

# The Effect of Pre-reading Activities on Male ESL Upper-Intermediate Students' Comprehension in a Post Basic Education School in Oman?

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## Abstract

The study aimed at investigating the impact of pre-reading activities on male ESL upper-intermediate students' comprehension in a post-basic education school in Oman. To this end, two reading comprehension tests and two questionnaires were administered to two groups of participants. One group served as control and the other served as experimental. Control group were assigned a reading comprehension test with follow up questions to answer. However, experimental participants were introduced to 10 minute-pre-reading activities prior to starting the test. The findings drawn from the comprehension tests revealed that experimental participants outperformed control participants. Data drawn from questionnaires showed that control group had a negative attitude to reading a text without pre-reading activities. However, experimental group had a positive attitude to reading a text after being introduced to the pre-reading activities. Although the study has shown empirically how effective the schema-based pre-reading activities were in maximizing ESL learners' comprehension ability, it had its limitations. It was restricted in setting and gender. It involved only two post-basic state schools. It was also restricted to male students. Second, it was limited to only two sample groups. Nevertheless, the findings of this study have confirmed preceding research on the effectiveness of the pre-reading activities and how they facilitate L2 learners' comprehension ability of the target text. Therefore, it might be paramount for teachers and syllabus designers to incorporate pre-reading activities, which are in different forms and types, to the reading texts students read.

**Keywords:** Pre-reading Activities, Control, Experimental, Schema activation, Prior knowledge

## 1. Introduction

Reading is an everyday activity that we often do either consciously or unconsciously through the decoding of messages that surround us in different forms. However, reading is a complex process involving a variety of skills (Whitehurst and Lonigan, 1998, cited in Kendeou et al., 2005) rather than a simple decoding of messages. Since reading takes a big chunk of our life, and as McDonough et al. (2013) contend that it is one of the most important skills around the world, a particular attention needs to be paid to this skill. Not only this, but there should be a focus on how to help L2 learners achieve better understanding of what they read. This attention has become the target goal of this research as a result of the problems that most ESL learners in Oman face in understanding reading texts. Students' low performance in reading might be due to the conventional approaches teachers have opted in most Omani state schools. Another factor might be the insufficient training that teachers have had in the reading skill. To deal with such a problem, the present study would investigate the effectiveness of the pre-reading activities on male ESL upper-intermediate students' comprehension in a Post-basic Education School in Oman. This research is grounded on the literature of many researchers, such as Tomlinson (2003), Harmer (2007), Hudson (2007) and McDonough (2013), who argue that pre-reading activities are a necessary step toward comprehension. It is conjectured that incorporating what Tomlinson calls readiness activities (2003) would successfully help ESL learners achieve a better understanding of the text content, meaning and form. To see whether this hypothesis is valid or not, two groups of participants took part in the following experiment. Each was assigned a reading comprehension test. The first participants were asked to answer the comprehension questions with no lead-in reading activities. However, the second participants were presented with four pre-reading activities before starting to answer the questions.

Two questionnaires were administered to both participant groups at the end of each reading test where the subjects were asked to give their attitudes regarding their reading test experiences. The purpose of this study is to confirm and validate the following hypothesis: Would male ESL upper-intermediate learners in a Post-basic Education School in Oman be engaged cognitively and effectively with the target language text and get better comprehension of it when pre-reading activities are employed? The empirical results of the study revealed that the pre-reading activities had positive effects on L2 learners' reading comprehension.

## 2. Review of the Related Literature

It has long been assumed by the traditional approaches that meaning exists in the target text to be read. Little or no attention has been given to the meaning that learners bring to the text through their own processing of their background knowledge of the world (Richards and Farrell, 2011) and the knowledge that is already present in that text. Cook argues that 'reading...occurs in a context... [and the] meaning of a text is not found just in the sentences themselves, but is derived from the previous knowledge stored in the reader's mind and the processes through which the reader tackles it' (2008, p. 121).

