

Integrating Reading comprehension and skills in English for Medical Students via Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP)

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Abstract: Despite its potential to assist language learners, neuro-linguistic programming, or NLP, has not gotten much attention. The goal of the current study was to find out how NLP techniques affected the reading comprehension of EFL students in an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course. Two complete classes of students were chosen to create an experimental group ($n = 30$) and a control group ($n = 30$) in order to accomplish this goal. Each participant received a reading pretest that was based on the material covered in the course.

Reid's (1987) leaning style questionnaire was used to diagnose the participants' sensory learning styles. After that, the experimental group members were trained in NLP techniques so they could use them when reading. The conventional method of teaching ESP reading was applied to the control group. It was discovered that applying NLP techniques can significantly improve the reading comprehension of Iranian undergraduate EFL learners based on the analysis of posttest results using ANCOVA. Implications for education are examined.

Key words: NLP techniques, EFL learners, IELTS, Baker and Rinvolutri, "the 4 pillars of NLP" theory.

Introduction: Reading skill is one of the most important language abilities for students who study at Medical Universities. There is no doubt that the majority of material offered to university students is in the form of written text, and those with adequate reading comprehension skills can overcome the challenge of reading texts (Hu, 2004).

Reading comprehension is also important in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) language classes especially in our case English for Medical Purposes. Much of the learning material in ESP classes is also offered to language learners in written form, and they must be able to read the text in order to comprehend, analyze and implement it into their sphere. However, because a variety of issues exist in English for Medical Purposes module at Samarkand State Medical university, the objectives and outcomes of this module have not been hopeful.

To begin with, most learners who attend English for Medical Purposes want to increase their Speaking ability and mostly think about getting IELTS considering that certificate as a luxury one thus, reading comprehension receives less attention. On the other hand, while most resources offered to learners are written, they are typically employed to teach content vocabulary to language learners rather than reading comprehension (Akbari & Tahririan, 2009). Furthermore, instructors do not take into account learners' levels and their styles. (Isazadeh, Makui, Ansarian, 2016; Wang, Wang, & Huang, 2008).

Recent study has also revealed that Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) has aided language learning in a variety of circumstances. In the learning process, NLP incorporates not just language but also behavior and strategic thinking. When compared to focusing solely on language, the combination of strategic thinking, action, and language is more likely to result in efficient language learning. As a result, learners can delve deep into the structure of a task. NLP is defined as "a complex set of beliefs, skills, and behaviors that can help a person communicate more accurately,

effectively, and respectfully" (p.4) by Baker and Rinvolutri. According to Richards and Rogers (2000), many language teaching methods, including the Silent Way, rely on the intellect of language learners. The last one has gotten very little attention: suggestopedia and the application of NLP in language instruction. Thus, the primary goal of this research was to determine whether or not NLP utilization can help language learners in ESP courses in Iran with their reading comprehension issues.

Students in the ESP course, which is one of the demanding and required courses for these students, received the majority of the attention. The study's potential findings may also serve as a guide for other instructors who run comparable programs at other Iranian medical schools.

Research Issue

In order to further the goal of the investigation, the following research question was put forth:

- What is the effect of implementing NLP techniques on reading comprehension of Samarkand State Medical University bachelor degree EFL learners in English for Medical Purposes module ?

Theoretical framework

The primary goal of the study was to determine how much NLP can impact Samarkand State Medical University bachelor degree EFL learners' reading comprehension in English for Medical Purposes module. Thus, using Revell and Norman's (1997, as referenced in Richards & Rodgers, 2000) explanation of "the 4 pillars of NLP" theory, the researcher chose it. Four essential components for NLP were categorized, which are outcomes, sensory acuity, flexibility, rapport.

The researcher considered several factors when creating the reading tasks in order to operationalize this theory. Initially, the task's primary goal (outcome) was stated clearly. Secondly, the reading assignments were completed in groups to optimize commonalities among students. Additionally, it assisted in lessening the differences, particularly subconsciously. Thirdly, students were instructed to observe how their groupmates read in order to get ideas for how to tackle reading problems. This is a deliberate, nonverbal phase of the assignment. Fourth, after receiving a briefing on the task, learners were asked to be adaptable and switch up their reading strategies if they didn't work. This required a repetition.

Vygotsky's (1987, as cited in Chaiklin, 2003) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) theory was another that served as the foundation for this investigation. ZPD is predicated on how cooperation affects learning. In order to learn effectively, it is assumed that students should move into the proximal zone of their peers. A person's zone of proficiency (ZDP) is their area of expertise that they can share with others. Another name for it is the Assisted Zone. Since cooperation is a component of NLP, it is expected that through NLP, students can reach each other's proximal zone and gain access to additional knowledge resources.

