

A Sociocultural Perspective on Iraqi EFL Learners Reading Comprehension Development

Muhammad Abdurazzaq Ismail

University of Samarra-College of Education-English department

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Abstract

Improving speaking skills of Iraqi EFL students was the main purpose of the current research. Thirty EFL students were selected as the research participants for achieving this aim. All students completed the pretest and then spent the next 25 weeks meeting for 90 minutes each to present their nine lectures, answer difficult questions, and get feedback on their use of language in context. Progressive-tests, posttests and delayed post-tests followed every three courses. The researcher utilized SPSS 22 to analyze the data descriptively and inferentially after doing an ANOVA on repeated measurements. It has been shown that using the ideas of sociocultural theory in the classroom has an important and positive impact on students of all ages and reading levels. According to the findings of the study, delivering a lecture promotes students' reading development, awareness of learning processes and acquisition of linguistic objects, cooperation, autonomy, and motivation. Learner agency, engagement, and co-construction of knowledge were also emphasized, since learning is not a simple transfer of knowledge from teacher to student.

Keywords: reading skill, agency, transforming knowledge, adaptive expert scaffolding, mediated instruction.

منظور إجتماعي ثقافي حول تنمية القراءة لمعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلفة أجنبية في العراق

م.د. محمد عبد الرزاق إسماعيل

جامعة سامراء/ كلية التربية/ قسم اللغة الانكليزي

الملخص: الهدف الرئيس للبحث الحالي هو تحسين مهارات التحدث لدى طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلفة أجنبية تم اختيار ثلاثين طالباً من طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلفة أجنبية كمشاركين في البحث لتحقيق هذا الهدف. أكمل جميع الطلاب الاختبار التمهيدي ، ثم أمضوا الـ ٢٥ أسبوعاً التالية في الاجتماع لمدة ٩٠ دقيقة لكل منهم لتقديم محاضراتهم التسعة ، والإجابة على الأسئلة الصعبة ، والحصول على تعليقات حول استخدامهم للغة في السياق. تتبع الاختبارات التقديمية والاختبارات اللاحقة والاختبارات اللاحقة المتأخرة كل ثلاث دورات. استخدم الباحث SPSS 22 لتحليل البيانات وصفيًا واستنتاجيًا بعد إجراء تحليل ANOVA على القياسات المتكررة. لقد ثبت أن استخدام أفكار النظرية الاجتماعية والثقافية في الفصل الدراسي له تأثير هام وإيجابي على الطلاب من جميع الأعمار ومستويات القراءة. وفقاً لنتائج الدراسة ، فإن إلقاء محاضرة يعزز تنمية القراءة لدى الطلاب ، والوعي بعمليات التعلم واكتساب الأشياء اللغوية والتعاون والاستقلالية والتحفيز. كما تم التأكيد على وكالة المتعلم والمشاركة والبناء المشترك للمعرفة ، لأن التعلم ليس مجرد نقل للمعرفة من المعلم إلى الطالب.

الكلمات المفتاحية: مهارة القراءة ، الوكالة ، تحويل المعرفة ، سقالات الخبراء التكيفية ، التعليمات

الوسيلة

1. Introduction

Reading is a difficult skill that requires the coordination of a wide variety of different components. A few instances of this would be things like thought processes, concepts, pronunciation, grammatical structures, lexical structures, and the impacts of things. Reading in an international language like English must be a top priority for language learners, especially those studying English as a foreign language (EFL), because we live in a global community. Furthermore, English reading ability may be a manifestation of English competence displayed in many portions of EFL textbooks. Nonetheless, a variety of approaches to dealing with Reading have been proposed, with an emphasis on communication and strategy (Richards, 1990).

Due to the complexity of English, reading contains structured phrases and sentences, planned and unplanned speech, imprecise and general terminology, fixed phrases, fillers or hesitation signals, slips and errors, Etc. (Luoma, 2004). As the most modern theory in the field of teaching English, sociocultural theory, which includes Reading skill, stresses the pervasiveness of language-related experiences, prior knowledge, and social and cultural concerns presented by EFL learners. It implies that teaching EFL Reading must be treated uniquely in terms of ZPD depending on the previous information learners bring with them, as emphasized by sociocultural theory.

As a consequence of this, the learning of a second language is regarded, from a sociocultural point of view, as a dynamic social activity that is dispersed across many persons, instruments, and activities. This perspective places an emphasis on human behavior and the individual construction of meaning in relation to both physical and social contexts (Burns, & Richards, 2009; Freeman, 2016; Hawkins, 2004; Johnson, 2009; Johnson, & Golombek, 2011; Richards, J., & Farrel, 2005).

