

**A Creative Dramatics Based Strategy to Enhance Al-Azhar  
Primary Institute Pupils' EFL Reading Comprehension and  
Attitudes.**

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## **Abstract**

This study aimed to investigate the effect of a creative dramatics based strategy on sixth graders 'English reading comprehension skills and their attitudes. The participant of the study consisted of (40) pupils distributed into two groups. One of the groups represented the control group of (20) pupils and the other represented the experimental one of (20) pupils. . The groups were randomly chosen from a purposive sample from Al-Safwa primary Model institute. Where the researcher works as an English teacher of the sixth graders. A creative dramatics based strategy was used in teaching the experimental group, while the traditional method was used in teaching the control one in the second term of the school .)year (2019-2020

## **:Introduction**

English, as a subject matter, in AL- Azhar foundation becomes a real challenge. Reading is considered one of the important skills which Al-Azhar pupils should acquire and perform. Pupils have two different texts to read:

1. Islamic Selection Book.
2. Every Body up Book.

Islamic Selection Book is considered a great step from Al – Azhar foundation for making a relationship between language and religion in the elementary stage. So, it is considered an attempt to

offer a curriculum in line with the wisdom of our religion. The Holy Qur'an is the basic source that confirms the importance of reading. The first revelation to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in Sūrah al-‘Alaq (verses 1-4) is about the divine instruction to “Read in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created- (1) Created man, out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood (2) Read! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful, (3) He Who taught the pen, (4) Taught man that which he knew not (5). Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) asked the prisoners to teach 10 Muslims to read and write in order to win their freedom. The message was very clear from that first day and was implemented in letter and spirit by Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him).

According to Weaver (2009), reading is a process which is determined by what the pupil-reader’s brain, emotions and beliefs bring to the reading: knowledge /information strategies for processing texts, moods, fear, and joys”. Reading engages human brain, emotion, and beliefs.

According to Grabe (2009), reading is process where pupil-readers learn something from what they read and participate it to an academic context as a side of education. According to Urquhart and Weir (2014), reading is the process of receiving and interpreting

information. When the pupils read a religious book, they use their beliefs in order that they can understand the meaning.

Kailani and Muqattash (2008) state that there are several purposes for reading as follows:

- Reading for research to get some inputs about a certain problem under study.
- Reading for enhancing intellectual skills, or to gain more common or specific knowledge.
- Reading for entertainment or self-development as reading a novel, story, and a poem, in a newspaper, magazine, or journal.

Reading is a number of interactive procedures between the pupil-readers and the text, in which they utilize their knowledge to build, to create, and to construct meaning. “Interactive” refers to two different conceptions:

(1) The interaction that occurs between the pupil-reader and the text, whereby the former constructs meaning based partly on the knowledge drawn from the text and partly from the existing knowledge that the pupil-reader has.

(2) The interactivity occurring simultaneously among the many component skills that results in comprehension.

Arıcan and Yılmaz (2010) defined the habit of reading as practicing the act of reading throughout life, constantly and critically as a result of perceiving reading as a need and a source of pleasure. To Durkin (1993), comprehension is the gist of the reading process and the active procedure of constructing meaning from a text.

Van den Broek and Espin (2012) noted that reading comprehension is a complex interaction among automatic and strategic cognitive processes that enables the reader to create a mental representation of the text. Comprehension depends on two elements, as follows:

1. Features of the pupil-reader, such as prior knowledge and working memory.
2. Language processes, such as basic reading skills, decoding, vocabulary, sensitivity to text structure, inferencing, and motivation.

According to Meniado (2016) reading comprehension is an interactive process of finding meanings from a text. To Rahmani and Sadeghi (2011), reading comprehension is the level of realizing a text/message. Ahmadi and Pourhosein (2012) expressed that reading comprehension is a cooperative mental practice between a pupil-reader's linguistic knowledge (knowledge of the world) and

knowledge about a given subject. Comprehension, to Tompkins (2011), is a creative process that is related to four skills; phonology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. Reading comprehension defined as the pupil-reader's ability to get meaning from what is read (Birsch, 2011).

