Exploring the Relationship Between Reading Speed and Comprehension in a College EFL Environment

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OVERVIEW

Introduction

Key terms

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Introduction

Benefits of reading

Imagination

Social skills

Communication

Health

Academic outcomes, etc.

Declining reading frequency & interest

Note: OECD average for 26 countries in 2000 and 2009.
Source: OECD, PISA 2009 Database, Table V.5.1.
Introduction

Literature:

Relationship between reading rate & comprehension level

- High reading rate > negative influence on understanding & critical thinking ability
- Low reading rate > negative influence on understanding (processing of text is too slow)

Reading in L1
Introduction

Literature:

Relationship between reading rate & comprehension level

- Speed reading & other types of fluency-enhancing training are beneficial for EFL/ ESL learners
Key terms

**Reading fluency** = “the ability to read text rapidly, smoothly, effortlessly, and automatically with little attention to the mechanics of reading such as decoding” (Meyer, 1999)

Reading fluency is usually measured by **reading rate**, calculated by words per minute (wpm)

**Speed reading** = is the ease of reading considered in combination with comprehension ability (Blau, 2001)
Current study

**Aim**: explore the relationship between reading speed and comprehension in a university EFL environment

**When**: 2018, April to 2019, January

**Who**: 71 students (freshmen) in two English Reading Skills classes

**What**: timed reading activities using the *Reading for Speed and Fluency* book by Nation and Malarcher (2007), Book 1 (34-40 sessions total)
Results & discussion

Average reading rates C1 & C2 (one year)

Wpm

Week
Results & discussion

Comprehension scores C1 & C2 (one year)

Scores out of 5

Week

Average C1 | Average C2
Results & discussion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G-TEC Scores</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>ALL</th>
<th>Listening</th>
<th>ALL</th>
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<tr>
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<td>S1-C2</td>
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<td>103.91</td>
<td>129.62</td>
<td>104.71</td>
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<tr>
<td>S2-C2</td>
<td>117.31</td>
<td>103.91</td>
<td>114.36</td>
<td>104.71</td>
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</table>

Statistically significant difference (p= 0.006) between the reading comprehension scores in the two treatment groups compared to overall scores.
Limitations & conclusion

- This exploratory study did not aim to control the great variety of factors that may have affected learning in the two treatment groups.
- Did reading familiar content at faster rates have any significant impact on understanding texts in a standardized test of English proficiency?
- Motivation may also have been an important factor contributing to the positive results of this study.
References


Thank you for listening!

Q & A