

EFFECT OF EXTENSIVE READING AND CREATIVITY ON ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

**Meera K. P.
Remya P.**

Extensive Reading is essential for the language development. The importance of creativity is studied in many areas of Education. The present study explores the effect of these two variables on the achievement in English of secondary school students. Survey method is adopted. The results indicate that there is significant relation between Extensive Reading and Achievement in English. Significant relationship is obtained between Creativity and Achievement in English.

INTRODUCTION

With the advance of science and technology, people are able to learn through many modes other than reading. Yet, reading continues to be a major tool of learning and enjoyment. Those who read more, generally do well in all areas of academic life. Reading helps children understand how different writers put down their thoughts. This leads to better writing skills. But no one can become a celebrated writer overnight. One needs to try and venture. Many more gifted writers remain unrecognized in our classrooms. There are some feelings which are not expressed in oral communication. Even those feelings can be expressed in the form of words. So, by reading books we can improve our way of expression and finally creativity. The most popular way of looking at creativity has been to emphasize on making something 'new' and different. One can define the concept of creativity as the ability to generate novel and useful ideas and solutions to everyday problems and challenges. Creativity is an organized, comprehensive and imaginative activity of brain towards an original outcome. The nature and the quality of the creative product includes definitions of creativity which emphasizes the outcome or the product that is original, unique, valuable and novel. Guilford (1971) points out the importance of trait concepts in the process of creativity. According to him traits are properties of individuals, and hence the most defensible way of discovering trait concept at present is that of factor analysis. The aptitude traits suggested by Guilford are sensitivity, redefinition, fluency, flexibility and elaboration. Many psychologists and scholars have studied the creative process in an effort to understand it and describe the process as consisting of preparation, incubation, illumination and verification. In foreign language teaching and learning, reading involves understanding and comprehending meaning or message conveyed through the written text. An efficient reader will understand what is irrelevant for him and what is relevant in the text that he should get at. Extensive reading can be very helpful in learning a foreign/second language. The curriculum should not be confined to anthologies of prose and poetry. Elley & Mangubhai (1983) conducted a study on the impact of reading on second language learning. The results indicate that pupils who read a large number of high-interest story books written in a second language progressed in reading and listening comprehension in that language at twice the rate of those students who do not read such books.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Research evidences show that extensive reading and achievement in English are closely related. Students who read independently, become better readers, score higher on achievement tests in all subject areas, and have greater content knowledge than those who do not (Krashen 1989). Kim & William (1995) studied the relationship of creativity measures to school achievement and to preferred learning and thinking style in a sample of Korean High School students for 92 male and 101 female Korean 11th graders. Creativity as measured by the Torrance Tests of Creativity, showed little relationship to school performance. Constantino, Lee & Krashen (1997) studied free reading as a predictor of TOEFL scores. The results indicate that free reading is a significant predictor of TOEFL scores. Leung (2002) investigated the impact of extensive reading on adults' self study of Japanese over 20 weeks of period. Results showed

extensive reading can enhance vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension and promote a positive attitude towards learning. Rankin (2005) studied the effect of embedded extensive reading in intermediate German L₂ and reported its usefulness for second language acquisition.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Research evidences show that extensive reading promotes the growth of vocabulary, verbal fluency and general information (Anderson, Wilson & Fielding, 1988). Schackne (1994) studied whether there is a correlation between extensive reading and language acquisition and obtained significant results. Hitosugi & Day (2004) incorporated an extensive reading programme into a second semester Japanese course at the University of Hawaii using Japanese children's literature. They found that within two weeks there were significant gains in reading ability in the language. Hughes-Hassell & Rodge (2007) studied the leisure reading habits of urban adolescence. The result of the study showed that there was a strong relationship between leisure reading and academic achievement. Creativity simply refers to the process of being imaginative and innovative. It is the ability to create something new that goes beyond ordinary modes of thought. Studies conducted by McCabe (1991) proved that academic achievement and creativity are related significantly. Nanda, Arti & Pal (1994) reported that highly creative students possessed better academic achievement. Language teachers can bring forth the best creative outputs from children by providing interesting activities but language teaching often fail to produce critics. It is seen that students who read extensively sometimes, fail to score good marks. So the investigators planned this study with the following objective.

OBJECTIVE

To find out the main effect of creativity and extensive reading on Achievement in English for the total and sub samples.

HYPOTHESIS

There will be a significant effect of creativity and extensive reading on achievement in English language for the total and sub samples.

VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

Creativity and extensive reading were treated as independent variables. Achievement in English language was treated as the dependent variable.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The study was conducted on a sample of 600 students of standard IX of secondary schools from three districts of Kerala. Due representation to gender and type of management of schools was given through stratified sampling technique.

Tools

A Comprehensive Test of Creativity by Nair and Sumangala, 1987). and Scale of Attitude towards Extensive Reading and Achievement Test in English language by authors

