

Factors Affecting English Reading Skills At Collegiate Level In Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

English reading skills is one of the key issues faced by students of all levels. The study aims at exploring those factors which affecting English reading skills at collegiate level in Nawabshah, Pakistan. To understand the affecting factors, three objectives from the main aim of the study are constructed. First of all, the study intends to determine the attitude of college students towards English reading skills. Second is to find out the problems they faced while reading. Lastly is to know the strategies for improving English readings at college level. The study adopted qualitative paradigm in which semi structured interviews were conducted from randomly selected 9 students of different colleges of Nawabshah, Pakistan and 4 teachers of the same colleges. Interviews were recorded, transcribed and analyzed thematically. The results also showed that students possess both positive as well negative attitudes towards English reading skills. Students' attitude is dependent upon the attitude of teachers, content of the syllabus and atmosphere of the classroom. The findings of the research showed that lack of vocabulary, having inadequate knowledge of English as a second language, difficulty in pronouncing the words, selection of text and lack of interest in reading are the major factors that affect English reading skills at college level. Moreover, teachers suggested some strategies to overcome the factors that affect English reading skills, such as in metacognitive reading strategies problem solving strategy works much better. It requires supportive environment and increases focuses for the reader. Overall, the background knowledge English as second language, reading attitudes and teachers' motivation play constructive role in developing reading skills of collegiate students.

Keyword: Reading Skills, Metacognitive reading strategies, problems, students

I. Introduction

Reading skill is the most important element for getting good marks, good jobs, and good life because it is fundamental part of human life of current century. According to **Grellet (1999)** there are two major reasons for students to read any text, first is reading for pleasure and the second is reading for getting information. With the same line of thought, it can be said that students can get much knowledge and find

whatever they want with the help of reading. The information students get by reading is much more than the information they get from radio or televisions because they get the details of the topic and research by reading more.

In the curriculum of Pakistani education system, the students are supposed to read the text of English and comprehension of the English text. Students are required to understand the general theme of the text and not to understand each part

of the text word by word. According to **Oberholzer, (2005)** it is more important to understand the central message of the text than to know the mechanical skill of reading. Reading without understanding serves no purpose. In simple words, understanding of reading any text is an important aspect.

Most of the Pakistani students are facing difficulties in reading English text because English language is not their first language. For instance, the students encounter difficulties when teachers ask them to read in the text and comprehend the central of the passage in the text. Pakistani students find difficulties in reading English text because of lack of vocabulary. Another reason the students face while reading English text is the understanding of main idea of the passage. Thus, the students should get command on these aspects of reading to improve their reading skills.

Reading English text is the most challenging task, even though very few researches have been conducted on this serious issue in Pakistan. In Nawabshah district the college level students enrolled in different college face difficulties in reading an English text because of their rural background, lack of appropriate teaching reading skill method and mostly learners came from Urdu medium educational background. In the curriculum of colleges of Nawabshah district, Learning English subjects are compulsory for students. Mostly subjects in the colleges are based on English language content and are being taught in English. The college level learners in Nawabshah encounter with difficulties while learning and reading English texts because English is not their first language and their previous educational background is not in English.

The aim of this research is to know the factors which affect English reading skill at college level in Nawabshah. To accomplish the aim of this research, following objectives and research questions are made.

1.1 Research Objectives

To know the attitude of students toward English reading skills at college level

To find out the problems they face while reading English

To explore the strategies for improving English reading skills at college level

1.2 Research Questions

Q1. What are the attitudes of college students towards English reading skills?

Q2. What are the problems they face while reading English?

Q3. What are the strategies of improving English reading skills at college level?

