

## The effect of hot seat strategy on the 1<sup>st</sup> intermediate students' Reading comprehension

Salih, Omar Abid<sup>1</sup>, General Directorate of Education, Anbar, and 61004, Iraq, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0134-4676>

### Suggested Citation:

Abid, O, S., (2020). The effect of hot seat strategy on the 1st intermediate students' Reading comprehension. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Science*. 15(5), 1089-1098, <https://doi.org/10.18844/cjes.v15i5.5153>

Received from 29 March 2020; revised from 08 August 2020; accepted from October 18, 2020.

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### Abstract

This study aims to investigate the effect of hot seat (HS) on the reading comprehension (RC) of 1st intermediate students during the academic year 2019-2020. To achieve the purpose of the study, it is hypothesized that there is no difference between the students' mean of the experimental group which is exposed to HS and that of control group which is not exposed to HS. The experiment has lasted for three weeks and the researcher has taught the two groups by himself. The researcher has used experimental design and chosen randomly a sample consisted of (63) students distributed into two groups. The experimental group as well as the control group are given a pre-test before beginning the experiment to measure the students' RC. The same test is given again at the end of the experiment in order to check whether the students' have been improved or not. The data has been collected and analyzed by using t-test for two independent samples. The results have showed that there was significant improvement in favour of the experimental group. Finally, some points can be concluded such as the importance of HS in teaching EFL because it increases students' motivation and makes the lesson more enjoyable and effective. In the light of the findings, some recommendations were put forward.

Keywords: Hot Seat, 1<sup>st</sup> intermediate Students, Reading Comprehension, EFL

<sup>1</sup>\* ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: Salih, Omar Abid, General Directorate of Education in Anbar, Iraq / Anbar 00964 Iraq.  
E-mail address: [omarabidsalih80@gmail.com](mailto:omarabidsalih80@gmail.com) / Tel.: 009647810744065

## 1. Introduction

According to Al-Marsumi (1988) reading is one of the language skills that involves two basic interrelated skills: reading speed and reading comprehension. So, RS when studied should be related to RC. Al-Zubaidi (2004) summarizes the relation between reading and other language skills stating that Reading unifies the related language arts of the writing, listening and speaking. What is written is read and what is read is discussed. Therefore, reading integrates and affects the nature and quality of oral and written language. Being able to read a foreign text as fast as the native one with the same degree of comprehension is still something difficult for Iraqi learners. Teachers and supervisors often complain of the standard of Iraqi English language learners in reading. They often say that those learners are word-by-word readers and claim that their level of achievement in RC is low (Sayhood, 1989). As a result, new methods and techniques should be used to overcome this problem. One of these novelty strategies which is adopted in this study is using HS. It plays a great role in overcoming the routine tasks followed academically in teaching reading skill (Johnson, 2004). According to Davies (2001) HS can help EFL students develop speaking, reading and writing skills. Students need more opportunity to practice English and use it inside and outside the classroom. It means that pair group work activities can provide students with opportunity to share information and build a sense of community. Wagner (1998) affirms that, Strategies are the everyday tools of the drama teacher. They help to develop enquiry skills, to encourage negotiation, understanding and creativity. Dillion (1988) presents those techniques with regard to comprehension, they are considered pedagogical devices vital for initiating classroom interaction. Moro (2005) states that, Hot Seating is a valuable tool that would aid delivery of the learning goals. It helps let other students know more about character, it creates interest and motivates participation in a class, it encourages students to express their thoughts and check students' preparation and understanding of the material (Borich, 2004). In the present study, the researcher is going to examine the effect of using HS in teaching RC, hoping that it will be beneficial as a new and suitable way of teaching.

