The Language Experience Approach as A Strategy in Improving Reading Comprehension

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ABSTRACT

The study focused on the efficacy of the language experience approach in developing students' reading comprehension. The study participants were 89 students of Grade 12 from Nasugbu Senior High School 1's Humanities and Social Sciences strand. The researchers utilized a quasi-experimental research design to gather data and information from the respondents. The study used a researcher-created questionnaire and a pretest and posttest to obtain all essential data. The pre-test was given to the learners without using the language experience approach, while the post-test was executed after using and applying the language experience approach.

The study's findings demonstrated a substantial change in the student's scores before and after using the language experience approach. The results additionally indicate a significant distinction between male and female sex-disaggregated reading comprehension skills. Based on their pretest and posttest scores, female respondents have greater comprehension abilities than male respondents. It was also revealed that the Language Experience Approach is suitable for improving reading comprehension since respondents disagree with the common problems encountered while using the approach.

Based on the results, it was recommended that the proposed workbook be used to help students develop their reading comprehension skills. Likewise, teachers should practice using the language experience approach inside the classroom and provide different activities that may improve students' reading comprehension, particularly males. According to the results, the female respondents perform better than the males. They may also look for more effective ways to improve students' reading comprehension, specifically males.

Keywords: language, reading, experience, comprehension

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the most vital skills in English. It serves as the primary source of language input and is necessary for developing other language skills, including speaking and writing. One of the four macro skills required to learn English is reading. Reading allows us to learn new things, expand our knowledge, and teach students how to read English texts effectively. Reading necessitates a high level of comprehension, wherein students must comprehend the meaning of the text or passage.

Reading is a difficult task requiring recognition, awareness, and comprehension. It is intended to help students develop knowledge and understanding by having them read and comprehend what they read. According to Zulkifli (2020), the ability of a person to comprehend text is influenced by their skills and capacity to process information. When students need help with word recognition, they use less of their processing capabilities to read individual words, which hinders their ability to comprehend what is read. Reading strategies for improving reading comprehension and inferences include expanding one's vocabulary, performing critical text analysis, and engaging in deep reading.

Emphasizing the value of reading, the teacher should consider the approaches he or she should take. To meet the needs of the students, the teacher may use and modify various approaches. Reading approaches are essential in improving reading comprehension because they facilitate students' capacity to read efficiently.

Additional factors influence a student's reading comprehension. Students' difficulties in learning the language are also linked to their language experiences in various situations. Teachers may also need help assisting students in comprehending what they read

dueto the impact of students' diverse language experiences.

This study investigates the effectiveness of language experience approaches in improving students' reading comprehension. It is a methodof teaching literacy based on a learner's existing language experience. This approach also includes shared experiences such as everyday occurrences, common educational experiences, a school event or hands-on exercises, outdoor adventures, and personal anecdotes or ideologies of students. A teacher does not typically give students explicit instructions in the language experience approach so that students can freely explore. This fosters classroom culture, increases student ownership and investment in reading and writing, and can aid in integrating content, literacy, and English-language learning and development (Lee, 2020). Teachers could use this approach to develop abetter learning plan for increasing their students' literacy levels.

This research examines how teachers use the language experience approach to help students learn from their experiences. The students' scores before and after using this approach were compared to determine its usefulness. A practical lesson strategy plan can aid in the success and well-being of the teacher. Teachers are teaching because they want to assist learners. When a lesson goes well or a student performs well on an assessment, an effective strategy can also contributeto job satisfaction (William, Mary, 2022). Learning strategies in language teaching are essential because they provide English teachers and students with the tools they need to establish their knowledge of theEnglish language in the classroom, making them an essential part of language teaching (Khansir, 2021).

Comprehension strategy assists students in becomingpurposeful and attentive readers who are in control of their reading comprehension. However, due to various teaching approaches, many teachers are still determining which learning approach is the best to use in helping their students improve or develop their comprehension skills, particularly those with low comprehension levels. Also, educators play an essential role in teaching children to read; consequently, they must understand how reading issues can negatively impact students (Claessenet al., 2020). The study's main objective is to determine the effectivenessof the Language Experience Approach in enhancing students' reading comprehension. The Language Experience Approach is a teaching strategy that involves a shared experience such as everyday occurrences,common school experiences, a classroom activity, or hands-on exercise.It may additionally involve students' personal experiences or views. This approach is one of the most effective methods for improving reading comprehension since learners may connect their existing knowledge andexperiences to comprehend what is in the reading material entirely.

