The Effects of Reading Aloud Strategies on Text Level Difficulties, Reading Proficiency and Reading Comprehension Skill

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Abstract

Reading aloud is an essential learning strategy that can increase the quality of students' reading comprehension abilities, which significant role may help them to overcome text level difficulties of the learning materials. This pilot study focused on reading aloud as an appropriate reading strategy for efficient outcomes for low-proficiency Saudi students. Mixed method design was employed with the administration of three research instruments; a reading test, a questionnaire and an interview protocol for teachers and students. Participants were 30 postgraduate students who attended a foundation English course at a public university in Saudi Arabia. The students were put into an experimental group where the reading aloud strategies were applied. The findings showed significant results. The results of the reading test and questionnaire showed that the students did better in the posttest than the pretest. In general, most of the students indicated that reading aloud strategies have helped them to improve their reading proficiency, better understand higher level texts, and hence improve their reading comprehension skill.

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INTRODUCTION

Reading has become an increasingly important skill among Saudi students in learning English language, and reading proficiency is necessary for students to understand written texts for academic achievement. Specifically, excellent reading proficiency is needed by Saudi students to understand academic materials. Student life becomes dynamic with the vital role of reading because it is an indispensable skill for educational success and academic learning (Alsamdani, 2011). Nevertheless, due to low reading proficiency, Arab students always struggle with English texts (Alrabai, 2016; Schumm, 2017). Due to this, Saudi students in general are weak in all skills due to lack of reading comprehension skills (Al-Seghayer, 2014; Mehmoud, 2014). Alhaqbani and Riazi (2012) highlighted the need for one vital reading strategy that could improve Saudi students' proficiency in reading and comprehension skills.

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From teachers' perspective, on the other hand, studies have pointed out that using different reading strategies in teaching could help to develop Saudi students' reading skills, and hence, teachers are encouraged to apply and ask their students to use different reading strategies in teaching and learning (Alsheikh & Mokhtari, 2011). Translation and asking questions are the common strategies utilized among Saudi EFL students, but these strategies could only help for a slow paragraph reading. These students also utilised different reading strategies depending on what they comprehended when they were reading (Al-Nujaidi, 2003). He however reported that there was minimal evidence to indicate the correlation between the students' reading comprehension and strategies used.

Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) considered the reading aloud strategies (RAS) are essential when Saudi students read academic materials. Morrison and Wlodarczyk (2009) have stated the positive impacts of using RAS in helping students, and RAS should not be viewed merely as a specific instructional activity, but as an essential part of the instructional material which could develop reading comprehension skills with English texts. An efficient technique of reading aloud allows a teacher to make inferences, clarify meaning, and able to assist students to enrich vocabulary and understand difficult level of a text (Ziegler et al., 2010). Darling-Hammond et al. (2015) further explained that RAS helps struggling readers to understand texts.There are also studies by Albashtawi, Jaganathan, and Singh (2016); Pan et al. (2011); Yeatman et al. (2012); and Rivers (2018) that proved the impact of RAS on reading comprehension skills in acquiring reading ability which enhances their expertise and lessen their text level struggle.

Evidently, there are few related studies on this issue, but an investigation on the impact of RAS on text-level difficulties and the reading proficiency of Saudi students for reading comprehension as a skill is scarce. Al-Nujaidi (2003) claimed RAS used by Saudi students require further investigation because it has inadequate empirical evidences on the effectiveness of RAS at text-level comprehension for reading proficiency. Hence, this pilot study aims to investigate the impact of reading aloud strategies on text level difficulties and reading comprehension skill among Saudi students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Reading Comprehension Skills and Strategies

Reading as referred by Koda (2007) is a process, and its goal is to build the meaning of the text based on visually encoded data. However, reading is a composite cognitive task. Ovando (2005) stated that in first language texts, students use only a single language whereas in a second language text, learners have at least two languages to manage. Hence, a text in a foreign or second language becomes much complex and more laborious and understanding becomes difficult.

Reading comprehension strategies are an exclusive method to a problem, and they can be defined as the conscious, internally variable psychological techniques aimed at improving the effectiveness of or compensating for the breakdowns in reading comprehension, on specific reading tasks, and in particular contexts. There are various reading ways to develop reading comprehension such as reading silently or reading aloud for literal, inferential and critical reading skills. McLaughlin and Allen (2002) mentioned that good readers use strategies of comprehension to enhance the construction of meaning. These strategies involve skimming, scanning, understanding vocabulary in the present context, summarizing, predicting and evaluating, making connections, self-questioning, monitoring and visualizing, etc. These strategies help readers to become metacognitive readers.

