



THE EFFECT OF SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING STRATEGIES ON READING COMPREHENSION

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| Article history: | Abstract: |
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| Received: March 30 th 2024 Accepted: April 26 th 2024 | Self-directed learning (SDL) has been a main emphasis of elementary education for several decades, dating back to 1975, when Malcolm Knowles published his book. However, the purpose of this study is to look at the influence of self-directed learning on students' reading comprehension skills, as well as the measures that instructors might take to enhance self-direction among primary school students. This is accomplished by teaching students' self-direction tools for reading comprehension, allowing them to check their own learning. To that purpose, they used more metacognitive methods, which are thought to be at the heart of self-directed action. |

Keywords: self-directed learning, andragogy, autonomy, reading

Primary school students struggle with reading a book because they are more interested with achieving the proper response than with the more crucial process of obtaining the answer. They rely too heavily on the dictionary to hunt up each obscure term. To assist primary school students in overcoming these challenges, teachers might instruct them to read and underline new words without consulting a dictionary, to utilize contextual cues to assume the general meaning, to skip superfluous unknown terms, and to break them down into root, prefix, and suffix. When we help elementary school students acquire knowledge of their own thinking and learning processes, we assist them in considering the efficiency of the techniques they employ in order to achieve the objectives they have set for themselves. Essentially, they are "thinking about thinking," which is referred to as metacognition. In general, using a long-term metacognitive technique of planning what needs to be done, tracking progress, and assessing outcomes is an effective way to assist primary school students gain control of their own thinking and feeling processes (Block, 2004). The literature on metacognitive techniques in reading comprehension suggests that poor readers lack appropriate metacognitive strategies and are unaware of how to approach reading. They also exhibit difficulties in the use of metacognitive methods to check their comprehension of materials. In contrast, competent L2 readers understand how to employ suitable tactics to improve text comprehension (Pitts, 1983). Block (2004) defines "metacognition [in this field] as a reader's awareness of (1) what he or she is thinking about while reading, (2) what thinking processes he or she initiates to overcome literacy challenges, and (3) how a reader selects specific thinking processes to make meaning before, during, and after reading. According to Knowles (1975), there is compelling evidence that persons who take the initiative in learning (pro-active learners) learn more and better, than do people who sit at the feet of teachers passively waiting to be taught (reactive learners) (Knowles, 1975: 14). Long (2002) defines self-directed learning as the learner's active control over the learning process. We emphasize student self-direction and efficacy by teaching and engaging primary school students in particular tactics that allow them to make decisions and solve issues on their own without always being told what to do. It means we provide them skills to help them handle knowledge properly and be self-confident, trusting in their own talents to achieve. Most importantly, we assist primary school students become more thoughtful about their thinking and learning processes. The goal of this research is to investigate the influence of self-direction on learners' reading comprehension competency, primary school learners' successes, and the teacher's involvement in this area, as well as to propose some useful reading tactics to improve learner autonomy. Thus, practical suggestions we may offer include encouraging primary school students to create their own objectives for personal growth and instructional progress, as well as preparing how to reach these goals. To achieve their goals, elementary school students might benefit from learning a range of problem-solving skills. To this goal, learners were taught and exercised SDL reading methods, particularly metacognitive ones. Some important principles of the subject are discussed here. The study is intended to answer the following particular question:

- Does SDL have a substantial impact on reading comprehension proficiency? The following are some particular hypotheses based on the defined research question: H0. Self-directed tactics have no substantial influence on EFL learners' reading comprehension ability compared to teacher-directed procedures. Self-directed learning, which originated in adult education, has been tested with students in elementary and secondary schools. There may be minor variances in how various educators define SDL, but a review of the literature reveals key concepts that are important to the notion. As the name implies, SDL sees learners as responsible owners and managers of their own learning processes. SDL combines self-management (managing the environment, including the social setting, resources, and

