Improving University Students' Comprehension of English Literary Texts: A Digital Dive

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Abstract

Improving university students' reading comprehension in English literary texts is a crucial aspect of their academic development. By implementing innovative strategies, educators can enhance students' ability to understand and analyze complex literary works. Apart from traditional methods, incorporating creative ones, especially computer technology-base methods such as multimedia presentations and software in the classroom can make learning process more dynamic and enjoyable for students. These approaches not only help the students grasp the nuances of English literature but also foster a deeper appreciation for the subject matter. Further, through these efforts, students can develop the necessary skills to navigate and interpret English literary texts with confidence and proficiency. Having understood this fact, the researcher of this study develops a student-friendly digital tool, called 'Reading Comprehension Skiller' to enhance the university students' comprehension of English literary texts. This research was descriptive and qualitative; and twenty students from first year in Language Department at Eastern University, Sri Lanka (EUSL) were the participants, who underwent a traditional pretest and an innovative post-test (i.e. with the developed tool). Analysing the result of both tests, a high progress was observed in the post test than the pre-test. Thus, the study concludes that the students at EUSL can become more proficient and insightful readers to greater extent by demonstrating the potential of digital technologies than using the traditional reading practices. Further, this innovative approach not only makes the students get benefitted academically but also cultivates a lifelong love for literature and learning.

Keywords: comprehension, literary text, pretest, post-test, digital tool, EUSL