014), which accounts for two out of ten marks. To improve reading skills, it is not only one of the main aims for our total mark in a test but our reading comprehension in daily life in different contexts as well.

Tran (2016), in her study, shared the view that there is a relationship between reading rate and reading comprehension, and that EFL learners can be trained to improve their reading speed and reading comprehension at the same time. Tran's experiment involves four groups of participants who are first-year students at a university in Vietnam. It was found that after the treatment, most participants were reading with 70% accuracy of comprehension, and they could maintain it with an unnoticeable increase as they increased their reading speed. Tran (2016) concluded the findings indicate that reading fluency improvement does not necessarily happen with a trade-off in reading comprehension. By contrast, reading comprehension can be maintained and even improved, along with reading speed development.

Nguyen et al. (2018) experimented in examining and assessing the effects of the timed reading intervention on the students' reading speed and reading comprehension. The experiment included 50 participants who came from the Economics Department of Thai Nguyen University of Economics and Business Administration (TUEBA). The participants were randomly chosen to take the pre-test, based on which the participants were divided into three groups. In the study, a pre-test, a post-test, and a reading rate chart were utilized to examine and to measure the students' reading rate and reading comprehension. In light of the study result, both students' reading speed and reading comprehension were significantly improved after the training course with timed reading texts as an intervention.

The studies by Tran (2016) and Nguyen et al. (2018) did not look into the influence of speed reading strategies upon high school students, which is the gap in this area of research. Therefore, this study aims to examine how to enhance English reading comprehension for the Vietnamese tenth-graders at high school in Gia Lai Province, Asia Pacific College school. For that purpose, the following question was to be answered: What is the effectiveness of speed readingstrategies instruction on tenth-grade students' comprehension?

3. Methods

3.1. Research approach

With the aim of exploring the application of speed reading strategies and their effects on students' reading comprehension, this study uses the experimental approach. In the study, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods is conducted to secure the reliability and validity of the study, which could be explained by a couple of reasons. Firstly, the vital aims of the study are to examine the influence of some speed reading strategies on improving the 10th-grade students' reading comprehension. For more details, an intervention of speed reading strategies and speed reading texts will be implemented to see whether there will be any differences between experimental group students' and control group students' reading comprehension. Secondly, the study aims to discover the learners' perceptions of speed reading strategies and their attitudes toward reading English materials after being trained with speed reading strategies for 15 weeks.

3.2. Population, sampling, and participants

The population in this experimental study consists of 40 students of Grade 10 at Asia Pacific College in Pleiku, Gia Lai, Viet Nam, who are aged fifteen to sixteen and have been learning English for five years with seven-year English curriculum.

The samples as the participants for the research were selected because they are key informants and knowledgeable about the problems or phenomena which the researcher was investigating (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993). The reasons for choice were (1) the researcher is working as English teacher at APC; (2) the research problem and purpose arise through a long process of teaching reading comprehension and observing students' reading comprehension learning activities; and, (3) the selected site (APC) should have the likelihood that the viewpoints are present and could be studied (McMillan & Schumacher, ibid).

Table 1. Sample for pre-test and post-test

No.	Class	Assigned group	N
1	10A1	Control group	20
2	10A2	Experimental group	20

3.3. Pre-test and post-test on speed reading and reading comprehension

As designed in the research, reading comprehension tests with one at the beginning of the study (pre-test) and one at the end of the study (post-test) were delivered to both the experimental group and the control group. The teacher gave students in both the control and experimental groups the reading pre-test in the first week of the experiment period, before teaching the strategies of speed reading. Reading texts in the pre-test were selected from the assigned summative test for grade 10th at the end of the first semester of the academic school year 2018-2019. The post-test text is the comprehension test that has been selected and adapted from the website https://kiemtra.sachmem.vn/ as a resource for EFL teaching, learning, and testing. The pre-test, as well as the post-test, comprises four reading texts of approximately 300 words each and has twenty comprehension questions, five questions for each reading text. After 15 weeks of practicing, our teachers prepared another reading comprehension test as post-test. This test was given after the experimental period to see the effect of the experiment and the students' reading comprehension progress on reading comprehension.

3.4. Study training materials

During the experimental period, the teacher applied speed reading strategies as implementing instruments in the experimental group, meanwhile, the control group was taught with standard curriculum textbooks.

