

A Comparative Study on the Effects between Murdoch Integrated Approach (MIA) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) on English Reading Comprehension of 6th Grade Students.

Received: 27 November 2020

Revised: 14 January 2021

Accepted: 19 January 2021

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Abstract

The purposes of the study were to 1. Construct the lesson plans on reading comprehension for 6th grade students based on the Murdoch Integrated Approach (MIA) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) to meet the efficiency criteria of 75/75 2. Ascertain the effectiveness index of the lesson plans on reading comprehension for 6th grade students based on the MIA and the CLT 3. compare the students' reading comprehension learning through the MIA and through the CLT 4. Compare 6th grade students' satisfaction towards reading comprehension learning through the MIA and the CLT. The research target group was thirteen 6th grade students attending Ban Plakhao School, Na Chuak district, Maha Sarakham province in the second semester of the academic year 2019, purposively selected for the study the research instruments were 6 lesson plans which were divided into two methods of teaching: 3 lesson plans (12 hours) for the MIA and 3 lesson plans (12 hours) for for CLT, the pre-test/post-test for the MIA and pre-test/post-test for CLT, a questionnaire measuring students' satisfaction for MIA and a questionnaire measuring students' satisfaction for CLT. The research findings were: 1) The efficiency (E1/E2) of the MIA lesson plans was 91.54/90.26. and the efficiency (E1/E2) of the CLT lesson plans was 81.66/80.51 The efficiency of both the MIA and CLT lesson plans met the criteria set at 75/75-2) The effectiveness index of the English for reading comprehension lesson plans through the MIA and the CLT showed that the MIA had an effectiveness index of 0.8071 or 81% and the CLT had an effectiveness index of 0.6779 or 68% 3) The comparison of the students' scores learning via MIA and CLT showed no difference between the two methods. 4) The students' satisfaction of MIA on three aspects was: 1. Atmosphere $\bar{X} = 4.22$, S.D. = 0.60 2. Learning activities $\bar{X} = 3.87$, S.D. = 0.64 and 3. Benefits $\bar{X} = 4.01$, S.D. = 0.69. The average satisfaction in all three aspects was at a high level with $\bar{X} = 4.03$, S.D. = 0.64. The students' satisfactions on the CLT according to three aspects was: 1. Atmosphere $\bar{X} = 4.51$, S.D. = 0.49; 2. Learning activities $\bar{X} = 4.55$, S.D. = 0.51; and 3. Benefits $\bar{X} = 4.60$, S.D. = 0.50. The average satisfaction in all three aspects was at the highest level with $\bar{X} = 4.55$, S.D. = 0.50. It is obvious that both the are effective, so there is no difference in the outcomes of the implementation of these two methods.

Keywords: Reading comprehension, Murdoch Integrated Approach, Communicative Language Teaching

Introduction

Language is essential for human communication. It is used as a tool to exchange meaning and understanding among people in communities around the world. English in particular is essential to various fields of study, especially education. In many countries, children are taught and encouraged to learn English as a second language or foreign language. Even in countries where it is not an official language, such as the Netherlands or Sweden, we will find many syllabi in science and engineering written in English because it is the dominant language in sciences, and most of the researches and studies in any given scientific field will be written in English as well. At the university level in many countries, students study almost all their subjects in English in order to make the material more accessible to International students (Naved, 2015). In other words, English is the medium of science, technology, and international trade, and a lingua franca among nations and parts of nations around the world.

Heilman, Blair, & Rupley (1981: 2) argue that reading can be defined as a thinking process and it can be a communicative skill. They also define that reading is an interacting process. By reading, students also learn much of what they need to know. Reading helps the students to develop their critical thinking and finally it influences the success of their academic achievement. The success in teaching and learning process both inside and outside the classroom is influenced by reading habits. Educational experts have afforded methods to improve the teaching of reading and enhancing students' reading ability such as proposing and applying many kinds of reading techniques and selecting authentic materials used in reading comprehension.