1.3 Significance of the Study

The scope of this study cannot be measure in a single aspect but this research is significant and useful both practically and theoretically. To study the factors that affect English reading skills of college students is significant for several reasons: Firstly, as reading is an important life skill, the success of college students depend on the ability to read well and comprehend well. Secondly, when college level students reach to universities they have to be proficient readers or they will be dismissed from the universities. After completing their graduation, students apply for jobs, to get better job they have to be good readers. Similarly, by understanding the factors that impact students English reading skill is important for thousands of poor readers. There are large numbers of researches conducted on reading skills but they focus on university level students, very few researches conducted on college level students' reading skills. The findings of this study can be used as a verification of the prior researches about the reading skills at English at college level. The results of the study will provide college level students of Nawabshah district, the solutions of their reading skill problems. The findings of the research can be used as information for teachers

of English language in order to improve their students' skills in reading English texts. The results of this study can also be useful for English language teachers in teaching reading skills. Teachers can use the appropriate strategies to solve the problems of reading English text faced by college level learners. It is useful for upcoming researchers to take this research as a reference for their research material. Last but not least, the information in this research can be useful for curriculum designer in order to design the curriculum of ESL learners; they can take into account the problems as well as their solutions in reading English texts.

2. Literature Review

Reading is tool of communication in which different people give their views. Reading is obviously an important skill for academic context and it has gained much significance. Reading as the phenomena of building the meaning by including various complex processes that included word knowledge, word reading, and words having a lot of linguistic experienced, **Wilkinson and Son (2011)**, defined that reading skills on the text and read throw textualization in order to help the students mind by developing the step of comprehension and able them to read independently. **Eskey (1986)** justified that reading is no way of clearness because readers acquire different meaning and they read again and again for connecting all of individual meanings into whole (p.10). **Oxford (1990)**, clarified that reading is an easier task to make reader to read in enjoyable way. **Anderson (1991)** described that reading means intellectual step for the reader to acquire data. .

Nuttal (2000:2) described that reading as a consequence of communication between the reader and writers' mind and it is the way in which how reader tries to get the message or the planned meaning from the writer. **Brown, (2001:53)** defined that teacher can use the different activates in order to create interest of

students. In this phenomenon, the reader supposes to create the meaning considered by reader and the reader can get the message, and writer meaning sense. It is said by **Pang in (2003:6)** reading is defined as understand written text. We have another view, **Dole et al (1991)**. Justified that, reading is agile, adaptable strategies are used to make sure of text and its understanding. **Alderson (2000)** explored that if readers have more knowledge obviously will get more knowledge from reading comprehension which readers wants. **Krshen and Terrell (1998)** defined that passage of reading with unaware mostly becomes the cause of reading comprehension.

Alderson (2000) and Goodman (1969) both clarified that, reading is way to make beneficial use of many strategies in order to get good information to the text. **Vorhus (1984)** claimed that when readers read their native language they must use their own language in order to share their ideas with others. **Zare, (2012) and Walker, (2000)** defined that reading strategies defined by, **Cohen (1990)** reading is a mental process that readers consciously chose and use compete reading activity successfully. **Baker and Boonkit (2004)** described that reading is a techniques and methods which reader utilize for making their reading successfully, (p.302). Another writer, **Janzen (2003)**, defined that reading has some other strategies such as evaluating, asking questions making predictions to be better the reading. **Alvermann and Phelps (1998)** they were of the view that comprehension is done when reader combine of the text which he already acquired for producing the meaning. Similarly **Koda (2005)** structured that comprehension being done when the reader get information and incorporate several information from the text and join it with known.

2.1 Reading in L1 and L2

Vorhaus (1984) stated that having many linguistic resources, when reader read in L1,

he/she can easily understand the concept of the author in a given text in their native language. When first language speakers read any piece of writing, they can employ their knowledge of language (e.g. grammar, words, and structure of the sentences), even if they do not understand what they are reading. Meanwhile, the first language speakers can use strategies like knowledge of background in order to comprehend the text.

However, L2 readers do not have enough knowledge about the grammar, vocabulary, and background knowledge of the target language. Therefore, they have to struggle to comprehend any piece of writing. In order to understand exact ideas or concepts of the author in a given text, the reader considered vocabulary as an essential component to understand the text or the important element of the language. According to **Seliger (1949)** readers usually divide the content of the text into isolated pieces and focus their attention on the isolated vocabulary units.