### 1.1 Literature Review

It is very important to review previous studies related to applying modern strategies in teaching in order to enable students to get a clear idea about studies carried out in the field, which shed light on major and minor dimensions of the present study. Elnada (2015) aimed at investigating the effectiveness of using Hot Seating strategy on enhancing speaking skills for the student-teachers of English major at Al-Azhar University. The researcher used the quasi experimental approach and the sample of the study was purposely selected from the 4th grade in college of Education at Al-Azhar University. It consisted of (24) female student-teachers who enrolled in the conversation and practicum courses during the academic year 2014-2015. The researcher designed sessions of activities (dialogue, discussion and exchanging creative ideas) related to speaking topics which carefully and purposely chosen to fit for discussions during the course of sessions. These activities were based on Hot Seating strategy which was used in teaching the study group. A speaking test was designed and validated as a pre and post-test. Data was analysed by using Wilcoxon test to check the differences between the performance of the group in the pre and the post-test. The results proved that there were significant differences in the mean between the pre and post speaking test of the groups in favor of the post-test. In the light of those findings, the researcher recommended the necessity of carrying out training courses for teachers to promote the implementation of HS strategy-based teaching towards enhancing students' productive skills. Mohammed and Naji (2019) aims at identifying the effectiveness of using Hot Seat strategy in achieving scientific concepts and developing the curiosity.

The sample of the study has been chosen 6<sup>th</sup> class students from Geel Al-Gad private school in Baghdad during the academic year 2016-2017. It consisted of (44) students to represent the two groups of research. Objective and attainment tests were prepared consisted of (30) items from multiple choice and its apparent validity has been verified by presenting it to experts and specialists and according to the reliability coefficient of the substantive items using the equation of Kuder Richardson 20. Results showed that the mean scores of the experimental group was higher than the control group.

## **1.2 Hot Seat Strategy**

This strategy was presented for the first time by the researcher (Sarah Young) in 2008 when this strategy was characterized by being an interactive strategy in which students practiced speaking, listening and understanding activities. It was called them "Hot Seat" in which each student could sit on in front of the other students in the classroom. They asked him/her questions while the teacher's role was to guide them by giving directions to focus on their questions. Throughout this strategy, students can form many various questions and the teacher corrects the information to them. One of the most important features of this strategy is its role in active learning and teaching. It reinforces skills that lead to interactive teaching in the classroom.

HS strategy has been defined as a verbal drama technique which can be used before or after role plays, short time provocations or short performance. It aims to understand characters' motives, background, feelings, personality and relationships to others (Billikova and Kissova, 2013). Wile (2013) states that, hot sea ting is a vocabulary game that stimulates vocabulary at a rapid rate. Even shy students participate because everyone gets a turn sitting in the HS. Everyone faces the teacher except for the student in the HS. The teacher writes a word on the board and students give clues to the student in the HS in an attempt to get the student to say the word. Kathleen (2007) says that, Hot Sea is an activity where the students' performance as themselves have the opportunity to question or interview a role player who remains in character.

### **1.2.1. The objective of HS Strategy as following:**

- Provide an opportunity for students to formulate and ask questions.
- Developing narration and analysis skills.
- Developing a spirit of cooperation among students.
- Encouraging students to play the roles in an interactive way.
- Encouraging students to practice activities in a manner that takes into consideration the individual differences between them and developing their creative thinking (Wile :2013).

### **1.2.2 Benefits of HS strategy**

Borich (2004) mentions some benefits as follows:

- It helps students know about the character.
- It creates interest and it motivates participation in a classroom.
- It encourages students to express their thoughts to help them clarify their thoughts.
- It helps to evaluate and check students' understanding of the material.

-Sustain attentive listening, responding to what they have heard by relevant comments, questions or actions.

- It changes the atmosphere in the class and it transfers responsibility of learning from teacher to learner.

Moore (2005) argues, "Hot Seating is a valuable tool that will achieve delivery of the learning goals". This is most immediately apparent in communication .

### 1.2.3 The steps of HS strategy

- The seats in the classroom are changed in a circular way and the HS is placed in the center as shown in Figure 1.

- The HS is in the middle and the rest of the students surround it.

- The teacher asks a volunteer student who is distinguished for a specific subject or skill by sitting on a hot chair.

-Students ask questions and the student answers them.

- The questions should not be answered in one word. It is preferable to be open questions.

The teacher can also sit on the hot seat in order to encourage the students to form open questions (Al-Hussein, 2015).



Figure .1 the seats in the classroom changed in a circular way and the HS is placed in the center

### 1.2.4 The HS in small groups

- The teacher divides the students into small groups after preparing the lesson or may divide the lesson into items so that each student is concerned with a specific one.

- A volunteer student from each group sits first on the HS in the middle and the rest surrounds him/her.

- They ask him/her open questions either for the whole lesson or for a specific item.

