

Print Rich Classroom: An Exposure to Learn English Language Reading Proficiency

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<https://doi.org/10.62345/jads.2024.13.3.72>

Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of print rich classroom on English language reading proficiency of fourth grade. The study utilized a randomized pretest-posttest control group design, drawn from true experimental research methods, was employed. A sample of forty fourth-grade students was randomly selected from a private school in Aroop, Gujranwala. Forty students were chosen and divided into two groups: twenty were randomly assigned to the control group and twenty to the experimental group. The control group was taught using traditional teaching methods, while the experimental group received instruction through a print-rich method. Lesson plans incorporating the print-rich method were specifically designed by the researcher for the experimental group. The control group continued with the traditional teaching method for one month. An English Language Reading Proficiency (ELRP) test was developed by the researcher to assess reading skills. The test's validity was confirmed using quantitative methods and expert opinion. Data were collected from both groups, with pre-tests and post-tests administered. The results showed that students taught using the print-rich method confirmed greater improvement in reading proficiency compared to those taught using traditional methods. The study's review clearly indicated, in light of other researchers' earlier research investigations, that this study is beneficial for English language learners that print rich classroom offers a variety of chances for students to advance their English language reading abilities both within and outside of the classroom.

Keywords: Print Rich Classroom, English Language, Reading Proficiency, Grade Four.

Introduction

English is the primary language in many states among all of God's creatures, and it is also the language of teaching in other nations, such as Pakistan (Khan et al., 2016). Learning can enhance all four of the critical English language proficiency domains: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Similarly, vocabulary development and language rules proficiency (Khan et al., 2016). Proficiency in the English language refers to a learner's capacity to use the language accurately and fluently so as to be able to communicate opinions, ideas, and information without any difficulty in all academic subjects, such as language, art, and social studies. "Language proficiency is the overall ability of an individual in language, and a test of proficiency is organized basically into listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills," according to Wilson and Komba (2012, pg. 2). Therefore, a student's competency in all four English language abilities is referred to as their English language proficiency. Students who struggle with the English language always perform

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poorly academically in other disciplines as well as English. Thus, it is imperative that we analyze today.

It is observed that English, being a globally spoken language, has been a common requirement for parents. However, to get better education and to train their children to cope with the severe competition in the global market, parents admit their children into private schools by paying the high fees (Gomathi, 2014). In schools, English has been a language of teaching yet early graders in preschool show reluctance to talk in English. Any language has to be acquired upon the basis of competence in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Reading is one of the basic four language skills which is necessary for learners. According to Reading is about seeing and understanding the printed text. The inability to appreciate texts without the ability to read indicates that reading skills are quite fundamental in terms of perceiving the intended meaning of written texts. Moreover, Mugambi (2015) states that being able to read well is a requirement for success in society.

The reading proficiency has kept on changing with many changes. It was believed that reading a book, a text, or responding to questions about a text established a reading skill. According to Afflerbach et al. (2008), skills were initially viewed from the perspective of behavioral learning. Indeed, the term "skill" has been used today by teachers and researchers alike in an attempt to summarize many aspects of reading development and instruction. Also, the emphasis placed on the extraction of contextually appropriate meaning underlines how reading skill today has grown to accommodate comprehension and contextual appropriateness. These reflect a broader and more cultured understanding of what constitutes reading proficiency today.

Armbruster et al. (2001) give particular emphasis to five the components of reading, i.e., phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. A reader cannot learn to read without learning these elements.

Phonics: Phonics instruction is one of the most vital parts of early reading ability training, especially in elementary school years. It deals with the connection between phonemes-which are sound units in a language-and letters or letter combinations graphemes which convey that phoneme. In fact, letter-sound correspondence greatly aids in the formation of early reading. According to research, children who receive a strong phonics education, particularly in the lower grades, have much improved spelling and reading abilities. It is especially beneficial for children who would likely face problems while reading (Ehri et al., 2001). Nonetheless, studies have repeatedly established that phonics education is beneficial in assisting kids in becoming proficient readers, particularly during the early stages of reading development.

Fluency: Fluency is the ability to read a text accurately and fast. Reading fluently is essential because a proficient reader picks up words quickly and doesn't need to spend a lot of time deciphering them, as Kuhn (2006) noted. An infant read with ease but was unable to comprehend the words. A child who was more fluent had less difficulty decoding. Fluency has two components: automaticity and accuracy in reading. When individuals read fluently, they no longer have to accurately and automatically recognize words. Thus, there is no denying the critical importance of fluency.

