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## **Effectiveness of Using SQ3R Strategy in Developing Reading Comprehension among Non- English Specialized Saudi University Students**

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**Abstract**

The current research aimed to investigate the effectiveness of using SQ3R strategy in developing reading comprehension among non-English specialized Saudi university students. The participants were (60) Saudi female university students. The author followed the quasi- experimental design and randomly selected and distributed the participants into two groups. The control group included thirty students and the experimental group included thirty participants. The experimental group was taught through SQ3R strategy whereas the control group was taught through the conventional instruction. A reading comprehension test was designed for data collection. The research utilized the instrument to record the results and interpret them in the light of its questions. The research was delimited to a period of the second term during the academic year 2020-2021. In the pre-testing of reading comprehension, results indicated no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of both the experimental and control groups. Additionally, the experimental group students achieved higher improvement in their reading comprehension favoring the post test. Meanwhile, the experimental group students obtained higher mean scores when compared to the control group students in the post testing of reading comprehension.

**Keywords:** SQ3R strategy, reading comprehension, university students.

## المخلص

يهدف البحث الحالي إلى معرفة مدى فاعلية استخدام استراتيجية SQ3R في تطوير الفهم القرائي بين طلاب الجامعات السعوديين غير المتخصصين في اللغة الإنجليزية. وبلغ عدد المشاركات (٦٠) طالبة جامعية سعودية. اتبع المؤلف التصميم شبه التجريبي واختار المشاركين بشكل عشوائي ووزعهم على مجموعتين. ضمت المجموعة الضابطة ثلاثين طالباً والمجموعة التجريبية ثلاثون مشاركاً. تم تدريس المجموعة التجريبية من خلال استراتيجية SQ3R بينما تم تدريس المجموعة الضابطة من خلال التعليمات التقليدية. تم تصميم اختبار استيعاب المقروء لجمع البيانات. استخدم البحث الأداة لتسجيل النتائج وتفسيرها في ضوء تساؤلاتها. حُدد البحث بفترة الفصل الدراسي الثاني خلال العام الدراسي ٢٠٢٠-٢٠٢١. في الاختبار المسبق لفهم القراءة ، أشارت النتائج إلى عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين متوسط الدرجات لكل من المجموعتين التجريبية والضابطة. بالإضافة إلى ذلك ، حقق طلاب المجموعة التجريبية تحسناً أكبر في فهمهم القرائي لصالح الاختبار البعدي. وفي الوقت نفسه ، حصل طلاب المجموعة التجريبية على متوسط درجات أعلى مقارنة بطلاب المجموعة الضابطة في الاختبار البعدي لفهم القراءة.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** استراتيجية SQ3R ، الفهم القرائي ، طلاب الجامعة.

**Introduction**

English is known as the international language and the main language for communication as it is used in many countries. Also, it is one of the most dominating languages of the world that has a significant impact on all life fields. It is widely used in education, business, movies, books, and even in sports. Through learning English, you will get access to any kind of information. Since it is lonely language for international, information and internet communication, for that the learning of English language is very important for keeping up with the competitive world.

For English learners, reading is a necessary skill. For the majority of students, it is one of the most vital skills that needed to be developed for achieving academic success. According to Hung and Ngan (2015), improving reading will also improve writing abilities, as the fact that people who are reading a lot are going to write better. Developing reading skills will also increase writing skills, because people who read a lot are more likely to write well. Erler (2009) indicated that reading and learning are intertwined in education. Reading is a crucial component of academic achievement. It is both one of the receptive and one of the oral skills. As is well known, reading is essential. People nowadays should not only learn to read, but also read to learn. This highlights the importance of reading as a life skill. Within the heart of reading, it is the ability to interpret and comprehend written or printed symbols, as well as the message which the writer is attempting to convey to the reader (Ibrahim, 2007; Serran, 2002).

One of the most crucial goals of the reading process is to comprehend what you're reading. It should be the first step of the reading process. According to Pardo (2004), comprehension could be defined as the process in which readers generate meaning by engaging with the manuscript using a mix of past knowledge and experience, information in the text, and the reader's attitude in relation to the text to construct meaning.. Further, Reading comprehension, according to Abdel Hack (2006), is the process of building meaning by interacting with the manuscript. Individuals generate meaning by combining past knowledge with hints from the manuscript as they read. Effective readers recognize

that when they read and monitor their knowledge, it is an individual activity and active process of comprehending the texts. Not only for comprehending the topic, but also for learning in general, reading comprehension is essential and crucial (Oakhill, et al., 2014).