There are some factors that effect on reading comprehension. The complexity of the text is influenced by the pupil-readers' strength and fluency in language and their comprehending of its applications and different meanings. A lot of vocabulary assist pupil-readers in explaining the unknown words through applying the opinions of context. (Dennis, 2008).

The anxiety during reading comprehension is another factor. Examinations, class work, or homework situations can put more pressure on reading. Pupil-readers who experience this anxiety may not completely understand the instructions which may lead to confusion and poor comprehension of the reading task. (Dennis, 2008).

Interest and motivation in another one. According to Dennis (2008), Pupil-readers' interest and motivation are important in developing reading comprehension. If pupil- readers find the reading

material monotonous, they will have a lot of problems in concentrating on their comprehension.

According to Russ (1989), attitudes have long been held as an important psychological construct as they play an important role in moderating one's level of motivation and intention to read, as well as mediating the relationship between an individual's beliefs and reading activities. Among classroom teachers, it is widely believed that the pupil-readers' attitudes towards reading significantly impact their reading comprehension.

Pupil-readers must see reading as valuable and enjoyable if they are to engage in both recreational and academic reading (McKenna et al, 1995).while Deford (2004) stated that reading cannot effectively occur without emotion and as such teachers need to understand pupil-readers read something, they do not simply read.

The emotional connection pupil-readers have when reading is the "primary reason most readers read, and probably the primary reason most nonreaders do not read" (McKenna and Kear, 1990). Without an emotional connection to texts, pupil-readers will not positively engage in reading and consequently their academic achievement levels will suffer. Teachers need to make reading irresistibly attractive to pupil-readers to enhance their positive

reading attitudes (Deford, 2004). When pupil-readers engage in reading, they are practising “holding a purpose, seeking to comprehend, believing in one’s own capability, and taking liability for learning” (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000).

According to Bolton (1979) “Creative Dramatics is doing”. This explanation leads to the essence of Creative Dramatics, understood as “make-believe play,” in which the participant pretends that he or she is someone else, or something else, through role-play in an imaginary environment. The experience of learning English by doing and the enjoyment as a reward from performing all contribute to boosting these effects. Learning by doing means that pupil-readers are engaged in Creative Dramatics to learn language in a natural way, using body language and facial expressions, making pauses and interruptions, and showing emotions in their interpretations of the play ( Lenka Krivkova ,2011).

According to Munther (2013), Creative Dramatics is an attractive teaching strategy which promotes co-operation, collaboration, self-control, goal-oriented learning as well as emotional intelligence skills. Creative Dramatics, to DuPont (1989), is an effective instructional strategy rather than traditional instruction to improving reading comprehension skill. Creative Dramatics provides pupil-readers with prior knowledge and general reading

skills and most importantly, with more positive attitudes toward learning and motivation for reading (McMaster, 1998). Rose et al (2000), outlined that utilizing outlined that using Creative Dramatics activities in the classroom enables pupil-readers to comprehend the text and to increase their reading abilities. Kelner and Flynn (2006) stated that the relationship between Creative Dramatics and reading comprehension is strong.

### **Need of the study:**

The need for this study appeared from these major reasons: The researcher, who has been working as an English teacher in institute, has noticed the pupils' sever weakness in reading comprehension skills. As a result, the researcher desires to improve his pupils' reading comprehension skills. Secondly, after the researcher has reviewed some previous studies about creative dramatics, he found that utilizing a creative dramatics based strategy motivated pupils to learn and created an entertaining environment for them. Thirdly, after the exploration of several studies related to the topic of this research, it is clearly observed that not only reading comprehension has been disregarded in institutes, but also it has been unattended as an area of research. There are few researches on reading comprehension skills here in Zagazig because there is an increasing interest in other skills rather in reading comprehension in spite of its

importance. Accordingly, the researcher realized the great need of working on enhancing reading comprehension skills through conducting this research, which aims at investigating the effect of a creative dramatics based strategy on enhancing the sixth graders' reading comprehension skills and attitude.

### **Problem of the study:**

The main problem of this study is that the researcher throughout his career in teaching English to sixth graders felt that pupils are not good at reading comprehension because reading comprehension has been less emphasized in teaching in favor of other language skills such as writing and speaking

### **Purpose of the study:**

The purpose of this study is to realize the effect of a creative dramatics based strategy on enhancing reading comprehension skills and attitudes in the model institutes.