The habit to know the meaning of every word in dictionary often leads the pupils to see the reading as a process of decoding word by word in terms of new language. However, the readers of L1 can easily regard the content as a whole, even if they struggle unfamiliar vocabulary. They can skip the unfamiliar words and jump to next in order to finish the reading. On the other hand, L2 readers separate the whole text into pieces of words, sentences and paragraphs. Consequently, they cannot comprehend the text with its actual essence and acquire incomplete meaning, undesired results and lack of continuity which ultimately become the cause of short term memory. According to **Eskey (1986)** short term memory create difficulties and hurdles in reading comprehension process because in this situation the reader cannot comprehend the text with its essence and the meaning of the text is acquire in fragments so they have to read again in order to connect all fragments of the text to comprehend it.

2.2 Types of Reading

There are two types of reading: intensive reading and extensive reading. **Tudor and Hafiz (1989)** differentiated between the two types:

In the activities of intensive reading the reader is in the major exposed to the small texts which are used as to clarify the particular phase of the syntactic, discourse and the lexical system of the L2 learners or to give the reasons for the targeted strategies of reading practices. Conversely, the purpose of extensive reading is to flood readers with relatively large quantities of L2 learners, few or no particular task to perform on this material.

2.2.1 Intensive reading

Intensive reading is defined as practices of reading that takes place in classrooms in which a detailed focus is required. The aim of intensive reading is to develop the solutions of reading problems to the learners. According to **Nuttall (1962)** the intensive reading intends specifically to train the learners in reading strategies. But some time students may demand to read the text by separating its parts in order to comprehend it. However, **Palmer (1964)** argued that in intensive reading the students use dictionary to translate, compare and analyze the text while reading. Similarly, the use of dictionary assists the students to improve his learning language processes.

Consequently, this may interrupt the students' speed of reading. In the views of **Harmer (2001)** reading comprehension does not mean to analyze everything or not to stop for each word. But is to say that the reader should not stop on each word for knowing its meaning or stop for analyzing every single point rather than the reader should make the central idea of the text and find the meaning by taking into account its context and content.

2.2.2 Extensive reading

Extensive reading is defined as the type of reading that students usually do away from the classrooms. Extensive reading includes; reading stories, novels, magazines, articles and newspapers. **Tudor and Hafiz (1989)** defined extensive reading as the practice of reading that increase students' proficiency in second language learning. The goal of extensive reading is to give pleasure to the reader. **Rechar Day (1998)** termed extensive reading as "Joyful Reading." Extensive reading help the reader to enhance his background knowledge identify the spelling contexts and expand his vocabulary. So the readers have the choice to select any piece of reading and read at any pace.

Day and Bamford (1998) stated that extensive reading is an essential part of second language curriculum, existing course and extra-curricular activities. Therefore, pupils have to depend on themselves in order to acquire knowledge from their reading outside the class.

2.3 Reading Sub Skills

Reading skill is a process of looking at series of written text. It is one of the most important features among speaking, writing and listening. It is the dynamic interaction between reader and the writer. Therefore, reading plays a very important role in texts. Without reading skills, students cannot explore their advance and higher level chances. That's why reading plays major role in comprehension in written text. By the status point of **Anderson, (1999.p1)**, reading is the most motivated skill among other and reader makes comprehensive knowledge throw reading comprehension in every field of academic level. According to **Alderson (2000)** he defines that reading is enjoyable and full, unreachable activity in which the reader get much pleasure and can totally grip the reading (**p.28**). Reading is one of the best language skills, which helps the learner to show create or develop the important and best features of knowledge regarding their topic or field which is known is reading, obviously

reading is the most comprehensive language skill which attached with sub skills such as skimming, scanning, careful reading and predicting.

2.3.1 Skimming

Skimming is a technique or method in reading at English. It is a technique in which a reader quickly moves his/her eyes over the text in order to get only the main/ central idea and overview of the text. In simple words, skimming is a process in which reader reads more in short period of time and it is helpful for the learner to cover a vast amount of reading material in quickly. In skimming the reader quickly get the gist of the passage and understand the attention of the author.

2.3.2 Scanning

Scanning is another technique of reading and it is useful for reading practices in which students require particular information without reading the whole content of the text. In simple words, scanning is a technique in which the students do not need to read the whole text word by word or line by line. By scanning, they can extract the main idea from the text without dealing with complete text.