When it comes to teaching a foreign or second language, a sociocultural approach places a significant amount of stress on the learner's own agency in the process. This does not need any reading on your part. It asks for a shift away from positivism, which was the main school of thought during the method period, and toward constructivism, which was the school of thought that was mostly pushed during the age that followed the method. In a country like Iran, where English is mostly taught in formal schools, encouraging EFL students to speak might be difficult. However, Iraqi EFL learners prefer to go back to their native tongue when they encounter a word for which they are unable to find an English translation. Students also avoid reading in English in pairs or groups. The problem is compounded by students' passion for reading.

It is important to note that training specific abilities and subskills with knowledge does not appear to help EFL learners converse. However, EFL learners' identity, past knowledge, prior learning experiences, cognitive processes, and feelings are crucial to learning language and reading skill. Sociocultural theory stresses such aspects as situational context, past learning history, background information, cognitive processes, and feelings (Beijaard et al, 2004)

Reading development is now considered a continuous process impacted by both internal and external factors. In point of fact, it seems that student elements such as identity, cognitive processes, culture, and previous knowledge, in addition to the social, physical, and cultural surroundings of language learning, are quite important. In point of fact, enhancing your reading is not a process that can easily be accomplished. Instead, it needs a reciprocal link between improvements in performance and the cognitive processes that underlie those changes. This relationship is affected by a wide range of factors, including the situational context, the history of learning, background knowledge, and cognitive processes.

In the meantime, the inquiry-based approach is an example of sociocultural theory. It is "one means of fostering meaningful professional development for teachers" that attempts to find, improve, or track changes in classroom practice by questioning one's own practices and assumptions as well as those of others (Atay, 2007, p.140). The inquiry-based method is, at its core, a practitioner-driven, self-directed, and often collaborative strategy whose goal is to answer questions that teachers themselves have asked, improve practice, and change the way teachers think about their jobs (Tasker, Johnson & Davis, 2010, pp. 1-2).

Given the above reasons and the fact that few, if any, research studies have been done on how to help Iraqi EFL learners improve their reading skills, the researcher decided to do such a study. Specifically, the following things were talked about:

1. Do giving lectures and taking tests that get harder help Iraqi EFL students get better at reading?
2. Do age and competence level affect how much reading skills improve?

The results of this study may help EFL students by giving them the methods and tactics they need to develop their reading abilities. A research of this nature could also provide information on the originality and involvement of instructors in the learning processes of their students. The study's findings may also point to the responsibilities that EFL teachers could play in knowledge production, cooperation, and skill development. For such a research, where teaching reading is observed as individualized, contextualized, and collaborative processes, local modifications and cooperation appear to be crucial.

3. Review of Literature

Learning English as a foreign language, like learning any other language, requires practice with listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Because of its structure, reading seems to be the most difficult of the four talents. Reading is more than just saying a set of words in a certain order with the right pronunciation and stress. Instead, it requires communicating a concept in an understandable manner. Reading incorporates the five factors of pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and understanding in its simplest form.

In this way, Jeremy Harmer (2003) says that all kinds of speech are made up of linguistic features and mental and social processes. Associated speech (sound assimilation, omission, or linking), expressive techniques (changing emphasis, pitch,

volume, or speed), lexis and grammar (form and function choices), and negotiation are the main language characteristics (clarification request, confirmation check, etc.). In contrast, mental/social processing include communication (creating comprehensible utterances through interpersonal contact), language processing (retrieving words, structure, shape, or function from mental grammar), and information processing. Reading cannot thus be discussed in isolation.

Reading, in other words, should be viewed as a form of communication that includes both understandable speech and comprehension. Reading is important for pupils' language development since it allows for practice, feedback, and engagement (Harmer, 2003). Reading is studied from many perspectives by various academics. For instance, Merrifield (2000) defines four aims for learning English and Reading: access, voice, action, and a bridge to the future (cited in Bailey, 2006). As a consequence, access allows EFL/ESL students to access information and resources while also orienting themselves in the world (cited in Bailey, 2006, p. 117). Voice, on the other hand, permits students to communicate their thoughts and views, as well as accept responsibility and demonstrate agency (Bailey, 2006). According to Bailey (2006, p. 118), action assists learners in solving issues and making decisions without relying on others to interpret the world for them. As the final goal, Bridge to the Future provides learners with the necessary techniques, talents, and knowledge to be adaptable to changes in the external environment (cited in Bailey, 2006).

