The effect of implementing an interactive reading project on reading comprehension in the third-semester Russian language class

Abstract
In recent years, a number of empirical and conceptual studies about Project-Based Learning (PBL) have presented consistent arguments rationalizing this approach to language learning and teaching. The most common benefits attributed to project work in the second- and foreign-language settings have been located and described in recent research. However, only a few empirical studies have been conducted to evaluate the effect of project work on language learning, and even fewer on specific language skills. This dissertation presents the results of a quasi-experimental research study that investigates the effect of incorporating a semester-long reading project into a third-semester Russian classroom and reports the measured effects of this experimental treatment on students’ reading comprehension, their reading habits and beliefs, perceived reading skills, and overall language proficiency. The dissertation provides data on a semester-long project allowing students to research a topic of their interest through a set of readings (which substituted for the textbook texts) with an ultimate goal of reporting their findings in the form of a newsletter article. The project entailed interconnected sets of sequenced tasks during which students are actively engaged in information gathering, processing, and reporting, with the ultimate goal of increased content knowledge and language mastery. The context for this project was primarily text-based (extensive readings served as a base for all activities and assignments), task-driven (creating an end-product in written form), collaborative, technology-enhanced (extensive use of the Internet), and individualized (students researched topics they were interested in). The results of the study demonstrate that students’ reading comprehension increased by using an integrated methodology where reading was taught through maximizing students’ previous knowledge of a subject matter of their interest and following the procedural model for interactive reading. Additionally, the results suggest that the project implementation had a positive effect on some reading habits and beliefs regarding foreign language (FL) learning, while no significant shifts were found in students’ perceived reading skills, or their overall language proficiency.
Reading comprehension has been the main concern for second language learners and researchers. Today, with rising interests towards Vygotskyan Sociocultural Theory (SCT), attempts have been made to insert Vygotskyan approach into Foreign/Second Language classrooms emphasizing a means of meaning internalization to see if it affects reading comprehension. To this end, 52 junior EFL learners from two universities were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. A pretest of reading comprehension was used. They further suggest that reading must be viewed as an interactive, iterative process, one that involves the writer seeking to anticipate and answer questions from the reader on the one hand, and the reader responding with understanding and insight. The data were gained from reading comprehension test, observation, field notes, and questionnaire. The findings show that the implementation of IERS with the appropriate procedures developed can improve the students' reading comprehension.

Aims: This study investigated the knowledge of and the attitude towards EFL/ESL reading comprehension through (1) the effect of (a) postgraduate specialization, and (b) nationality, (2) the correlation between the EFL/ESL reading comprehension attitude and postgraduate specialization. Sample: A convenience sample of 30 postgraduate international students at the University of Exeter participated in this study. 1 Title of Unit: Reading Comprehension. Reading Grade Level: Time Frame: 7 2 weeks. Identify Desired Results (Stage 1): Students will be introduced to the objectives for the unit and day. The teacher started by going through a PowerPoint with the class over Topic and Main Idea. (Due to time constraints, she had to implement my plan a little differently than I laid it out, but that was in order for the unit to be authentic.) I then gave the students two different work sheets to review the Topic and Main Idea. The students did well identifying that one worksheet's topic was sharks.