Materials for treatment included thirty reading practice texts which were adapted from *Tieng Anh 10* (Hoang & Nguyen, 2018), *Bai Tap Tieng Anh 10* (Luu Hoang Tri, 2016), and from website www.freereadingtest.com. Students in the experimental group did two reading practice texts per week. Each treatment reading practice text consists of five comprehension questions. These texts with speed reading strategies were applied to the experimental group in APC during 15 weeks in the 2nd semester of the school year 2018-2019.

In this study, timed reading and paced reading exercises have been adopted. In a timed-reading task, the students read the passages at their average and comfortable speed. When they finish reading, they calculate their reading speed by dividing the number of words in the text by the time they have taken to read it (Nuttall, 1982; Champeau de Lopez, 1993). For example, if they took four minutes to read a 500-word text, their reading speed would be 500:4=125 words per minute. In paced reading practice, the teacher controls the time allowed for the readings (Champeau de Lopez, 1993). Concerning the passages to be read, a mark is placed in the margin of the text next to the line containing each 100th word. The teacher then tells the students, with a tap on the desk, to move to the next mark, according to the speed the teacher is pacing (Champeau de Lopez, 1993; Anderson, 1999). In this research, the researcher and the teacher are pacing at 150 words per minute at the minimal reading rate in class-paced reading activities, so the tap would be every 45 seconds to read 100 words (Champeau de Lopez, 1993).

3.5. Data collection procedure

Firstly, the pre-test and post-test are designed based on the previously mentioned resources and from other sources, such as www.sachmem.vn, other Vietnam provincial DOETs, Learning Resource Network, Reading Explorations, Learn English Teens, British Council. The pre-test and post-test designs are the preferred methods to compare the reading comprehension of participant groups (experimental group and control group) and measure the degree of change occurring as a result of treatments or interventions implemented in the experimental group.

Secondly, pre-tests are given to both groups of the research before some speed reading strategies as the treatment is applied to the experimental group in the training course while post-tests are taken by two groups after experimenting period. All the test papers are collected from the research participants and marked for statistics. The pre-test and post-test results are data for analysis to discover the difference in reading comprehension between the experimental group who are trained with some speed reading strategies and control group who are not.

3.6. Data analysis methods

Based on the data collected and prepared in statistics, the researcher used quantitative data analysis to process all numeric data to turn into meaningful data through the application of rational and critical thinking. Quantitative data analysis included the calculation of frequencies of variables and differences between variables.

To serve the quantitative analysis approach, SPSS 18.0 for Windows OS and Excel 2013 were employed for statistical analysis. The mean values and standard deviations of the pre-test and post-test for both the experimental group and the control group were checked to find out the descriptive statistics. The t-test will be done with SPSS and also Microsoft Excel 2013 to help find out a significant difference in reading comprehension pre-test and post-test scores between the two groups.

4. Findings

Research question: What is the effectiveness of speed reading strategies instruction on tenth-grade students' comprehension?

Table 2 shows the results of reading comprehension pre-tests and post-tests in both the experimental group and the control group. There were two times of reading comprehension testing, pre-test, and post-test. The pre-test had been given in the first week of the experimental period (17 weeks) to two groups before the researcher implemented the intervention with speed reading strategies in the experimental group. The post-test was given to both groups after giving the treatment of speed reading. Based on Table 2, the scores of the pre-test of the two groups seem equivalent, while the scores of the two group's post-test show a significant difference. To prove the reliability of the variances between the experimental group post-test scores and control group post-test scores, the Independent Samples T-Test was run with SPSS 18.0.

Table 2. The results of groups in the pre-test and post-test

THE PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST RESULTS					
Experimental group			**Control Group**		
	PRE-TEST	**POST-TEST**		**PRE-TEST**	**POST-TEST**
Student 1	80	95	Student 1	65	85
Student 2	75	95	Student 2	75	85
Student 3	80	100	Student 3	80	80
Student 4	60	90	Student 4	70	75
Student 5	70	85	Student 5	75	70
Student 6	65	100	Student 6	75	75
Student 7	80	100	Student 7	80	80
Student 8	75	100	Student 8	80	80
Student 9	85	100	Student 9	75	70
Student 10	90	100	Student 10	75	75
Student 11	65	100	Student 11	80	80
Student 12	80	100	Student 12	80	75
Student 13	75	95	Student 13	85	90
Student 14	90	100	Student 14	70	70
Student 15	80	100	Student 15	80	80
Student 16	75	90	Student 16	80	85
Student 17	80	95	Student 17	80	75
Student 18	60	80	Student 18	80	75
Student 19	90	100	Student 19	75	80
Student 20	75	95	Student 20	80	80
MEAN	76.50	96.00		77.00	78.25
Std. Deviation (SD)	9.05	5.76		4.70	5.45
p (Independent Samples Test-t-test)	0.828	0.000000000007			

