

The Effect of Vocabulary, Syntax, and Discourse-Oriented Activities on Short and Long-Term L2 Reading Comprehension

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of vocabulary, syntax, and discourse-oriented teaching on Iranian EFL learners' short-term and long-term reading comprehension ability. 90 intermediate level EFL learners were assigned to three groups. One of the groups received vocabulary-based reading instruction, the other group received syntax-based reading instruction, and the third group received SFL discourse-based reading instruction. Following the treatment, immediate and delayed reading comprehension tests were administered. The results of the two One-Way ANOVA procedures showed that the group which received discourse-based instruction had the best performance on both immediate and delayed post-tests, followed by the group that received syntax-based instruction. It was concluded that Iranian EFL learners will have best performance on reading comprehension when they receive instruction on the discourse features (register, genre, and cohesive ties). It was also concluded that reading in a word-by-word manner prevents global understanding of the text.

Keywords: reading comprehension, discourse-oriented activities, vocabulary, syntax

1. Introduction

"Due to the social and economic opportunities it offers, reading is one of the most important skills to be developed among all learners" (Grabe, 1991, p. 386). According to Fazeli (2010), the ability to read written material is very important in the civilized world. In a society characterized by globalization and technological change, where knowledge is becoming increasingly important, reading ability is a key skill for active participation. Reading is a significant way to learn English, especially in EFL contexts. That is why finding ways to improve it has long been a major concern of teachers and researchers.

Due to the importance of the reading skill, there have been many studies trying to explore different aspects of reading comprehension ability (Aidinlou, 2012; Carrell, 1987; Lopez, 2008; Nagy, 1988; Zhang, 2008). Many of these studies focus on the grammatical and lexical knowledge, and few consider other competencies and the possible differences among their effects on reading comprehension.

One of those competencies which has been ignored by most researchers is systemic functional linguistic (SFL) - oriented discourse knowledge. According to Aidinlu (2011), based on SFL, language has two planes: discourse-semantics and lexico-grammar. The former looks at language from two perspectives. Discoursally, it deals with coherence and cohesion at the text level; and semantically it deals with the three strands of meanings (meta-functions) at the clause level.

Some studies, like Aidinlou (2012), have focused on the effect of discourse knowledge on reading comprehension ability, but none has compared the differences among the effects of this knowledge, lexical knowledge and syntactic knowledge on reading comprehension. It is the aim of the present study to address this question.

2. Literature Review

Goodman (1967) introduced a psycholinguistic model for reading comprehension, which considers reading as a psycholinguistic guessing game. In this model, reading is viewed as a language activity as well as a psycholinguistic process. According to Brown (2001), Goodman's model distinguishes between bottom-up and top-down processing in reading.

Recent models of the second language reading process have focused on an interactive approach toward reading comprehension. According to Keshavarz and Mohammadi (2009), the interactive model is based on the premise that neither bottom-up nor top-down models can by themselves describe the reading process. According to Eskey (2005), successful reading entails a balanced interaction between bottom-up and top-down processing skills. Grabe (1991) defines interactivity of reading in two ways. The first definition refers to reading as a process in which the reader makes use of information from his/her background knowledge as well as information from the printed page. The second definition refers to reading as an interactive process in the sense that many skills work together simultaneously in the process.

There have been different approaches to teaching reading. One of them is the Language-based approach. The dominant view around the 1950s and 1960s was that once learners acquired the habit of language use through learning grammar and lexis, they would become able to read fluently. According to this approach, reading problems depend on language problems (language here is used in its traditional sense, knowledge of morphology, syntax and lexis). According to Masuhara (2003), such behaviorist views led to reading being treated as a means of language practice through the use of simplified texts and graded readers. The basic assumption of this approach is that understanding the linguistic meaning of a text equals understanding of the textual meaning. According to Geva (1992), those L2 learners who are more proficient in L2 in terms of their lexicon and various aspects of syntactic knowledge are better able to process and integrate information at more global levels in reading tasks.

