

Article

The Current State of Integrating Reading Comprehension and Linguistic Skills in Mother Tongue Education: Based on A Teacher Survey

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Abstract: This article analyzes the current state of the integration of reading comprehension and linguistic skills in mother tongue education, based on a teacher survey. It examines the role of linguistic knowledge in the process of reading comprehension, the possibilities of teaching language units in connection with the text's content, and the views of mother tongue teachers regarding existing methodological needs. The survey results indicate that teachers recognize the importance of units such as the contextual meaning of a word, inter-sentential connections, pronouns, conjunctions, and particles in the process of reading comprehension. At the same time, the findings substantiate the need for specialized tasks and methodological recommendations aimed at the integrated development of reading comprehension and linguistic skills.

Keywords: language, methodology, reading comprehension, survey, pronoun, linguistics.

1. Introduction

Developing reading comprehension skills in mother tongue education is one of the fundamental objectives of the teaching and learning process. This process involves students' ability to read a text, comprehend its meaning, recognize the relationships between words and sentences, and substantiate their interpretations with evidence. When reading comprehension skills are effectively developed from an early age, they provide a strong foundation for learners' subsequent acquisition of knowledge, independent learning, and effective functioning in real-life situations. Cognitive and psycholinguistic perspectives suggest that the systematic acquisition of grammatical knowledge enhances learners' capacity to comprehend increasingly complex texts. This is particularly important in upper grades, where the linguistic complexity of texts requires a higher level of linguistic competence from students [1].

The effective integration of reading comprehension and linguistic skills in classroom instruction largely depends on teachers' methodological approaches. The linguistic features that teachers emphasize during text-based activities, the ways in which they connect grammatical knowledge with reading tasks, and the criteria they use to evaluate students' responses have a direct impact on learning outcomes. Therefore, investigating mother tongue teachers' perceptions of the role of linguistic knowledge in the reading comprehension process is of considerable importance [2, 3].

2. Materials and Methods

A questionnaire survey was employed to examine mother tongue teachers' perceptions of the integration of reading comprehension and linguistic skills. The survey

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was conducted anonymously and involved a total of 88 teachers. The questionnaire was designed to investigate the perceived role of linguistic units in the reading comprehension process, teachers' theoretical perspectives on this relationship, and the extent to which they incorporate these principles into their classroom practice. In addition, the study explored teachers' views on the significance of linguistic analysis in fostering reading comprehension and the degree of emphasis it receives in instructional practice. The findings provide insights into teachers' understanding of the relationship between linguistic knowledge and reading comprehension, identify existing challenges, and offer a basis for justifying the need to refine methodological approaches in this area.

3. Result and Discussion

The questionnaire findings provided valuable insights into mother tongue teachers' perceptions of the integration of reading comprehension and linguistic skills. The responses were systematically analyzed and summarized according to their content, and the key findings are presented in the table below [4].

Table 1. Questionnaire Results Obtained from Mother Tongue Teachers

Response Scale:

1 – Strongly Disagree

2 – Partially Disagree

3 – Partially Agree

4 – Strongly Agree

No.	Statements	1	2	3	4
1	Linguistic knowledge has a direct impact on students' deep comprehension of a text.	0 (1 respondent did not answer)	12	20	55
2	Failure to understand pronouns, conjunctions, and particles leads to inaccurate interpretation of a text.	21	6	31	30
3	The inability to infer word meaning from context reduces the level of reading comprehension.	2	2	16	68
4	Understanding negation is essential for the accurate interpretation of a text's logical meaning.	7	6	21	54
5	Understanding grammatical markers in dialogue helps identify the speaker.	16	3	30	39
6	Understanding the structure of complex sentences is important for accurate text comprehension.	8	9	30	41
7	Systematic instruction in linguistic knowledge is necessary for developing reading comprehension.	6	4	28	50
8	Linguistic analysis should occupy a distinct place in reading comprehension instruction.	1	11	21	55

For the first statement, teachers were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the following proposition: "Linguistic knowledge has a direct impact on students' deep comprehension of a text." The results show that the majority of participants supported this view: 55 teachers selected "strongly agree," while 20 chose "partially agree." In addition, 12 teachers selected "partially disagree," and no respondent selected "strongly disagree." One participant did not answer the question [5]. These findings indicate that most teachers recognize the important role of linguistic knowledge in the reading comprehension process. The results confirm that teachers generally acknowledge the necessity of working with grammatical and lexical units in the development of reading comprehension. However, the fact that a proportion of respondents (13.6%) did not fully endorse this relationship suggests that, among some teachers, the role of linguistic

knowledge in reading comprehension has not yet been sufficiently conceptualized. This may, in turn, lead to the inconsistent and unsystematic application of linguistic approaches in classroom instruction [6].