The five principles that Nunan (1999) analyses in relation to the teaching of speaking are: the situational context in which teaching or learning takes place; the appropriate context for developing fluency and accuracy in speaking; pair and group work activities to improve speaking; the negation of meaning; and transactional and interactive Reading tasks. Nunan (1999, p. 226) states, "one has to know how to express sounds in an understandable manner, enough vocabulary, and grammar proficiency." It indicates that learners must have not just language competency, but also "a range of sociolinguistic and conversational skills that enable the speakers to know how to say what to whom, when" (Nunan, 1999, p. 226). Nunan (1999) also highlights five concepts and issues that should be considered when teaching speaking. These include the distinctive nature of speaking, the background knowledge of the individuals being taught, such as previous learning experiences or motivation, the reading task that has been assigned, the goals of teaching speaking, and the nature of the pedagogical speaking-focused tasks.

Using educational psycholinguistics or cognitive and social psychology as a base, the best conditions for EFL/ESL reading are found mostly through empirical research (Burns, 1998). Canale and Swain (1980) studied communicative competence, Krashen (1985) studied comprehensive input, Ellis (1990) studied negotiated interaction, VanPatten and Cadierno (1993) studied input processing, Meisel, Clahsen, and Pienemann (1981) studied developmental sequences, and Faerch and Kasper (1983) studied communication strategies. According to Burns (1998), the aforementioned perspectives are among the theoretical frameworks followed by all

teacher education programs, and they are deemed pertinent to oral skills, including speaking.

The accuracy-based method stresses precise pronunciation, stress, grammar and lexical choices, whereas the fluency-based approach promotes speech fluency (Burns, 1998). Furthermore, techniques to teaching speech can be classified as direct or controlled or indirect or transmitted (Burns, 1998). The direct approach consists of three different skill-gaining strategies: pedagogic (Nunan, 1989), pre-communicative (Littlewood, 1981), and part-skill practise. It works primarily through consciousness raising (Littlewood, 1992). The indirect method emphasises student autonomy, communicative, and real language usage (Burns, 1998). The indirect view, also known as the transformational view, investigates language in terms of its role as a mediator and negotiator. This perspective is influenced by skill-using theories (Rivers and Temperley, 1978), real-life theories (Nunan, 1989), communicative theories (Littlewood, 1981), and whole-task theories (Littlewood, 1992). Consequently, the two methods constitute two dimensions or extremes of the same object. The second method, fluency-focused, appears to be consistent with sociocultural theory's fundamental ideas, especially the autonomy of the learners and the transformative and mediating roles performed by instructors, other learners, and language.

Among the many ways to improve reading, especially in terms of fluency, it's worth mentioning discussion and talking circles where students can talk about their own experiences, attitudes, ideas, Etc. (Ur, 1981; Ernst 1994).

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory affects language education, including EFL reading. This approach emphasizes contextual elements and the mind-environment link while learning a language. Fundamental to this theory are the ideas of mediation (the use of psychological or symbolic tools, especially language), scaffolding (the provision of support and collaboration), and ZPD (the gap between an individual's current and potential development, at which point they are capable of performing a task with the aid of others). Mediation refers to the use of psychological or symbolic tools, particularly language (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Snow, 2014; Lantolf & Poehner, 2008; Williams & Burden, 1997).

Consideration of social processes and the sociocultural context is central to SCT, making it largely a social approach (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Snow, 2014; Lantolf & Poehner, 2008; Williams & Burden, 1997). Actually, SCT emphasises the dialectical interaction between the environment and the mind, in which the social context in which people interact influences and is impacted by the psychological and genetic variables that are inherent to individuals. SCT was initially adopted in the classroom for young learners and L1, and it was then introduced to the classrooms for second and foreign languages. Williams & Burden (1997), Lantolf & Poehner (2008), Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Snow (2014).

SCT, on the other hand, tries to look at different parts of the same thing using a theory in which different parts interact with each other in a way that makes the presence of one part depend on the presence of others. It means that you can't talk

about one dimension, like the mind, without understanding the other dimension, like the environment. In terms of its strengths, SCT stresses the social backdrop, particularly sociocultural aspects, the importance of which cannot be overstated. Its primary application in educational settings, as well as L2 instruction, adds to its merits. When compared to other theories that only analyse one dimension, SCT stands out because it considers various dimensions of the same thing through a dialectical interaction rather than a dualistic one.