There are studies which underscore the importance of language skills for effective reading (Clark, 1988; Devine, 1988). Clarke (1988) investigated the reading behaviors of adults reading in two languages, English and Spanish. For this purpose, he examined the Spanish and English cloze test performance of good and poor L1 readers. The finding supported the activities of traditional teachers whose approach to teaching emphasized grammar lessons and vocabulary instruction. Devine (1988) holds that low reading achievement in a second language is significantly related to low general proficiency in that language and that readers with low L2 language proficiency are specifically handicapped in their ability to utilize contextual constraints and cohesive devices when reading in their target language. Clark (1980) suggests that there is a threshold of linguistic competence necessary for successful reading. He refers to this threshold hypothesis as 'short circuit hypothesis'. According to Bernhardt and Kamil (1995), within this hypothesis is the belief that language is the key factor in reading/literacy activities, and in order to read in a second language, a level of second language linguistic ability must first be achieved.

The small number of studies specifically investigating the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension have consistently found a strong connection between the two (Hazenberg & Hulstijn, 1996; Hu & Nation, 2000; Laufer, 1991a, 1991b).

According to Laufer (1998), reading comprehension is strongly related to vocabulary knowledge, more strongly than to the other components of reading. According to Hu and Nation (2000), the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension is complex and dynamic; they introduce four views toward the relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension. The first view is the instrumentalist view. This view sees vocabulary knowledge as a major prerequisite and causative factor in comprehension. According to this view, good vocabulary knowledge supports good comprehension. The second view is the aptitude view, which sees vocabulary as one of the many outcomes of having a good brain. Good comprehension is also one of these outcomes. The third view is the knowledge view, which sees vocabulary as an indicator of good world knowledge. This world knowledge supports reading comprehension because the reader must bring as much information to the text as the reader expects to get from it. The fourth view is the access view which, like the instrumental view, sees vocabulary as having a causal relationship with comprehension provided that the vocabulary can be easily accessed.

The role of syntactic knowledge in adult L2 reading has recently received a lot of attention. There have been studies which show the importance of syntactic awareness as an element of the reading skill.

Barnett (1990) believes that unduly stressing vocabulary building or inference skills may not help those students who do not have adequate syntactic knowledge. She adds that sensitivity to syntactic constraints develops before sensitivity to both semantic and discourse constraints. According to Devine (1988), knowledge of syntax enhances L2 reading ability. He adds that poor second language knowledge is in part the result of failure to manipulate the syntactic features of the target language.

Nation and Snowling (2000) examined the syntactic awareness skills of groups of children who differed in reading comprehension ability but not in decoding skills. They found that children's syntactic awareness skills were related to their reading skills. Poor comprehenders performed poorly on all measures of syntactic awareness.

In contrast, there have been studies which do not support the correlation between syntactic knowledge and reading comprehension. Cooper (1984) conducted a study to investigate the correlation between performance on syntactic features and general comprehension. For this purpose, a shortened test was administered to a group of practised and unpractised readers. The test consisted of 26 items and concentrated on tense, aspect and modality. The results confirmed that neither group was secure in understanding tenses, aspects or modality, and the mean score of practised readers was rather low. He concluded that practised readers were not distinguished clearly from unpractised readers by their ability to understand the meaning carried by syntax. In another study, Gascoigne (2005) investigated the correlation between success on form-focused grammar exercises, and reading comprehension ability in beginning L2 readers. To do so, 56 native speakers of English assigned into two introductory French courses in which grammar exercises as well as reading exercises were addressed. The finding failed to support a strong negative correlation between successes on form-focused grammar exercises and L2 reading comprehension scores.

In a similar vein, Cain's (2007) research on the relationship between syntactic awareness and reading comprehension did not support a special relationship between syntactic awareness and reading comprehension. In addition, Blau (1982), in a study on the effect of syntactic difficulty on learners' reading comprehension, concluded that the relationship between syntactic difficulty and reading ability is not as strong as may have been expected.