Furthermore, the researchers believed that using an effective strategy allows teachers to quickly impart knowledge while allowing students to learn a new language using their diverse experiences. Additionally, as an alternative method to other teaching reading strategies, this research study will provide ideas and output about the efficacy of this approach in developing student comprehension. Language teachers can use this new concept to design and deliver high-quality lessons that ensure students are engaged and have long-term language learning experiences.

OBJECTIVES

This study examines the effectiveness of language experience approaches in teaching the language as an input in developing reading comprehension.

Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:
1. Is there a significant difference between the pre-and post-test scoresof the respondents?
2. What is the students' sex-disaggregated reading comprehensionskill?
3. What benefits do students gain when using the language experienceapproach in reading comprehension skills?
4. What common problems do students face while using the language experience approach?
5. What possible output can be crafted based on the result of thestudent's post-test using the language experience approach?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

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Research Design

The researchers utilized a quasi-experimental research design. One form of quasi-experimental design is pre-test and post-test research. According to Stratton (2019), pre-test and post-test research are among many types of quasi-experimental design. The term "quasi" refers to something that resembles experimental research but does not imply that the method is true experimental research. The researchers employ a two-group pretest-posttest technique. The two-group pretest-posttest design is a quasi-experimental in which the result of interest is measured twice: once before and once after a teacher teaches a group of participants about a specific topic using the language learning experiences approach.

Sampling Design and the Respondents

The 89 students of Grade 12 from Nasugbu Senior High School's Humanities and Social Sciences strand participated in the study using purposive sampling for the academic year 2022–2023.

The researchers chose these respondents because they believed they would provide enough information for this study. Furthermore, they are incoming first-year college students, and this study may help them develop their language skills to perform well academically.

Data Gathering Instrument

The present study used a researcher-made questionnaire, pre-test, and post-test to gather necessary data. The pre-test will be given to the learners without using the language experience approach, while the post-test will be executed after using and applying the language experience approach. The questionnaire was made based on the study's objectives.

The questionnaire includes questions that could be answered on a four-point Likert frequency rating scale from 1 (being the lowest) to 4 (being the highest) with corresponding verbal interpretations such as Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, and Strongly Agree, as elaborated in the succeeding pages of this section.

The following ranges were utilized as a measurement scale to interpret the respondents' ratings.

Construction. The researchers constructed a draft questionnaire based on the objectives of the study. Include other processes

Validation. After creating the questionnaire draft, a panel of invited research experts will develop a content validity procedure. (Qualified experts in the field validated it.)

Administration. The final copies of the questionnaires were administered and distributed to the students in the sample.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The data from the study would be collected, interpreted, and compiled by the researchers. The following statistical tools are used for data analysis.

Frequency. This was done to determine the total number of respondents who responded to the questionnaire.

Ranking. Respondents must rank their response options in order of preference when answering a ranking question. Researchers can use this information to determine the popularity and perspectives of each response option among respondents. This will be assessed using the percentage calculation.

Dependent T-test. This test determined the difference between the pre-test and post-test results.

Weighted Mean. This was used to validate the respondents' scores and determine the responses from the four scales of respondents based on the questionnaires.

Z-test. This hypothesis test was used to determine if there is a difference in the respondents' sex-disaggregated reading comprehension data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

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1. Significant difference between the pre-and post-test scores of therespondents

Difference in the Score of the Students Before and After Using theLanguage Experience Approach in Reading Comprehension Skill

Due to technological advancements, students may rely heavily on videos, audiobooks, and other tutorials, which may dull their reading skills. Therefore, this research aims to improve students' reading comprehension by using the Language Experience Approach.

If the p-value of 3.81393E-55 is less than the level of significance of 0.05, then the null hypothesis must be rejected. This revealed a significant difference in the scores of the student respondents before and after using the language experience approach inreading comprehension.

The language experience approach is likely effective in improving the reading comprehension of the HUMSS students. In this regard, the students can perform better with the help of the language experience approach. The result concurred with the study of Lubis W., Pricilia, and Lubis L. (2020), which focuses on the effect of the languageexperience approach on students' comprehension of recount text. Using this approach, the students become more active, and their comprehensionis categorized as "very good."

Moreover, the findings coincide with the study of Ayu Rizalatun (2019), which revealed that students' scores in cycle one differed in cycle two. The study concludes that without the presence of the Language Experience Approach, the students' reading comprehension could not improve, and with the Language Experience Approach, their reading abilities could be enhanced.