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

To find out the main effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable achievement in English language, the investigators used the technique of ANOVA. The obtained F-value for the main effect of creativity on achievement in English language is 120.026 which is beyond the tabled value 3.02 and 4.66 for (2,591) degrees of freedom at 0.05 and 0.01 levels of significance respectively. Hence, the main effect of creativity on achievement in English language is significant. The obtained F-value for the main effect of extensive reading on achievement in English language for the total sample is 14.967 which is greater than the tabled value 3.02 and 4.66 for (2,591) degrees of freedom at 0.05 at 0.01 levels of

significance respectively. Hence, the main effect of extensive reading on achievement in English language is also significant. When

the effect of extensive reading on achievement in English language of boys is studied, the F-value obtained was 8.308. It is beyond the tabled value 3.04 and 4.71 for (2,295) degrees of freedom at 0.05 and 0.01 levels of significance respectively. The obtained F-value for the main effect of creativity on achievement in English language of boys is 72.226 which is beyond the tabled value 3.04 and 4.71 (for 2,291) degrees of freedom at 0.05 and 0.01 levels of significance respectively. There is a significant effect of creativity on achievement in English language of girls as the obtained value for the effect of creativity on achievement in English language is 50.651. The effect of extensive reading on achievement in English language for girls is also significant as the obtained value 20.651 is far beyond the value required for significance at 0.05 and 0.01 level. The main effect of creativity on achievement in English language is significant for the total sample. When the main effect of this variable on sub samples based on gender is studied, the result showed significance. This suggests that children are creative and with a creative touch, the English language teacher can lend exercises to students to spread wings to their imagination and learn the language in an easy and pleasant manner. The main effect of extensive reading on achievement in English language for the total sample and for the subsample based on gender is found significant. This shows that all the students should be provided with chances for extensive reading. Review of the literature indicated that creativity contributed a lot for academic achievement. More creative students showed better academic performance. The present study also proved the significant effect of creativity on achievement in English language. The studies conducted by Kim & William (1995) and Nanda, Arti & Pal (1994) support this finding. The investigators found significant effect of extensive reading on achievement in English language. This finding supports the findings of Constantino, Lee & Krashen (1997) and Mason & Krashen (1997).

CONCLUSION

The findings of the present study suggest that the language teacher can set interesting and exciting problems in the areas of composition, grammar, etc. and thus can get the best creative output from children. Opportunities to express creativity may create love in the minds of children towards learning English language. Teachers can make their classes more interesting by assigning creative tasks, and thereby ensuring the co-operation of students. Open ended questions and group activities should be incorporated in the classroom activities. Teacher may try to adopt different teaching methods, instead of sticking on to one particular method. The language should not be imposed upon children, as it would create hatred in their minds. Teachers should be widely read and should motivate children by narrating stories from classics in simple English. Students should be given reading assignments. Best summary should be read aloud in the class. Students should be encouraged to read English newspapers daily and they should be asked to note down the main events. Reading clubs should be formed in the school where students could read and have discussions on what they have recently read. Children could be taken to book exhibitions and book fairs and literary gatherings. Parents have a major role in moulding the reading habits of children. They could help children to select appropriate reading materials. They can gift them interesting works in English. A good library with enough reading materials should be maintained in the school. Every week, at least one hour should be kept aside as library period. Teacher may recite popular poems and ask the students to do the same. Teacher should discuss with the pupils the latest works and new authors.

The role of creativity and extensive reading on achievement in English is found significant in the present study. Reading sharpens insight and sight, widens sympathies and experiences and provide occasions for the exercise of judgment about human beings and their conditions. A life-long relationship with the printed material will help a person in every circumstance throughout his or her life. So, love of reading should be inculcated among children right from the beginning of education. Good education, proper care and provision of opportunities for creative expression inspire the creative mind. Therefore, there is a need

for properly planned, deliberate and conscious effort on the part of teachers, parents and all the members of the society to provide children conducive atmosphere for the development of creative abilities.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, R.C., Wilson, P.T. & Fielding, I.G. (1988) Growth in reading and how children spend their time outside of school. *Reading Research Quarterly* 23, 1, 285-304, April.
- Constantino, R., Lee, S. & Krashen, S. (1997) Free voluntary reading as a predictor of TOEFL scores. *Applied Language Learning* 8, 111-118, June.
- Elley, W.B. & Mangubhai, F. (1983) The impact of reading on second language learning. *Reading Research Quarterly* 19, 53-67, July.
- Guilford, J.P. (1971) *The Nature of Human Intelligence*. McGraw-Hill, London.
- Hitosugi, C. & Day, R.R. (2004) Extensive reading in Japanese. *Reading in a Foreign Language* 16, 1, 20-30, April.
- Hughes-Hassell, Sandra. & Rodge, P. (2007) The leisure reading habits of urban adolescence. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* 51, 1, 22-33, September.
- Kim, J. & William, B. (1995) The relationship of creativity measures to school achievement and to preferred learning and thinking style on a sample of Korean high school students. *Educational and Psychological Measurement* 55, 1, 60-74.
- Krashen, S.D. (1989) We acquire vocabulary and spelling by reading: additional evidence for input hypothesis. *Modern Language Journal* 73, 3, 440-464, June.
- Leung, C.L. (2002) Extensive reading and language learning. *Reading in a Foreign Language* 14, 1, 30-42, April.
- Mason, B. & Krashen, S. (1997) Can extensive reading help unmotivated students of EFL improve? *ITL Review of Applied Linguistics* 9, 2, 78-84, June.
- McCabe, M.P. (1991) Influence of creativity and intelligence on academic performance. *Journal of Creative Behaviour* 25, 2, 116-122, January.
- Nanda, A., Arti, N. & Pal, G. (1994) Creativity and academic achievement. *Asian Journal of Psychology and Education* 3, 15-19, June.
- Rankin, J. (2005) Easy Reader: A case study of embedded extensive reading in intermediate German L₂. *Teaching German* 38, 2, 125-134, June.
- Schackne, S. (1994) *Extensive Reading and Language Acquisition: Is There a Correlation? A Two Part Study*. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 388110.
- Torrance, E.P. (1965) *Gifted Children in the Classroom*. Macmillan, New York.