

Storytelling as a Reading Comprehension Instructional Strategy

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Abstract

This is part of a dissertation work that aims to investigate the impact of storytelling as a reading comprehension instructional strategy. The author used a pretest-post test control group quasi experimental design to evaluate the impact of the use of storytelling as a reading comprehension instructional tool. The study was conducted on fourth graders in Ethiopia, English as a foreign language context where there is pervasive oral language tradition. Eleven stories, eight of which are translated versions of folktales widely known in the research area and the rest three from out of the area, were used in storytelling sessions that lasted for twelve weeks. Independent samples t-test and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) have been used as statistical tools to explore change in the reading comprehension mean scores. The ANCOVA has been employed after discovering the fact that the t-test fails to show a significant change. The findings favor the implementation of storytelling as a reading comprehension instructional tool with a significant mean difference after the impact of the pre-test has been controlled.

Keywords: *Storytelling, reading comprehension, reading instructional strategy, schema theory, dual coding theory*

Introduction

Information is transmitted in different ways until the invention of alphabets, codes that represent the sound of languages before 1700 BCE (Crabben, 2011). These codes help humans to preserve knowledge and transmit that knowledge across border and generation. These codes also demand humans to learn and use them for message transfer. The issue of communication using codes calls for a meaningful competence on the proper understanding of the messages carried in those codes - reading.

Reading is not merely enunciating letter codes, but also comprehending or extracting some message out of the codes. If students can read the words of a text and do not understand what they are reading, then they are not really reading (McIntyre, Hulan and Layne, 2011). The authors also said this comprehension relies on inside and outside variables. The variables are the reader, the activity of reading, and the text. This study is interested on the last two variables i.e. the use of storytelling, and stories.

In our modern world where print appears to lead formal communication medium, reading stands out as a crucial language skill. Reading is an important, if not the most important, knowledge gathering tool in the realm of academia. Cummins (2011) contended that the need for literacy engagement, reading in focus, is justified both logically and empirically. He said what is logical is the fact that academic language is found in print than in conversational language, and it is empirically supported by the huge publication of different researches done over the past 30 years.

This research intended to see if L2 storytelling as a reading instructional strategy positively impacts the achievement of this very important language skill, i.e. reading. The use of storytelling as a language teaching tool has been considered very important for some, but as many proponents claim it hasn't ap-

pear to be given due attention. What is more, the attention it gets in Ethiopia, foreign language context, where this research is undertaken, is scanty.

The approach which is believed to create a bridge between aural and reading skills considers multimodal oral input as its fundamental tool in teaching reading. Nessel & Dixon (2008, p. 20) warned a frustrating result both on the part of the teacher and the learners if reading instruction is solely introduced. They said there should be an exposure to the spoken language for the reading instruction to give fruit. The oral exposure may help students to “recognize in print many of the words they know orally and use what they know about English syntax to predict upcoming words in written texts with considerable accuracy.”

Many have supported this strategy as old but good. Nessel (1985) stated nothing equals listening to entrancing story without a book as a source. Huang (2006) emphasized on storytelling over story reading by considering the former as having additional features over the latter. Within the storytelling, there is another equally important thing, the story text. Haven and Ducey (2007, p. 7) reflect their belief as “Perhaps we respond so positively and powerfully to storytelling because we are genetically predisposed to favor the form.”

Assuming that oral language input helps in progressing reading comprehension ability of students, the intent to examine the effect of storytelling as an oral input form is primarily justified in this research context from two different perspectives. Firstly, though it is assumed that oral language exposure helps in reading comprehension, the chance of getting a natural English language oral discourse in Ethiopia, this research context, is near to zero. Thus, enriching a classroom with an oral input full of expression and accompanied by various non-verbal cues could help to bring the desired result in learning the English language in general and reading comprehension.

Secondly, the fact that the country Ethiopia and the region this research is to be undertaken, Amhara region, have a well founded oral tradition, which is yet to enjoy dominance, making a use of the oral input as yeast to activate understanding the written form appears very sound. Therefore, it is believed that storytelling could be found important in helping learners alleviate their reading comprehension deficiency.

