USING NARRATIVE TEXTS TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' READING PROFICIENCY

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ABSTRACT

This study is conducted to investigate the effectiveness of using narratives on real life tragedies in teaching reading. It also seeks to find out whether narratives motivate students to read in English on their own.

The study adopted the quasi experimental design. A pre – test was administered at the beginning of the study. The pre – test was taken from authentic International English Language Testing System (IELTS). The experimental group was taught reading using narratives on real life tragedies for eight weeks. The teaching was carried out based on the module prepared by the researches. At the end of eight weeks, the group sat for a post – test. A set of questionnaire was also administered to the group to elicit the students' personal views or opinions regarding narratives texts.

The findings are as follows:

1. Descriptive Statistics: Students' scores on the IELTS pre and post – tests.

The minimum score for the pre – test is 3 and the maximum score is 24 whilst the minimum post – test score is 5 and the maximum is 30. The mean scores for the pre and post – tests are 12.10 and 16.40 respectively. The standard deviation for the pre and post – tests are 5.589 and 5.841 respectively. These figures show that there is a significant difference between the pre- and post – tests scores. The students did better on the IELTS after the training on reading skills using narrative texts. The results support the view that reading is interactive and when students are engaged in the text, their comprehension improves.

2. Students' responses to the post – study questionnaire

In response to the narrative texts, the majority of students (70.8%) said that the narratives they read help them to improve their vocabulary. 66.7% of them said that narrative texts help them improve their grammar and sentence structure. Most of the students thought narrative texts were easier and more comprehensible than expository texts. They thought the sentence structures of narrative texts were straight forward and less complicated. This facilitated reading and understanding of the texts. They found narrative texts interesting, exciting, easy to grasp and helpful in improving their English proficiency.

Based on the above findings, it can be concluded that narrative texts help students to improve their reading proficiency. This is because when students read narrative texts, they were able to relate to the texts. This allowed them to be actively engaged in the texts and at the same time improved their proficiency.