Table 3 demonstrates that the ***mean*** value of pre-test scores of two groups is relatively equal when the ***mean*** of the experimental group pre-test scores is 76.50 and 0.50 lower than control group pre-test scores. Also, it is seen that the standard deviations of experimental group pre-test scores and control group pre-test scores, respectively, are 9.047 and 4.702. With mean value, it could be seen that the two groups are equivalent in reading comprehension before the implementation of speed reading strategies as the intervention.

Table 3. Result of the experimental group and control group in pre-test

	INTERVENTION	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PRETESTSCORES	YES	20	76.50	9.047	2.023
	NO	20	77.00	4.702	1.051

Table 4 shows that there is a difference between **_mean_** values of the post-test scores of two groups where **_mean_** of post-test for the experimental group is 96.00 and the standard deviation for post-test of the experimental group is 5.758 while the **_mean_** of pre-test for the control the group is 78.25 and standard deviation for post-test of the control group is 5.447. The results in the table explain that students' post-test scores of the experimental group are higher than the students' post-test scores in control group. For the experimental group, after the study intervention, students' scores in the post-test of reading comprehension tests improve higher than their scores in the pre-test and higher than student's ones in the control group in the post-test.

Table 4. Result of the experimental group and control group in post-test

	INTERVENTION	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
POSTTESTSCORES	YES	20	96.00	5.758	1.288
	NO	20	78.25	5.447	1.218

The result is presented in the chart below:
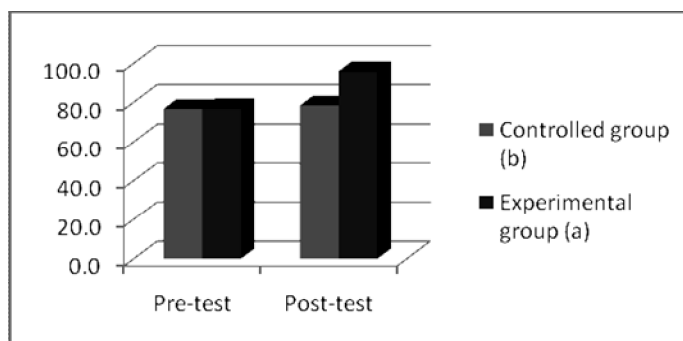
Figure 1. The differences of mean value between two groups

The descriptive statistics of students' comprehension scores are set out in Table 3 then the t-test is analyzed by SPSS with the results of the Independent Sample test on pre-test scores shown in Table 5 and the result of the Independent Sample test on post-test scores in Table 7 as below.

Table 5. Results of Independent Sample test on Pre-test scores

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
						Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df				Lower	Upper
PreTest Scores	Equal variances assumed	5.510	.024	-.219	38	.828	-.500	2.280	-5.115	4.115
	Equal variances not assumed			-.219	28.566	.828	-.500	2.280	-5.166	4.166

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According to Table 5, the t-test for equality of **mean** for the pre-test, the significant value of the pre-test is higher than 0.05, where p=0.828 (Sig. 2-tailed). In other words, before the intervention was conducted, it could be assumed that the reading comprehension level of both the control and experimental groups was insignificant.

Table 6. Results of Independent Sample test on Post-test scores

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference		Lower	Upper
PostTest Scores	Equal variances assumed	.001	.981	10.015	38	.000	17.750	1.772		14.162	21.338
	Equal variances not assumed			10.015	37.883	.000	17.750	1.772		14.162	21.338

From Table 6, the t-test for Equality **mean** with Independent for Sample test on Post-test scores performs that the experimental group scored higher than the control group at post-test, p < 0.0000 (Sig. 2-tailed). As a result, after the researcher applied the intervention with speed reading materials, a marked difference was found in the experimental group. In other words, there was a particular effect of speed reading strategies on students' comprehension.

Through using a t-test at (p≤0.05) to compare the means of the two groups, it was found that there was no significant difference between the reading comprehension of the two groups. The researcher assumed that the two groups were equivalent as it is taken from their marks in the first test, and the two groups were divided in relation to their levels. Therefore, any difference after doing the timed reading and paced reading practice tests should possibly be due to the implementation of the speed reading strategies. After conducting the experimentation and giving the post-test to both groups, the hypothesis was checked through using a t-test at (p≤0.05) and the results, as shown in the Table 7.