Wallace (2001), as cited in Tomlinson (2003), and Ajideh (2003) describe traditional reading pedagogy as simply focusing on comprehension in the form of a text followed by a series of

questions to answer. Tomlinson (2003, p. 341-350), on the other hand, provides an overview of three prominent approaches to teaching L2 reading from the 1980s to the 1990s: the Language-based Approach, the Skill/Strategy-based Approach, and the Schema-based Approach. The Language-based approach advocates that learners' understanding of the reading text is achieved only through understanding its vocabulary and grammar, or through what Tomlinson (*ibid*) calls the 'hold in the bottom' pedagogy. This approach contends that learners' acquisition of grammar and lexis would enable them to read fluently, though that might 'not equal comprehension of the textual meaning' (*ibid*, p. 343). The Skill/Strategy-based approach claims that the readers are considered to be active agents who direct their own cognitive resources in reading (*ibid*, p. 347). Lastly, the Schema-based approach has brought major contributions to our knowledge of reading (McDonough et al., 2013, p. 119). According to the proponents of this approach, these schemata allow readers to predict what may happen, and relate texts to their background knowledge of the world (*ibid*).

In order to understand how pre-reading activities facilitate ESL learners' reading comprehension ability in the context of this study, we need to give an overview of how the 'bottom-up', 'top-down', and 'schemata' processes (Tomlinson, 2003; Harmer, 2007; Hudson, 2007; Cook, 2008; McDonough, 2013) interact and operate to foster reading comprehension.

A great deal of literature research on reading asserts that both 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' processes are essential in understanding reading materials, and therefore learners should be aware of how to process them. According to Harmer (2007), a top-down processing is when the overall picture of the text is processed by the reader. However, in the bottom-up processing the reader's focus is on words, phrases, and coherent devices (*ibid*), or what McDonough et al. (2013, p. 121) call 'discourse signposts in the text'.

Another valuable contribution to research on the reading skill and which proved its effectiveness on the learners' reading comprehension is provided by Schema theory (Tomlinson, 2003; Harmer, 2007; Hudson, 2007; Cook, 2008; McDonough, 2013). According to schema advocates, the term 'schema' refers to 'how the knowledge that we have about the world is organised into interrelated patterns based on our previous knowledge and experience' (Hudson, 2007, p. 119). Tomlinson (2003, p. 349) adds that comprehension, according to schema adherents, 'happens when a new experience (be it sensory or linguistic) is understood in comparison with a stereotypical version of a similar experience held in memory'. Nunan (1999, p. 256) also defines schemata as the process of 'interpret[ing] what we read in terms of what we already know, and we integrate what we already know with the content of what we are reading'. Hudson (2007) claims that prior-knowledge not only may have a facilitative impact on fitting incoming textual data, but also increases the amount of data to be retained from the text. This leads in turn to improving learners' reading comprehension.

In spite of the massive research on the effectiveness of schema on learners' reading ability to comprehend textual data, some researchers have argued that background knowledge may distort the reading process (Hudson, 2007). Carrell and Eisterhold (1983), as cited by Scott (2001), also argue that a reader's content schema might fail to operate when this latter does not correlate with the reader's cultural background. Besides, Grabe (2008), cited by McDonough et al. (2013, p. 119), describes schema theory as 'a simplifying metaphor'.

Although schema theory has been brought under criticism, its impacts on learners' reading

comprehension ability have been proved to be of much significance. This significance comes not only from its descriptive and explanatory power, but also from its external validity. This present study is going to prove how effective pre-reading activities, driven from schema theory, would be on male ESL upper-intermediate students' reading comprehension in a Post-basic Education School in Oman.

The purpose of the pre-reading activities, as have been advocated by Tomlinson (2003), Harmer (2007) and McDonough et al. (2013), is to activate learners' prior knowledge of the world and relate that to the target text. Tomlinson (2003, p. 113) points out that these 'readiness activities' help L2 readers to attain the mental apprehension they take to texts. Scrivener (2012, p. 267) also provides what he calls a 'route map' which consists of 'pre-text' or 'lead-in' section with the only goal to draw students' attention to the text topic, initiate discussion of the themes, and make explicit link between the text topic and students' personal lives and experiences.

### **3. Research Method**

The primary goal of this research was to investigate whether the pre-reading activities would be effective in maximizing L2 learners' comprehension of the target text. To this end a quantitative method design was used to collect data.

#### *3.1 Participants*

Two male groups of participants totaling 60 served as the subjects of the study. Male samples were L2 upper-intermediate students in a post basic education school in Salalah city, Sultanate of Oman. Their mother tongue is Arabic and their second language is English. Both groups of participants were aged between 16 and 18. A group of 30 subjects served as control and another group of 30 served as experimental.