Teachers can help to improve students' reading comprehension skills through instructions in reading strategies (Küçükoğlu, 2013). For this reason, it is imperative for a student to use reading comprehension strategies when reading academic materials for active learning. Kragler and Martin's (2009) investigation on appropriate strategic control over reading comprehension found out that it might develop more advanced literacy activities because good readers inevitably engage with a wide diversity of strategies. In contrast, less proficient readers are often unaware of the fact that good readers use a variety of appropriate strategies to create meaning and repair understanding while improving their reading skills (Gooden,

2012). Accordingly, suitable reading strategies help students to improve in reading comprehension.

2.2   Learning Materials and Text Level Difficulty

Utilising the appropriate reading strategy is vital to increase students' reading proficiency to a certain degree of the text material comprehension. Apparently, the difficulty levels of reading materials used in Saudi Arabia universities have been identified to deter the students' reading efforts (Al-Nafisah, 2011). It was further revealed that the students and teachers at the universities were not given choices in terms of reading materials. The study proved that the increased level of text difficulty in academic materials used at the universities did not meet with the Saudi students' proficiency level. In fact, some of the materials are in advanced academic styles which contradict the typical Saudi students' reading materials and text level difficulties. The learning materials were usually written by the native speakers in advanced writing styles who practically do not have any hands-on experience dealing with Saudi Arabian students' text level difficulties. Consequently, the students started taking no interest and become bored with these academic materials. As a result, the problem has led to a huge gap among Saudi students in their reading ability and the level they are at, particularly among the low-proficiency readers.

2.3   Studies on Reading Aloud Strategies

Reading loudly is the foundation of literacy growth. Gold and Gibson (2001) discovered that the Fourth and Sixth grade students who read loudly continuously during a time duration of seven months accomplished certain gains in their reading comprehension, vocabulary and decoding skills. The study also found that reading aloud represented the relationship between the meaning hence, making reading aloud and printed word complex thoughts much accessible to be perceived by readers. Gray (2010) asserted that in Saudi Arabia, the elementary schools use standardised Basic Readers to teach reading aloud to entire students in the First to sixth grade. In the First to third grade, the students learn to read aloud, and in the Fourth to sixth grade, they read for comprehension. In elementary schools of Saudi Arabia, the reading program emphasises vocabulary acquisition, word recognition, and comprehension through reading aloud by teachers as well as students.

During reading aloud activities, a teacher reads from the text out loud to students, and this is often done as a group activity. This helps to build knowledge about a specific subject by the teacher. Most probably, the teacher reads aloud the harder text. Indeed, the use of variations in pitch, tone, pace, volume, pauses, eye contact, questions and comments to produce a smooth and enjoyable delivery make it a shared, guided reading process (Burkins & Croft, 2010). In other words, this is an important strategy because it encourages students to read and eventually starts to improve their reading comprehension, which in turn enhances their literacy levels. Himmele and Himmele (2012) acknowledged that an effective narrative reading aloud strategy helps students to acquire the academic language that they will need to understand informational texts. They consider it as a vital strategy to increase the overall quality of students' reading ability. Bolos (2012) concurred on the effectiveness of RAS to encourage students to read in order to improve their reading ability with the problematic text. Alshehri (2014) agreed that reading aloud strategies develop students' interest in the learning material hence, increases their desire to be lifelong readers.

On the other hand, RAS make a teacher as a model for students to read. Consequently, it causes the students to start thinking critically about the text they are reading and motivate them in developing concepts, vocabulary, fluency, oral language, story scheme, and higher-level thinking. Reading aloud therefore is a practical reading strategy, and further investigation is required on how this strategy can be used to promote reading growth among Saudi students who are having limited reading proficiency. However, there were limited studies have been found to examine reading aloud to solve text-level difficulties for low reading ability students. There scarcity has created a vast and considerable gap for this pilot study to be carried out, focusing on reading aloud as an appropriate reading strategy for low-proficiency Saudi students fin overcoming the text level difficulties.

METHODOLOGY

Concurrent mixed method design was employed for this pilot study, where both quantitative and qualitative data were collected at the same time (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007). The data were triangulated, which choice was made mainly due to timing.