behaviors) with self-monitoring (the process by which learners monitor, assess, and regulate their cognitive learning techniques) (Bolhuis, 1996; Garrison, 1997, as cited in Antonio, 2001). SDL acknowledges the importance of motivation and volition in beginning and sustaining learners' activities. Motivation motivates the decision to engage, whereas volition preserves the desire to complete a task and achieve goals (Corno, 1992; Garrison, 1997, as mentioned in 2001). -In SDL, control progressively transfers from teachers to students. Learners exert a considerable lot of independence in creating learning goals, selecting what is desirable to learn, and how to approach the learning activity within a particular framework (Long, 1994 as cited in Kerka, 2000; Morrow, Sharkey, & Firestone, 1993 as cited in Antonio, 2001). Teachers support learning by making it 'visible.' They demonstrate learning techniques and work with primary school students to build the capacity to utilize them independently (Bolhuis, 1996; Corno, 1992; Leal, 1993, as cited in Antonio, 2001). -SDL is, strangely, rather collaborative. Learners engage with teachers and peers (Guthrie, Alao, & Rinehart, 1996; Temple & Rodero, 1995, quoted in Antonio, 2001). SDL fosters domain-specific knowledge and the capacity to apply conceptual knowledge to new contexts. It aims to bridge the gap between classroom knowledge and real-world challenges by examining how individuals learn in actual life (Bolhuis, 1996; Temple & Rodero, 1995 as quoted in Antonio, 2001). Primary school students learn to recognize and appreciate their own life experiences. They come to appreciate the personal experiences of others. They foster critical thinking, independent initiative, and a sense of self-esteem and confidence. SDL allows you to learn how to learn, how to perceive, and how to be, all of which help you become more self-directed in many aspects of life. It is a situational trait that is temporary and depending on the learner's ability, dedication, and confidence at the time (Pratt 1988, p.162, as stated in Merriam 2001). The advantages of SDL are best stated in terms of the learners it produces. According to the research on SDL, self-directed learners are more conscious of their responsibilities for making learning meaningful and monitoring themselves (Garrison, 1997 as referenced in Antonio, 2001). They are interested and open to new experiences (Long, 1994 as referenced in Kerka, 2000), see issues as challenges, crave change, and like learning (Taylor, 1995 as cited in Antonio, 2001). Taylor also discovered that they were driven and persistent, autonomous, self-disciplined, self-confident, and goal-focused. Self-directed learning enables students to become more successful learners and social people. Self-directed learning goals differ according to the writer's philosophical approach. Those who adhere to a humanistic perspective believe that the objective of self-directed learning should be the development of the learner's ability to guide oneself.

Knowles and Tough (1967 as quoted in Merriam, 2001) wrote from this perspective as do Brockett and Hiemstra (1991 quoted in Merriam, 2001). In their Personal Responsibility Orientation (PRO) model of self-directed learning, human nature that is "basically good . . . accepting responsibility for one's own learning" and being proactive drive their model.

Teacher's role in self-directed learning: The educational process aims to generate self-directed, lifelong learners. Many contemporary educational procedures in public schools and colleges, however, serve to reinforce reliance rather than foster self-direction. Furthermore, there are several approaches to effective teaching. With a few exceptions, excellent teaching is situational; it changes in reaction to learners. The teacher continues to describe some essential qualities of a student who can take responsibility for learning: the capacity to identify one's own goals; understanding of how to successfully use linguistic resources; careful time management for learning; and active creation of learning techniques. Knowles sees the teacher's job as that of a facilitator of learning, a procedural guide rather than a content broadcaster. One of the teacher's most essential responsibilities is to promote student awareness of their involvement in learning. Taylor (1995, as cited in Antonio, 2001) proposes engaging primary school students in discussions on subjects from the Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale. Topic examples: I know I want to learn and that I am a learner, therefore I can learn anything, and I enjoy learning and solving difficulties since I know that thinking 'hard' can be enjoyable. The activity of appraising oneself on such subjects was proven to improve learner awareness. Long (1994, as referenced in Kerka, 2000), a reader, proposes sparking a similar debate by asking questions aimed to assist learners understand what effective readers do and how to become them. Some instances he gives are: Did you read better today than yesterday? Could you remember the concepts in your book? Were there any words you didn't know? How did you figure them out? Another key component of the SDL method is learner decision-making. Taylor promotes including primary school students in decisions about what is to be learnt, when and how it should be studied, and how it should be assessed. Furthermore, every proponent of SDL emphasizes the significance of enabling students to explore their own interests in order to make learning more relevant. Morrow et al. (1993, as reported in Antonio, 2001) found that when authors are permitted to pick their own themes, they write more frequently and in longer works. However, primary school students do not require complete independence. Teachers might, for example, provide a theme framework within which primary school students can make choices (Guthrie et al., 1996; Temple & Rodero, 1995, as quoted in Antonio, 2001). Teachers in this method encourage primary school students to take responsibility for their own learning, as well as to collaborate and discuss with others. Long (1994 as referenced in Kerka, 2000) and Bolhuis (1996 as quoted in Antonio, 2001) emphasize that teachers who wish to support SDL must abandon an ego-threatening practice of tracking and correcting faults (Guthrie et al. 1996 as cited in Antonio, 2001). Long and Bolhuis advocate for greater tolerance of uncertainty and risk-taking, as well as focusing on learners' strengths rather than weaknesses, because it is more beneficial for learners to achieve a few objectives that are important to them than to meet all of the teacher's objectives. Leal (1993, as referenced in Antonio, 2001) recommends enabling students to explore concepts through peer conversations, even if the answers are incomplete, since this can lead to new and significant discoveries. Corno (1992, as referenced in Antonio, 2001) proposes enabling students to follow personal interests without the prospect of official grading. Even if they make mistakes along the way, the activities will keep them interested, overcome