#### *3.2 Data Collection Tools*

Data was collected through a reading comprehension test (see Appendix 1) and closed-ended questionnaires. First, a reading comprehension test was assigned to two groups of participants. Each group was assigned a reading comprehension test comprising five reading comprehension tasks; varying from multiple choice, True/False statements, filling-in gapped sentences, to word definitions. These comprehension tasks were chosen according to the reading criteria of the Common European Framework (Bolukbas, 2013, p. 2150), which the Omani curricular is based on. The total mark for the test is 50. The time allotted for the control group was 40 minutes. Whereas, the experimental group were allotted 40 minutes with additional 10 minutes for the pre-reading activities. For the control group, a reading test was assigned with follow-up questions to answer. For the experimental group, four pre-reading activities were conducted by the researcher prior to assigning the reading comprehension test. The pre-reading activities, sample of which is provided in Appendix 2, included guessing the topic of the reading text through pictures, watching a three-minute video clip followed by vocabulary elicitation, and questions for discussion. Key words in the video that the learner would encounter in the reading test were made transparent and their meaning was checked. The control test was conducted before the experimental test. Both tests

aimed at measuring students' comprehension ability (Thongyon and Chiramanee, 2011) of the target text.

Upon completion of the reading comprehension tests, two different closed-ended questionnaires were administered to each group. However, to measure the dependability and consistency of the statements within the questionnaires before being administered in order to get more valid responses, the researcher used 'Cronbach's Alpha coefficient' (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 201) reliability command in SPSS. Cronbach's Alpha consistency test revealed that the value of reliability among the questionnaires' statements is 0.773 for the control group and 0.599 for the experimental group. This means that the closer the Cronbach's alpha coefficient to 1.0, the greater the internal consistency (Gliem and Gliem, 2003) among the statements of the questionnaires. Both questionnaires were designed on the basis of Likert scale where participants were asked to provide 'a range of responses to [18] given... statements' (Cohen et al., 2011, p.386) to 'discover strength of feeling or attitude' (Bell, 2010, p. 146) about the importance of the pre-reading activities and their impact on their comprehension of the target text. The research approach applied in this study was quantitative and it involved 'data collection procedures that result primarily in numerical data' (Dornyei and Uma, 2011:203). The rationale behind using a quantitative approach for collecting data is 'that at its best a quantitative enquiry is systematic, rigorous, focused and tightly controlled, involving precise measurement and producing reliable data' (ibid, p.203).

### 3.3 Method of Data Analysis

Students' reading comprehension test scores as well as their responses to the questionnaires were computed, compared and analyzed using SPSS computer-based data management and analysis software package (Blaxter et al., 2010; Cohen et al., 2011; Dornyei and Uma, 2011). Comparing data was essential in that it helped the researcher to determine which group of students performed well in the test.

## 4. Results

To test the research study hypothesis of whether the pre-reading activities help in facilitating learners' comprehension of the target text, both participants' tests- control and experimental- were marked and the scores were analyzed by means of SPSS statistical variance analysis. A t-test was employed to determine if the two reading comprehension tests were with statistically significant difference or not. Data drawn from participants' responses to the questionnaires was also analyzed statistically through SPSS measurement tool and Microsoft Excel spreadsheet application and were translated into graph forms.

Table 1. T-Test/ Group Statistics: Mean Variance and Standard Deviation for Control and Experimental Tests

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
How well L2 learners Perform in the reading test?				
Controlled Test	30	27.13	8.042	1.468
Experimental Test	30	46.03	3.891	.710

This table depicts the t-test employed to test if the two independent participants- Control and

Experimental- differ in the mean scores. It includes two sets of test-analysis and shows a variance in the mean scores of both control and experimental test groups. The mean score of the former is 27.13, whereas the mean score for the latter is 46.03.

Table 2. Levene’s Independent Sample Test for Variance Homogeneity Assessment

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means						
How well L2 learners Perform in the reading test?	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	21.843	.000	-11.588	58	.000	-18.900	1.631	-22.165	-22.165
Equal variances not assumed			-11.588	41.870	.000	-18.900	1.631	-22.192	-22.192

To further support the significant variance among both tested participants, SPSS Levene’s test was employed. Table 2 reveals results of the control and Experimental tests after using SPSS ‘Levene’s test for Equality of Variances and t-test for Equality of Means’ (Gaur and Gaur, 2006: 61). Levene’s test was used to either accept or reject the null hypothesis (Cohen et al., 2011).