Reading a text without comprehending it is a waste of time and energy, thus students should be introduced to a range of ways to assist them in overcoming reading comprehension difficulties (Ayitey & Baiden, 2020). Some students struggle to figure out what the text's major point is. They read the entire book in the hopes of finding specific details, but they overlook the primary theme. The most significant aspect of comprehending the text is to grasp the core idea.

Due to the above considerations, the author intends to solve the problems by using SQ3R strategy. The SQ3R is a strategy that can help learners understand the purpose of the context text.

Robinson (1970) utilized the SQ3R study strategy to help students learn more effectively by adding higher-level study abilities. Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review are the five phases of SQ3R. This strategy has been developed in the 1941 and it has been success for many years. To get the most out of their reading time, students might apply the SQ3R strategy to actively read a material. Furthermore, the multi-step SQ3R strategy plan makes sense since it incorporates activities before, during, and after reading to assist children in being actively involved in reading to grasp (Falenti, 2012). SQ3R strategy aids the reader in comprehending the book's content, even if it contains items that are difficult to read and comprehend (Van Blerkom, 2011). Summing up, the above considerations highlight the need to investigate the effectiveness of using SQ3R strategy in developing reading comprehension among non-English specialized Saudi university students.

### **Research objective**

The research aims at identifying the effectiveness of using SQ3R strategy in developing reading comprehension among non-English specialized Saudi university students.

## Research question

### The research sought to answer the following question:

What is the effectiveness of using SQ3R strategy in developing reading comprehension among non-English specialized Saudi university students?

## Research significance

1. Attempting to develop university students' reading comprehension skills to improve their performance in English language.
2. Few attempts have been made to develop non-English specialized reading comprehension skills, especially in Saudi context.
3. The research will contribute to this area of literature and provide researchers with suggestions for further research.
4. Helping students and professors develop reading strategies to enhance learning process.

## Research hypotheses

The research hypothesized the following:

1. There is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group students and those of the control group students in the pre-testing of reading comprehension.
2. There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group students and those of the control group students in the post testing of reading comprehension favoring those of the experimental group.
3. There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group participants in the pre-post testing of reading comprehension favoring the post test.

## Methodology

### Research design

According to the research nature, it utilized the quasi-experimental design as a control group and an experimental group were selected and adjusted.

## Instrumentation

For collecting data, the research utilized a reading comprehension test aimed at measuring some reading comprehension skills among non-English specialized Saudi university students. The test consisted of ten passages. Each passage was followed by one multiple choice question. One mark is assigned for each question. The total mark assigned for the test is 10. The time assigned for the test is determined by calculating the mean time, which the fastest as well as the slowest students took in responding to the test. It was found that the time needed to answer the test was one hour and ten minutes (70 minutes). The test was adjusted in terms of its validity and reliability.

## Validity and reliability of the reading comprehension test

### 1. Validity of the test:

To ensure the test validity, it was revised by a jury of specialists in curricula and TEFL methodology. The test was reviewed and adjusted according to their suggestions and recommendations. Further, the correlation coefficient was used to estimate the validity of the internal consistency between the score of each question and the total score of the reading comprehension test, by applying to a survey sample consisting of (30) respondents, which is demonstrated in the following table (1).

**Table (1) The validity of the internal consistency between the score of each question and the total score of the reading comprehension test (N= 30)**

Question numbers and correlation coefficients between the score of each question and the total score of the scale					
question No.	1	2	3	4	5
correlation coefficient	0.88**	0.76**	0.63**	0.57**	0.69**
question No.	6	7	8	9	10
correlation coefficient	0.61**	0.41**	0.74**	0.57**	0.88**

(\*\*) significant at level of 0.01.

Table (1) clarifies that the values of correlation between the score of each question and the total score of the reading comprehension test ranged between (0.26: 0.75), and all values are statistically significant at (0.01) levels. This refers to the high internal consistency between the test questions and indicates the high and adequate validity of the test, which makes it valid as a research instrument for measuring students' reading comprehension.