However, the Ordinary National Educational Test (O-NET) scores in English of 2017-2018 at the school levels were found to be below the national levels in reading skills for comprehension. The test in English administered to 6th Grade Students nationwide under the Basic Education structure consists of 3 strands: as follows 1. Language for communication; 2. Language and culture; and 3. Language and Relationship with the community and the world.

The O-NET test results in 2018 were as follows; 1. Language for communication mean score of school level was 34.23, the mean score of national level was 38.24; 2. Language and culture mean score of school level was 45.00, the national level was 42.19; 3. Language and relationship with community and the world mean score of school level was 35.00, the national level was 39.64. The total 3 strand average of school level was 36.50 but the national level was 39.24. A close look at the O-NET test scores of 2017-2018, we found that the students' English at the school levels was below the national level in the development of reading skills for comprehension.

As the Murdoch Integrated Approach (MIA) introduced by Murdoch (1986) is a good way for teaching reading and Savignon (2001) also emphasizes that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is also the teaching approach necessary for the twenty-first century. The researcher, therefore would like to use these two approaches to help improve the students comprehension skills as well as compare the their effectiveness in developing students' reading comprehension ability for future use at school.

As mentioned earlier the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) proposed by Savignon (2001) is also the teaching approach necessary for the twenty-first century because it stresses the importance of communication. Readers must use their knowledge in communicative reading activities that engage all the four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Students have the opportunity to practice English in every skill for communication purposes in various contexts or situations. Students mainly practice in reading and writing and pay superficial attention to speaking and listening. The reading steps in the CLT are divided into three main stages, namely: Pre-reading, While-reading and Post-reading.

Research Objectives

1. Constructing lesson plans on reading comprehension for 6th grade students based on the Murdoch Integrated Approach (MIA) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) to meet the efficiency criteria of 75/75
2. Ascertaining the effectiveness index of the lesson plans on reading comprehension for 6th grade students based on the Murdoch Integrated Approach (MIA) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)
3. Comparing the students' reading comprehension learning through the Murdoch Integrated Approach (MIA) and through Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)
4. Examining the satisfaction towards reading comprehension learning through the Murdoch Integrated Approach (MIA) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) of 6th Grade Students

Scope of the study

The scope of this research study is as follows.

1. Target group:

The research target group were thirteen 6th Grade Students attending Ban Plakhao School, Na Chuak district, Maha Sarakham province in the second semester of the academic year 2019 purposively selected for the study. The research instruments were: 6 lesson plans divided into two methods of teaching divided into 3 lesson plans (12 hours) for the Murdoch Integrated Approach (MIA) and 3 lesson plans (12 hours) for Communicative Language Teaching (CLT); pre-test/post-test for MIA; pre-test/post-test for CLT; a questionnaire on the students' satisfaction for MIA; and a questionnaire on the students' satisfaction for CLT.

2. Variables The variables in this research consisted of two types:

2.1 Independent Variables were the teaching of English reading comprehension using MIA and CLT methods for 6th Grade Students.

2.2 Dependent Variables were the English reading comprehension achievements and the students' satisfaction towards the teaching of English reading comprehension through MIA and CLT for 6th Grade Students.

3. The contents of six reading texts

3.1 The three selected reading texts for MIA were: Helpful Dolphins, BTS Sky Trains and Ice cream

3.2 The three selected reading texts for CLT were: Halloween Night, A Deer and a Tiger, and Robot Dogs.

4. Research Instruments Research Instruments consisted of 6 lesson plans, a pre-test/post-test, and a questionnaire

4.1 Lessons plans There were 6 lesson plans, three of which were based on MIA, and the other three were based on CLT.

4.2 Reading comprehension tests Two reading comprehension tests each comprising 30 items of multiple choice questions were designed and constructed. One was to assess the students' reading comprehension before and after using MIA lessons; and the other one CLT lessons.

4.3 A questionnaire A five-point Likert scale questionnaire was constructed to inquire for the students' attitude toward-Learning of English reading comprehension through using MIA and CLT methods.

5. Data collection

The data collection procedures were as follows:

5.1 Experimental preparation

1) Set the target group as a research experimental group by purposive sampling (6th grade students) for the teaching-learning management in order to find the effects of using the MIA and the CLT methods to develop the students' reading comprehension.