Bryant (2005, p. 108) emphasizes the critical role of Latino children's involvement "in literature circle discussions using culturally appropriate, meaningful, and relevant children's literature in classrooms in the United States" after following the viewpoints of sociocultural theory. When the study was being done, the researcher tried to get the teachers to "be reflective practitioners" and think about how the families of Latino students affected their academic success (Bryant, 2005, p. 108). Bryant (2005) lists several possible difficulties that are critical for the success of language learning courses, such as multiple pathways to learning, community strengths, home and school collaborations, the role of family, classroom dialogues, and so on. It implies that teachers must be more creative and approach the teaching practicum via the right lens depending on the scenarios, context, setting, course objectives, and so on.

In a similar line, Perry (2012) asserts that there are several theories that explain diverse strategies for applying literacy in various settings and contexts. The researcher offers an overview of three major viewpoints on sociocultural theory after arguing that various theories are not always useful for literacy objectives. In essence, Perry (2012) illuminates the three views of literacy as social practice, multiliteracies, and critical literacy. According to this viewpoint, literacy is related with social elements that are intertwined with ideological and cultural paradigms, as well as the consequences of power. As with earlier research, Perry's (2012) study focuses on reading skills within the theoretical framework of sociocultural theory.

Lynch (2007) states that the family plays the most significant influence in enhancing early children's literacy abilities. Lynch (2007), citing Pianta (2004, p. 175), asserts that adult-child communication is "the primary medium by which literacy is acquired". In addition, he stated that general talk about historical events seemed vital for enhancing children's literacy skills. According to the study, the degree of risk linked with literacy development may be due to differences between the home and school contexts (Lynch, 2007, p. 7).

Talandis Jr and Stout (2014, p. 2) created a syllabus that includes "personalized topics, direct instruction of pragmatics, more L1 support, and frequent oral assessment" in order to improve conversation skills among EFL Japanese speakers. Their results showed that the interactive English curriculum helped students improve their reading skills. They also showed that this kind of curriculum changed a boring teaching situation into one that was interesting and helped even the least interested students improve their Reading skills.

Also, they came to the conclusion that an inquiry-based approach leads to teachers who are reflective and who use multiple and different perspectives to guide their teaching. Unfortunately, there aren't many studies that look at how sociocultural theory can be used in the classroom. In fact, most studies are based on theory and present and discuss the tenets, principles, and different points of view of sociocultural theory (e.g. Bryant, 2005; Perry, 2012). The inquiry-based approach to teacher education, which includes theoretical and practical knowledge subthemes, is relevant to this research. The researcher used a classroom-based ELT technique to enhance students' oral skills and behavior.

3. Methodology

3.1. The Participants of the study

Because the researcher had access to two full classrooms, the participants of the study were split between two different groups of female students, each of whom had a different level of proficiency and was of a different age. This was done so that the researcher could assess the influence of both factors. The information on the participants who were selected may be seen in the table below.

Table 1: The participants of the study

	Group 1	Group 2	Gender	Native Language	Total
Number	16	14	Female	Arabic	30
Age	12-16	9-11	Female	Arabic	10-16
Levels	Pre-intermediate	Elementary			

3.2. The Instruments of the study

The current study made use of three instruments. The first instrument that was used was the Oral Placement Test (Question Bank 1) published by Cambridge University Press (2013). It contained a total of 36 questions and was broken up into six different levels, which were as follows: Starter, Elementary, Pre-intermediate, Intermediate, and Upper-intermediate. A pre-test, an immediate post-test, and a delayed post-test were all conducted using the Oral Placement Test. The Beginner Tests: Language in Use by Doff and Jones (2000), which was published by Cambridge University Press, was the second instrument that was used. The Beginner Tests: Language in Use had a total of five exams, each of which was divided into eight distinct portions (A-H). The characteristics of each part of the test are summarised in the table that follows.

Table 2. Language in Use: Characteristics of the Five Beginner Tests

Sections	Number of questions	Characteristics
A	10	Multiple-choice questions
B	5	Matching questions
C	5	Multiple choice questions(conservation)
D	6	Matching questions
E	7	Multiple-choice cloze questions
F	8	Reading based Multiple-choice questions
G	11	Cloze multiple-choice questions
H	3	Writing tasks(descriptive writing)
Total	55	

The third tool was prepared tasks, which provided students with a list of subjects on which they had to deliver a brief lecture. The rubric for other tests is provided by the test's publisher .Some questions have only one right answer, while others, like writing tasks and reading tasks, are judged by the teacher as a whole.