This research focuses on fourth graders. There are reasons for choosing grade four students as the interest of this study. The first and the prominent one is the fact that this grade students are expected to be at a certain level of comprehension. According to the MLC (minimum level competency) students are expected to achieve, students by the end of grade three are expected to have an ability of reading fluently and understanding what they have read. This level set by the MoE (Ministry of education Ethiopia) highlights an expectation of reading comprehension beginning grade three and hence grade four students are presupposed to have the readiness and potential to change on that specific dimension.

The other reason which seems to obligate early grade as an appropriate reading comprehension intervention period is related to the long academic journey awaiting students'. Learning to read should be accomplished before reading to learn. In this regard, Crévola and Hill (2001, p. 7) argue, “Children who successfully learn to read in the early primary years of school are well prepared to read for learning and for pleasure in the years to come. Conversely, they added those whose reading ability is poor in the early grades will struggle academically and will have poor self-esteem and will eventually be forced to withdraw.

In line with this, Gambrell (1996) considered elementary schooling period as the most important age of education for a child to gain motivational energy to become a ‘life-long reader’. There will be a chance of great success in learning a second/foreign language when this learning is made in early ages (Crosse, 2007; Genesee, 2014; Isbell, Sobol, Lindauer & Lowrance, 2004; McIntyre, Hulan & Layne, 2011). Crosse (2007:5) agrees “A good foundation for learning English as an additional language is embedded in quality early years practice.”

The third reason for a focus on younger learners is related to affective variables. Learners who are young are usually ready to take risks if there is reinforcement from the scaffolding process as compared to older ones. Crosse (2007) argues younger children are less repressed than older children to engage. She added once these young learners feel there is a warm situation, they will involve entirely in the process of learning and benefit to attain the language skills.

Above all, storytelling as an oral input form appears to work for young learners, not a disregard of its impact on adults. Researchers like Tierney & Dobson (1995), Jong & Vandor Leij (2002) and others en-

dorsed aural inputs as effective instructional strategies for young language learners. For example, Jong & Vanoder Leij (2002) indicate that listening comprehension impacts reading comprehension of students from first grade through third grade. Haven (2007) also conclusively regards listening to stories as a way to enhance reading comprehension.

Theoretical framework

This research has laid its theoretical conception on two well established theories and one widely recognized body of knowledge which hasn't yet been framed in a theory form. These are dual coding theory, schema theory and the telling of stories. Here under is a short recount of these bodies of knowledge that have framed the instructional procedures of this interventional study.

The telling of stories

This topic presupposes two important things: the story text and its telling. As much has been dealt in the introduction part, there is relationship between oral language input and reading comprehension as an output. The natural language learning process in native language literacy is a good justification for the underlying importance of oral language. First language learners can learn to read and write after the learners have enough oral exposure of the language. The oral storytelling aspect in the current research context seemed more like a natural language learning situation as the storyteller employs as much sensory aides as possible to help the learners in the comprehension process of a print text. This makes the process of the learning much easy and productive. Thus, it is with the assumption of the role of the oral input that storytelling is implemented in this study.

Equally important is the issue of affective filter hypothesis of Krashen vis-à-vis the implementation of the storytelling strategy. As researches supported, storytelling lessens students fear as they will be overwhelmed by participating in a captivating story being narrated. This, therefore, is believed to contribute to a reading performance improvement in this study.

The other major thing potentially signaling success in reading comprehension could be related to type of texts employed for the telling, the use of stories. These text types are unique in their own; they can be a source of motivation and emotional engagement for the reading process. Stories are motivating and fun and develop positive attitudes and help children to keep on learning (Gomez, 2010). Hence the fact that texts are literary/stories is assumed to reinforce reading success.

Finally, the pedagogical benefit of storytelling offers learners' is related to learning style. Storytelling provides an opportunity for students to enjoy a wide range of sensory input (Fitzgibbon & Wilhelm, 1998). Students with visual, auditory, or kinesthetic learning styles enjoy storytelling sessions as the telling incorporates tools to address any of the senses referred. Therefore, it can be said that the telling of the story text aided with varied sensory aids helps to bring students' imaginative engagement. The sensory conscious aspect of storytelling can be taken as a theoretical bases storytelling brought success in reading comprehension. The provision of varied sensory aides is with the purpose addressing students with different sensory styles.