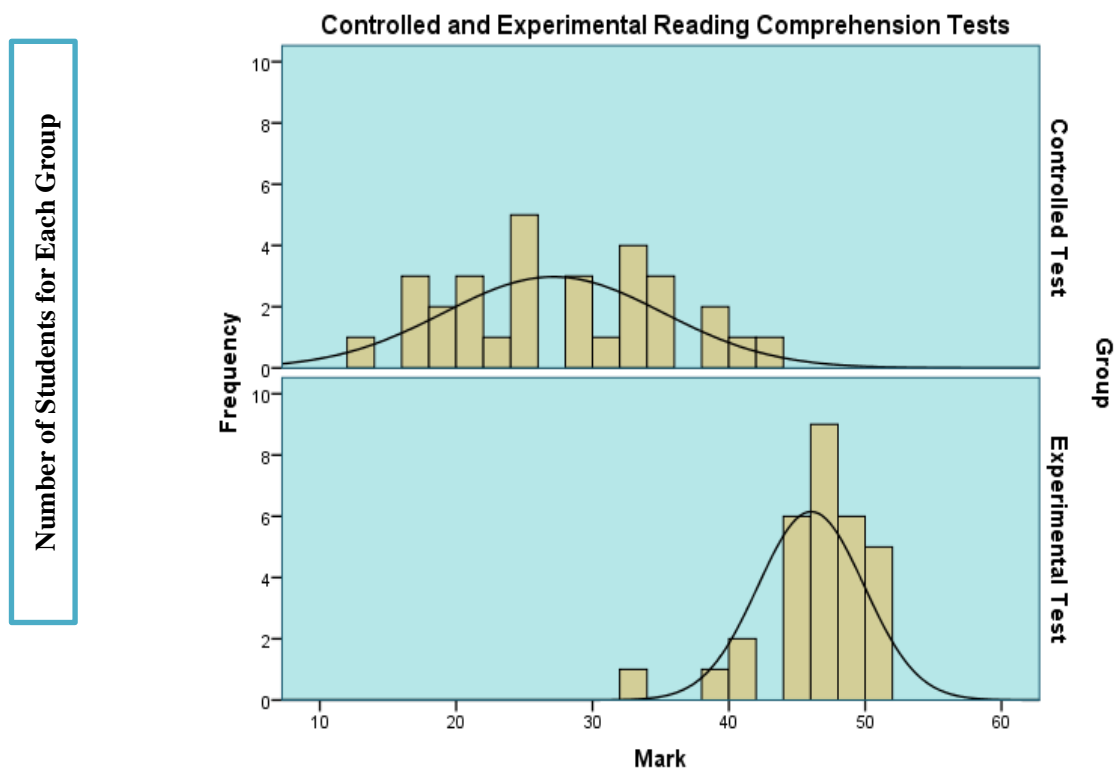


Figure 1. The Distribution of Scores in the Control and Experimental Tests and their Frequencies

The two bar charts shown in Figure 1 indicate the distribution of scores among experimental and control participant tests. As it could be seen, control participants' scores range between 13 and 42, while experimental participants' scores range between 33 and 50.