Table 7. Compared mean values of post-test

	Controlled group	**Experimental group**
MEAN	78.25	96.00
SD	5.45	5. 76
Value **p** of t-test	0.000	
SMD	3.26	

Table 7 shows that the results of the pre-test were equivalent. The post-test after treatment verified the differential of the**mean** (average value) by t-test to result in **p** value<**0.000** (p≤0.05). The result showed that the differential between the experimental group's **mean** value and the control group's **mean** value is profoundly meaningful.

Based on Cohen's conventions (Cohen, 1988), effect size Cohen's d of the post-test on the experimental group and control group was calculated as below:

$$d = \frac{M\,E.\,Group - M\,C.\,Group}{SD\,pooled}$$

The pooled standard deviation was:

$$SD\,pooled = \sqrt{(SD^2\,E.Group + SD^2\,C.Group)/2} =$$

$$SD\,pooled = \sqrt{(5.67^2 + 5.45^2)/2} = 5.5610$$

And therefore:

$$d = \frac{96.00 - 78.25}{5.5610} = 3.19$$

The d value was revealed "large" which tells that the difference of post-test results between the two groups is large enough and consistent enough.

Moreover, SMD value was 3.26 (SMD > 1.0) showed the treatment of speed reading strategies had a significant effect on the experimental group.

$$SMD = \frac{MEAN\,in\,posttest\,of\,E.\,group - mean\,in\,posttest\,of\,C.\,group}{Std.\,Deviation\,in\,posttest\,of\,C.\,group}$$

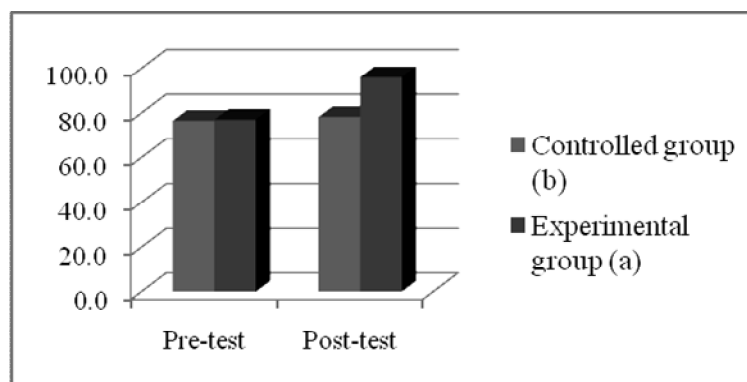$$SMD = \frac{96.00 - 78.25}{5.45} = 3.26$$

Figure 2. Effect of the treatment on the experimental group

The result also showed a high level of reading comprehension by the experimental group, which appears from the means of both experimental and controlled groups. It is obvious that there was a significant difference between the means of both groups due to the implementation of speed reading strategies. Because of that, the Null hypothesis was rejected at ($p \leq 0.05$).

The results also revealed that the students in the experimental group were better than the students in the controlled group. Apparently, the difference between the means was due to the implementation of speed reading strategies or timed reading activities.

5. Discussion and implications

5.1. Discussion

The study examined the improvement of students' reading comprehension through speed reading strategies. Buzan (2003, p. 21) stated that reading rate and comprehension are two areas (among the top 20 areas) that commonly mentioned as requiring improvement. Accordingly, improving both reading rate and comprehension can be challenging. It is because improving the students' reading rate is not just about reading words faster than they read before. In general, the results showed that the experimental group improved in reading comprehension after 15 weeks doing 30 timed reading and paced reading practice tests. The results also indicated that although the intervention time is limited in 15 weeks, it can motivate students in reading and improve their reading confidence. More interestingly, there is a close relationship between reading speed and comprehension. For example, progress charts of individuals revealed that when their reading speed dropped, there was also a decline in their comprehension.

In other words, it seems that reading one-word-at-a-time inhibits reading for understanding. Conversely, comprehension is generally higher when readers learn to read faster.

First, the results of the study showed that there was a significant difference in reading comprehension by applying speed reading strategies. The result indicated that timed reading and paced reading practice tests were effective for the experimental group. When this study is compared with the previous one conducted by Chang (2010), regardless of the differences of scale, the learning context…, there are some similarities between the two studies. The results of the present study revealed that including timed reading and paced reading activities in the regular reading texts of a standard school textbook; students could be better on comprehension skills to get the main idea as well as general information from reading texts after 15 weeks of training through 30 speed reading texts.