2.3.3 Careful reading

This technique of reading needs from the learner to acquire detailed knowledge from the whole text. In this method of reading the reader requires to read slowly and read again and again in order to compare and connect new information with his/her prior knowledge. This strategy requires the knowledge of reader to get detailed information to the text. Moreover, the reader excluding read slowly and reread the text in order to connect the knowledge and campier the previous knowledge in this point of view, **Urquhart and Weir (1998)** clarified that this typing of meaning reading proceeds the meaning to learn for the reader. According to **Urquhart and Weir (1998)** careful reading is time taken

because as compare to scanning and skimming techniques because it requires detailed description of the text and in this reading the reader read for the sake of extracting essence of the text.

2.3.4 Predicting

It is a very helpful sub skill of reading in which a reader can make predictions by using his/her prior knowledge and he can extract the meaning of the passage even if he encounter with unfamiliar words but by prediction he can get the meaning from the whole passage. The reader can predict the information in the text with the help of clues given by the author in the text. It includes charts, index, graphics, and keywords. While reading students can predict what will happen next in the story. They can reject or confirm their prediction as they reading.

2.4 Metacognitive Reading Strategies

Metacognitive strategies refer to readers' deliberate mental behaviours for directing and controlling their cognitive strategy processing for successful performance (Phakiti, 2006). Three distinct categories of metacognitive reading methods have been identified by Mukhtari and Richards (2001). Global strategies, support strategies, and problem-solving techniques comprise them.

Global strategies are broad and try to provide the context for the act of reading, for example, by examining the title and contents, making assumptions about the text, establishing the purpose, etc. Using problem-solving techniques, such as reviewing the material to ensure comprehension, will help you understand the text as you read. Support measures, such as using a dictionary or taking notes, help to carry out the reading process.

2.5 Reading Models

Reading comprehension is very important in every subject and grade level. The reading model is divided into three sub models. The first is

bottom-up-reading, the second is the top-down-reading and the third is the interactive model. The interactive model is complete model in reading comprehension because it includes both bottom-up-model and top-down-model.

2.5.1 The bottom-up-reading model

The bottom-up-model is also known as data driven because it emphasizes on the printed and written text. This model emphasizes on the ability of students to decode or understand what is written in the text in which he/she creates meaning. This model also suggest reading process start with the learning of letters, then words and then sentences and then to extract the meaning from the words/sentences. According to **Nunan (1991)** this model of reading emphasizes on the language decoding, i.e. the students visualize to decode the lexes without understanding the whole text.

2.5.2 The top-down-reading model

This model of reading emphasizes on the background knowledge of the reader while reading practices in which meaning is important than grammatical structure. Thus, this model focused on the contextual meaning of the text and neglects the dominancy of grammar in the text. According to **Clarke et al (1977)** in this situation the reader understand or comprehend the text with the help of his/her prior knowledge, ideas and attitudes which clarify the meaning and help to draw linguistic predictions.

2.5.3 The interactive reading model

This model is complete model for reading comprehension because it involves both bottom-up-model and top-down-model. Thus, it depends on both textual and graphic information in the text. It includes both surface structure system and deep structure system. In this model of reading the bottom-up-model helps to remove the ambiguities of the text and top-down-model help to comprehend the text with the help of readers'

previous knowledge and contextual cues. According to **Carrell and Eisterholdregard (2010)** reading is not a one way interchange of knowledge but it is an interaction between the text and the reader.

2.5.4 Reading and text selection

Selection of material for reading is very important in order to be successful in reading practices. The selection of reading material is crucial for both teachers and students. There should be efficient teaching material selected by the teachers according to the students' cognitive level. Meanwhile, students should also select material for reading which is suitable for their interests, i.e. to select any book or text that they prefer to read and matches with their interest. Thus, selection of appropriate texts developed a kind of encouragement and participation in the activities of class. This makes the process of reading interesting and enjoyable and provides students the sense of pleasure. The selection of text takes into consideration several elements that can reach towards the successful use of the texts. **Shahidullah (1995)** claims that learners' present linguistic level and the level of their cultural schemata and the content of the text have to be taken into account in selection of text for them.