2) Set the duration for the teaching-learning from 4 November 2019 - 13 December 2019

3) Prepare the pre-test and post-test on reading comprehension for the target group and get them checked by the thesis committee and experts for improvement. Administer the pre-test to the target group before teaching.

4) Prepare six lesson plans with three lessons using MIA and the other three using CLT methods.

5.2 Experimental

1) The researcher taught the experimental group by using the MIA and gave the post-test after finishing teaching three lesson plans.

2) The researcher taught the experimental group by using the CLT and gave the post-test after finishing the lesson plans.

5.3 Post-Experimental

1) The researcher assigned the target group to answer the questionnaire assessing their satisfaction.

2) The researcher collected the data from the pre-test and post-test, the exercises and the questionnaire for and analysis.

3) The researcher reported the research findings.

Conclusions

1. The efficiency (E1/E2) of the MIA lesson plans was 91.54/90.26. And the efficiency (E1/E2) of the CLT lesson plans was 81.66/80.51. These numbers showed that the efficiency of both the MIA and CLT lesson plans meets the criteria in the objective of the study which was set at 75/75.

2. The effectiveness index of the English for reading comprehension lesson plans through the MIA and CLT showed that the MIA had an effectiveness index of 0.8071 or 81% and the CLT had effectiveness index of 0.6779 or 68%.

3. The comparison of gaining scores of students when learning via MIA and CLT lesson plans showed no difference between the scores of the two methods.

4. The students' satisfaction with the MIA lessons according to 3 aspects was: 1) Atmosphere $\bar{X} = 4.22$, S.D. = 0.60, 2) Learning activities $\bar{X} = 3.87$, S.D. = 0.64, and 3) Benefits $\bar{X} = 4.01$, S.D. = 0.69. The average satisfaction in all 3 aspects was at a high level with $\bar{X} = 4.03$, S.D. = 0.64.

The students' satisfaction with learning through CLT according to 3 aspects was: 1) Atmosphere $\bar{X} = 4.51$, S.D. = 0.49, 2) Learning activities $\bar{X} = 4.55$, S.D. = 0.51, and 3) Benefits $\bar{X} = 4.60$, S.D. = 0.50. The average satisfaction in all 3 aspects was at the highest level with $\bar{X} = 4.55$, S.D. = 0.50

Discussions

The result for each research objective is discussed as follows:

1. The efficiency (E1/E2) of the MIA lesson plans was 91.54/90.26. These numbers show that the efficiency of the MIA lesson plans meets the criteria in the objective of the study which was set at 75/75. This high efficiency is due to the elaborate construction process of the lesson plans which have been checked and commented by the thesis control committee and experts. Meanwhile classroom activities in line with MIA method encourage students to be interested and participate in learning and practicing all four skills including listening, speaking, reading and writing. This involvement made students enjoy practicing reading. During the MIA reading class, students were gradually involved in the reading activities through the 7 steps of teaching. They were confident to interact with their friends by the support and encouragement of the teacher. Through the 7 steps they had chances to learn the meaning of words, and to understand the texts via various activities such as asking and answering about the story they read. This is in line with Harris & Sipay, (1979, 55) who claim that understanding the meaning of words is the essential element for reading comprehension (Harris & Sipay, 1979: 55).

The efficiency (E1/E2) of the CLT lesson plans was 81.66/80.51 which is higher than the set criteria at 75/75. This high efficiency is the result of elaborate construction of the CLT lesson plans under the monitor of thesis advisors and with the comments from the experts. The reading activities under communicative language teaching approach provide great opportunities for students to learn actively in the communicative context. During the CLT reading class, students had a chance to learn the pattern of sentences and meaning of vocabulary presented to them in the pre-reading step of the lesson. Then they practiced understanding the text through various activities in the while-reading step, such as filling the missing information, rearranging the incidents, drawing diagram, asking and answering questions, pair works, group works, reading games, etc. After practicing and interacting with each other, in the third step, post-reading step, Students were encouraged to use

the language they had learned in the new situation, in various activities, such as adapting the story, lengthening the story, role playing, concluding, completing the new tasks, etc. Through these steps, students had chances to learn and practice using their language skills in meaningful contexts. Therefore, students gradually developed their language skills to the advanced and practical level. Within these 3 steps, students have chances to improve the communicative competence, namely grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociocultural competence, and strategic competence, which are the essential components of communication skill (Savignon, 2001).