The second statement addressed the proposition: "Failure to understand pronouns, conjunctions, and particles leads to inaccurate interpretation of a text." The findings reveal that teachers' views on this issue are not entirely uniform. Of the 88 teachers surveyed, 30 fully agreed with the statement, while 31 partially agreed. This suggests that most teachers do not deny the contribution of linguistic units to text comprehension, although they do not always regard them as a decisive factor. At the same time, the responses of the 27 teachers who expressed disagreement are noteworthy [7]. Their answers indicate that some teachers may conceptualize text comprehension as a process that is not directly dependent on these linguistic units. As a consequence, pronouns, conjunctions, and particles may be treated primarily as grammatical topics, while insufficient attention is given to their cohesive and meaning-making functions within a text. Such an approach may also be reflected in classroom practice, where linguistic units are taught in isolation from authentic texts and their communicative functions in real discourse are relegated to a secondary position. As a result, students may know these units theoretically but may not be able to use them effectively in the process of comprehending textual meaning [8, 9].

The third statement examined the proposition: "The inability to infer word meaning from context reduces the level of reading comprehension." The responses indicate a high degree of consensus among teachers. Specifically, 68 of the 88 teachers fully agreed with the statement, and 16 partially agreed. The very small number of negative responses (only four teachers) demonstrates that this issue is widely regarded as an important factor in reading comprehension. The findings suggest that teachers understand that word meaning should not be interpreted as an isolated lexical unit but rather through its contextual use within a text. This reflects an awareness that successful reading comprehension depends not only on dictionary meanings but also on the contextual and semantic functions that lexical items perform within discourse [10, 11].

The results of the fourth statement show that most teachers consider understanding negation to be important for accurate text interpretation. Teachers were asked to evaluate the proposition: "Understanding negation is essential for the accurate interpretation of a text's logical meaning." A total of 54 teachers fully agreed with the statement, while 21 partially agreed. These results indicate that teachers generally recognize the significant role of negative constructions in comprehending textual meaning [12]. However, the responses of the remaining 13 teachers who expressed disagreement demonstrate that views on this issue are not entirely consistent. In some cases, negative forms may be presented in classroom instruction primarily as grammatical phenomena, while their role in expressing logical relations within a text is not sufficiently emphasized. Consequently, learners may experience difficulty interpreting meanings such as contrast, denial, or limitation expressed through negation, which can negatively affect accurate comprehension of the text [13].

The fifth statement examined teachers' views on the proposition: "Understanding grammatical markers in dialogue helps identify the speaker." Of the 88 teachers surveyed, 39 strongly agreed and 30 partially agreed with the statement. These findings indicate that the majority of teachers recognize the important role of grammatical markers in identifying the speaker within a dialogue. However, the fact that 19 teachers did not agree with the statement suggests that teachers' understanding of this issue is not yet fully developed. This may indicate that the communicative function of grammatical markers in discourse is not consistently emphasized in classroom practice [14].

The sixth statement addressed the proposition: "Understanding the structure of complex sentences is important for accurate text comprehension." The results demonstrate that most teachers consider this factor to be significant. Specifically, 41 teachers strongly agreed, 30 partially agreed, while 17 expressed disagreement. Underestimating the importance of complex sentence structures may result in insufficient attention being paid to their role in expressing logical relationships such as cause and

effect, condition, and contrast within a text. Consequently, students may experience difficulty identifying the relationships between clauses, which can hinder their ability to construct a coherent understanding of the text as a whole [15].