The first tool was used because it was appropriate and could test the learner's ability to answer the most basic conversational questions. On the other hand, the second test was used to make the students more aware of how to deal with linguistic structures and forms. Also, the second test showed the teacher where the students needed help and support, so the teacher could give them useful feedback. Lastly, the third tool gave the student the background information he or she needed, such as the right terms, structure, ideas, and so on.

3.3. The Procedures of the study

All students completed a pretest before participating in 25 90-minute sessions in which they delivered nine lectures, fielded difficult questions, and received corrected feedback on vocabulary, structure, collocation, and more. An additional tool utilised to make students more aware of the need to better their language use was a progressive exam given after every three courses. Finally, students completed the posttest and delayed posttest. The researcher performed and analysed interviews for the pretest, posttest, and delayed posttest based on the Elementary Reading Rubric. Any student received a total of nine lectures, three written progressive tests, a pre-test, a post-test, and a delayed post-test. The average of each progressive test and each of the three lectures was computed and entered into SPSS. It indicates that each student had six scores. Following the completion of an ANOVA on repeated measures, the researcher imported the data into SPSS 22 and carried out an analysis of it using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The whole of the project was

finished in a span of four months, with a time lapse of three weeks existing between the posttest and the delayed posttest. The numerous time points that occurred while carrying out the present investigation are outlined in the table that can be seen below.

Table 3: Different moments in time for data collection

Time	Tests	Dates
Time1	Present	October,8,2017
Time2	Progressive Test 1 (4 Weeks)	November,5,2017
Time3	Progressive Test (6 Weeks)	December,17,2017
Time4	Progressive Test 3 (12 weeks)	January,14,2018
Time5	Posttest(13 Weeks)	January,21,2018
Time6	Delayed posttest (16 weeks)	February,10,2018

4. Results

Descriptive Statistics

After completing the study, the researcher collected six different sets of data, including pre-test, interim, post-test, and delayed post-test results. Table 4 shows the demographic and skill breakdown for each category.

Table 4: Comparative analysis of the two groups' performance on the six tests at six distinct time points

Descriptive Statistics					
	Level	age	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Present	=Elementary	=9-11	15.4375	3.11916	16
		Total	15.4375	3.11916	16
	=Lower intermediate	=12-16	16.7143	3.07417	14
		Total	16.7143	3.07417	14
	Total	=9-11	15.4375	3.11916	16
		=12-16	16.0333	3.07417	14
		Total	16.0333	3.11264	30
Test 1	=Elementary	=9-11	25.5625	3.11916	16
		Total	25.5625	3.07417	16
	=Lower intermediate	=12-16	22.1429	3.11264	14
		Total	22.1429	8.02470	14
	Total	=9-11	25.5625	8.02470	16
		=12-16	22.1429	6.56163	14
		Total	23.9667	6.56163	30
Test 2	=Elementary	=9-11	30.1250	8.02470	16
		Total	30.1250	6.56163	16

	=Lower intermediate	=12-16	34.8571	7.45855	14
		Total	34.8571	7.42855	14
	Total	=9-11	30.1250	7.42855	16
		=12-16	34.8571	6.56163	14
		Total	32.3333	6.56163	14
Test 3	=Elementary	=9-11	39.8125	7.32183	16
		Total	39.8125	9.96138	14
	=Lower intermediate	=12-16	36.0000	9.96138	30
		Total	36.0000	11.17690	16
	Total	=9-11	39.8125	11.17690	16
		=12-16	36.0000	9.96138	14
		Total	38.0333	11.17690	14
Posttest	=Elementary	=9-11	22.6250	10.53887	16
		Total	22.6250	3.59398	14
		=12-16	24.8571	3.59398	30
		Total	24.8571	3.59398	16
		=9-11	22.6250	3.59398	16
		=12-16	24.8571	3.59398	14
		Total	23.6667	3.87150	30
Delayed posttest	=Elementary	=9-11	24.8571	3.10309	16
		Total	24.8571	3.10309	16
		=12-16	26.0000	4.00000	14
		Total	26.0000	4.00000	14
		=9-11	24.8571	3.10309	16
		=12-16	26.0000	4.00000	14
		Total	25.0333	3.60539	30