Vocabulary: List of words which assists pupils in making sense a list of terms that the student knows. A large vocabulary makes it possible for readers to comprehend texts more fully and precisely. Without expanding their vocabulary, one cannot write and read proficiently (Biemiller, 2001). When a child encounters words regularly, they eventually learn how to use them correctly. Early childhood educators gradually teach their young readers to rely on such words or vocabulary. Young children like learning to read when they have a big vocabulary and use those words in a

variety of circumstances. A child's comprehension of written language improves with increased vocabulary.

Comprehension: Reading comprehension is one of the most important skills for someone learning English as a second language. Given the significance of reading proficiency, it has shown to be quite difficult to improve this strategy. Willingham (2017) asserts that reading without comprehension is similar to speaking without logic. It might be challenging for anyone to study without comprehension. For the reader to be proficient in oral language, the definitions of the established ideas and the syntactic and contextual connections between them are essential. When young children are exposed to a wide variety of print, they are in an environment that is rich in print. That is, a classroom must show and utilize print in a meaningful way throughout teaching and learning in order to be considered really print-rich. It is essential for the development of literacy skills for youngsters to explore print in meaningful contexts and watch adults using print; because they educate them that print has meaning and that writing and reading have real-world applications. With time, children get motivated to try reading and writing independently (Abraham, 2003).

A print-rich classroom is one that has an abundance of printed resources, including books, periodicals, charts, and the like, and where writing and reading are applied to a wide range of real-world situations (Hussein & Ahmed, 2013). Children engage with many print resources in a print-rich classroom, including word walls, labels, signs, graphs, and other items suited for the students' age. An setting that is print-rich contains a range of prints, including word walls, alphabetic and number charts, drawings, posters, labels, and any other print that supports children's reading development.

The four essential components of English reading phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension are greatly improved in a print-rich classroom. The following are some ways that the availability of a wide range of print materials supports each of these areas:

Phonics: Students find it simpler to identify letters with their matching sounds when they are exposed to words and letters in a print-rich classroom. A deeper comprehension of phonics is achieved through the use of resources such as word walls, posters, and interactive reading tools.

Fluency: Frequent reading promotes frequent exposure to a variety of print items, including books, magazines, and charts. Regular reading improves fluency. Children can practice accuracy, emotion, and pace by having their books read aloud to them.

Vocabulary: Through books, posters, and labels, children are exposed to a wide variety of words in a print-rich school setting, which helps to foster vocabulary development. Regular interaction with print allows children to learn new words and understand their meanings within context.

Comprehension: Children can participate in deeper reading and learning in a print-rich classroom because of the range of print materials available. Students can practice deciphering meaning, drawing connections, and creating comprehension techniques by being exposed to a variety of genres, text kinds, and written language.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study was to find out the effect of Print Rich Classroom (PRC) on the English language reading proficiency (ELRP) of grade four.

Research Methodology

Population and Sampling

A) Target Population

The study's population was all the grade four students' enrolled private School Aroop, Gujranwala.

B) Accessible Population

Using the fish bowl technique, 40 students from the private school Aroop in Gujranwala were randomly chosen to make up the study's accessible population.

C) Sample of the study

The sample of the study was comprised 40 students of grade four studying at private School Aroop, Gujranwala.

Tools of the Study

For this experimental study, three chapters from the Grade 4 English textbook were chosen. The Test Construction Team worked with the researcher to construct the Pre-Test and Post-Test. The purpose of this study was to develop an English language reading proficiency (ELRP) exam that evaluated phonics, fluency, vocabulary and reading comprehension. Thirty minutes were allotted for the test. Each participant took the test on their own, according to the style of administration. Each test item's content validity ratio (CVR) was determined after consulting a subject matter expert. Items were changed in response to expert suggestions. For the sake of validity, the Content Validity Index (CVI) was computed to be 0.85.

Validity of the Tool

The researchers developed a test based on English texts for grade four. A test on grade four English textbooks was created by the researchers. Since every item on the reading assessment test used in this study was taken from the grade four curriculum, its validity can be questioned. It was requested that each test item be reviewed by subject experts (SEs) to improve it. Fourteen Subject Experts were consulted in order to ensure the validity of the research instrument.