Schema theory

This theory is one of the research frameworks that are sought to play a role in implementing the storytelling strategy to improve reading comprehension in the current research. The theory assumes that a text per se doesn't bear meaning; rather it is what the reader carries- "the information, knowledge, emotion, experience and culture" to reading the text (Anderson, 1984). This is in fact the tenet of top-down processing.

Schema theory is considered as a reading comprehension theory though it broadly tries to explain how cognition works- how we structure, store and retrieve knowledge (Al-Issa, 2006). This theory has largely been accepted by many scholars- "a pedestrian knowledge as put by Myers (n.d.)". According to schema theory, a reader's schema, structured knowledge about the universe, entails a foundation for learning, understanding and reciting concepts in different texts, stories or otherwise (Andrs on, 1984). Anderson added, according to this theory, comprehension is possible when the reader can bring schema that pro-

vides information on the objects and events in the text read. A reader who falls short of a schema that will agree with the form and content of texts being read fails to make meaning (Schumm, 2006). This conception necessitate the inclusion of pre-reading activities that aim at activating learners related knowledge about the story to be storytold and read.

Dual coding theory model (DCT)

This theory was initially designed to understand the process of cognition like schema theories; of course later on, it has been used to explain reading comprehension. The theory emphasizes on verbal and non-verbal processes. DCT assumes that everything represented in memory has two aspects: linguistic and non-linguistic from. These two different codes follow two different processing unites - one for language and another for imagery of objects and events (Sadoski and Paivio, 2001).

The basic representational units in the verbal system are called logogens, alternatively called verbal representations, verbal encodings, mental language, or inner speech. Analogously, the basic representational units of the nonverbal system are called imagens which are alternatively called nonverbal representations, nonverbal encodings, metal imagens, or imagery (Sadoski and Paivio, 2001, p. 37). Sadoski and Paivio state that the terms logogens and imagens take their origin from Greek and are compound word forms. Logo means speech or discourse; imago stands for imitation, copy or image and gen means something which generates. So, the two terms are understood as generators of language and image respectively.

Emphasizing the imagery, Sadoski and Paivio (2004) argue that reading comprehension models that overlook the contribution of no-verbal information to comprehension failed to give a full picture of the reading process. They emphasized the dual code (verbal/linguistic and non-verbal/imagery) application in comprehension process. The use of nonverbal language in the process of telling the story has its theoretical backing from the dual coding theory.

Research questions

1. Is there a significant difference between the reading comprehension scores of the experimental and control groups before the intervention?
2. Is there a significant difference between the reading comprehension scores of the experimental and control groups after the intervention?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference between the post test score of experimental and control groups by controlling the pre-test?

Methods

Participants

The participants of this study are grade four students in a governmental primary school which is located in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia. All students (N= 65) in their two intact groups have been the participants of the study. The assignment of the groups as control and experimental was random. The experimental group was three students more than the comparison group. Many of the students are from low economic class. The school provides a loaf of bread with a cup of milk for some impoverished students.

Data collection

The data are collected using two tests which are administered in three days interval. Both tests include fifteen items and each item counts one mark. A pretest score is therefore a sum of the two tests which is calculated out of a total thirty marks. The tests are used for a similar research purpose for the same level of students, and validity in this research context has further been checked by two well experienced elementary level English language teachers and other two TEFL experts for the pilot test of the study. The pilot test has been used to check the reliability of each item. Data gained from the experts and the reliability test has guided the modification of the tests for the main study.

Data analysis

The data were analyzed quantitatively using SPSS, version 21. Descriptive statistics (Mean scores, standard deviations), and parametric tests, T-test and ANCOVA, have been used to see if there happened a statistically significant change on reading comprehension performance due to the intervention. All assumptions to each test have been found tenable and reported before computation.

Intervention procedures

The storytelling interventional instructional strategy has been conducted by one veteran teacher who has taught for more than 25 years. She is a female teacher who teaches English in the same school. The use of the already available human resource is to implicate on the practicality of the strategy; otherwise, a better result could have been achieved with a better trained storyteller teacher. The whole intervention period has consumed eleven stories. These stories were used as teaching materials both for the comparison and experimental groups. The overall procedure has three parts: pre-reading (pre-teaching of difficult vocabularies and discussion of two to four story related questions which aim at motivating the thought process for the story to be read); while reading (this is the interventional phase where the two groups are treated differently) and the post reading activity (focused much on working on some comprehension questions from the stories).