3.1   The Participant and Research Instrument

There were two types of participants which were student participants and the teacher participants. Student participants were recruited from male students entering the College of Science, and their age ranged was between 18 to 20 years. There were 30 male college students for the experimental group, and 30 were for the controlled group. On the other hand, two teacher participants who have had the experience of using the reading aloud strategies were also recruited.

This study employed a survey questionnaire, a reading test, and an interview protocol. A reading test was used in the experimental group, which was validated. The test-retest reliability was run using Pearson Correlation. It measures the stability of the scores of a construct obtained from the same person on two or more separate times. Reliability concerns the degree to which scores can be distinguished from each other, despite measurement error. Analysis of the Pearson Correlation showed that the test was significant (2-tailed) at p-value <.05.

The second instrument is a questionnaire, which consisted of a series of questions to gather information from respondents on the effectiveness of reading aloud strategies. This instrument had four sections. Its reliability analysis was run using Cronbach's alpha, and the value, α (.743) indicate acceptable reliability for the questionnaire.

The third instrument is an interview protocol which utilised semi-structured interview. This instrument was used to gain information about the teachers' current read-aloud practices and students' views of the RAS. The validity of the interviews was checked by the reading expert teachers at King Faisal University and two experts from other Saudi universities. After receiving their comments for face and content validity, these interviews were amended before implementation. These semi-structured interviews were then conducted with the students and reading teachers.

3.2   Research Procedure

The study was conducted in one semester (14 weeks), where the pre-test was administered in Week 1, and the post-test was administered at the end of the semester. The semi-structured interviews were then conducted with the students and reading teachers, followed by the administration of the questionnaire with the students.

3.2.1   Reading Aloud Strategies Procedure

The teacher read every reading passage in the book aloud, and the students were required to listen. The procedure for the reading aloud strategy includes the pre, during and after reading aloud activities. Firstly, in the pre-reading aloud activities, a discussion was done to identify the author, title, setting, characters, background, and to activate students' prior knowledge. Secondly, during reading aloud activities, there were the ongoing interaction, responses, and dialogue between teacher and students to help students identify aspects of narrative and informational texts, share their thought, question, discuss and engage in metacognition.

During RAS, students were also involved in the thinking process which requires students to verbalize their thoughts and reflect on how they make meaning. Finally, in the after reading aloud strategies, students were required to respond, a balance between talking and sharing. Other after reading aloud activities also included mapping, using graphic organizers, making a prediction, and sketching. Students

were able to discuss responses, create visual images, stage debates, write their responses, interview each other, and defend their responses. The reading teacher of the group (treatment group) read aloud passages in the book twice, over a period of a semester. As the teacher read the story, he encouraged students to read aloud and look for answers and questions. On the other hand, the reading teacher with the controlled group did not use reading aloud strategies. He used silent reading (common strategies) as usual according to instructional material instructions.

FINDINGS

4.1   Results of the Reading Test

Independent samples t-test was run on the results of the reading test, and the pre-test showed no significant difference in means, $p > 0.05$ between the experimental and controlled groups, indicating the assumption of homogeneity of variance is met. Here the confidence level was kept 95% for 5% margin of errors. Hence, the results of t-test showed that the reading level of controlled and the experimental was groups was almost the same.

Table 1. Results of Independent Sample T-Test

	T-Test for Equality of Means			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Level
Controlled Group	.341	-.667	.694	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference
Experimental Group	.341	-.667	.694	

A paired-samples t-test informs whether there is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores for Time 1 and Time 2. Thus, a paired-samples t-test was performed on the pre-test and post-test results of the groups. The confidence level for this analysis was kept at 95% for a 5% margin of errors. From the results, the mean score of the controlled group was -.200 and -6.400 for the experimental group. However, the standard deviation of the controlled group was .714 and 2.608 for the experimental group. These differences show that the students of the controlled group did not perform very well.

On the other hand, the students of experimental group excelled in the results. As the p-value > 0.05, so no differences were shown in the controlled group, but there were differences in the experimental group which differed as the test was adequate. In summary, the experimental group showed better results here than they did before.

Table 2. Results of Paired Sample T-test.

