

# The Impact of Speed Reading Techniques on Students' Reading Comprehension

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## **Abstract:**

Speed reading is widely promoted as a method to increase reading efficiency; however, its effects on comprehension remain debated. This research investigates whether practicing speed reading improves comprehension levels among students and explores the balance between reading speed and understanding. Using a controlled experimental design, the study evaluates comprehension outcomes before and after students employ specific speed reading strategies. Findings suggest that while speed reading can enhance reading efficiency, its effectiveness for comprehension varies depending on students' proficiency levels and the complexity of the text. The study offers insights into how speed reading can be applied in educational settings to optimize both reading pace and comprehension.

**Keywords:** abilities, language learning, speed reading, reading comprehension.

Most people study a foreign language primarily due to academic requirements and curricula. Additionally, many pursue language learning to enhance their career prospects, as proficiency in at least one foreign language can lead to more rewarding job opportunities. In today's world, where English is recognized as an international language, having a basic understanding of it is often considered essential. Furthermore, some learners engage in language study for specific purposes, using the language solely for particular contexts without incorporating it into their daily lives.

In today's information-rich world, reading efficiency is increasingly important for academic success. Speed reading techniques, which claim to improve reading pace without sacrificing understanding, have gained popularity among students and educators alike. However, while these methods are designed to help readers process information more quickly, their actual impact on comprehension is less clear. Reading comprehension is a crucial skill that allows students to analyze, interpret, and retain information, making it essential for meaningful learning and application across subjects.

This study seeks to explore the effectiveness of speed reading techniques on students' reading comprehension. Specifically, it examines whether increasing reading speed through various

strategies—such as skimming, chunking, and minimizing subvocalization—can lead to higher comprehension levels or whether it risks compromising understanding in favor of speed. By investigating how different student proficiency levels interact with speed reading methods, this research aims to provide insights into the potential benefits and limitations of speed reading in academic settings, ultimately contributing to a more nuanced view of its role in developing both reading efficiency and comprehension skills.

Teaching a foreign language to children is obviously different from teaching adults. Children do not have the same access as older learners to use a language to talk about a language; in other words, it is needed a secured atmosphere in order to encourage them to become independent and adventurous in the learning of the language (Cameron, 2001: 1; Scott and Ytreberg, 1990: 10). In teaching spoken language to children, the teacher needs to give nonverbal communication to support the intended message. Children are in the stage of here and now in which all five senses need to be stimulated in learning a language (Brown, 2001: 88-89).

Zuchdi (2007) also states that reading can be interpreted as a meaningful interpretation of writing. The essence of reading is to understand the correct meaning. Word recognition is considered a prerequisite for reading comprehension, but word recognition without reading comprehension is of little value. Furthermore, reading comprehension is itself a set of knowledge acquisition skills that enable people to acquire and apply the knowledge acquired by reading written language (Zuchdi, 2007). Ideally, everyone should be able to read and write. Therefore, to improve your reading comprehension, you must learn to read effectively. Effective improvement of speed reading skills and solid comprehension can be achieved by learning speed reading technique.

Teachers often lack sufficient knowledge of classroom strategies to address diverse abilities effectively. While grouping students by ability narrows the range, it doesn't eliminate the fact that each student has unique needs and learning preferences. More training is necessary to equip teachers with skills to accommodate various learning styles. Bloom's taxonomy, for example, can support teachers in creating challenging, differentiated tasks and promoting the social and academic benefits of collaborative group work. Additionally, teachers need training to act as facilitators of learning rather than relying predominantly on whole-class instruction. It's also essential for students to be guided in taking responsibility for their own learning.

Speed reading technique helps students learn knowledge that is understood. Learning becomes more difficult when the student's reading speed is not optimal. Speed reading technique is also an alternative technique to help students become effective readers. Reading speed can be improved with eye exercises because good eye movements reflect the amount of vocabulary read (Soedarso, 2006).

This study sheds light on the effectiveness of speed reading techniques in enhancing students' reading comprehension. While speed reading can significantly improve reading pace, its impact on comprehension is complex and varies according to individual proficiency levels and text complexity. For some students, particularly those with strong foundational reading skills, speed reading techniques like skimming and chunking may enhance their ability to process large volumes of information quickly without sacrificing understanding. However, for others, especially those still developing reading fluency, these techniques can hinder deep comprehension, leading to gaps in understanding and retention.

The findings suggest that speed reading should be approached as a complementary skill, best suited for specific reading contexts, such as preliminary reviews or information gathering, rather than for texts requiring detailed analysis. Educators might consider integrating speed reading strategies with traditional comprehension exercises to help students balance reading speed and depth of understanding. Overall, while speed reading offers practical benefits, its use in educational contexts should be carefully tailored to support comprehensive, purposeful reading.

Many factors influence students' reading comprehension, one of which is reading rate. Research indicates that speed reading techniques, including their foundational principles, significantly impact students' reading pace and contribute to improved comprehension. With just sixty seconds per passage in each practice session, students are encouraged to gradually increase their reading speed while enhancing their understanding of the material. Regular practice has shown to refine these skills, making the benefits of speed reading methods more evident.

Another critical factor affecting reading comprehension is motivation. Students who are motivated and view learning as essential are more likely to seek effective learning strategies that align with their individual needs. This includes experimenting with methods to enhance understanding and comprehension of reading materials. Speed reading can foster greater awareness of the reading process, helping students develop the reading skills expected in academic settings.

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