Literature Review

NLP is one of the more recent scientific breakthroughs that links language, neurology, and mathematics. Bandler, a mathematician, and Grinder, a linguist, were the prosecutors on NLP, and they came from different backgrounds (Bandler & Grinder, 1975). NLP was developed to raise the bar for intrapersonal and interpersonal communication within and between individuals (Revell & Norman, 1997). In an effort to develop NLP, scholars developed a set of techniques and patterns to accomplish this goal. These patterns were dubbed "the strategies that other people can use in the pursuit of excellence" by Winch (2005) on page 1.

NLP has the potential to be applied as a theory in the field of education, claim Tosey and Mathison (2003). He makes the assumption that NLP is cooperative and goal-oriented in addition to being a whole-body learning theory that promotes interpersonal and intrapersonal communication. Afterwards, managers, trainers, salespeople, market researchers, counselors, consultants, physicians, attorneys, and more were trained using NLP.

Scholars Richards and Rodgers (2000) were among those who talked about NLP's application in language instruction.

Their approach to NLP was to examine "how people influence each other and in how behaviors of very effective people could be duplicated," building on the concept first presented by Bandler and Grinder (1975) (Richards & Rodgers, 2000, p.125).

Subsequently, they claimed that while NLP may influence language acquisition, little research has addressed this matter.

Methods

Participants

To fulfill the goal of this study, 60 bachelor students of Samarkand State Medical University took part in the study. These participants were of different genders and their age ranged between 17 and 21. The participants took part in the study in form of two intact classes; therefore, non-random sampling through the convenience approach can best describe the participants' sampling procedure in this study. These participants formed two cohorts for this study, i.e. an experimental group (n=30) and a control group (n=30).

Thirty people each were assigned to the experimental group (n = 30) and the control group (n = 30) for these two classes.

A reading comprehension test was used to assess their reading homogeneity. Using the pre-test results, an analysis of covariance was performed to ensure that the groups were homogeneous. It demonstrated that, prior to treatment, there was no discernible difference in reading comprehension between the two groups.

Instruments and Materials

The materials used in the present study included passages, taken from the platform mt.sammu.uz English modul. The participants were given a pretest (from the above mentioned platform), as pretest, and another test from the platform as posttest.

The instruments used in the study included: a) Reading pre-test and posttest, and b) Reid (1987) learning style question-naire. The reliability of the reading pretest and posttest was checked the platform and was equal to.89, and.88 for the two tests respectively. In addition, these tests are considered valid, as they are designed by a panel of experts at Samarkand State Medical University, and are used to measure learners' reading comprehension at English for Medical Purposes module.

Data Analysis

The main objective of this study was to find out whether there is any statistically significant difference between the experimental and control group concerning the treatment of the study.

Procedure

The treatment phase in the experimental group was based upon a series of topics, each presented in one of the ten sessions. The topics were among the most popular issues in re-lation to NLP practices. Listed below: 1. Introduction; NLP presuppositions and core concepts 2. Goal Setting (Outcome)-Guided Fantasy 3. Sensory Language (Reid's Test) 4. Sensory Language (Continue) 5. Metaphor-Accentuate the Positive 6. Emotion 7. Belief (Flexibility) 8. There is no Failure; only Feedback 9. Finding the Best Strategy (Flexibility) 10. Review of the strategies.

Results

Version 22 of the Statistical Package in Social Sciences (SPSS) was utilized to examine the information. In light of the study's goals, the following research question was answered: What is the effect of implementing NLP techniques on reading comprehension of Samarkand State Medical University bachelor degree EFL learners in English for Medical Purposes module ?

The study was designed to be quasi-experimental because the participants were divided into two intact classes of ESP, one for the experimental group and another for the control group. Furthermore, it can be difficult to define all of the many variables that are present in the majority of applied linguistics research.

The main objective of this study was to find out whether there is any statistically significant difference between the experimental and control group concerning the treatment of the study. Based on the fact that the control and experimental groups were two intact classes of medicine students, and might not be matched at the outset, the pretest scores (the covariant) was adjusted and an analysis of covariance, AN-COVA was applied to find if there was any preexisting significant difference in pretests of both experimental and control group to ensure the homogeneity of the groups from the very beginning so that any significant difference in control and experimental group can be attributed to the effect of the treatment. Here it is worth mentioning that all the assumptions for applying ANCOVA to the data was investigated to meet the conditions under which ANCOVA is permitted to be applied.

CONCLUSION

Considering that Samarkand State Medical University EFL students have insufficient reading comprehension of ESP reading materials, this study made use of NLP instruction to enhance their reading. The results of the study revealed that NLP instruction can be effective in terms of reading comprehension for Samarkand State Medical University bachelor degree EFL learners in English for Medical Purposes module. The results gained from this study can have pedagogical implications for language teachers who may wish to increase their learners reading comprehension. In addition this research can be a guide to other researchers who may wish to gauge the effect of NLP instruction of other performance of the EFL leaners with regard to other language skills.

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