Some studies also compare the effect of vocabulary knowledge and syntactic knowledge on reading comprehension performance. Mokhtari and Niederhauser (2013) examined upper-elementary grade students' level of vocabulary knowledge and syntactic awareness relative to their reading comprehension performance. Two sets of tests for measuring students' vocabulary, reading comprehension, and syntactic awareness were administered to 32 upper-elementary students. The finding showed that both vocabulary knowledge and syntactic awareness contributed in significant and unique ways to students' reading comprehension performance. Additionally, syntactic awareness explained a small amount of additional variance in reading beyond what was explained by vocabulary. Guo (2008) investigated the respective role of vocabulary knowledge, syntactic awareness and metacognitive awareness in explaining reading comprehension of adult English language learners. He found that vocabulary knowledge, syntactic awareness, and metacognitive awareness are not completely distinguishable from one another. Along the same line, Shiotsu and Weir (2007) examined the relative contribution of knowledge of syntax and vocabulary to L2 reading. Their study suggested the relative superiority of syntactic knowledge over vocabulary knowledge in predicting performance on a reading comprehension test.

Recently there has been focus on a discourse-based instruction of reading based on systemic functional linguistics (SFL). Eggins (1994) describes Systemic Functional Linguistics as a functional-semantic approach to language which explores both how people use language in different contexts and how language is structured for use as a semiotic system. Martin (1992) believes that, based on SEF, language is used to do a function; it must be manipulated at the text level, not at the sentence level solely; and it can be interpreted and comprehended in the social context including context of situation and context of culture, referred to as register and genre, respectively. According to Aidinlou (2012), SFL describes language from two points of view; discourse-semantics and lexicogrammar. From the discursal point of view, cohesion and coherence are of focal attention at the text level. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), cohesion is a semantic relation between an element in the text and some other elements that are crucial to its interpretation. It refers to the range of possibilities that exist for linking something with what has gone before. Malmkjar (2004, p. 543) defines cohesion as "the way in which linguistic items are meaningfully connected to each other sequentially on the basis of grammatical rules".

The unit of analysis for cohesion is the cohesive tie. Martin (2003) defines cohesive ties as the relationship between a cohesive item and the item it presupposed in a text. Halliday and Hasan (1976) discuss five major types of cohesive ties that occur in a text: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction and lexical cohesion.

Many studies on first and second language acquisition have shown a strong relationship between cohesion and reading comprehension. Irwin (1980) examined the relationship between the cohesive ties in a passage and text comprehension. To do so, two versions of a passage on gibbons were developed, with one version containing about twice as many ties as the other. Sixty college students participated; each read one of the passage-versions and then, either immediately or after 20 minutes, recorded his/her free recall and answered the prompted-recall questions. The results also indicated that the number of cohesive ties in a passage may be related to comprehension.

In another study, Bridge and Winogard (1982) investigated the differences between good and poor readers' awareness of cohesive relationships within a text. Ninth grade good and poor readers were required to complete a cloze passage in which words involved in three kinds of cohesive relationships (referential, conjunctive, and lexical) had been systematically deleted. The subjects were asked to read the passage orally, supply the missing words, and think aloud about the reasons for supplying each cloze deletion. The results showed that Good readers were very successful in explaining the context clues which they used to fill in the cloze deletions. Cooper (1984), in a study on the differences between practiced and unpracticed non-native readers of English, found that unpracticed readers differ primarily from practiced readers in their inability to understand lexical cohesion, and to understand the meaning relationships between sentences.

Another aspect of language from a discursal point of view is coherence. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), coherence refers to the way a group of clauses relate to the context. According to Martin (1992), social context includes both context of situation, which is referred to as register, and context of culture, which is referred to as genre. Eggins (1994) also identifies two types of coherence; registerial and generic coherence. He believes that a text has registerial coherence when one can identify one situation in which all the clauses of the text could occur, and has generic coherence when one can recognize the text as an example of a particular type.

There have been few studies which focus on the effect of genre and register familiarity on EFL learners' reading comprehension. Shokouhi and Amin (2010) investigated the students' performance on reading comprehension tasks due to their various degrees of genre familiarity. At the first stage of the study, 90 samples of six English and Persian newspapers were collected and analyzed using the Systemic Functional approach to language analysis. Then, four texts from the English samples (two written by American native writers and two by Iranian non-native writers of English) were administered to 27 EFL students to answer a number of questions regarding structure, content, and context of the texts. They found that that subjects' familiarity with content and context of a genre is an important factor in reading comprehension.

Aidinlou (2012) investigated the role of explicit instruction of discourse-semantics in reading comprehension. He concluded that EFL learners will understand the global discourse aspect of the reading comprehension passages better if they are given formal teaching about register; that is, the field, tenor and mode of the discourse, and the genre of different text types in accordance with the systemic functional linguistics.