	Paired Samples Test		
Group	Paired Differences		Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	
Control Group	.200	.714	.136
Experimental Group	6.400	2.608	.000

4.2   Results of the Questionnaire

A questionnaire was distributed to measure the opinion of the students regarding the effectiveness of reading aloud strategies used in the class. Table 3 illustrates the first section, an overall response of the effectiveness of RAS on text difficulties, where the maximum mean score is 3.3 for (suitable for challenging text material) and the minimum mean score is 2.6 and 1.3. However, the majority mean score is 2.8 and 2.9 whereas the majority SD is 1.4. Thus, the overall response was not bad as the students considered the effectiveness of RAS on the text difficulties. These strategies worked for them on the text difficulties with the learning material.

Table 1. The Effectiveness of Reading Aloud Strategies on Text Difficulties with Learning Material.

Items	Means	SD
Provide interactions with a variety of texts	2.8	1.5
Help student notice aspects of narrative/informational texts	2.8	1.5
Help understanding instructional material	2.9	1.4
Make active student learner during text reading	2.9	1.4
Suitable for challenging text material	3.3	1.1
Print reference help to understand the written language of the text material	2.6	1.4
Promote the student's love for reading difficult test	2.9	1.3
Teacher's reading aloud played important part in text understanding	2.9	1.4
When a teacher sets aside time to read orally from texts above my independent level but at my listening level, I comprehend text easily	2.9	1.4
Supports whole class text studies	2.9	1.4
Help student talk and think about the text	2.9	1.4
Make the student able to review text structure	3.0	1.4

The second section of the survey looked at the effectiveness of RAS on reading proficiency. The overall response was good. While the maximum mean is 5.0 (promote vocabulary development) whereas the minimum Mean score was 2.9. These Mean and SD scores showed that maximum students' perception that RAS were effective for increasing their reading proficiency.

Table 4. The Effectiveness of Reading Aloud Strategies on Reading Proficiency.

Items	Mean	SD
Raise the reading proficiency to a level above my current ability	4.2	0.8
help me "read between the lines" to be a proficient reader	3.3	1.4
I can understand meanings that are not directly stated	4.2	0.8
Help me able to read fluently and proficiently	4.3	0.8
Help for improvement in reading fluency for my pronunciation	4.3	0.8
I can read proficiently difficult text without difficulty	2.9	1.3
Promote vocabulary development for reading proficiency	5.0	0.0
Help me to understand the main ideas and important details	3.3	1.4
make the student able to comprehend 95%-word recognition	3.4	1.5

Another significant aspect of overall response to the effectiveness of RAS on lower & higher-Level Text Difficulties. On the other hand, Mean and SD were 2.8 and 1.3 positively (reading aloud strategies solve text level difficulties). The next question asked the informants that RAS make lower level advance text easy where the mean score is 2.6, and the is 1.2. What is interesting in this data is that the last item (make higher level advance text easy) has a maximum mean score of 2.9 and SD 1.4. Thus, these results show that most of the students answered that RAS makes lower level and advance level text easy for them.

Table 5. The Effectiveness of Reading Aloud Strategies on Lower & Higher-Level Text Difficulties

Items	Ineffective	Somewhat ineffective	Neutral	Somewhat Effective	Effective	Mean	SD
Reading aloud strategies solve text level difficulties	0.0%	0.0%	21.6%	29.7%	48.6%	2.8	1.3
Make lower level advance text easy	13.5%	16.2%	18.9%	21.6%	29.7%	2.6	1.2
Make higher level advance text easy	0%	0%	21.6%	29.7%	48.6%	2.9	1.4

As far as the effectiveness of RAS on the reading comprehension as a skill is concerned, what can be clearly seen in table 6, most of the mean and SD score was 3.0 and 1.3. On the other hand, the rate fell to a low point for Mean at 2.6 (promote literacy skill). The maximum mean score was 3.7 (friendly definitions explain the meaning of the word).

Table 6. The Effectiveness of Reading Aloud Strategies on Reading Comprehension as a Skill