### **Significance of the study:**

:This study may benefit

- Instructors of English:

The study may be provide them with systematic and practical procedures through a strategy based on creative dramatics to be applied within the classroom on enhancing EFL pupils' reading comprehension skills and attitudes. Also, it may help them to .facilitate their work

- Al-Azhar primary institute pupils:

This study may enhance the EFL pupils' reading comprehension besides their positive interaction and participation with the teacher within the classroom and reading attitudes.

- Supervisors:

This study may attract supervisors' attention to hold training courses for teachers in the importance of utilizing a creative dramatics based strategy on enhancing reading comprehension skills and attitudes.

**The instruments:**

1. A questionnaire to determine the most important reading comprehension skills for sixth graders.
2. A pre/post reading comprehension test was developed in light of the objectives of the course (one chapter, chapter 4 from the second semester in the grade six basic education "Islamic Selections Book").

3. A pre/ post attitudinal scale.

### **Delimitations of the Study:**

The Academic Limit\*

1. The study is limited to teaching Islamic Selections Book.
2. The study is limited to reading comprehension skills and attitudes.

The time and place limit\*

The study is limited to sixth graders, As Al-Safwa primary model institute At Sharkia. It was implemented in the second .) semester of the school year (2019– 2020

### **:Study procedures**

:The following procedures were conducted as follows

1) Reviewing relevant literature and previous studies related to the study variables:

A. The Dependent variable (Creative Dramatics) to frame the study experiment.

B. The Independent variable (Reading comprehension) to conclude the target skills.

C. The reading attitudes to crystallize the target dimensions.

2) Designing a Creative Dramatics Strategy in the light 1. A. and judging it.

- 3) Designing a Reading Comprehension chick list and judging it by a TEFL jury members.
- 4) Designing a Reading comprehension test in the light of the approved Reading Comprehension skills, to be pre/post used.
  - 5) Designing an attitudinal scale in the light of 1.c .and judging it.
- 6) Selecting the study participants from Al-Azhar Primary institute in zagazig, Sharkia Governorate and dividing it.
- 7) Pre-administering the study instruments (Reading Comprehension test +Scale) to the two groups.
- 8) Administering the strategy based on creative dramatics to the experimental group.
  - 9) Post- administering the study instruments to the two groups.
  - 10) Comparing the pre to post results of the study instruments.
- 11) Preforming statistical analysis of the data collected to test hypotheses.
- 12) Interpreting results and discussing them.
- 13) Providing conclusion, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

## Results of the study

The results of the present study showed that the experimental group, taught through a creative dramatics based strategy performed better than the control one in the post administration of the reading comprehension test and attitudinal scale since there were statistically significant differences at ( ) between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in favor of the former.

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استراتيجية قائمه على الدراما الابداعيه لتنمية الفهم القراني باللغة الانجليزيه و الاتجاهات  
لدي تلاميذ المرحلة الابتدائيه الازهرية.

بنيامين نور الدين عطيه غنيم

مدرس اللغة الانجليزية بالازهر الشريف

اشراف

ا.د/ عزه احمد حمدى المرصفى

استاذ المناهج وطرق التدريس

كلية التربيه/ جامعه الزقازيق

الملخص :

تهدف الدراسة الى معرفة مدى تاثير استراتيجية قائمه على الدراما الابداعيه لتحسين الفهم  
القراني باللغة الانجليزيه والاتجاهات لتلاميذ الصف السادس الابتدائى بالمعاهد الازهرية  
النموذجية. وتتكون عينة الدراسة من (٤٠) تلميذا مقسمة الى مجموعتين، المجموعة  
التجريبية (٢٠) تلميذا، والمجموعة الضابطة (٢٠) تلميذا اختيرت المجموعات عشوائيا  
من العينة المقدمة من معهد الصفوه النموذجى حيث يعمل الباحث كمدرس للغة الانجليزية  
للصف السادس. حيث استخدمت استراتيجية قائمه على الدراما الابداعيه فى التدريس  
للمجموعة التجريبية بينما استخدمت الطريقة التقليدية فى التدريس للمجموعة الضابطة فى  
الترم الاول للعام الدراسى (٢٠١٩-٢٠٢٠).