This brief review of the literature on reading comprehension shows that although there are a number of studies which have investigated the effect of vocabulary and syntax-based teaching of reading, few of them have considered discourse knowledge and its effect on reading comprehension ability. This implies that there exists a gap in research on this controversial issue. This study is an attempt to fill part of this gap; it aims to address the following research questions:

- 1) Are there any significance differences among the effects of vocabulary, syntax and (SFL) discourse-oriented methods of teaching reading on Iranian EFL learners' short-term reading comprehension ability?
- 2) Are there any significance differences among the effects of vocabulary, syntax and (SFL) discourse-oriented methods of teaching reading on Iranian EFL learners' long-term reading comprehension ability?

3. Method

3.1. Participants

This study was conducted with 90 female and male language learners at intermediate level of proficiency in a private institute in Zanjan. The participants were in three groups. Each group of participants received a different treatment.

3.2. Materials and instruments

The materials and data collection instruments utilized in this study included the following:

One of the instructional materials was 'Interchange'; the main course book at Intermediate level, which was introduced by the institute. Other materials for teaching reading were chosen by considering the length of the text (150-250 words). The passages were chosen from reading course books such as Interchange, Communicative reading skills 1, Select reading and Reading through interaction. A total number of 20 reading texts were chosen from the above-mentioned sources.

To collect data, the following instruments were used: There was a pretest to homogenize the participants. The participants were administered a PET (Preliminary English Test) test before the treatment. This test contained 55 multiple-choice items, 30 items tested the grammatical knowledge, and 25 items examined the vocabulary knowledge of the learners. The test also contained four reading comprehension exercises including matching, true-false, comprehension questions and a text with gaps. Two post-tests were also used; one post-test was administered immediately after the treatment to see the effects of three ways of teaching reading on learners' short-term reading comprehension. For this reason, 3 reading comprehension passages and 20 multiple choice questions were used. The second post-test was administered 3 weeks after the administration of the immediate post-test to investigate the delayed effect of the above-mentioned treatments on the participants' reading comprehension ability. The test included 3 reading comprehension passages and 20 multiple-choice questions.

3.3. Procedure

To begin with, 90 intermediate level learners with the afore-mentioned characteristics were selected. In order to determine the homogeneity of the participants, a proficiency test (PET) was administered. It took 60 minutes. Having determined the type of treatment to be given to each of the different groups, the treatment was given, which lasted over 10 sessions. The participants took part in their English class twice a week. Each session lasted about one and a half hour. The participants were in three groups. Each group of participants received a different treatment. The treatment consisted of the following three ways of teaching reading:

- a) Group A received two short passages every session. In this group, the focus of reading instruction was on the discourse features of the passages including factual genres, register and cohesion. For three sessions, the participants of this group were taught cohesive devices, that is, references, conjunctions, ellipsis, substitution and lexical devices. For three sessions, the focus was on the instruction of register, that is, field, tenor and mode. In the remaining four sessions, the focus was on factual genres including exposition, exploration, report, description and discussion.
- b) In Group B, the focus of reading instruction was on the students' knowledge of the structure of each sentence. The instructor made students to focus on the syntactic information of each sentence such as tense, subject-verb agreement, and different clauses to get the meaning.
- c) In Group C, the focus of reading instruction was on vocabulary items of the texts. The participants were supposed to read the text word by word and find the meaning of each unknown word in order to be able to understand the general meaning of the text.

To analyze data, two separate one-way ANOVA procedures were used; one to investigate the effect of different ways of teaching reading on short-term L2 reading comprehension, and the other to study the effect of the same ways of teaching reading on long-term L2 reading comprehension.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Investigation of the First Research Question

The first question attempted to investigate the differences in the effectiveness of vocabulary, syntax, and (SFL) discourse-oriented teaching of reading on Iranian EFL learners' short-term reading comprehension ability.

A one-way ANOVA procedure was used to analyze the participants' scores on the immediate post-test. Descriptive statistics, including the mean, standard deviation, etc. are summarized in Table 1.