Items	Ineffective	Somewhat ineffective	Neutral	Somewhat Effective	Effective	Mean	SD
Increase listening comprehension skills	16.2%	18.9%	16.2%	13.5%	35.1%	3.3	1.5
Promote literacy skill	35.1%	16.2%	16.2%	13.5%	18.9%	2.6	1.5
Open conversation for making connections	16.2%	21.6%	21.6%	21.6%	18.9%	3.0	1.3
Identify author, title, setting, characters, background	18.9%	10.8%	32.4%	24.3%	13.5%	3.0	1.3
Activate prior knowledge or common knowledge	18.9%	10.8%	32.4%	24.3%	13.5%	3.0	1.3
Improve the student's word recognition skills and confidence	16.2%	10.8%	32.4%	24.3%	13.5%	3.3	1.4
Provide an opportunity for thinking process	24.3%	18.9%	18.9%	18.9%	18.9%	2.8	1.4
Reading aloud strategy helps to reflect on how to make	18.9%	10.8%	32.4%	24.3%	13.5%	2.9	1.4
Promote syntactic development	21.6%	21.6%	18.9%	18.9%	18.9%	2.9	1.4
Increase abilities to recognize words	18.9%	10.8%	32.4%	24.3%	13.5	3.0	1.3
Friendly definitions explain the meaning of the word	8.1%	2.7%	27.0%	35.1%	27.0%	3.7	1.1
Facilitates reading comprehension	18.9%	13.5%	35.1%	16.2%	16.2%	2.9	1.3
Reading aloud strategies make instructional material easy	13.5%	18.9%	27.0%	16.2%	24.2%	3.1	1.3
Reading aloud strategies improve reading as a skill	13.5%	16.2%	18.9%	21.6%	29.7%	3.3	1.4

4.3   Results of the Interview

4.3.1   Results of Students' Interviews

The overall response to the interviews was good. The main aim of the interview is to find out students' perspective on the effectiveness of using the RAS. All the students agreed that they were reading aloud in their reading classroom activities and their reading teachers were regularly using these methods which were very effective. In all cases, the respondents reported that their reading teachers used reading aloud strategies during reading classroom activities. For example, many of them said that they used RAS in the current semester when in previous semesters they were using silent reading strategies, and that the use of RAS enhanced their reading proficiency. While they were concern whether reading aloud was a useful reading strategy for their text level difficulties, almost all the respondents replied opined that RAS is very effective for lower level text. They said that they did not lose control of the reading tests when it was conducted from the lower level text. They further explained that the lower level reading passages were easy to extract information. Themes regarding lower level text were easy for them to understand. In addition, most of the students also agreed RAS was able to help them improve their literal reading comprehension skills.
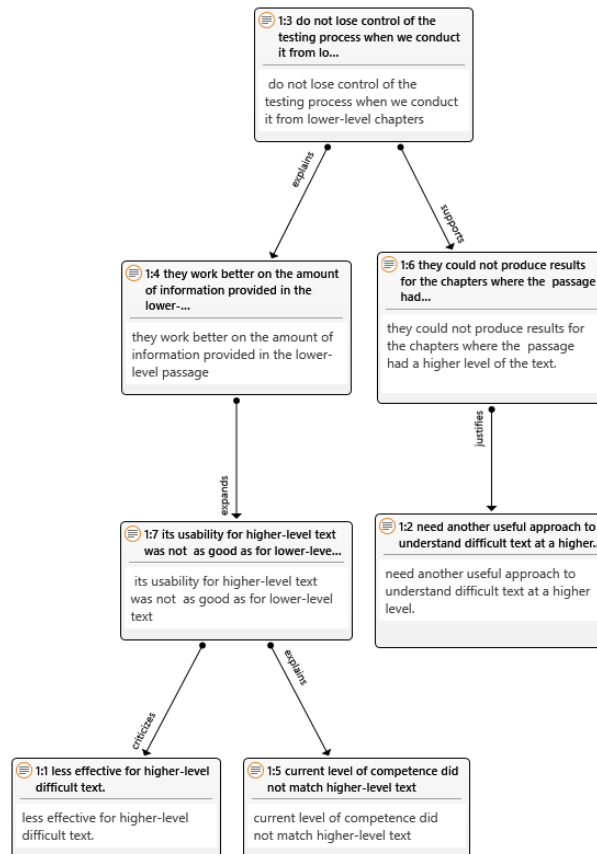

Figure 1. The Effectiveness of RAS for Higher and Lower Level Texts.

The figure above shows the most significant findings from students' interviews which is their dissatisfaction about these strategies for higher level text. Areas of thematic point of views where significant differences have been found include vocabulary, difficult text structure and complexity of understanding. Figure 1 shows their difficulties in understanding the higher-level text and how they felt the ease of effectiveness of these strategies for lower level text. Figure 1 also shows that there have been a

sharp feeling of the students that reading aloud strategies did not rise their abilities for higher level text. Though it was very easy for them to understand the lower level text, yet these strategies worked very less for difficult text. In summary, what stands out in the above figure is the difference these strategies worked for higher and lower level text.