## 2. Reliability of the test:

For verifying the test reliability, Cronbach's Alpha formula was computed as shown in Table (2).

**Table (2) reliability value of the test**

Instrument	number of questions	Cronbach's alpha coefficient
reading comprehension test	10	0.74

The above table demonstrates that Cronbach's Alpha coefficient value is statistically significant at 0.01 level which refers that the test is highly reliable.

## Participants

The research participants were (60) junior female university students at Faculty of Education, Early Childhood Department, Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The quasi-experimental design was utilized in which a control group and an experimental were randomly selected and consisted of (30) participants for each. SQ3R strategy was integrated in teaching the experimental group whereas the control group was merely taught using the conventional instruction.

## Limitations of the research

The current research was delimited to a sample of (60) junior female university students at Faculty of Education, Early Childhood Department, Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

It was delimited to a period of the second term during the academic year 2020-2021. It dealt with investigating the effectiveness of using SQ3R strategy in developing reading comprehension among non-English specialized Saudi university students.

## Procedures

The author reviewed literature concerning reading comprehension and SQ3R strategy. For measuring the students' reading comprehension before and after applying the strategy, the author developed the research instrument which is a reading comprehension test. Further, a control group and an experimental were randomly selected and consisted of (30) participants for each. They were derived from junior female university students at Faculty of Education, Early Childhood Department, Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. After verifying the validity and reliability of the research, the author applied the pre-reading comprehension test before conducting the intervention. SQ3R was incorporated in teaching the experimental group whereas teaching the control group was mainly based on the conventional instruction. An action plan was prepared for 3hours a day on 3days a week for a period of 10 weeks. Then, the post-reading comprehension test was administered to identify the degree of development in the students' reading comprehension progress. In this research, the reading comprehension test was used as data collection instrument to provide research credibility.

## Literature Review

Using SQ3R strategy has been documented in many studies. Dharma (2013) conducted a study in order to evaluate the usage of the SQ3R strategy for teaching students how to read, comprehend, and absorb legible materials. The study's objectives were met through the use of an observation card and a questionnaire. Results showed that SQ3R strategy aided the learner in comprehending the legible material and improving their reading abilities, according to the findings. Moreover, the findings revealed that the students' judgments on the relevance of this technique in teaching reading were in accord.

Hutasuhut (2014) conducted a study to see how the SQ3R method affected reading comprehension. An experimental research design was used in this study. The sample includes an experimental group and a control group, each with 32 students in each lesson. The SQ3R technique is integrated in teaching the experimental group whereas the control group was mainly based on the usual method. Results showed that The SQ3R strategy considerably increases the students' reading comprehension.

Al-Ghazo (2015) investigated the impact of SQ3R and semantic mapping methodologies on Jordanian university students' reading comprehension learning. The participants in this study were 60 students from two English Level 1 classrooms, 30 in the control group and 30 in the experimental group. Both of the groups groups were assigned an accomplishment pre-post reading comprehension test, with some differences in how each group is taught. To measure the students' comprehension of the reading content, a twenty-question multiple-choice reading comprehension test is designed. The post-test findings revealed that the semantic mapping and SQ3R strategies group obtained higher scores than the control group.

Rahyana (2016) investigated the impact of the SQ3R strategy on students' reading comprehension. Total sampling technique was employed for sampling. There were 37 pupils in these samples. The non-treatment group was 19 pupils and the treatment group contained 18 pupils. The study's findings proved that employing the SQ3R strategy had highly substantial influence on the post-test.

Bulut (2017) investigated the reading comprehension skills of those who used the SQ3R reading comprehension strategy. Seven fourth-grade pupils at a primary school were given the method to help them improve their reading comprehension abilities. To establish study credibility, a reading comprehension test, student interview form, and student observation form were employed as data gathering techniques. According to the findings, the SQ3R-based reading curriculum improved pupils' reading comprehension. Additionally, students' capacity to visually interpret texts, as well as their prediction and note-taking abilities, were shown to have increased.

Biringkanae (2018) conducted a study to investigate SQ3R strategy to increase students' reading comprehension and the students' perceptions of the strategy. The sample included 24 students. The non-treatment group was twelve students whereas the treatment group was twelve students. The instruments included a reading test and a questionnaire. The results of the study demonstrate that implementing the SQ3R strategy can help pupils enhance their reading comprehension skills.

