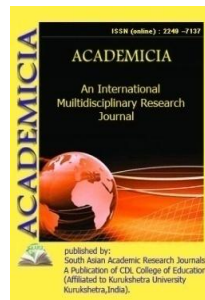


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THE EFFECT OF COMBINED STRATEGY INSTRUCTION ON READING COMPREHENSION

Turdimatova Gulchiroy*

*Fourth year student of Uzbekistan State World Languages University,
UZBEKISTAN

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effectiveness of combined strategy instruction on reading comprehension, students' perceptions of combined strategy training in reading instruction, and teachers' perceptions about combined reading strategy instruction and their experiences during strategy instruction. Four upper-intermediate classes (two as control groups and two as experimental groups) participated in the study. The experimental group received four-week long combined strategy instruction while the control group followed the current reading syllabus without strategy instruction. During the four-week study, Chamot and O'Malley's (1994) strategy instruction model, Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA), was followed for the most part. Prior to and after the four-week study an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) reading test was given to the students to assess their reading comprehension. Retrospective think-aloud protocols were used after the post-reading test in order to gather evidence on the use of strategies during the post-test. Following the treatment, a questionnaire was administered to the experimental group students in order to explore their perceptions of the strategy instruction program. Finally, the instructors of the experimental classes were interviewed about their experiences during the treatment period. The data analysis showed that the experimental group showed significantly greater improvement on the reading test after the four-week study. Furthermore, the retrospective think-aloud protocols demonstrated that experimental group students employed a broad range of strategies during the post-reading test. The analysis of the questionnaire and interviews revealed that combined strategy instruction had a positive impact on both teachers and students.

KEYWORDS: *Reading Strategies, Top-Down Reading Strategies, Bottom-Up Reading Strategies, Reading Strategy Instruction, Strategic Reader, Scaffolding.*

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