2.6 Reading Difficulties

Researches on reading skills indicated that second/foreign language learners face difficulties and challenges during reading. According to **Hirsch (2006) and kamhi (2007)** mostly students face the problem of understanding the vocabulary. If you do not have knowledge about the topic you are reading you will face a lot of difficulties as compare to those who are familiar with the topic. Students mostly face the difficulties in reading comprehension such as the understanding of phonemes because some words are phonetically same but possess different meaning and spelling.

Another difficulty second/foreign language learners faced during reading process is the

awareness of words that have the more than one meaning. There are several words that have more than one meaning that can be clarify in terms of its context. The problem is that students do not know the other meaning of any word and relies on the same meaning that they know about the particular word which leads them towards the inappropriate comprehension of the text. So the context knowledge is essential for reading comprehension.

Furthermore, lack of vocabulary creates difficulty in reading comprehension process. If the students have enough knowledge of vocabulary then he/she can comprehend the text appropriately. Therefore, the students should read more in order to acquire new vocabulary and then improve his reading comprehension by applying his vocabulary

2.7 Previous Studies

2.7.1 First previous study

Sutta (1994) conducted research on the topic "Ability of Using Reading Comprehension Skills in Reading Expository Texts". The Aim of the study was to investigate reading development through expository texts. His findings showed that using the skills of reading comprehension in expository texts were not efficient. He (1994) recommended that these types of programs are not effective in some cases so the researchers should apply methods or techniques which are proficient for their subjects, areas and problems.

2.7.2 Second previous study

The topic of Bilal Elimam's (1995) study was "the impact of schema theory for reading and understanding English texts". The Findings stated that mostly students are not good in the process of reading any text and the research proved that reading a second language is challenging and difficult. The results showed that students have to understand the importance of reading and aim of reading any text. It is general

belief that reading without comprehension is not useful.

2.7.3 Third previous study

Abass Abdel Rehman Alansary (2000) investigated on “The effects of strategies on reading skills”. In this research, He (2000) stated that students are very weak in reading skill, as well as in understanding and comprehending English discourse. They can neither read rapidly nor understand exactly, whatever they read so the reading process deals with understanding and comprehension of the text. After analyzing the data, the results indicated that those students who are weak in reading comprehension skill is because of lack of experiences and background knowledge. The study recommended that teachers should be given trainings, lesson plans of reading should be well arranged, teachers and parents should encourage their students/children for reading texts books according to their interests.

2.7.4 Fourth previous research

Salah Mahgoub’s (2001) topic was “Reading skill problems” and the findings of the study indicated that reading comprehension problems include untrained teachers, lack of vocabulary and lack of background knowledge. His study recommended that teachers should motivate students to read interesting stories; teachers should apply different strategies of reading to their students specifically scanning and skimming.

2.7.5 Fifth previous study

Wahiba Babaiba Meddjahdi (2014) did research on “Reading comprehension problems among English as foreign language learners (EFL)”. The aim of study was to know the reading difficulties faced by secondary students and to investigate the causes of their difficulties in reading tasks. The results of the study indicated that mostly students face the difficulties while reading such as

ambiguous words, level of pronunciation and the selection of reading material. The findings also find out the reasons of poor reading and these were the lack of vocabulary, poor grammar knowledge, and lack of reading habit among students. The study recommended that EFL students need both linguistic and vocabulary knowledge.

3. Research Design

Research designed is a comprehensive plan of the study that includes all activities related to research of the researcher. Particularizes what requires to be done, where and when, with whom and why. According to **Creswell (2001)**, the primary research is all about the data the major area of any research design is to elaborate the specification of gathered data and how the data will be organized, processed and analyzed.

This study adopted qualitative research method because reading skill is an ongoing process and it varies from situation to situation. Qualitative research enables researchers to investigate in-depth and with this research method researcher can records data from different situations. Qualitative research is the emerging demand of social sciences field particularly in Education field (**Dornyei, 2007**). Research in qualitative paradigm refers to the procedures of collecting data in open-ended questionnaire that analyze transcribed recordings in qualitative content analysis. This study adopts interviews as tool to collect data.