The Language Experience Approach can improve the student'sperformance by considering the test results. It indicates that this approach to teaching the language as an input in developing reading comprehension is practical. Finally, this approach can help students improve their motivation in reading and provide them opportunities to use their prior knowledge and experiences to develop readingcomprehension.

2. Students' sex-disaggregated reading comprehension skill

Students' Sex-Disaggregated Reading Comprehension Skill (Pre-Test)

The p-value of 0.01 is less than the significance level of 0.05; the null hypothesis must be rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference between the sex-disaggregated reading comprehension skills of males and females on their pre-test results. Considering the mean of each group, female respondents have higher reading skills than male respondents.

Students' Sex-Disaggregated Reading Comprehension Skill (Post-Test)

Since the p-value of 0.00 is less than the level of significance of0.05, then there is a need to reject the null hypothesis. Thus, there is a significant difference between the sex-disaggregated reading comprehension skills of males and females in terms of the results of their post-test. Considering the mean of each group, female respondents have higher reading skills than male respondents.

This aligns with the idea of Purti (2020), who stated that femalestudents performed better in reading than male students. This means thatfemale students were better than male students at reading comprehension. Moreover, this echoes the result of Moradi, Ghabanchi, and Pishghadam (2020), which exposed that reading comprehension favored female respondents.

The results show that female respondents' reading comprehension is better than that of male respondents. In this regard, the language experience approach is an accurate way to determine students' skills and to determine who performed well in reading.

3. Benefits that Students gain during the Utilization of the LanguageExperience Approach in Reading Comprehension Skill
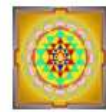
Table 1

Benefits of the LanguageExperience Approach in Reading Comprehension Skill

Statement	WM	VI
1. I can use my previous knowledge in language learning to understand new language concepts.	3.62	Strongly Agree
2. I can share my language learning experiences with my peers to help them understand language lessons.	3.43	Agree
3. I can comprehend reading materials better by relating it to my language knowledge which includes word vocabulary and previously read texts.	3.48	Agree
4. I can relate words to images by using my previous learning.	3.36	Agree
5. I can enumerate synonyms and antonyms of words based on the experiences related to it.	3.34	Agree
6. I can pronounce words easily based on comparing its spelling to words that I am familiar with.	3.44	Agree
7. I can connect the ideas presented on a reading material to my personal experiences and knowledge.	3.43	Agree
8. I can easily elaborate on the meaning of a specific word based on my knowledge of the language.	3.28	Agree
9. I can recognize words and explain them further using my experiences with language.	3.37	Agree
10. I can apply my prior knowledge to complete my written and oral tasks.	3.54	Strongly Agree
Composite Mean	3.43	Agree

The Language Experience Approach in reading has many benefits that show the ability of students to understand the meaning of the texts and use their prior knowledge to learn new language concepts. Secondly, the topic in the LEA activities encourages students to apply a reading approach. It shows more about the advantages of using the Language Experience Approach in improving their reading skills; it was assumed that this approach had been successfully tried.

The general weighted mean is 3.43, verbally interpreted as "Agree." This means that students agree with the benefits when it comes to the utilization of the language experience approach. Current findings are similar to the claim of Rahmawati and Sumarlam (2019), who asserted that using LEA in teaching reading comprehension improved students' reading skills, motivation, and self-efficacy. More so, the findings also agree with the view of Rismayani (2020), who pointed out that using LEA improved students' reading comprehension skills, especially in understanding a text's main idea and details.

Based on the results, using a language experience approach, students can use their previous knowledge in language learning to understand new language concepts with a weighted mean of 3.62, ranked first. This approach enables students to construct connections between old and new knowledge. These findings support the study conducted by Rizalatun (2019), which found that the language experience approach facilitates activities for students to build their reading comprehension achievements. This also supports Wahyudi, Dewi, and Hasanah's (2020) conclusion, showing that by having a reading interest, students will quickly understand the reading and even find ideas or creative solutions from what they have read.

Furthermore, students can apply their prior knowledge to complete their written

and oral tasks with a weighted mean of 3.54, ranked second among the ten others. In other words, their readingcomprehension improved due to applying reading strategies in their reading activities before and after reading (Putra & Suzzane, 2022).