There were two groups of learners with elementary and lower intermediate levels, as indicated in the table, whose ages looked to be similar but were separated by two age groups of 9–11 and 12–16. Pre-test mean scores for learners with elementary English proficiency (group 1) were 15.43 and for those with pre-intermediate level (group 2) were 16.71. The average group 1 score on the first progressive exam, which consisted of three lectures and one written test, was 25.56, while group 2 scored 22.14. The average score on the second progressive exam, on the other hand, was 30.12 for group 1 and 34.85 for group 2. The third progressive test produced mean scores of 39.81 and 36 for groups 1 and 2, respectively. The average scores on the posttest and delayed posttest for group 1 were 22.62 and 24.18, respectively. Finally, group 2 had a posttest mean score of 24.85 and a delayed posttest mean score of 26.

4.1. Inferential Statistics

To determine if the variance-covariance matrix of the dependent variables is circular or spherical, we use Mauchly's test, which is supplied by the mixed ANOVA test. As seen in table 5, the significance level is .000, which is less than 0.01. Consequently, we

must alter the degrees of freedom of the univariate tests to account for the observed violation, i.e. epsilon, which has three potential values: the Greenhouse-Geisser epsilon, the Huynh-Feldt epsilon, and the Huynh-Feldt epsilon. For the sake of the study, we employ the Greenhouse-Geisserepsilon, which is 0.560 and significantly more than the typical correction of 0.05.

Table 5: Mauchly's Sphericity Test

Measure Reading							
Within Subjects	Mauchly's	Approx. Chi-square	df	Sig.	Epsilon ⁶		
					Green house-Geisser	Huynh -Feldt	Lower - bound
Effect	W	81.625	14	.000	.560	.651	.200
time	.044						

In essence, Table 6 displays univariate tests for the within-subject variables and interaction factors. According to the table, there was a significant temporal main effect $(2.802, 78.457)=47.295, p < 0.001$. This indicates that the performance of the learners at different periods has changed dramatically as a result of the teaching provided through lecture presentation, feedback, and mostly through sequential written assessments. There are variances between at least five time points, as shown in the table.

Table 6: Tests of Within-Subjects Effects

Measure: Reading							
Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Square d
time	Sphericity	8698.68	5	1739.73	47.29	.00	.628
	Assumed	8		8	5	0	
	Greenhous e-Geisser	8698.68	2.802	3104.43	47.29	.00	
		8		6	5	0	
	Huynh- Feldt	8698.68	3.257	2671.06	47.29	.00	
		8		8	5	0	
Error(time)	Lower- bound	8698.68	1.000	8698.68	47.29	.00	.628
		8		8	5	0	
	Sphericity	5149.84	140	36.785			
	Assumed	5					
	Greenhous e-Geisser	5149.84	78.45	65.639			
		5	7				
	Huynh- Feldt	5149.84	91.18	56.476			
		5	6				
	Lower- bound	5149.84	28.00	183.923			
		5	0				

To go one step further, a test of between-subjects effects was conducted to see whether there were any significant variations in level or age between the two experimental groups. Table 7 provides information on tests for between-subject effects. The table demonstrates that despite the two groups' different ages and educational levels, there were no appreciable performance discrepancies between them.

Table 7: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Measure Reading						
Transformed Variable Average						
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	126097.729	1	126097.729	1863.771	.000	.985
Level	.000	0				.000

age	.000	0				.000
level× age	.000	0				.000
Error	1894.405	28	67.657			

The pairwise comparison table reveals that there were no statistically significant differences between the two groups in terms of level or age. Table 8 illustrates that Bonferroni correction was used to keep the total Type I error at 5%.

Table 8: Pairwise Comparisons (Level & Age)

Measure Reading						
99% Confidence						
Interval for Difference						
(I)Level	(J)Level	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std Erroe	Sig ^c	Lower Bound	Upp er Bou nd
=elementary	=Lower intermedi ate	-.470 ^{a,b}	1,229	.705	-3.866	2.936
=Lower intermediate	=element ary	-.470 ^{a,b}	1.229	.705	-2.926	3.866
		-.470 ^{a,b}	1.229	.705	-3.866	2.926
		-.470 ^{a,b}	1.229	.705	-2.926	3.866
(I) age	(J) age					
		-.470 ^{a,b}	1.229	.705	-3.866	2.926
=12-16	=9-11	-.470 ^{a,b}	1.229	.705	-2.926	3.866

Based on estimated marginal means

a An estimate of the modified population marginal mean(I)

b An estimate of the modified population marginal mean(J)

c Adjustment for multiple comparisons Bonferron

The changes identified throughout the six time periods are shown in Table 9. As shown in the table, there were significant differences between time 1 when the pretest was administered and other times when participants received training. This is especially clear between the pre-test and post-test, as well as between the post-test and the delayed post-test. When the delayed posttest was given 3 weeks after the last lesson, it was found that Reading improvement hadn't changed much even though there hadn't been any lessons.