Table1: Descriptive Statistics for the ANOVA on Reading Comprehension

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Discourse	30	18.3667	1.44993	.26472
Syntax	30	16.9667	1.65015	.30127
Vocabulary	30	16.2000	1.56249	.28527
Total	90	17.1778	1.78368	.18802

As it can be seen in the table, the discourse group has the highest mean ($\bar{X}=18.36$), followed by the syntax ($\bar{X}=16.96$), and the vocabulary ($\bar{X}=16.20$) groups. To see whether or not the differences among the means are statistically significant, the one way ANOVA procedure was run. The results of the ANOVA procedure are given in Table 2.

Table 2. The Result of the ANOVA on Reading Comprehension

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	72.422	2	36.211	14.950	.000
Within Groups	210.733	87	2.422		$\omega^2 = 0.59$

Based on Table 2, the F-value and the significance level ($F_{2, 87} = 14.95$, $p < .05$) are indicative of significant differences among the means of the groups. At the same time, the index of the strength of association ($\omega^2 = 0.59$) indicates that 59% of the total variance in the dependent variable (reading comprehension) is accounted for by the independent variable (presentation technique). This means that the remaining 41% of variance is left accounted for. To locate the differences among the means, a post-hoc Scheffe' test procedure was run, which yielded the following results.

Table 3: Multiple Comparisons of Means for short-term Reading Comprehension

(I) group	(J) group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Discourse	syntax	1.40000*	.40185	.003
	vocabulary	2.16667*	.40185	.000
Syntax	vocabulary	.76667	.40185	.168

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

A look at Table 3 makes it clear that although the difference between the syntax and the vocabulary groups is not statistically significant, there are significant differences between the discourse group and the other two groups. This means that the participants of the discourse group have outperformed their counterparts in the vocabulary and syntax groups.

4.3. Investigation of the Second Research Question

The second question attempted to investigate the differences in the effectiveness of vocabulary, syntax, and (SFL) discourse-oriented teaching on Iranian EFL learners' long-term reading comprehension ability. Another one-way ANOVA procedure was used to analyze the participants' scores on the delayed post-test. Descriptive statistics, including the mean, standard deviation, etc. are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for the ANOVA on Reading Comprehension

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Minimum	Maximum
Discourse	30	18.0667	1.55216	.28338	15.00	20.00
Syntax	30	16.7667	2.04574	.37350	13.00	20.00
Vocabulary	30	15.5000	1.97833	.36119	13.00	20.00
Total	90	16.7778	2.12940	.22446	13.00	20.00

As it can be seen in Table 4, the discourse group has the highest mean ($\bar{X}=18.36$), followed by the syntax ($\bar{X}=16.96$), and the vocabulary ($\bar{X}=16.20$) groups. To see whether or not the differences among the means are statistically significant, the one way ANOVA procedure was run. The results of the ANOVA procedure are given in Table 5.

Table 5. The Result of the ANOVA on long-term Reading Comprehension

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	98.822	2	49.411	14.107	.000
Within Groups	304.733	87	3.503		$\omega^2 = 0.83$

Based on Table 5, the F-value and the significance level ($F_{(2,87)} = 14.107$, $p < .05$) are indicative of significant differences among the means of the groups. At the same time, the index of the strength of association ($\omega^2 = 0.83$) indicates that 83% of the total variance in reading comprehension is accounted for by the presentation techniques. To locate the differences among the means, a post-hoc Scheffe test procedure was run, which yielded the following results.

Table 6: Multiple Comparisons of Means for long-term Reading Comprehension

(I) group	(J) group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Discourse	Syntax	1.30000*	.48323	.031
	Vocabulary	2.56667*	.48323	.000
Syntax	vocabulary	1.26667	.48323	.037

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

A look at Table 6 makes it clear that there are significant differences between the discourse and the syntax, between the discourse and the vocabulary, and between the syntax and the vocabulary groups. In other words, the discourse-oriented teaching is more effective on long-term reading comprehension than syntax-oriented teaching, which is, in turn, more effective than vocabulary-oriented teaching.

4.4. Discussion

Some of the findings of this study are similar to those of the previous studies (Aidinlou, 2012; Bridge & Winogard, 1982; Cooper, 1984; Geva, 1992; Khatib & Safari, 2011; Mirzapour & Ahmadi, 2011; Pierce, 1975) in that they, like the present study, emphasize the role of language learners' perception of cohesion on their reading comprehension ability.