In the control group, at the while reading stage, the teacher first reads the story twice. Then she lets students to read it silently and finally students take turns to read aloud a paragraph or few lines to the class until the whole story is over. In the experimental group, the teacher storytells two-three times, but after the first telling she invites any interested student to retell the story in English or Amharic, students first language. In the second telling, she invites only those who would like to retell in English. If the teacher feels that students need more telling to understand the story, she tells it for the third time. What is crucial in storytelling is it is performed with full expression, both facial and body movement, and vocalization to help students in the comprehension of the story.

Ethical considerations

There are three principles of ethics as highlighted in Marczyk, Dematteo & Festinger (2005) and Vanderstoep & Johnston (2009). These scholars posit that the principles are originated from the Belmont Report (1979). The principles: respect for persons, beneficence, and justice, were carefully considered during the study. To its effect, a consent paper was prepared and then approved by supervisors. Later it was signed by both the participants and their parents/guardians. Guardians signed for fear of age being a factor to diminish participant autonomy. Marczyk et al (2005) consult that all participants are seen equally, so grouping into experimental and control group was done on random basis. Moreover, as Vanderstoep & Johnston (2009) suggest all sources are duly acknowledged and hence there is no intent of plagiarism.

Results

The need for computing the statistical mean difference, if any, between the control and experimental groups before the intervention is required because there is a need to minimize the impact of previous performance difference on the result of the post test. The quasi-experimental nature of this research somehow may increase the risk of having groups with unequal performance before the intervention. If statistically similar standings between the two to be compared groups is not assumed or assured, such situation may potentially be a factor to affect findings as the difference in performance may be as a result of this confounding variable (Hinton et al., 2004, p.106). This is why checking the presence or absence of statistically significant difference between the means of the two groups before the intervention using independent samples t-test is crucial. Of course, ANCOVA, which computes the mean significant difference through controlling the impact of the pretest scores, will later be computed for a more robust finding. In this section the findings of the study are presented along with the research questions raised in this study.

Reading comprehension scores before intervention

As table 1 presents, control group was associated with a reading comprehension score of $M= 12.58$ ($SD=3.85$). By comparison, the experimental group was associated with larger reading comprehension score of $M= 12.71$ ($SD=4.33$). To test the hypothesis that there is no statistically significant difference between the control and experimental groups in reading comprehension before intervention despite the numerical variation, an independent samples t-test was computed.

Table 1: *Group Statistics of the pretest scores*

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Score before the intervention	Control	31	12.58	3.845	.691
	treatment	34	12.71	4.331	.743

The control group and the experimental groups are normal enough to be able to run this parametric test as the P values of the Shapiro- Wilk test for the two groups are 0.48 and 0.1. In addition the assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and found tenable based on leven's test at $f(63)=0.12$, $P=0.26$.

The independent samples t-test was then computed to examine if the already explored mean difference between the groups before intervention was significant or happened due to chance. As can be observed from table 2, the control group was associated with a statistically non-significant difference in reading comprehension at, $t(63) = 0.12$, $P=0.9$. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted, and it is suggested that the two groups have no difference in their reading comprehension performance before the intervention.

Table 2: *Independent Samples Test of the pretest scores*

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
						Lower	Upper	
Score before the intervention	Equal variances assumed	-1.23	63	.903	-.125	1.020	-2.163	1.913

Reading comprehension scores after intervention

The post-test provides with a different score of data set and hence both groups of data shall be checked for the normality and homogeneity assumptions. Post test scores of both the control and experimental groups are just enough to be taken normal to run independent samples t-test as the p-values of Shapri- Wilk test for the two groups are 0.85 and 0.06 respectively. Additionally, Levene's test has been computed to examine homogeneity of variances at $f(63) = 1.71$, $P=0.06$ showing scores not significantly varied amongst the population. Therefore, the data set has fulfilled the second assumption as well.

The first output displayed is group statistics, and we can see mean and standard deviations in this table below.