Table 9: Pairwise Comparisons (Time)

Measure: Reading						
(I) time	(J) time	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. ^c	99% Confidence Interval for Difference ^c	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	-7.777 ^{a,b}	1.481	.000	-13.443	-2.110
	3	-16.415 ^{a,b}	1.206	.000	-21.032	-11.798
	4	-21.830 ^{a,b}	2.052	.000	-29.683	-13.978
	5	-7.665 ^{a,b}	.836	.000	-10.864	-4.467
	6	-9.018 ^{a,b}	.772	.000	-11.971	-6.065
2	1	7.777 ^{a,b}	1.481	.000	2.110	13.443
	3	-8.638 ^{a,b}	1.790	.001	-15.491	-1.786
	4	-14.054 ^{a,b}	2.171	.000	-22.361	-5.746
	5	.112 ^b	1.361	1.000	-5.098	5.322
	6	-1.241 ^b	1.407	1.000	-6.626	4.144
3	1	16.415 ^{a,b}	1.206	.000	11.798	21.032
	2	8.638 ^{a,b}	1.790	.001	1.786	15.491
	4	-5.415 ^b	2.317	.402	-14.282	3.452
	5	8.750 ^{a,b}	1.353	.000	3.573	13.927
	6	7.397 ^{a,b}	1.293	.000	2.448	12.347
4	1	21.830 ^{a,b}	2.052	.000	13.978	29.683
	2	14.054 ^{a,b}	2.171	.000	5.746	22.361
	3	5.415 ^b	2.317	.402	-3.452	14.282
	5	14.165 ^{a,b}	1.821	.000	7.195	21.136
	6	12.812 ^{a,b}	1.924	.000	5.449	20.176
5	1	7.665 ^{a,b}	.836	.000	4.467	10.864
	2	-.112 ^b	1.361	1.000	-5.322	5.098
	3	-8.750 ^{a,b}	1.353	.000	-13.927	-3.573
	4	-14.165 ^{a,b}	1.821	.000	-21.136	-7.195
	6	-1.353 ^b	.397	.030	-2.871	.166
6	1	9.018 ^{a,b}	.772	.000	6.065	11.971
	2	1.241 ^b	1.407	1.000	-4.144	6.626
	3	-7.397 ^{a,b}	1.293	.000	-12.347	-2.448
	4	-12.812 ^{a,b}	1.924	.000	-20.176	-5.449
	5	1.353 ^b	.397	.030	-.166	2.871

Based on estimated marginal means

*. The mean difference is significant at the, 01 level.

b. Based on modified population marginal mean.

c. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.

Fig. 1 clearly depicts the performances of the two groups at each of the six time periods. As seen in the graph, the two groups performed similarly on a variety of tests. The first group, with the lower proficiency level, has been doing better than the second group in the most recent three time periods. This resulted in no statistically significant differences between the groups; however, group 1, with its younger average age and lower average proficiency level, exhibited somewhat larger improvement on the posttest and delayed posttest.