Anjuni & Cahyadi (2019) conducted a study to see if the SQ3R strategy may help students improve their reading comprehension. A total of 30 pupils were included in this study's sample. The results revealed that employing the SQ3R strategy to teach students reading comprehension is extremely effective in enhancing students' reading comprehension.

Ayitey and Baiden (2020) conducted a study to see if the SQ3R strategy may help junior high students improve their ability to read expository texts. The baseline performance of students in reading comprehension was studied using 45 students. The results revealed that the treatment group demonstrated a considerable development in the post-test of reading comprehension. SQ3R is a superior method for enhancing the participants' reading comprehension capacity of expository texts and it is recommended to be supported and used in instruction.

Majeed (2020) conducted a study to find out if employing the SQ3R strategy may help second-year college students improve their reading comprehension. The study sample randomly included two groups of students who were equalized and adjusted according to a number of characteristics that may influence the independent variable (SQ3R). Data is gathered using an appropriate reading comprehension test. The results revealed that the treatment group obtained higher scores significantly than the non-treatment group participants in the post test.

Handayani, et al. (2021) conducted a study to enhance the students' reading comprehension through SQ3R strategy. Sample consisted of 40 students. Results showed that the students were more active in practicing the reading comprehension. Mujidah & Ainun (2021) conducted a study to compare the impact of learning to read pupils who used the SQ3R technique to students who did not. A treatment group and non-treatment group were included in the sample. Students' reading learning improved significantly after being taught utilizing the SQ3R approach, according to the findings.

Amiruddin (2022) conducted a study to find out the degree of significance in differences in reading comprehension and accomplishment between the treatment group that its teaching was based on the SQ3R strategy and the non-treatment group who were taught using the traditional strategy. According to the findings, the SQ3R method helped pupils enhance their reading comprehension skills.

### Statistical analysis

After collecting data, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program was used to analyze them and the following statistical methods were applied:

- Pearson correlation coefficient for estimating consistency and relationships between variables.
- Cronbach's alpha coefficient for estimating reliability.
- Mean.
- Standard Deviation.
- T-Test for calculating the significance of the differences between groups.

### Results and discussion

#### - Testing the first hypothesis

There is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group students and those of the control group students in the pre-testing of reading comprehension.

**Table (3) Indication of significance of the differences between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups students in the pre-test of reading comprehension**

(N = 60)

Variables	experimental group = 30		control group = 30		Value) (T	Type of significance
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation		
<b>reading comprehension test</b>	2.23	2.11	2.06	1.87	0.323	Not statistically significant

Results verify the hypothesis. The above table clarifies no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of both the experimental and control groups with regard to the pre-testing of reading comprehension. This means that the groups have appropriate equivalence and homogeneity, and there are no external factors that distinguish one group over another before using the strategy, which also confirms the safety of the steps of conducting the research and that any change in the participants' reading comprehension will be attributed to the effectiveness of the strategy.

### - Testing the second hypothesis

There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group students and those of the control group students in the post testing of reading comprehension favoring those of the experimental group.

**Table (4) Indication of differences between the mean scores of the experimental group participants in the pre-post testing of reading comprehension**

(N = 30, df= 29)

Variables	Test	Mean	Std. Deviation	(T) Value	Sig	ETA square	Effect size
<b>reading comprehension test</b>	Pre	2.33	2.11	17.19**	0.01	0.911	Big
	Post	6.80	1.93				

Table (4) shows that the experimental group participants statistically achieved higher improvement in the post test more than the pre-test of reading comprehension and the difference between the mean scores was at (0.01) level, indicating a "T" value of (17.19). Because statistical significance reflects the degree of confidence in the differences' findings, independent of their effect size, the effect size is computed using the "ETA square" method,

which indicates that the value of ETA square was (0.911) and in turn the effect size is "large". Moreover, it is obvious that the SQ3R strategy effect size on reading comprehension is high. Accordingly, that highlights the effectiveness of using SQ3R strategy in developing reading comprehension among non-English specialized Saudi university students.

### - Testing the third hypothesis

There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group participants in the pre-post testing of reading comprehension favoring the post test.