- They exchange roles with each other with teacher's encouragement.

- The teacher's role is a monitor and guider(ibid).

### 1.2.5 Procedures of using HS strategy in Classes.

HS as any educational drama games can be used in enhancing student-teacher's speaking skills according to four stages: preparation, implementation, evaluation and follow up . This usage has its stages while application inside classrooms which are mentioned by Al-Heela and Ghunaim (2006). These stages can be summarized as follows:

- a) Preparation: In this stage, there are some responsibilities belong to the teachers they are supposed to be done such as material, rules and needed time.
- b) Implementation: Teachers should know the individual differences among the students and maintain the aim of the game toward achieving the objectives of the lesson with some fun. They have to observe their students while implementing the game in order to guide them and keep them safe.
- c) Evaluation: Teachers have discussed the results and showed the benefits of the game. Teachers have to fix and organize the results clearly.
- d) Follow-up: Teachers follow-up students to identify the acquired learning experience and provide them with other activities to enrich their experience.

Teachers' Role in HS strategy. HS as a new strategy requires from teachers to hold some responsibilities. To create active environments and improve students' comprehension, Roskos (1995) mentions the following list of the teacher' roles:

- a) On- Looker: Appreciates ongoing drama, nods and smiles.
- b) Stage Manager: Gathers material, makes props, constructs costume, organizes set, and makes script suggestions.
- c) Co-Player: Assumes role and within the role, mediates dialogue-guides plot, and defines roles and responsibilities of different characters.
- d) Play Leader: Introduces conflict, facilitates dialogue and solves problems.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 The Design of the Study

The quasi-experimental design followed in this study is called control group and "Random Assignment" see table 1. The students in the experimental group have been exposed to the dependent variable (HS) to discover its effect on their reading comprehension while the other students in the control group have not been to the mentioned variable.

**Table 1: the study design:**

Groups	Variables	Post-test
Experimental	by HS strategy	
Control	without HS strategy	

## 2.2 Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study includes all the 1<sup>st</sup> intermediate students/ Morning studies in Al-Habania City that relates to the ministry of Education in Iraq during the academic year 2019-2020. The total number is (1136). In order to achieve the aim of the study, the researcher has randomly selected Al-Majid intermediate school for girls to represent the sample of the study. 1<sup>st</sup> intermediate students have been distributed into four sections (A, B, C and D). Section B has randomly been chosen to be the experimental group which consists of 34 students. Section D has been also chosen randomly to be the control group, which includes 34 students. Thus, the total number of the sample participants is 68 students. Five repeaters in the previous year have been excluded, so the final number is (63) as shown in table 2.

Table2: number of students

School	Groups	Sections	Number of Students	Number of repeaters	Final Number
Al-Majid intermediate school	Experimental	B	34	2	32
	Control	D	34	3	31
		Total	68	5	63

## 2.3 The Study Equipment

The researcher makes use of many tools and aids to achieve the experiment goals in teaching the experimental and control groups like the studying class and certain instructional aides are prepared like the white board, charts, cards, chalk, drawings, a tape recorder, chairs, tables and laptops. There are special aids for the experimental group, which are essential requirements for HS lesson like valuable sources, papers, rewards and dictionaries.

## 2.4 The Instructional Material

The instructional material of the present study consists of two passages A letter from Australia and Different schools. Both of them are taken from the book entitled English for Iraq which is prescribed for teaching the first intermediate students in Iraqi schools.

## 2.5 The Achievement Test

The test items have been constructed in the light of the behavioral objectives of the material. The test consists of (20) items. Objective questions including multiple choice, true and false, fill in the blanks were used in the test.

## 2.6 Test Validity and Reliability

To achieve face validity of the test, it has been given to a jury of experts. The jury are teachers and instructors specialized in TEFL, linguistics, testing and statistics. According to their notes some items are modified and the test is redistributed again until the test has gained its general consensus and it has gained 86 agreement of the total jury members.

The Alpha Cronbach equation is used to measure the test reliability which is (0.84). Thus, it is regarded as a good indicator for the test reliability.

### **2.7 Pilot Administration of the test**

The pilot administration of the test has been conducted on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> of Dec. 2019, after achieving its face validity. The test has been given to 25 students from Al-Bwasil intermediate School for checking its appropriateness and estimating the required time. The results have showed that the test items are clear to the examinees and the needed time to answer is between 35 – 45 minutes. There is no ambiguity found in the items of the instructions of the test.