4.3.2 Results of Teachers' Interviews

Figure 2 shows the thematic point of view of teacher A on reading aloud strategies. Teacher A argued that he considered it a valuable strategy because his students must know at this stage how to read. They still have reading aloud problems because they did not do it at school. He further said that the biggest weakness is the students' reading. The students cannot read well, and he feels it is something he should know already. He perceived it as a valuable strategy. It has some benefits and is more stimulating. He also indicated that it is a helpful strategy as it helped students in listening and pronunciation. He further agreed that it is a useful strategy by saying that these reading aloud strategies respond well to the balance between talk and text and sharing. He also included mapping, graphic organizers, prediction check, sketch to stretch, and semantic differential scales. He said that only because of these strategies, his students were able to discuss responses, create visual images, stage debates, write their answers, interview each other, and defend their reactions. In the end, he confirmed that these strategies failed to produce results on the higher-level text.
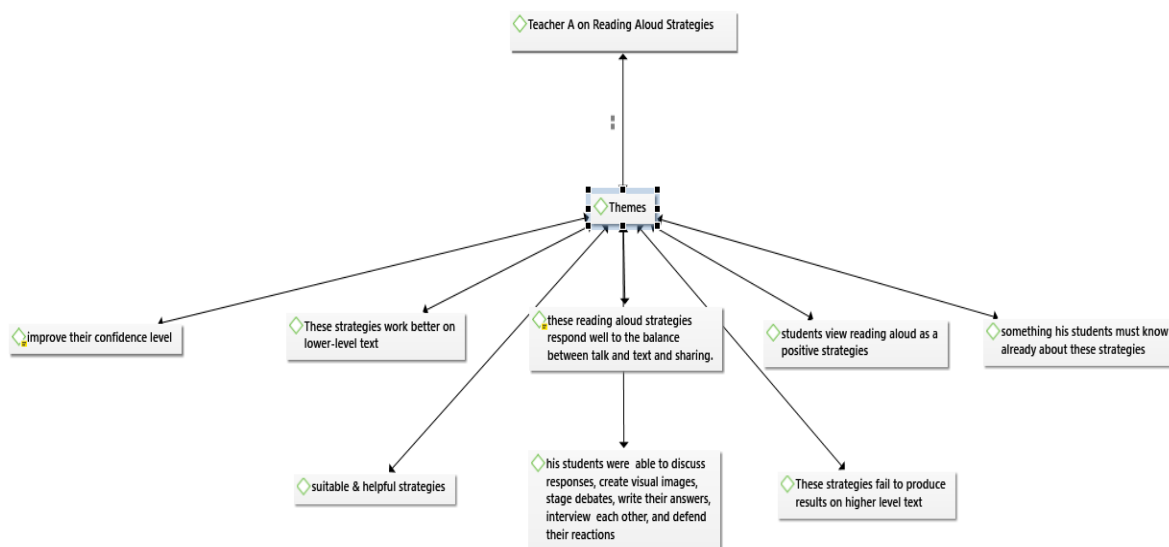
Figure 2. Themes of Teacher A's Opinion on Reading Aloud Strategies.