**Table (5) Indication of significance of the differences in the post-testing of reading comprehension between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups**

(N = 60)

Variables	experimental group = 30		control group = 30		Value) (T	Type of significance
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation		
post testing of reading comprehension	6.80	1.93	3.10	2.04	7.20**	statistically significant

(\*\*) significant at level of 0.01.

The aforementioned table demonstrates that the experimental group participants significantly obtained higher improvement as compared to the control group participants in the post testing of reading comprehension. This confirms the effectiveness of using SQ3R strategy in developing the experimental group reading comprehension skills when compared to the individuals of control group students who were not treated with that strategy, and therefore their reading comprehension scores were lower than those of the experimental group students.

Results of the research are consistent with other studies (Dharma, 2013; Al-Ghazo ,2015; Rahyana, 2016; Bulut, 2017; Biringkanae, 2018; Anjuni & Cahyadi, 2019; Ayitey & Baiden, 2020; Majeed, 2020; Widiawati, Nuraida & Saputri, 2020; Handayani, et al., 2021; Maryuni, 2021; Mujidah & Ainun, 2021; Khider Macías & Mayorga Chacón, 2021; Qishta, et al., 2021; Sari, et al, 2022). For instance, Widiawati, Nuraida, and Saputri (2020) performed research to determine if using the SQ3R strategy may increase eighth-grade students' reading comprehension. The results of the pre-test and post-test were compared to examine the data. The post-test results revealed a considerable improvement. This study also revealed that the majority of the participants agreed that the SQ3R strategy was effective in increasing the respondents' reading comprehension. The study found that using the SQ3R strategy can help pupils enhance their reading comprehension.

Similarly, the results agree with Maryuni (2021) who did a research to investigate the impact of SQ3R strategy on developing reading comprehension. Results showed that including SQ3R into reading exercises can help pupils develop their reading comprehension. Furthermore, the results agree with Handayani, et al. (2021) who concluded that the students' reading comprehension can be enhanced through implementing SQ3R strategy and it also can increase their engagement in all learning activities.

Furthermore, the research result goes in line with Khider Macías, & Mayorga Chacón (2021) who conducted a study using the SQ3R strategy to measure students' reading comprehension improvement. A treatment group and a non-treatment group participated in this study. The findings clarified that after applying the strategy in reading classes, the treatment group increased their scores and achieved better performance. According to the findings, the SQ3R strategy can help students enhance their reading comprehension.

Qishta, et al. (2021) conducted a study sought to assess the effectiveness of KWL and SQ3R strategies in improving students' reading comprehension skills. The researchers used a quasi-experimental design on a group of (119) secondary female students to meet the study's objectives. Three groups of equal size were established, a non-treatment group as well as two treatment groups. A post reading comprehension test was utilized. Findings concluded that the first treatment group that

learns using the KWL strategy significantly outperformed the non-treatment group and showed better improvement in the post test. Furthermore, the study findings referred that the second treatment group that learns using the SQ3R strategy significantly outperformed the non-treatment group and showed higher improvement in the post test..

### **Recommendations and suggestions for further research**

In the light of the obtained findings, this research recommends that there is a need for Activating the practices of using SQ3R as an effective strategy in developing university students' reading skills. Reading comprehension should be given a great importance and emphasized as important skills of English language during preparing students at all educational stages. Providing university teaching staff with professional training opportunities of applying SQ3R strategy that is needed in the teaching process. The present research could be replicated on a larger sample of EFL learners. Moreover, other variables could be investigated such as the effect of using SQ3R strategy on developing students' reading comprehension according to gender and age variables. Further, researchers can explore the effect of using SQ3R strategy at other stages (primary, preparatory and secondary) on developing students' reading comprehension and attitudes towards EFL.

### **Conclusion**

The major purpose of the research is to investigate the effectiveness of using SQ3R strategy in developing reading comprehension among non-English specialized Saudi university students. Results showed that both the experimental and control groups had no significant statistical difference in their obtained scores of the reading comprehension pre-test. In addition, the experimental group participants showed statistically significant difference and better improvement in the post reading comprehension test compared to the pre-test due to using SQ3R strategy. Furthermore, when compared to the control group, the experimental group participants achieved higher improvement and in the post reading comprehension test attributed to the considerable contribution of implementing SQ3R strategy. Summing up, using SQ3R strategy proved to be effective on developing the participants' reading comprehension.

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