On the other hand, students can comprehend reading materialsbetter by relating them to their language knowledge, including word vocabulary and previously read texts ranked third with a weighted meanof 3.48. In the study by Zulkifli, Nian Masna Evawati, and Koryati (2020). Their findings correspond to the results of this study wherein the Language Experience Approach is a suitable reading approach to be usedin teaching reading comprehension because it can develop the students' motivation and reading ability for them to be able to comprehend the textrelated to their experiences effortlessly.

Students can pronounce words quickly by comparing their spelling to words they are familiar with, ranked fourth. The language experience approach enables learners to pronounce the words correctly.Students can share their language learning experiences with their peers to help them understand language lessons. They can connect the ideas presented in reading material to their experiences and knowledge. Both ranked 5.5 with a weighted mean of 3.43, while students can recognize words and explain them further using their experiences with language with a weighted mean of 3.37 ranked seventh.

Moreover, students can relate words to images by using theirprevious learning, with a weighted mean of 3.36, ranked eight; students can enumerate synonyms and antonyms of words based on their experiences related to them, with a weighted mean of 3.34, which rankedninth; and students quickly elaborate the meaning of a specific word based on their knowledge of the language with a weighted mean of 3.28which ranks tenth and the last. Based on the study by Marpaung and Sinaga (2019), there was an improvement in the students' reading comprehension after applying the directed activities related to texts.

Students enjoyed their learning process even though they found some difficulties. This result also supports Maghfiroh's (2019) claim that using the Language Experience Approach improves students' reading comprehension of descriptive text. This demonstrates that most studentsdo not benefit significantly from relating words to images and enumerating the synonyms and antonyms of some other words, which are also vital in enhancing vocabulary. Students with no reading strategies may need help getting the best reading skill strategy to meet their reading needs (Almutairi, 2018).

Based on the result, the Language Experience Approach is suitable for improving reading comprehension because it shows that most students develop their motivation and reading ability. Students who learn reading using this approach have a stronger desire to interact, as they are interested in their peers' writing.

4. Common problems that students face during the utilization of the language experience approach

Table 2
Common problems students face in utilizingthe language experience approach

Statement	WM	VI
1. It's not easy for me to recognize the meaning of the text using a language experience approach.	1.90	Disagree
2. I had difficulty answering various questions after reading the passage.	1.74	Disagree
3. It is difficult for me to learn grammar.	1.94	Disagree
4. I commonly misunderstand the meaning of words that I heard from my instructor.	1.69	Disagree
5. The language experience approach is not suitable for my learning style.	1.83	Disagree
6. I got bored while listening to my instructor.	1.53	Disagree
7. I lack awareness of the Language Experience Approach.	1.78	Disagree

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Table 2 continued…

8. I find it hard to connect what I am reading to another text, something that I have seen, or something that I have experienced.	1.75	Disagree
9. I mispronounced the words in the assigned reading materials.	1.72	Disagree
10. I easily get distracted and cannot focus on what my teacher is saying.	1.55	Disagree
Composite Mean	1.74	Disagree

Choosing the right teaching approach makes informationcome to life, enabling students to engage with topics and activelyenhance their knowledge and abilities. Various typical reading difficulties might hinder students' progress in reading comprehension and cause them to do poorly in other areas. This research aims to identifyreading comprehension challenges encountered by students when usingthe language experience technique.

The Language Experience Approach shows some benefits, butsome students encounter different difficulties while utilizing this approach. Students generally have their own learning and reading styles. In this regard, this research aims to identify reading comprehension challenges encountered by students when using the language experience technique.

As shown by the general weighted mean of 1.74, it can be inferred that students have differing views regarding using the language experience approach. Topkaya and Ozkurt (2021) supported this view, stating that the language experience approach positively affected reading comprehension and motivation. Meanwhile, it also suggests that the Language Experience Approach is an effective teaching technique for improving language and literacy outcomes for learners, and it can positively impact motivation, writing performance, and vocabulary acquisition and retention.

Based on the results, with the help of the language experience approach, respondents were fine with learning grammar, with a weightedmean of 1.94, which ranked first among the ten problems presented. Thissupports Al-Jarrah and Ismall's (2018) claim that the level of learners' vocabulary knowledge, prior knowledge, and grammatical knowledge influence reading comprehension. However, the results contradict the study of Hassan (2021), which concluded that the primary language problems were a lack of vocabulary and grammar knowledge, poor performance in the language, and linguistic interference.