Figure 3 is the ATLAS ti 8 output for semantic links among concepts explained by teacher B, which shows different categories of themes regarding text and proficiency. As far as these hyperlinks are concerned, he stated that RAS improved reading proficiency because it stimulated students' ability to comprehend text but not with final chapters where the text difficulty level was higher. Here teacher B confirmed that his students have text-level difficulties. He further reported that data questions are very easy for them, and most of them efficiently did the logical questions given in the lower-level text. Even though the current language ability for text comprehension was low, yet these strategies helped them to understand the literal meaning of what the text says. He further maintained that to infer meaning from what was read to help comprehend text was a slightly problematic task for them. Thus far, he conceded that these strategies if applied to difficult texts affect students' reading comprehension skills. In addition, he insisted that its usability for higher-level text was not as good as for lower-level text. He further gave an example of data questions were easy, but logical questions were easy to answer for his students in the lower level text but when they face these questions in the higher-level text, they failed to comprehend meaning from the difficult text.
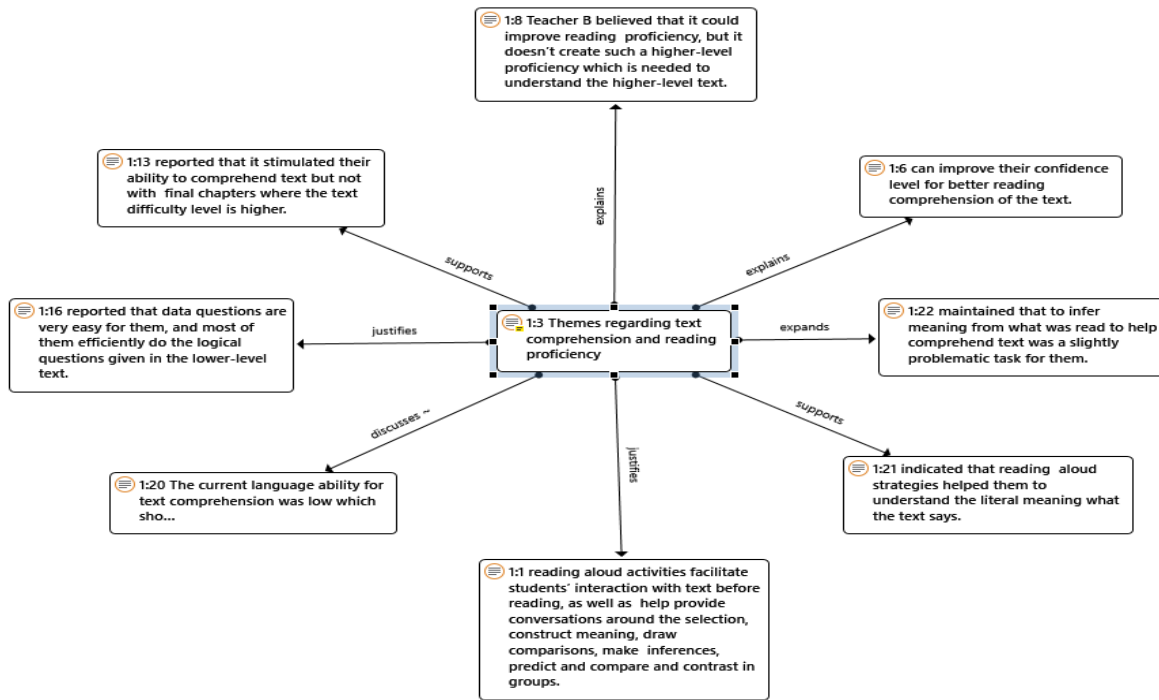
Figure 3. Themes of Teacher B's Opinion on Text and Proficiency.

Another significant aspect of the thematic point of view was the perception of both the teachers regarding the effectiveness of reading aloud strategies on reading comprehension skills. As shown in Figure 4, semantic links of themes for the perceptions of both the teachers clearly show that they believed these reading aloud strategies help to provide conversations around the selection and construction of meaning from the text. On the other hand, these strategies also made the students able to practice questioning, predicting, connecting ideas and drawing a conclusion. Both the teachers also strongly believed that these reading aloud strategies improved the reading comprehension skills of their students. In addition, RAS also affects students' thinking process, helping them during reading listening and pronunciation skills. What further stands out in the figure above is stimulating students' abilities to comprehend text, interpreting figurative language, make them able to discuss, improvement in their reading proficiency and these strategies were also more stimulating them for reading skills.
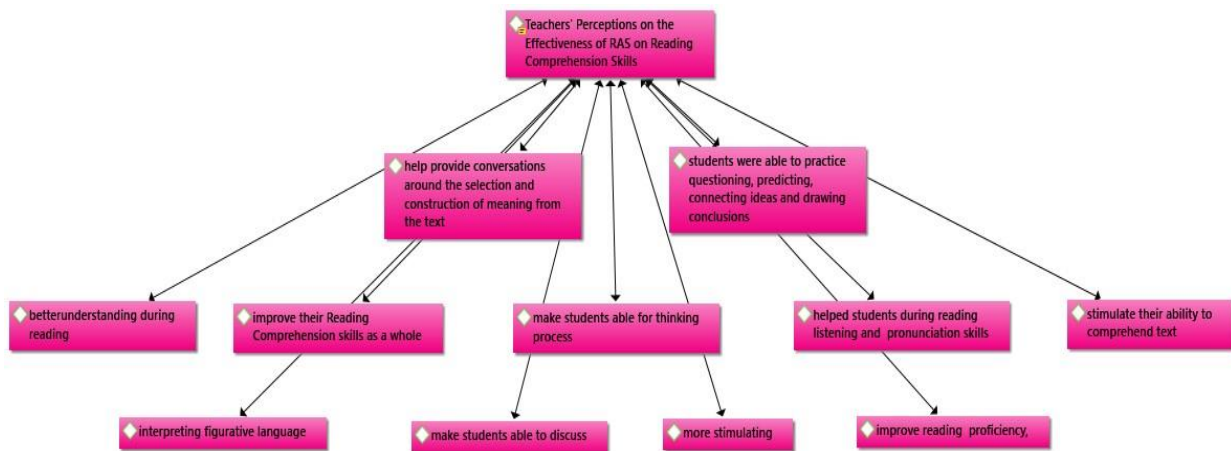