Table 3: *Group Statistics of the posttest scores*

	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Score after the intervention	Control	31	13.77	4.731	.850
	treatment	34	15.79	4.779	.820

From table 3, it is observed that the experimental group has a numerically greater mean score than the control group, the difference being 2.02 which is greater than the numerical mean difference of the pretest scores of the two groups. Thus, what is left important is to see if this numerical difference is statistically

significant. Independent samples t-test is one of the tests that helps to show the statistical level of significance of this change.

Table 4 presents the independent samples t-test output for the post test. The comparison group (N=31) had a mean score of M=13.77 (SD=4.73). By comparison, the treatment group (N=34) had a mean score of 15.79 (SD= 4078).

Table 4: *Independent Samples Test on post intervention scores*

		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	(2- Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
Score after the intervention	Equal variances assumed	-1.710	63	.092	-2.020	1.181	-4.38	.340

To test the hypothesis that the comparison and treatment groups were not having a statistically significant mean difference, independent samples t-test was computed. As can be seen from table 4, the test was associated with a non-significant effect, $t(63) = 1.71$, $P=0.092$. From the result of this test, we can reject the null hypothesis, so it can be said that the two groups are not different in terms of their reading performance even after the intervention.

Reading comprehension scores after intervention by controlling the pretest

The non-significant result on the independent samples t test on the post-intervention results made computation of a more robust statistical tool essential. ANCOVA came in to effect due to this. ANCOVA is a robust computational tool computed to see changes in mean scores by controlling the impact of the pretest. There are a couple of assumptions to check before running ANCOVA. The first assumption is the pretest scores shall not be statistically different across the independent variables. The result accepts the hypothesis that there is no significant change on scores between the control and treatment on the pretest at $t(63) = 0.12$, $P=0.91$. The second assumption is homogeneity of regression. A P-value of .66 is non-significant, so the null hypothesis can be accepted, and homogeneity of regression assumption is met. ANCOVA is presented using table 5 below.

Table 5: *Tests of Between-Subjects Effects*

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	1064.565 ^a	2	532.282	77.364	.000	.714
Intercept	38.557	1	38.557	5.604	.021	.083
Pretest	998.404	1	998.404	145.112	.000	.701
Group	58.433	1	58.433	8.493	.005	.120
Error	426.574	62	6.880			
Total	15788.000	65				
Corrected Total	1491.138	64				

a. R Squared = .714 (Adjusted R Squared = .705)

From table 5 above, the figure of importance is the P-value of the group which informs if the groups mean difference is statistically significant. $P < 0.05$, so we reject the null hypothesis that there is no mean score difference between the comparison and treatment groups when the pretest scores are controlled. Therefore, based on the result of the ANCOVA, it can be said that the intervention has brought a meaningful difference in students' reading comprehension when the impact of the pretest scores is controlled.

Discussion

As it has been highlighted before, the main intent of this research was to examine if the use of storytelling improves young fourth graders reading comprehension achievement. The major finding of the study was reflected through a statistical tool called ANCOVA. In addition to this, comprehension means score comparisons between the two groups, the comparison and the experimental, was executed for both the pretest and post test scores. The difference between the means of the pretest of the two to be compared groups was needed to see if the groups' performance is different before treatment. To preclude the fear of pre-intervention performance difference between the two groups, on post test score differences, a statistical tool which controls the pretest scores, ANCOVA was applied.

From the finding, it can be said that the treatment group which, at the initial stage of the intervention, has a similar standing in reading comprehension performance with comparison group, made a significantly better achievement on the post test as it is validated by the result of the ANCOVA. Therefore, despite the storyteller's performance, the use of storytelling as a reading comprehension instructional tool by a classroom teacher, has an encouraging output.

The result of this study is similar to many others just enough to be able to awaken teachers and researchers to give attention to using storytelling as a second/foreign language teaching strategy especially as a reading instructional tool. Yet, all that have been surveyed in this research are in a way different. Huang (2006), for example, did an experimental study on sixth graders having three groups based on instructional material and strategy usage as - text only, text with illustration and text- illustration with storytelling. Huang suggested considering storytelling in teaching reading. Although the comparison groups are different, a difference may be due to customary/traditional instructional methods usage difference between the two research contexts, Huang (2006) and this study mirror storytelling important.