Difficulty in recognizing the meaning of the text using the language experience approach with a weighted mean of 1.90 ranked second. Students can easily recognize and elaborate on a text's meaning.The findings opposed the study of Yuvirawan, Listia, and Amelia (2021),wherein most students struggle with narrative reading. Their difficultiesare identifying the main idea, locating detailed information, making inferences, identifying references, and comprehending the meaning of words.

Meanwhile, the perception that the Language Experience Approach is unsuitable for their learning style ranked third with aweighted mean of 1.83. Current findings are similar to Kim's (2020) claim that LEA effectively taught English to Korean students with different learning styles, including visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners. Similarly, a study by Aldawood (2020) found that LEA was effective in teaching English to Saudi Arabian students with different learning styles, including visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners.

Moreover, a lack of students' awareness of the Language Experience Approach, with a weighted mean of 1.78, ranked fourth.
.students struggle to connect what they are reading to another text, something that they have seen, or something that they have experiencedgain a weighted mean of 1.75 .ranked fifth; and the difficulty while answering various types of questions after reading the passage ranked sixth with a weighted mean of 1.74. These findings manifest that studentsneed help clarifying the relevant ideas in answering the question, and inline with this, mispronouncing

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the words in the assigned reading materials with a weighted mean of 1.72 ranked seventh among the ten others.

However, students commonly misunderstand the meaning of words that they hear from their instructor, with a weighted mean of 1.69,ranked eighth; students get distracted and cannot focus on what their teacher is saying, ranked ninth, with a weighted mean of 1.55; and getting bored while listening to their instructor, with a weighted mean of1.53, ranked tenth, or last. These findings agree with the study of Hassan(2021), who asserted that grammar, new words, homonyms, and homographs, among other things, were found to impede reading comprehension. Moreover, among teachers, there was general agreement that vocabulary was the most challenging issue. They reported that new vocabulary hampered students' comprehension of the reading text.

The results show that the Language Experience Approach is a practical approach to improving reading comprehension because the respondents disagree with the stated common problems of the approach.Moreover, using the Language Experience Approach, the students can quickly improve their performance, writing skills, vocabulary knowledge, and word recognition. Lastly, this approach is an effective strategy for teaching and improving the students' reading comprehension.

5. Proposed Workbook using Language Experience Approach as Strategy in Improving Reading Comprehension

The workbook comprises different passages with reflective andcomprehensive questions. The primary purpose of reflective questions isto encourage students to self-reflect and improve their thinking skills. Moreover, these questions help students think deeper about what they just learned and how they learned about the topic. Meanwhile, comprehensive questions can help the students understand the passages'meaning and the text. Reflective and comprehensive questions can also guide students in using their experiences, previous knowledge, and information. The passages can be easily comprehended, and students canreflect accurately and recognize their learning process.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were made:
1. The result shows that students can perform better with the helpof the language experience approach, and it is effective in improving reading comprehension skills.
2. Regarding sex-disaggregated reading comprehension skills between male and female respondents, female respondents have better comprehension than male respondents.
3. The Language Experience Approach significantly benefited the respondents by using their prior knowledge of language learning to understand new language concepts and enable them to apply their prior knowledge to complete their written and oraltasks.
4. Most respondents need help understanding the meaning ofwords they heard from their instructor, get distracted and cannotfocus on what their teacher is saying, and get bored while listening to their instructor. This signifies that the students need more assistance in learning and some motivational exercises.
5. The learning material that the researchers provide can be used to supplement the language experience approach as a strategy for improving reading comprehension skills.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of the findings and conclusions in the study, the following recommendations are hereby presented:
1. Teachers could guide the students, specifically the males, through developing their reading comprehension. Teachers mayalso continue using the language experience approach in classroom management to improve the students' reading

comprehension.

2. Teachers should also practice using the language experience approach inside the classroom and provide different activities that may improve students' reading comprehension, particularlythe males, because, according to the results, the female respondents perform better than the males. They may also lookfor more effective ways to improve the students' reading comprehension, specifically the males.

3. Teachers may know more about the benefits of the language experience approach to classify if this approach is compatible with the student's learning styles. Meanwhile, the students mayalso know the benefits of LEA and use it in the learning processto improve their reading comprehension.

4. Teachers may provide different motivational activities to help students utilize the language experience approach and avoid such problems and difficulties during the learning process. Meanwhile, students may focus on the instructor to quickly improve their reading comprehension.

5. The proposed workbook can be used to improve the learners' reading comprehension.

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