### **2.8 Discriminating Power and the Level of Difficulty**

After scoring the test items, the students' scores were arranged from high to low. Then, they were divided into two groups. The high group consisted of 15 as well as the low group. In addition, adopting the difficulty equation for each item, it has been founded 4 items appeared so difficult because their difficulty levels were more than 80, whereas 20 items appeared so appropriate in their difficulty levels because they were between % 80- %20.

The results showed that most of the items are of a good power of discriminating because their discrimination levels are more than % 30 except 4 items whose discrimination power are less than %30. Consequently, 6 items are omitted and the rest 20 items are at an acceptable level of difficulty as well as power of discriminating .

### **2.9 The Experiment**

The experiment started on the 1<sup>st</sup>, Sep. 2019. The researcher started teaching the first group (B) by using HS strategy. Device and the second group (D) without using HS strategy, and also in the light of the procedure in each daily plan that was prepared by the researcher himself. The researcher attended all the lessons given to both groups.

The experiment lasted two weeks and was ended on 12<sup>th</sup>, Dec. 2019. Throughout the two weeks, the students were taught the two passages from the prescribed textbook set for the teaching of English and according to the mentioned methods of teaching.

### **2.10 The Final Administration of the test and Scoring Scheme:**

At the end of the first semester and precisely on 5 February 2020, the post achievement test has been conducted to both groups; the experimental and the control groups. Students were told about the date of test three weeks before. The same procedures have been used in conducting the test to avoid any extraneous variables may change the results. The whole tests have been conducted by the researcher with the help of teachers of English language in a comfortable environment. After answering the questions, the researchers collected the test sheets and scored them in order to know students' achievement after applying the experiment. The total mark is forty, which is distributed among the twenty items: two marks for each one. Since all the questions include 20 items, so two mark are given for any correct answer.

## **3. Results**

To investigate the above hypothesis, the researcher has compared the RC of both EG and CG in the post test by using *t*- test for two independent samples to determine whether or not there are any

significant differences between the two groups in this respect. The results have showed below in Table3: the results:

Group	No.	M	SD	Calculated t - Value	Tabulated t - Value
Experimental	32	3.19	0.78	6.667	2
Control	31	2.03	0.56		

#### 4. Discussions

It is obvious from the table above, that the mean score of the experimental group is 3.19 and that of the control group is 2.03. The computed *t*- value 6.667 is higher than the critical *t*- value. Based on this result, the experimental group is better than the control group; so, there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups in the post-test. Therefore, the second null hypothesis is refuted. The results obtained in the present study agree with Elnada (2015) who finds that there were significant differences in the mean scores between the pre and post speaking test of the paired group in favor of the post-test. It is also in agreement with Mohammed and Naji (2019) who showed that the mean scores of the experimental group was higher than the control group . Most of the studies states the importance of HS strategy in enhancing the students' achievement positively and it makes them feel more interesting and enjoyable in classrooms.

#### 5. Conclusion

From the results of the present study, the following conclusions are made:

1. There is a considerable improvement in students' comprehension as a result of HS strategy.
2. HS strategy can be very beneficial in the class if they are used appropriately.
3. HS strategy, as a teaching device, increases students' motivation and helps to make the lesson more enjoyable, more interesting.
4. The students of the experimental group have dealt positively with the suggested instructional strategy (HS).
5. The use of HS strategy creates an alternate pathway to learn a language. It can create a new way for the students to improve their comprehension.

#### 6. Recommendations

Based on the results and conclusions put forward, some recommendations have been drawn. It is hoped that they will be of value to the students and teachers in the field of TEFL. These recommendations are as follows:

1. Syllabus designers and teachers should put emphasis on using HS strategy, not only at a university level but in both primary and secondary schools to enhance students' motivation and confidence in learning the English language.



2. The teacher can give more attention and time to poor readers who are usually in need of special attention, utilizing all available devices and means to improve their comprehension.
3. The teachers also need to concentrate on extensive reading to build up fluency and to get a large amount of vocabulary.
4. An in-service training programme can be administered to Iraqi EFL instructors by using HS strategy.

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