Similarly, Kowsary & Rouhari (2013) compared storytelling and a traditional instructional strategy that focused on silent individual reading on elementary level in an L2 context. The finding indicated storytelling as a better tool to improve reading comprehension. This study resembles the current study in relation to the traditional instruction employed and on its attention to folk literature.

As the fourth graders in this research context are at their early stages of learning English language, the finding seems to be a showcase for what Bransford, Brown and Cocking (2000) suggested. They recommend the use of storytelling at early stages of language learning since different parts of the brain that work for a successful language attainment are electrified with an oral language practice which is made possible with storytelling. In a similar vein, Tierney and Dobson (1995, p. 1) noted the prominence of oral input in the form of storytelling in the early stages of language learning, a support to the finding of this study.

Isbell, et al (2004) on the other hand compared the reading comprehension performance of young learners (aged 3-5) who were read to and told. Their result has shown that students who received both ways of instruction using twenty-four stories showed an improved reading comprehension. However, when the effect of the aforementioned strategies on students' comprehension is measured, those who had the storytelling intervention depict a better improvement on their score than their counter part students who were read to. This study speaks the same with the current study in terms of some similarities on the strategies used for the two groups of the study participants and the finding.

Unlike the above few research findings that surface the prominence of storytelling, there are some that have not reported significance of storytelling over other teaching strategies with respect to reading comprehension. Güler (2013), for example, reported a non-significant result in reading comprehension performance after employing storytelling (read aloud) and silent reading strategies. However, Güler (ibid) used qualitative data to claim an important finding that revealed students' appeal to storytelling justifying the strategy as interactive and enjoyable.

Moon and Maeng (2012) also compared storytelling and storysinging as reading comprehension strategies on elementary school students. The finding didn't show any significant difference in reading comprehension achievement between the two groups that used the two strategies. However, the storytelling group has shown a significant improvement; also, both groups of students have reported positive attitude towards learning the language with motivation and ease.

Conclusion

To conclude, storytelling as a form of oral input, as Zouganeli and Donaldson (1982); Droop & Verhoeven (1998) and Davies (2007) contend, shall take a place in a foreign language classroom as it may help create a near natural language learning situation. In the current research context, where only little (if any) is tried, the implementation of the strategy may bring a profound result due to the rich foundation of oral language practice in L1. Also, it seems plausible, in this research, to claim storytelling as an important strategy to help compensate foreign language learners (like Ethiopian students) lack of oral language exposure in a natural setting i.e. at home, in the cafe, religious places, in the market, at school, etc.

The strategy employed in this research has intertwined stories and their telling. Both in isolation are new introductions in the target classrooms in this research as stories in the basal textbooks are not related to folktales widely known in the study area. Therefore, the use of stories that are related to or being translated from stories in the oral tradition of the target population per se is believed to facilitate comprehension. This is partly revealed from the significant change on reading comprehension score in the control group. The researcher believes the use of stories translated from the oral tradition shall be given special attention for future studies in an L2 context as it has simple and familiar form (Dujmovic, škola & Pula, 2006; Greaser et al, 1996) creates a relaxed environment (Onu, 2013; Aiex, 1988) that invites imagination. Subsequently, it makes the input comprehensible that entails reading comprehension.

The implementation of the storytelling strategy seems more promising in the early grades as many of the studies reviewed and the current study show a positive result in terms of using storytelling with young second or foreign language learners. Although there are studies that reveal encouraging results in using storytelling with high schoolers or above and even in work places, this study suggests storytelling as an important instrument for primary level learners and particularly for fourth and fifth graders of the research context. First, for this study shows positive findings and second, for the age of the students is arguably believed a fertile stage for best result in learning language, particularly reading comprehension.

Finally, cognizant of the fact that storytelling is a strategy that invites students of various sensory styles and different proficiency levels, its use as an instructional strategy by a well trained and capable classroom teacher in an L2 context seems to have a future waiting for. As it is evident from the findings of this study and others that are used here as comparison, storytelling could serve as a preferred reading instructional tool if not for a better achievement on comprehension, for a better attitude to and motivation for learning second or foreign language, particularly reading.

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