Based on the results, it can be concluded that the Iranian students will have higher performance on reading comprehension if they are given explicit instruction on (SFL) discourse knowledge, which entails knowledge of different text types; knowledge of the inevitable situational factors; that is, field, tenor and mode involved in communicative events; and knowledge of cohesive devices, especially those specific to written texts. These results support Aidinlou (2012), who suggests that explicit instruction of systematic discourse-semantic knowledge improves EFL learners' reading comprehension ability.

These findings also confirm those of Zhang (2008) that the overt teaching of the formal background knowledge; that is to say, register and genre, brings about an increase in the recall of the main ideas of the reading passage at issue and facilitates reading comprehension in consequence. They also support Carrell's (1987) contention that explicit teaching of text structure facilitates reading comprehension.

Toledo (2005) believes that readers cannot grasp the message of the passage unless they are aware of the knowledge of the contextual dimensions that constrain it at different levels. This is supported by the findings of the present study, as the explicit teaching of genre and register types referring to context of situation and context of culture improved the learners' reading comprehension ability.

Meanwhile, the results of this study corroborate Goodman's (1967) claim that reading is not a process of picking up information from the page in a letter-by-letter, word-by-word manner; rather, it is a selective process. According to Grellet (1981), it is always preferable to start with overall meaning of the text, its function and aim, rather than working on vocabulary or more specific ideas. She argues that one should start with global understanding and move towards detailed understanding rather than working the other way round. The results of the present study corroborate this claim.

Based on the results of this study, discourse-oriented teaching of reading is the best way in comparison to syntax and vocabulary-based teaching of reading. This contradicts the finding of Hinkel (2006), who refers to the key role of bottom-up processing and suggests that sentence and text level instruction should be worked after working on phonics, word recognition and graphic knowledge.

The findings of this study also contradict the findings of those studies which underscore the importance of language skills for effective reading (Clark, 1988; Devine, 1988; Laufer, 1998). For example, Laufer (1998) claims reading comprehension is strongly related to vocabulary knowledge, more strongly than to the other components of reading.

The observed discrepancy between the findings of the present study of those of the above-mentioned studies could be partially attributed to the learners' proficiency levels. As it was discussed, this study used intermediate level participants. But, the above-mentioned studies mostly used advanced learners. Also, in this study gender was not considered as a variable, which could be another reason for the different results.

Regarding the second research question of this study, the results showed significant differences among the groups on the delayed reading comprehension post-test. The result showed that discourse-based teaching had long-term effect on EFL learners' reading comprehension ability. This finding goes in line with a number of other studies (Kaivanpanah & Zandi, 2009; Johnson, 1983; Shiotsu & Weir, 2007). Johnson (1983), for example, believes that the emphasis on the development of vocabulary knowledge in reading textbooks may encourage word-by-word reading and, consequently, prevent ESL readers from the development of the skill of processing syntax and context for meaning.

5. Conclusions and Implications

The result of the present study indicated that the discourse-based teaching of reading is the most effective way of teaching reading in comparison to the two other ways; vocabulary and syntax-based teaching. Based on this finding, it can be concluded that giving formal teaching about the register; that is, the field, tenor and mode of the discourse, and the genre of different text types in accordance with the systemic functional linguistics helps Iranian EFL learners to understand the global discourse aspect of the reading comprehension passages better.

The results of the delayed post-test also revealed that syntax-based teaching of reading was better than the vocabulary based one. It seemed that word-by-word reading prevented the participants from developing their skill of processing syntax and context for comprehending the text.

To conclude, discourse-based teaching of reading provided the opportunity for learners to pay attention to two important factors of a passage (cohesion and coherence) to comprehend the text.

The findings of the present study can have significant implications for teachers. First, instead of encouraging students to read a text in a word by word or sentence by sentence fashion, they can help them to understand features of global discourse to interpret the text. Secondly, by knowing the advantages of understanding a text in relation to its context of situation and context of culture, they can use formal teaching of register and genre to help students in their general comprehension of a passage.

The findings can also have implications for students in that instead of the traditional way of reading (word by word), they can try discourse-based reading in which they can use features of global discourse, cohesion and coherence, to understand and interpret meaning.

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