Figure 4. Teachers' Perceptions on the Effectiveness of RAS on Reading Comprehension Skills.

DISCUSSION

In this pilot study, the researcher explored whether reading aloud strategies improve reading text. Findings are like those found by (Al-Nafisah, 2011) who indicated that RAS developed students' reading text comprehension even if it is at a higher level. The gain in reading text comprehension was shown through the instrument which was used to collect data. Here the first objective of this study was met which to know the impact of reading aloud strategies on text level difficulties. As per experimental results of this study, the researcher found that RAS had a good effect on reducing text level difficulties with the learning material because the experimental group showed the better result (Eason, Goldberg, Young, Geist, & Cutting, 2012). The students were able to understand the difficult text and its meaning. They not only found the answers to the data questions but also answer the inferential questions. The most difficult information in the text which needed their critical thinking skill was easy for them to trace in the reading passages (Huang, Chern, & Lin, 2009; Kim & Wagner, 2015). Moreover, the students figured out the meaning of the paragraphs by understanding new vocabulary by using these strategies. This is like findings of (Eason et al., 2012; Sajid, 2015; Trabasso & Bouchard, 2002).

On the other hand, the interviews revealed that RAS had less impact on higher level text difficulties the students had with the learning material. However; 80% of students ticked it as an effective strategy for low proficient students during the survey. Further, maximum said yes during an interview for the same. So, this was the vital reading strategy which was badly needed for the students to improve their reading proficiency (Mokhtari & Reichard, 2004). Many of the students 80% ticked that RAS was effective for reading comprehension as a skill. During interviews, the teachers also recommended this strategy to improve Saudi students reading comprehension skills (Al-jarf, 2007). It is similar to Qanwal and Karim (2014) findings that RAS help struggling students to build comprehension skills by reasoning, background knowledge, fluency, attention, and ability to process information. Both the teachers agreed that the impact of reading aloud strategies on reading comprehension skills of low proficient Saudi students was effective. Findings of their interviews are the same as (Lei, Rhinehart, Howard, & Cho, 2010; Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko, & Hurwitz, 1999) expressed RAS a successful approach to helping students improve their literacy, helping students build reading comprehension skills. Findings also reveal that students' inferences they had through their predictions help them to understand the thinking of multiple-choice answers in the reading passage without failing to give correct answers regarding a logical question. Here students used RAS for evaluations at the highest text level of Bloom's taxonomy which were obvious from their preferences about whatever they encountered in the reading passages where they read, thought and synthesize themselves to a certain decision during and after reading (Bloomfield, 2012; Greene, 2001). All in all, this pilot study provided a clearer picture while meeting its objectives and the necessary amendment was made for the instruments before the final study.

CONCLUSION

Reading comprehension can be improved by reading aloud strategies. Research has shown that this strategy if used very well by the expert teachers is the only single most important and vital one can improve not only reading proficiency but also text understanding for improving reading comprehension skills. The researcher examined the effectiveness of RAS with low proficient Saudi students to know the impact of reading aloud strategies on text level difficulties and their reading comprehension skills. Researchers have demonstrated that these strategies are an effective way for low proficient readers' reading comprehension skills. These strategies were very effective with low proficient Saudi students who enter at the university level for foundations courses. These strategies offered to these students were excellent and performed very well for improving their reading comprehension skills. The present research proved if reading aloud delivered effectively, provides an opportunity for deeper reading comprehension skills. This builds on and results in reading proficiency. Successful reading aloud actively engages students in literacy and teach students to use these strategies in order to understand complex text information. Mainly, the pilot study data received after the findings of this study was for the improvement of the research instruments. Indeed, it was used to improve the validity and reliability of them in this

research. In the light of the outcomes and discussion, forthcoming research can fetch greater picture with more numbers of partakers with the expectations of better understanding they experience on the practice of reading aloud strategies.

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