The study took place in colleges of Nawabshah District. The population according to **Borg and Gall (1994)** is the universal set of all participants real or hypothetical group of people, objects or events which the researcher desires to generalize the results. The population selected for this study was teachers and students because it is important to consider both teachers and students to share the factors that affect reading students reading skill and the solutions to improve reading skills. The reason to select teachers for this study is that

teachers play a constructive role in student's academic life and they better known learners' weaknesses and strengths. Teachers do not only teach but also understand what challenges or difficulties students face in reading English text. The number of participants selected for the collection of data was 15 students and 10 teachers of college level at Nawabshah. This study used semi-structured interviews because it gives freedom to participants to explain the phenomena in their own way. Data was transcribed thematically.

4. Research Findings and Discussion

4.1 What are the attitudes of college level students towards English reading skill?

After conducting semi-structured interviews from college level students the interviews were transcribed and thematic analysis was done to know their attitudes toward English reading skill.

The following results were formed:

Majority of the students were of the views that students create either positive or negative attitude towards English reading skill depends on various factors. Some of the students were of the views that the atmosphere of the classroom and teachers attitude plays a crucial in developing student's attitude towards English reading skill. They believed that the attitude of teacher towards reading skill directly influence the way students perceive reading skill. One of the students was of the views that I possess positive attitude because my teacher have positive attitude towards reading development.

Some of the students were of the views that the content of the syllabus of English reading lessons also affect their attitude towards reading skill. Students believed that teachers should provide students wide range of materials for reading having varieties of subjects. This is essential because students have different interests and they enjoy and learn more when they taught subjects of their own choices. Students stressed that if they

provide with attractive and interesting syllabus for English reading lessons; they will enjoy and comprehend the texts effectively and can easily understand the central message of the text.

Some of the students possessed negative attitude towards English reading skills because they face many difficulties during reading comprehension. They were of the views that the teachers did not encourage them for reading and having less interest in teaching English reading lessons. They also indicated that teachers did not provide them supportive and friendly atmosphere in the classroom that ultimately create negative attitude towards reading. One of the students was of the views that I am not interested in English reading activities because I feel reading is boring and time taking.

4.2 What are the problems they face while reading English at college level?

After thematic analysis of Question 2 the following themes were found that shows the factors which affect learners' English reading skill at college level:

4.2.1 Vocabulary

One of the factor that affect learners' reading skills at English is the lack of vocabulary. Student 1 and teacher 5 was of the views that without vocabulary, learners cannot read or construct meaning from the words written on the passage. Vocabulary involves gathering meaning from words while reading. Student 6 was of the view that children with strong vocabulary are able to read more fluently. Some students said that having vocabulary is very essential for reading English passage because if learners do not recognized the words, they could not enjoy the reading. Teacher 12 was of the view that college level learners face difficulties in reading because of having lack of vocabulary.

Most of the participants of the study pointed out that vocabulary is the most difficult task in reading lessons because reading is the most

important element in order to understand any language, many of the participants answered that without vocabulary reading is not being done in well method. Lack of vocabulary is also a problem in reading comprehension. Some students were of the views that vocabulary is backbone of reading without vocabulary we cannot explore our ideas with others, and few of the argued that if we have good competency on vocabulary, one can comprehend the text easily. Vocabulary is like a soul of reading process. One of the participants says that vocabulary is most important component in reading, if we do not recognize any word, we cannot enjoy the reading.

4.2.2 Lack of motivation in English Reading skill

Majority of the participants were of the views that they do not have motivation for English reading skills. Some of the students do not motivate themselves to continue their reading activities. One of the students were of the view that reading skill is a time taking process and it requires interest of the reader to understand the text completely but lack of motivation decrease their interest of reading and therefore, create problem in understanding the English text and affect their reading skill. All of the students were agreed that lack of motivation decreases the process of reading and learning English text.