Second, this study also looked at students' perceptions of speed reading strategies. Many students believed those speed reading strategies, as well as timed reading and paced reading activities, help them improve reading speed and reading comprehension at the same time. Besides, timed reading and paced reading also brought unexpected gain, such as language knowledge and feeling confident; moreover, they are reported to improve students' concentration, which seems to support research results of Walczyk et al. (1999).

5.2. Implications

Some pedagogical implications also arise from the findings of solutions and suggestions already discussed.

First, speed reading strategies had some positive effects on improving students' reading speed and reading comprehension after one applied academic semester at APC Gia Lai. Speed reading strategies need to be applied in English classes more regularly and flexibly. That is, without changing textbook contents, teachers should add to teach more strategies in reading comprehension sections or change the methods of conducting teaching reading with speed reading strategies to make students more motivated and dynamic in their learning.

Second, regarding the issue of applying speed reading strategies, teachers should deepen their knowledge and improve their skills by regular professional development activities related to selecting, training, and applying speed reading strategies in practical teaching implementation in EFL classes at high school.

The success of the English class requires not only teachers' effort but students' as well. That is the reason why, together with the supports from teachers, students should pay attention to their learning process to be active learners. Due to the quite large size classes and limited time for teaching and learning in class, students should manage for self-studying and training of speed reading strategies to obtain productive habits of effective reading. Therefore, such autonomy and responsibility will contribute to good reading comprehension.

6. Conclusion

The findings of the study highlight the influence of speed reading strategies in enhancing English reading comprehension for the Vietnamese tenth-graders at APC school in Gia Lai Province. These findings are expectedto extend the understanding of the speed reading strategies in teaching and learning English as a foreign language in Vietnamese contexts. The results of this study, to some extent, are not conclusive; however, they supported findings by Maxwell (1972), Farstrup & Samuels (2005), Chung & Nation (2006), Chang (2010), Tran (2016) and Nguyen et al. (2018). It was found that the speed reading strategies can be used to train EFL tenth-graders, and they can help them improve their reading comprehension. The experimental results indicate that participants who had not been trained with speed reading strategies appearednot to gain reading speed and reading comprehension. In contrast, those who had been trained in speed reading courses could increase their reading comprehension. The finding may be useful for teachers and the tenth-grade students when they encourage EFL learners in APC school to read with ease and comprehend more in learning English.

This experimental research was conducted on a rather small scale with limited time and ability.Therefore, it is expected that further studies should be carried out to explore other factors that may affect EFL learners' reading speed and reading comprehension, such ascognitive and psycholinguistic factors. Larger scale with more participants and facilities studies are also recommended so that the study results would be more conclusive and convincing.

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NGHIÊN CỨU PHƯƠNG THỨC TĂNG CƯỜNG ĐỌC HIỂU TIẾNG ANH CHO HỌC SINH VIỆT NAM LỚP 10 TRƯỜNG TRUNG HỌC PHỔ THÔNG Ở TỈNH GIA LAI

Tóm tắt: Đề án Ngoại ngữ Quốc gia 2020 được tiến hành từ 2008 nhưng học sinh tiếng Anh vẫn gặp khó khăn khi sử dụng các kỹ năng giao tiếp nhất là kỹ năng đọc hiểu. Bài trình bày phân tích kết quả vận dụng các kỹ thuật đọc tốc độ trong khóa học 15 tuần rèn luyện nhóm 20 học sinh lớp 10 trường APC tại tỉnh Gia Lai sau khi họ tham gia kiểm tra đọc với 20 bạn khác. Thực nghiệm này chứng minh vận dụng các kỹ thuật đọc nhanh, đọc lướt, đọc sâu vừa tăng cường tốc độ đọc hiểu, sự tự tin; đồng thời, vừa bắt học sinh tập trung hơn vào câu hỏi đọc hiểu. Như vậy, các kỹ thuật này có thể là lựa chọn chiến lược tăng tốc độ đọc hiểu và giúp học sinh mở rộng kiến thức làm nền tảng cho những kỹ năng giao tiếp tiếng Anh khác.

Từ khóa: Đọc tốc độ, kỹ thuật, kỹ năng đọc hiểu, tăng cường, học sinh phổ thông trung học