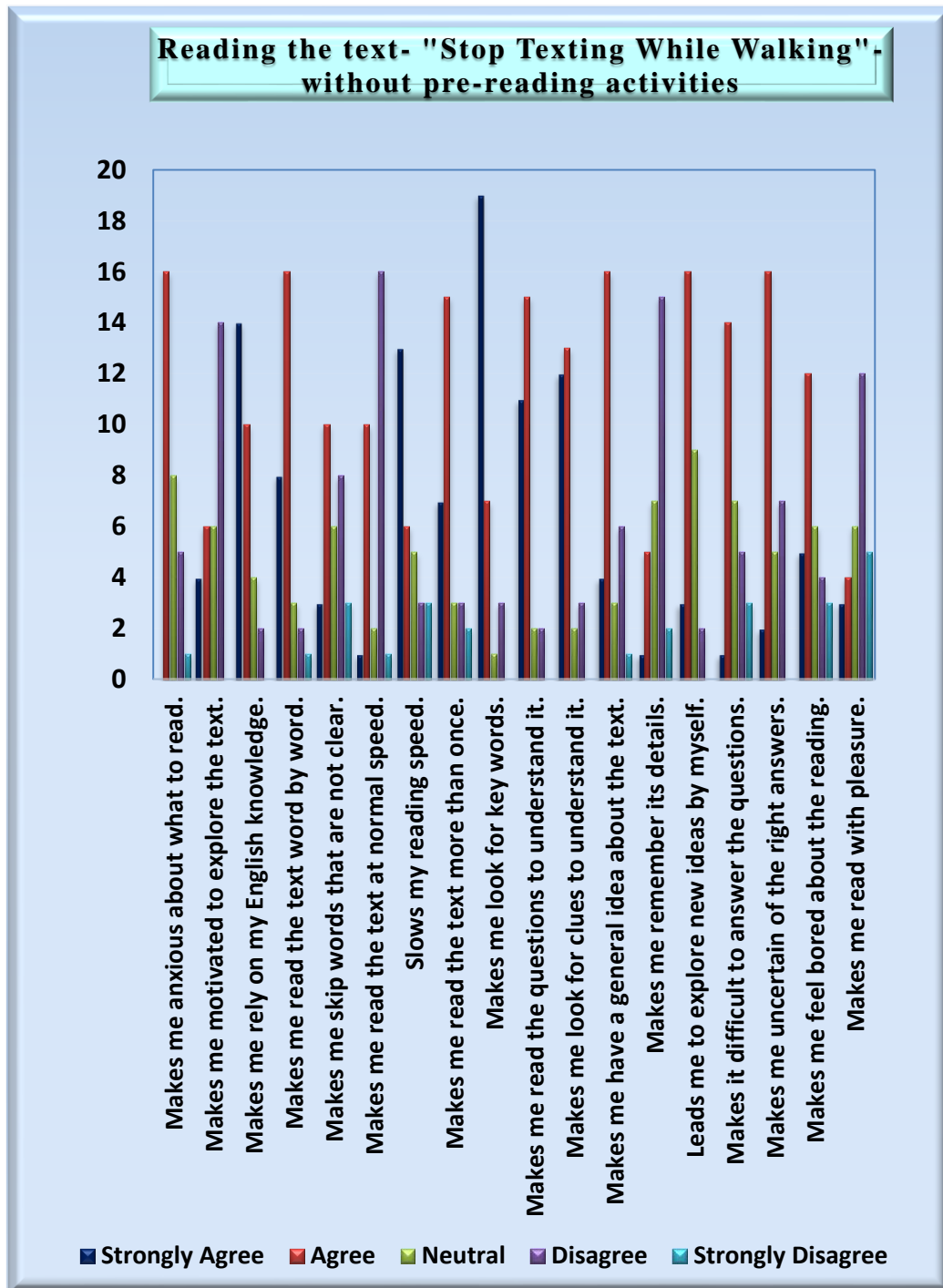


Figure 2. Attitudes of Control Students to the reading test without Pre-reading Activities