4.2.3 Lack of reading habit

Majority of the participants believed that they do not read on daily basis. Lack of reading habit is one of the biggest problems in English reading process because daily practice of reading makes them proficient reader and able to comprehend the text in short period of time, some of the students believed that reading habit is important for reading performing better in classroom activities. Some students answered that teachers do not assign them reading tasks on daily basis which is one of the cause of their lack of reading habit. Some of the students were of the views that

teachers mostly teach them through multimedia and technological equipment which decrease their need of reading through books and other resources. One of the participants answered that due to lack of reading habit I cannot perform well in English reading activities in the classroom.

4.2.4 Difficulty of pronouncing the words

Most of the participants pointed out that understanding of pronunciation of words are a big issue in English reading skill because whenever we read any word of L2 we cannot pronounce the word in a better way as native pronounced and we feel uncomfortable to pronounce the words we cannot continue our reading further because of mispronunciations of words. Some of the participants were of the views that understanding and pronunciation of unfamiliar words are problem they face during reading process. The pronunciation of words is difficult for L2 speakers because English is not their first language. Some of the students believed that during reading practices they encounter with the words having same spelling but there phonetics is change which creates confusion for students to pronounce the words in its actual phonetics.

4.2.5 Lack of interest in English reading skill

Majority of the students were of the views that they do not take interest in reading activities that is a big problem in reading process. Many of the students believed that reading is a boring task and they do not find any pleasure in reading. Participants were of the views that they encounter with difficult words and ambiguous meaning of the words which create confusion and they left reading any text without understanding completely the main message of the text. Some of the students were of the views that teachers should motivate them to create interest in reading activities so that they can increase their interest in English reading skill.

4.2.6 Selection of the text

Majority of the participants were of the views that selection of text matters a lot in English reading skill. If the text is not reliable and effective then students will be unable to comprehend it. Some students were of the views that some books are written by native speakers and their words are difficult to understand. The selection of appropriate text for reading lessons is essential to understand its central theme. Some students answered that teachers assigned them those books which are difficult to understand because of native writing which creates problem for them and lack of interest in reading activities.

4.2.7 Lack of appropriate strategies

Some of the students were of the views that lack of appropriate strategies for teaching English reading skill is another factor they face during English reading activities. One of the students was of the view that teachers do not teach students with appropriate strategies that can increase student's interest and understanding of reading English text. Some students were of the views that good strategies by teachers play a crucial role in teaching English reading skill that can motivate them to improve their reading skills.

4.2.8 The content of syllabus for reading comprehension lesson

Some of the students were of the views that the content of the syllabus for English reading lessons are not attractive and exciting. Some of the students were of the views that lessons in the syllabus are not clearly defined. Some students said that the lessons of English reading skill in the syllabus are not up to date and adequate. The content of the syllabus for reading exercise are very difficult to understand because the recommended books were written by native speakers.

4.2.9 Lack of knowledge of English language

Most of the students were of the views that lack of English language knowledge is also a problem in reading skill. When students are supposed to comprehend the English text, they face difficulties because of the lack of language knowledge. One of the students was of the view that I face difficulties in reading of English text because English is not my first language and having its complete knowledge is impossible. Some of the students were of the views that they cannot read English text easily because they did not have command on English language. Some of the students suggested that teachers should help them in learning English and therefore, improve their problem of English reading skill.

4.3 What are the strategies for improving English reading skill of college level students?

After conducting interviews from college teachers to know the appropriate strategies for improving English reading skill of college level students, thematic analysis was done and the findings of Question 3 resulted in the following themes:

4.3.1 Teacher's motivation for teaching English reading skill

Majority of the teachers were of the view that teachers' motivation for teaching English reading skill is very important to solve students' reading problems. Some teachers were of the views that if teachers are not motivated to teach English reading skill, the students will not improve reading skill effectively. Some teachers believed that teachers' motivation play a founding role in students learning. If teacher is motivated to teaching English reading skill with zest and zeal, the students will learn interestingly and effectively.