2. The effectiveness index of the lesson plans using the MIA and the CLT for English reading comprehension was 0.8071 or 81% and 0.6779 or 68% respectively.

The effectiveness index of the MIA lessons was high because the classroom was implemented smoothly and regularly in line with the MIA concept. Under the MIA method, students had a lot of time to learn language from the basic level such as vocabulary, to the practical level via various activities which enhanced students' reading comprehension skill. This resulted in the high percentage (81%) of their reading comprehension. The result was consistent with the studies aiming to develop reading ability by Munoz Bastias, (2011), Thapsorn (2011), Yeemadalhee (2013), Aeksin (2014), and Thepakorn (2014).

Meanwhile, the effectiveness index of the CLT reading lessons was not as high as the MIA lessons. It might be the effect of the time for CLT implementation, which was the second half of the semester, the period the schools had many activities that might distract the students' concentration in the classroom implementation. However, the development of 68% was quite high. When teaching elaborately in line with the CLT reading concept, students learned a lot from basic language aspects to the advanced ones. To illustrate, in the pre-reading stage, they learned the meaning of some words, the patterns of sentences; in the while-reading stage, they practiced using the vocabulary and sentence patterns they had learned; and in the post-reading stage, they used the language patterns they could use fluently from the first two stages to complete or produce new tasks. In short, the CLT process could make students develop their reading ability, which was consistent with studies on reading ability development conducted by Naeem Akhtar (2014), Chaopaknam (2014), Suwansaenthawee (2013) and Ngasit (2012).

3. The comparison of the students' scores in reading comprehension between learning through the MIA and the CLT was not different ($t=1.733, p.109$) which may be due to the following reasons.

The MIA is an effective method for teaching reading because it is the method that focuses on the learners' involvements in the learning process using their thinking and solving problems skills, learning activities are done by the students using the learning materials and activities well-prepared by the teachers. The students do the most of the learning activities by themselves or within groups with the teacher as a guide and facilitator. Most importantly, the learning activities are planned for an integration of all four language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing.

The CLT aims to enable students to use language correctly suitable for the situation. The content used will focus on communication using various activities as a training tool. The teacher prepares the activities or situations to help the students do the activities within 3 steps: presentation, practice and production.

As presented above, it is obvious that both the MIA and the CLT methods are effective; there is no difference in the outcomes of the implementation of these two methods.

4. The satisfaction of students with the two methods of learning was high. It may be explained that both methods were based on engaging students in the classroom activities where they had no anxiety. The process of teaching and learning in both methods provided them with active and meaningful reading activities with the teacher as facilitator and mentor. The contents of the lessons were gradually learned from simple to difficult so that they did not feel stressed while learning. This is congruent with the satisfaction theory saying that a person is content to do anything that brings happiness and avoid doing what makes him suffer or get adversity (Dechinda 1992: 38). The students' satisfaction with MIA lessons was consistent with studies by Thapsing (2011), Yeemadalhee (2013), Aeksin (2014), and Thepakorn (2014); and the satisfaction with CLT lessons was consistent with studies by Naeem Akhtar (2014), Chaopaknam (2014), Suwansaenthawee (2013), and Ngasit (2012).

Suggestions

1. Suggestion for practical implementation

1.1 Teachers should provide students with interesting learning aids.

1.2 Teachers should be patient and follow all the steps of teaching in order to be reliable in teaching.

2. Suggestions for further research

2.1 There should be two sample groups in the study for credibility.

2.2 The sample group should be more than 30 students.

2.3 The two teaching approaches MIA and CLT should be experimented for students of other levels for comparison.

Acknowledgment

This research was successful. I would like to thank all the teachers, advisors and experts. Is very high And thank the faculty members in the curriculum who gave them their knowledge, experience and approach to learning. As well as encouraging you to research well all along.

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