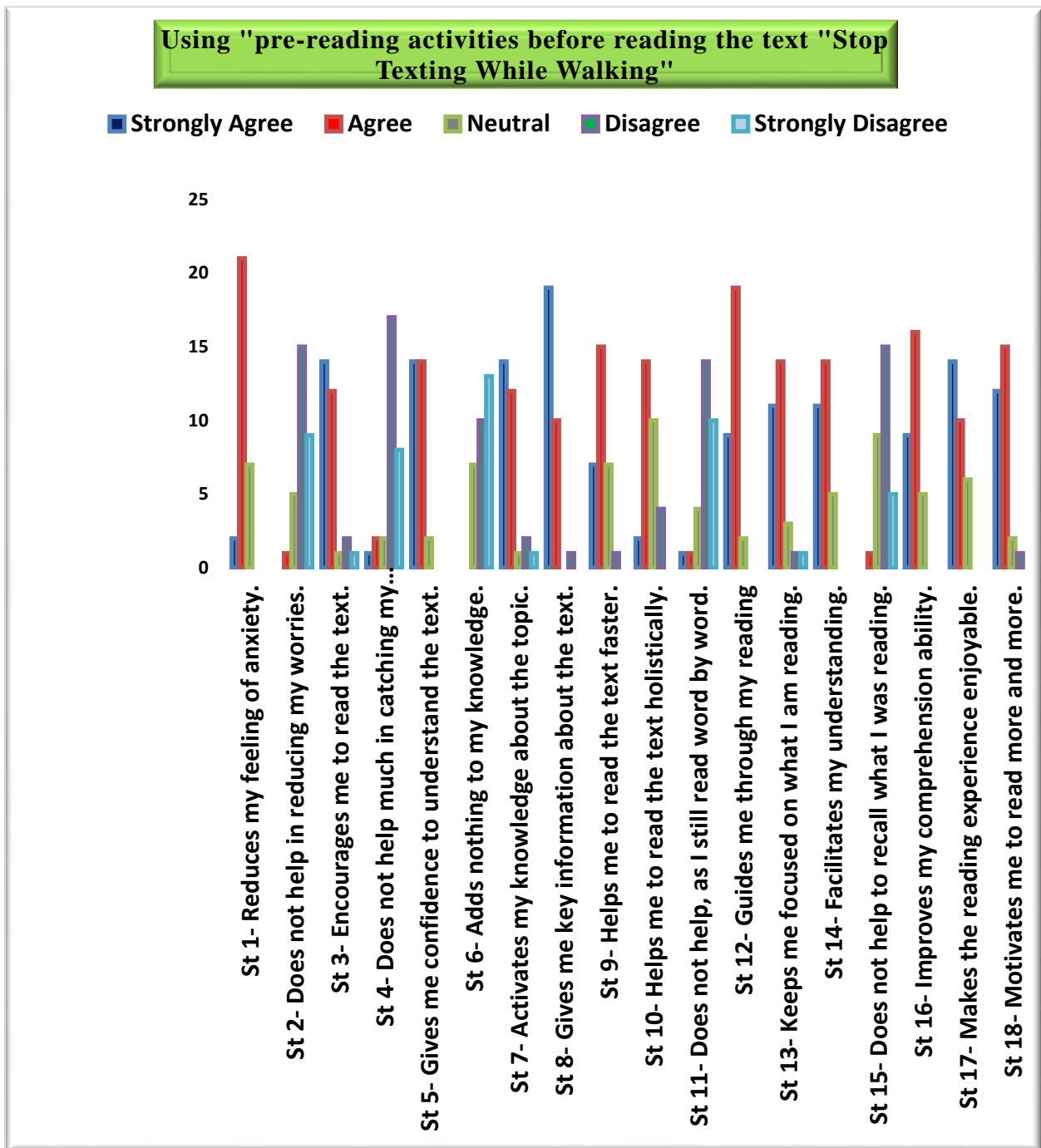


Figure 3. Attitudes of Experimental Students to using Pre-reading Activities before starting the reading test

The above figures 2 and 3 reveal control and experimental participants' responses to the closed-ended questionnaires. While controlled participants expressed a negative attitude to reading a text without pre-reading activities, experimental participants expressed a positive attitude to using pre-reading activities before starting the reading test.

Table 3. Descriptive Frequency Mode and Mean Variation of participants' attitudes about the ability to understand a reading text without pre-reading activities



Control Participants' Attitude Descriptive Statistics						
S	N		Mode	Mean	Result	Reading the text- "Stop texting while walking"- without any pre-reading activities
	Valid	Missing				
1	30	0	4	3.43	Agree	Makes me <i>anxious</i> about what to read.
2	30	0	4	3.00	Disagree	Makes me <i>motivated</i> to explore the text.
3	30	0	1	1.80	Agree	Makes me rely on my English knowledge.
4	30	0	4	3.93	Agree	Makes me read the text word by word.
5	30	0	4	3.07	Neutral	Makes me skip words that are not clear.
6	30	0	4	3.73	Agree	Makes me read the text at normal speed.
7	30	0	5	3.77	Agree	Slows my reading speed.
8	30	0	4	3.73	Agree	Makes me read the text more than once.
9	30	0	5	4.40	Strongly agree	Makes me look for key words.
10	30	0	4	4.17	Agree	Makes me read the questions to understand it.
11	30	0	4	4.13	Agree	Makes me look for clues to understand it.
12	30	0	4	3.53	Agree	Makes me have a general idea about the text.
13	30	0	4	3.40	Disagree	Makes me remember its details.
14	30	0	2	2.33	Neutral	Leads me to explore new ideas by myself.
15	30	0	4	3.17	Neutral	Makes it difficult to answer the questions.
16	30	0	4	3.43	Agree	Makes me uncertain of the right answers.
17	30	0	4	3.10	Neutral	Makes me feel bored about the reading.
18	30	0	4	3.40	Agree	Makes me read with pleasure.
18	30	0	4	3.41	Agree	Total Valid N (List-wise)