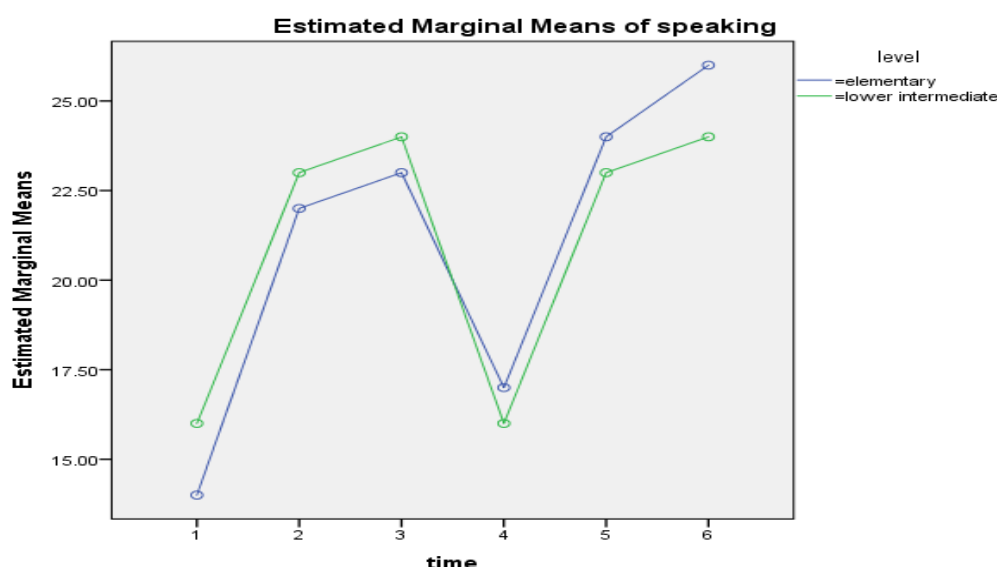


Fig. 1: profile plot on the six time points: group 1 vs. group 2

5. Discussion & Concussions

Presenting a lecture, adhering to form-focused teaching by providing suitable feedback in its needed context, and raising awareness through the offered assessments improved the oral skills of Iraqi EFL learners, according to the findings of the current study. The findings of the research also indicate that age and level are not the most significant criteria to consider. It was shown that teaching reading using the principles of sociocultural theory was beneficial for all participants, regardless of what level they were at or how old they were. In other words, this was true regardless of the age or level of the participants. In the end, all participants had the same problems, which were caused by their needs, situations, and ideas:

- ◆giving lectures by each participant, followed by challenging questions from the teacher based on what they said, and getting feedback from the teacher that was specific to each person's needs,
- ◆completing a gradual written test that assessed vocabulary, grammar, and even reading and writing skills.

What's interesting is that these kinds of activities made people more motivated to learn. They were happy to be giving a lecture, and they had something important to say. They also asked a lot of questions about the right words or how to say them in their presentation. Also, when a student gave a lecture, other students listened carefully and asked questions about what she said. So, Reading may be seen from both a psychological and a cultural perspective as a means of making sense and exchanging information and ideas (Burns, & Richards, 2009; Freeman, 2016; Hawkins, 2004; Johnson, 2009; Johnson, & Golombek, 2011; Richards, J., & Farrel, 2005). This is how Iraqi EFL learners could present their lecture and deal with problems that come up during their presentation.

Clearly, the teacher attempted to assist the Readingskill process for the students. In fact, teacher-mediated interventions increased the process of Reading development within the classroom setting. Moreover, this improvement occurred as a result of the learners' participation in the guided participative, which centred on their agency. According to Rogoff (1990), apprenticeship tool " occurs through guided participation in social activity with companions who support and stretch children's understanding of and skill in using the tools of the culture" (vii). Another important problem is related to social interaction, which is crucial in any classroom and promotes peer learning and mediated instruction when the presenter must deal with challenging questions from the teacher or when the class members ask questions about a recent lecture and the presenter must respond.

After considering transformative appropriation, the instructor attempted to be an adaptable expert and approached the students' zones of proximal development (ZPD) by posing demanding questions and delivering necessary corrective feedback. In this regard, John-Steiner and Mahn (1996) referred to knowledge co-construction in the classrooms, which is "based on the concept that human activities occur in cultural contexts, are mediated by language and other symbol systems, and are best understood when investigated in the context of their historical development" (191). Gass, Behney, and Plonsky (2013) caution that there is no one learning method or pace. It suggests that students convert the information imparted by the instructor and internalise a changed version of the martial arts, which is mostly influenced by psychological, cognitive, and social tools they have inside and confront in social situations like classrooms.

The aforementioned concerns are also consistent with Williams and Burden's (2004) argument, which refers to sociocultural theory and asserts that teaching and education are more than instruction theories "butwith learning to learn, developing skills and strategies to continue learning, with making learning experiences meaningful and relevant to the individual, with developing and growing as a whole person." Students were driven to find the language components they needed to conduct a lecture on the assigned subjects since it was their talk and they had thoughts to share with their peers. They prioritised learning, which enhanced their reading.

The researcher discovered that conscientious-raising, transformation, knowledge creation, and participation are critical for Reading enhancement after attempting to train Reading using sociocultural theory. The research found that lecturing improves learners' reading progress, knowledge of learning processes and language aspects, cooperation, autonomy, and motivation. It was also said that learning is a shifting and multifaceted process in which learner agency, engagement, and knowledge co-construction are crucial.

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