4.3.2 Increasing vocabulary

Majority of the teachers were of the views that students should increase their vocabulary to

improve their English reading skills. One of the teachers answered that I can encourage my students to improve his vocabulary by giving him tasks of learning vocabulary on daily basis. Some teachers were of the views that teachers should help students to improve their vocabulary. One of the teachers answered that without having enough vocabulary students cannot read and understand English text effectively. One of the teachers suggested that students should work on their vocabulary and try to increase their vocabulary with the help of daily practice.

4.3.3 Creating friendly and supportive environment

Majority of the teacher agreed that supportive and friendly environment of the classroom help students to learn efficiently. Some of the teachers were of the views that if teachers provide students with supportive and friendly environment then students can increase their interest in English reading skill activities. One of the teachers were of the view that I give my students supportive environment and create English reading skill exercises interesting for them, they gave me excellent results. Students should be given all facilities in order to solve the factors that affect students English reading skills.

4.3.4 Use of metacognitive reading strategies

Majority of the teacher were agreed that metacognitive strategies play a constructive role in students improving English reading skills. Some of the teachers were of the views that if teachers apply different techniques and methods by using metacognitive strategies on students while teaching English reading skill then students can improve their English reading skills. One of the teachers agreed that metacognitive is an appropriate teaching reading or strategies help teachers to promote their students deep reading and also help students to work on right direction. Among metacognitive strategies, problems

solving strategy is the most frequently used to enhance students' reading skills. Some of the teachers were of the views that teachers should learn different methods of teaching English reading skills by using metacognitive strategies and make the difficulties of students easy in during reading English text.

4.3.5 Background knowledge

Almost all of the teachers agreed that background knowledge is very important for reading. Background knowledge helps the students to understand or comprehend the text effectively. Some of the teachers were of the view that teachers should provide students the background knowledge of the text so that students can get the idea from the background knowledge to comprehend it with its central message. Teachers should make students familiar with the nature of the texts, places, characters and events of the passage that they are going to read. One of the teachers believed that background knowledge clarify the thoughts of the author and help students to read and comprehend it well.

5. Conclusion

This study investigated the factors that affect English reading skills of college students in Nawabshah. This research decided to go to the depth of the issue and find some strategies to overcome such matter. To accomplish this task, researcher constructed three objectives from the main aim of the study. First of all the researcher intends to determine the attitude of college students towards English reading skills. Second is to find out the factors that affect students English reading skills. Lastly is to know the strategies for improving students' English reading skills. This research adopted a qualitative paradigm in which semi structured interviews were conducted from both teachers and students from different colleges of Nawabshah. Interviews were recorded semi-structurally and furthermore, they were analyzed thematically.

The findings of the research showed that lack of vocabulary, having inadequate knowledge of L2, difficulty in pronouncing the words, selection of text and lack of interest in English reading skills are the major factors that affect students' English reading skills. The results also showed that students possess both positive as well negative attitudes towards English reading skills. Students' attitude is determined by the attitude of teachers, content of the syllabus and atmosphere of the classroom. Moreover, teachers suggested some strategies in order to improve students English reading skills which include supportive environment, background knowledge, increasing vocabulary and teachers' motivation play a constructive role. Last but not least limitations and delimitations were identified and areas for further studies were recommended.

5.1 Recommendations for Further Studies.

After having discussion of the factors which affect English reading skills of students of college level and conclusion of the results, the researcher suggests to the students and teachers that students should understand the factors that affect reading English texts and teachers should apply appropriate strategies to solve their students' reading problems. Teachers should tell their students about reading problems and motivate them to improve their English reading skills.

The researcher also recommend to future researchers that further studies required for understanding English reading skills more deeply by understanding the nature of the students. Further studies can investigate factors that affect reading skills of disable students. It is recommended for upcoming researcher to know the effect of curriculum in terms of reading skills. The researcher further suggested that future researches should be done involving three main objects, teachers, students and curriculum. The researcher recommended that further studies should be done by using quantitative method. The questionnaire should be used in order to

generalize the results in large number of population. The researcher suggests that there should be more studies conducted on reading problems faced by rural students. Last but not least, more researches are required to elaborate which approach is suitable for reading English text at all levels of learning.

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