frustration, and finally break down obstacles to success. According to Leal, Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading might be one technique to achieve this goal in the reading classroom. To instill the habit of self-monitoring, teachers must encourage students to reflect on their actions and amend their work (Corno, 1992, as quoted in Antonio, 2001). Keeping journals is one approach to document the learning experience. Teachers can also model learning skills such as anticipating, questioning, explaining, and summarizing so that primary school students may utilize them independently. Teachers must also enable individual students to tackle a task in a variety of methods and tactics (Many, Fyfe, Lewis, & Mitchell 1996). Teachers should teach elementary school students realize their diverse personality types, life objectives, and learning methods; set high criteria and encourage elementary school students to meet them. Because SDL emphasizes meaningful learning, Temple and Rodero (1995, as cited in Antonio, 2001) suggest a contextual learning method in which teachers bring real-world issues into the classroom for students to solve. They warn against 'sugar-coating' work with enjoyment, arguing that if the assignments are worthwhile, students would work on them gladly. Learners should also be permitted to engage with the teacher in establishing deadlines and other rules. For the language instructor, the question is if it is feasible to assist students in acquiring and developing skills of any type that will improve their capacity to study both within and outside of the classroom. Researchers discovered that as children develop, they have a greater need for autonomy. SDL may be one method to leverage the innate urge to contribute to a meaningful learning experience that will continue until adulthood. Furthermore, providing reading methods for self-monitoring meaning can assist primary school students develop into actual readers.

READING TECHNIQUES FOR SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING: Reading comprehension methods are defined as mechanisms that allow readers to successfully generate meaning from the written page. In other words, these methods demonstrate how readers approach a reading job, evaluate their reading, and respond when they do not understand. Good readers use past information and experience to better grasp what they're reading, allowing them to discover connections. Struggling readers frequently read a book without pausing to assess whether it makes sense based on their prior knowledge, or whether their knowledge may be applied to assist them grasp perplexing or difficult information. Teaching primary school students how to relate to text allows them to better grasp what they are reading (Harvey & Goudvis, 2000, as mentioned in FOR-PD, 2004). Accessing existing information and experiences is an excellent beginning point for teaching tactics since every student has experiences, knowledge, views, and emotions to draw from. The following are some instances of linking statements that primary school students can use as a reference, or instructors can use as prompts for classroom discussion. This section reminds me of.... I felt like... (character) when.... If it occurred to me, I would... This book reminds me of... (another text) because.... I can connect to... (section of text) because.... Something similar occurred to me once. Tovani (2000, as referenced in FOR-PD, 2004) explains why relating to text benefits readers: It enables readers to comprehend how people feel and the motivations behind their actions. It allows readers to have a sharper image in their heads while they read, which increases reader engagement. It prevents the reader from getting bored while reading. It establishes a reason for reading and keeps the reader engaged. Readers can observe how other readers responded to the reading. It requires readers to actively participate. It enables readers to recall what they have read and pose questions about the material. Reciprocal Teaching is an educational technique for teaching strategic reading established by Annemarie S. Palincsar that involves a discussion between teachers and primary school students. In this debate, the instructor and primary school students alternate roles as the teacher, leading the discussion regarding a portion of text. The group participants in the discourse apply four autonomous reading comprehension strategies: text prediction, summarization, question generation, and explanation of unknown or confusing information. At first, the adult instructor is primarily responsible for beginning and maintaining the discourse by modeling and thinking aloud. As primary school students get more experience with discussion in small groups, the instructor voluntarily delegated responsibility for the dialogue to the students while also serving as a coach, providing evaluative information and pushing for increased and higher levels of engagement. This transition from an instructor-centered to a student-centered approach is a crucial component of the reciprocal teaching process and fosters self-regulation on the part of elementary school learners (Palincsar and Brown, 1986). (For more information see: Palincsar and Brown 1984; Peter E. Doolittle, et al 2006; Oczkus, 2003). There are several additional recent studies and ways to foster learner autonomy, but owing to research restrictions, it is hard to include and comment on them all in this study.

CONCLUSION: The aim of this study is to investigate the impact of self-direction on learners' proficiency of reading comprehension, primary school learners' accomplishments, teachers' role in this area, and suggesting some tips about learning strategies so that EFL learners can read different texts of not only their textbooks but also other sources like magazines, newspapers, etc. to comprehend them effectively and efficiently without wasting their time by looking up each Furthermore, the long-term goal of the SDL is to promote lifelong learning, particularly in adult education. Primary school students are in command of their own learning, which is a key component of good learning. SDL enables students to be productive, engaged, and motivated learners. They are no longer bored with this activity. They create and follow their own particular goals and interests. However, issues develop when the teaching method does not correspond to the learner's level of self-direction, and primary school students are not appropriately led in the early stages of learning. On the other hand, it requires learners to collaborate with the teacher. The t-test results show a significant difference in mean score between the two groups, confirming primary school learners' superior performance after therapy.

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