The seventh statement focused on the necessity of systematic instruction in linguistic knowledge for the development of reading comprehension. The findings indicate that 50 teachers strongly agreed and 28 partially agreed with the statement. These results suggest that the majority of teachers recognize the need to organize reading comprehension instruction in close connection with the systematic development of linguistic knowledge. Nevertheless, the responses of the remaining 10 teachers, who expressed either disagreement or uncertainty, indicate that the concept of systematic integration of linguistic knowledge into reading instruction is not equally understood or consistently implemented by all teachers.

The eighth statement investigated teachers' attitudes toward giving a distinct place to linguistic analysis in reading comprehension instruction. Of the 88 respondents, 76 either strongly agreed or partially agreed, whereas 12 disagreed with the statement. Although the majority of teachers acknowledge the importance of linguistic analysis in reading comprehension, the findings suggest that the extent to which it is implemented systematically and purposefully in classroom practice varies considerably among teachers.

The ninth and tenth questions required teachers to provide open-ended written responses. The ninth question asked: "Which linguistic units do students have difficulty understanding during the reading comprehension process? Why?"

An analysis of the responses concerning students' linguistic difficulties in reading comprehension revealed that most teachers merely listed various linguistic units without providing detailed explanations. The most frequently mentioned items included vocabulary definitions, conjunctions, particles, homonyms, synonyms, dialectal words, figurative meanings, idiomatic expressions, archaic words, distinctions in tense and person-number agreement, and complex sentences. These responses indicate that teachers are generally able to identify the linguistic areas in which students experience difficulties. However, in most cases they did not explain why these particular linguistic units create obstacles to comprehension.

Notably, seven teachers did not answer the question at all, while the responses of eight teachers were unrelated to the question asked. This suggests that some teachers experienced difficulty either understanding the purpose of the question or articulating the underlying problem precisely.

A particularly noteworthy finding is that only 14 of the 88 teachers attempted to explain the reasons underlying students' reading comprehension difficulties. Among the factors identified were limited vocabulary, insufficient engagement with literary reading, the linguistic complexity of texts, and students' developmental characteristics. These findings suggest that although teachers are generally able to recognize which linguistic units influence reading comprehension, many encounter difficulties when explaining the mechanisms through which these factors affect comprehension. This indicates that, while awareness of the problem exists, teachers' ability to analyze and justify the underlying causes remains insufficiently developed.

The tenth question asked teachers: "What recommendations would you provide for effectively integrating grammatical literacy with reading comprehension skills?" An analysis of the responses revealed that teachers generally expressed their recommendations at a broad and general level. The most frequently suggested approaches included strengthening students' linguistic knowledge, increasing the number of grammar exercises, and placing greater emphasis on text-based activities. However, most responses did not clearly explain the specific methodological mechanisms through which grammatical knowledge and reading comprehension could be effectively integrated. These findings suggest that although teachers recognize the importance of linking linguistic knowledge with reading comprehension, they lack well-defined instructional strategies for implementing this integration systematically and purposefully in classroom practice. Overall, the findings indicate a clear need to develop methodological approaches

aimed at integrating grammatical literacy and reading comprehension skills in mother tongue education.

Similar findings have been reported in studies conducted in the state of Florida, where teachers acknowledged the importance of grammatical knowledge in the reading comprehension process but experienced difficulties in applying it systematically in classroom instruction and translating this understanding into concrete pedagogical practices. These studies likewise suggest that, although teachers recognize the significance of the issue, they often encounter challenges in explaining it conceptually and transforming it into effective instructional strategies.

4. Conclusion

The findings of the teacher questionnaire demonstrate that the integration of reading comprehension and linguistic skills constitutes an important methodological issue in mother tongue education. Teachers' responses confirm the significant role of contextual word meaning, intersentential cohesion, pronouns, conjunctions, particles, and other linguistic features in the process of text comprehension. The results further indicate that grammatical knowledge should not be taught merely as a set of isolated rules but should instead be incorporated as a practical tool that supports reading, comprehension, textual analysis, and meaning construction. Accordingly, integrating linguistic skills into text-based learning represents an effective methodological approach to fostering reading comprehension competence.

Based on the survey findings, it can be concluded that there is a need to develop comprehensive methodological guidelines, instructional tasks, and assessment criteria that enable mother tongue teachers to promote the integrated development of reading comprehension and linguistic skills in a systematic and pedagogically effective manner.

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