Reliability of the Tool

The test's reliability provides information on the items' consistency. Forty students participated in a pilot testing phase to confirm the tool's reliability. Kuder-Richardson (kr-20) was computed upon the receiving of responses. Kuder-Richardson (kr-20) has a value of 1.93.

Data Collection

Pretests and posttests were used to collect data from the forty students enrolled in the private school Aroop, Gujranwala. The students were divided into experimental and control groups. The researcher herself gathered the data. Both groups received the ELRP exam both before and after the course of treatment. The ELRP Test, which included 24 items for the pre- and post-test, took an hour to complete for the students. The test was collected after the allotted time had passed.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed by SPSS version 24. Independent sample t-test was use of test of significance (Frankel 2012).

Results

Table 1: Comparison of English language reading proficiency Pre and Post-Test Mean Gain Scores while taught through Traditional Teaching

Groups	N	Mean	SD	Df	t- Value	Sig
Control Pre-Test	20	20.8	3.3			
Control Post-Test	20	31.5	6.8	19	-6.0	.000

Table 1 reflects that the result of paired sample t-test, found out the difference between pre-test and post-test mean gain scores of the students of experimental and control group. The results revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between pre-test mean scores of control group ($M=20.8$, $SD=3.3$) and for post-test mean scores of control group ($M=31.5$, $SD=6.8$), where the difference value of (19), $t= -6.0$, and significant effect value is $.000$ $P<.05$ (2 tailed). The difference between mean scores of pre-test and post-test of control group was 19 and significant effect value is $.000$, which indicates that p value is more than $.05$ so there is a significant difference between pre and post-test scores of groups. Therefore, there is a significant difference of pre and posttest Mean scores of grade 2 taught through traditional classroom towards English language reading proficiency. Hence null hypothesis (H_{01} = There is no significant difference of pre and posttest Mean scores of grade 4 taught through traditional classroom towards English language reading proficiency) is rejected.

Table 2: Comparison of English language reading proficiency Pre and Post-Test Mean Gain Scores while taught through Print Rich Method

Groups	N	Mean	SD	Df	t- Value	Sig
Experimental Pre-Test	20	19.4	2.6			
Experimental Post-Test	20	41.0	3.0	19	-23.9	.000

Table 2 reflects that the result of paired sample t-test, found out the difference between pre-test and post-test mean gain scores of the students of experimental and control group. The results revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between pre-test mean scores of experimental group ($M=19.4$, $SD=2.6$) and for post-test mean scores of experimental group ($M=41.0$, $SD=3.0$), where the difference value of (19), $t= -23.9$, and significant effect value is $.000$ $P<.05$ (2 tailed). The difference between mean scores of pre-test and post-test of experimental group was 19 and significant effect value is $.000$, which indicates that p value is more than $.05$ so there is a significant difference between pre and post-test scores of groups. Therefore, there is a significant difference of pre and posttest Mean scores of grade 4 taught through traditional classroom towards English language reading proficiency. Hence null hypothesis (H_{02} = There is no significant difference of pre and posttest Mean scores of grade 4 taught through traditional classroom towards English language reading proficiency) is rejected.

Table 3: Comparison of Mean Gain Score of English language reading proficiency of grade four taught through traditional and print rich classroom

Test Score phonics	N	Mean	SD	Df	t- Value	Sig
Control group	20	3.0	2.5	30	-3.8	.001
Experimental group	20	6.3	2.0			
Test Score fluency	N	Mean	SD	Df	t- Value	Sig

Control group	20	1.2	1.6	30	-.54	.001
Experimental group	20	1.5	1.2			
Test Score vocabulary	N	Mean	SD	Df	t- Value	Sig
Control group	20	4.8	4.2	30	-2.3	.02
Experimental group	20	8.0	2.5			
Test Score comprehension	N	Mean	SD	Df	t- Value	Sig
Control group	20	2.0	2.5	30	-3.4	.001
Experimental group	20	4.8	1.8			

Table 3 reflects the results of the independent sample t-test, of the control and experimental groups. There is statistically significant difference in mean gain scores difference value of English language reading proficiency of grade four taught through traditional and print rich classroom is =30 $p < .05$, for phonics of both the groups for the control group ($M=3.0$, $SD=2.5$) and for the experimental group ($M=6.3$, $SD=2.0$), the difference value is 30, t value is -3.8 whereas the significant effect value is .001. For fluency of both the groups for the control group ($M=1.2$, $SD=1.6$) and for the experimental group ($M=1.5$, $SD=1.2$), the difference value is 30, t value is -.54 whereas the significant effect value is .001. For vocabulary of both the groups for the control group ($M=4.8$, $SD=4.2$) and for the experimental group ($M=8.0$, $SD=2.5$), the difference value is 30, t value is -2.3 whereas the significant effect value is .02. For comprehension of both the groups for the control group ($M=2.0$, $SD=2.5$) and for the experimental group ($M=4.8$, $SD=1.8$), the difference value is 30, t value is -3.4 whereas the significant effect value is .001, which indicate that p value is more than .05. So there is a significant difference between mean gain scores of phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary and comprehension of print rich classroom towards English language reading proficiency of control and experimental groups. Hence, null hypothesis (H_{03} = There is no significant difference of Mean gain scores of phonics, reading fluency, vocabulary and comprehension of grade 4 taught through traditional and print rich classroom towards English language reading proficiency) is rejected.

Discussion

Since its beginning, English has served as a unifying global language. As the world has become more interconnected, the significance of learning English has increased, even in countries where it is not the official language. Aydin (2014) wrote a highly insightful essay on the use of blogs for learning English as a second language. The researcher gathered valuable and relevant assessments regarding the use of reading tools, in the process of learning English. The study highlights the role reading play in English language education. The function of reading proficiency in the achievement of the English language. The 264 participants in the survey concluded that although instructional resources help English language learners become more fluent in the language, using reading abilities in English language teaching and learning is a more engaging and enjoyable approach to training. According to the report, a large number of English language learners are proficient in the language. If students are to have immediate access to reading, a classroom library is required. A higher number of students choose to spend their free time participating in print rich related activities when library corners are well-designed in classrooms. For this reason, it is among the fundamental elements needed in a school that uses a lot of print. This exchange shows several elements present in the classroom library of any school. When talking about the best approach to set up a library, Abraham (2003) provides a very clear definition of a library in a school, which is a corner that offers specific locations for youngsters to investigate books.

Conclusion

In summary, a print-rich classroom is essential to a student's development of reading skills. Print awareness must be included in the early literacy sequence since it does not develop on its own. Teachers should provide students with both verbal and nonverbal cues to help them focus on print conventions, such as letter recognition, text directionality, and spacing. By exposing students to a variety of print types and their functions, they gain insight into how print is used in everyday contexts and academic settings. Read aloud to your pupils and engage them in a discussion about the idea of print. Settings that are good for education for young children. Because of the support this environment offers, students are better able to concentrate on other print rich reading abilities like phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Gaining proficiency in reading English is crucial for both academic achievement and personal development. The purpose of this study was to determine whether print settings could predict preschool-aged children's ability to identify letters. The mean scores for phonics, vocabulary, reading fluency and comprehension was found below average in reading proficiency test of early graders. The overall means scores reflect that students' performance in English language reading proficiency at early grade level on ELRP Test is average.

- In the light of the findings of the study were made the print rich classroom enhances the phonics skills among students at early graders.
- In the light of the findings of the study were made the print rich classroom enhances the fluency skills among students at early graders.
- In the light of the findings of the study were made the print rich classroom enhances the vocabulary skills among students at early graders.
- In the light of the findings of the study were made the print rich classroom enhances the comprehension skills among students at early graders.

Recommendations

Reading proficiency in English can be greatly improved in a classroom that uses a lot of print. Make sure that labels, such as word walls, names of objects, are clearly printed on common classroom items. Students' vocabulary grows as a result of helping them connect words to their meanings. Offer a large selection of reading materials, such as books, journals, charts, posters, and student-generated content. Teachers should focus on organizing various activities and giving the students a variety of tools and materials in order to create a print rich classroom. A learner can be more creative the more materials and resources they can locate. In addition to the students' work, the classroom should be filled with various prints, photographs, and large alphabet letters. A well-stocked classroom should include print materials created by both teachers and pupils, such as books, labels, word wall, posters, charts, and other items. Additionally, it is important to provide kids with the chance to write and read a variety of stories. When it comes to implementing print-rich classroom programs in elementary schools, educators such as supervisors, administrators, teachers, and other educators should be prepared. Children's understanding of the importance of the printed materials on display in the classroom for their English language development must be emphasized.

By implementing these guidelines, teachers can create a print-rich classroom climate that promotes English language reading proficiency and sets early grades on the path to becoming proficient and self-confident readers.

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