Table 4. Descriptive Frequency Mode and Mean Variation of participants' attitudes about the ability to understand a reading text with the use of pre-reading activities

Experimental Participants' Attitude Descriptive Statistics						
S	N		Mode	Mean	Result	Using pre-reading activities before reading the text "Stop texting while walking"
	Valid	Missing				
1	30	0	4	3.83	Agree	Reduces my feeling of anxiety.

2	30	0	4	4.07	Disagree	Does not help in reducing my worries.
3	30	0	4	4.20	Strongly Agree	Encourages me to read the text.
4	30	0	4	3.97	Disagree	Does not help much in catching my attention.
5	30	0	4 <sup>a</sup>	4.40	Strongly Agree	Gives me confidence to understand the text.
6	30	0	5	4.20	Strongly disagree	Adds nothing to my knowledge.
7	30	0	5	4.20	Strongly Agree	Activates my knowledge about the topic.
8	30	0	5	4.57	Strongly Agree	Gives me key information about the text.
9	30	0	4	3.93	Agree	Helps me to read the text faster.
10	30	0	4	3.47	Agree	Helps me to read the text holistically.
11	30	0	4	4.03	Disagree	Does not help, as I still read word by word.
12	30	0	4	4.23	Strongly Agree	Guides me through my reading.
13	30	0	4	4.10	Agree	Keeps me focused on what I am reading.
14	30	0	4	4.20	Strongly Agree	Facilitates my understanding.
15	30	0	4	3.80	Disagree	Does not help to recall what I was reading.
16	30	0	4	4.13	Agree	Improves my comprehension ability.
17	30	0	5	4.27	Strongly Agree	Makes the reading experience enjoyable.
18	30	0	4	4.27	Strongly Agree	Motivates me to read more and more.
18	30	0	4	4.10	Agree	Total Valid N (List-wise)

Tables 3 and 4 show results drawn from questionnaires eliciting control and experimental participants' attitudes about the ability to understand a reading text with or without pre-reading activities. Evidently the result was a total mean score 3.41 and a total mode 4 for control group and a total mean score 4.10 and a total mode 4 for experimental group. The total result is 'Agree'.

## 5. Discussion and Limitations

To address whether the pre-reading activities are effective in facilitating L2 upper-intermediate students' reading comprehension, the results obtained from the reading

comprehension tests and form students' attitudes to the statements in the questionnaires were analyzed and discussed statistically.

A t-test was employed to compare two independent test scores of two groups; one control and the other experimental. As the data in Table 1 revealed, the mean score of control participants was 27.13 while the mean score of experimental participants was 46.03. The findings showed that experimental participants outperformed the control participants with 18.9 mean score variance. Levene's test for equality of variances, as shown in Table 2, was used. The test demonstrated that there was a statistically significant difference between the two mean test scores of both groups. The test with equal variances not assumed (Gaur and Gaur, 2006) showed degrees of freedom 41.870 with a p-value .000, that is low than 0.05 (see Table 2). This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis which assumed there was no statistically significant difference between the average scores of both groups. Therefore, experimental participants who were presented with four pre-reading activities, comprising guessing the topic of the reading text through watching a video clip followed by contextual pictures, vocabulary elicitation, and questions for discussion, outperformed their control peers in the reading comprehension test.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of test scores among control and experimental participants. The bottom bar chart shows that a great number of experimental participants scored 44 to 48. However, the one at the top shows most control participants scored between 16 and 34. This is another indication supporting the claim that the pre-reading activities have significant impact on L2 learners' comprehension ability.

The questionnaire results also give us a clear picture of students' attitudes to the type of reading comprehension tests assigned to them. Tables 3 and 4 illustrate L2 learners' level of agreement to the type of reading they experienced. On the one hand, results drawn from Table 3 describe the frequency mode and mean variation of participants' attitudes with a total mean of 3.41 and a mode totaling 4. Results from Table 4, on the other hand, describe the frequency mode and mean variation of experimental participants' attitudes with a total mean of 4.10 and a mode totaling 4. To sum up the data shown in both questionnaires revealed that control group expressed negative attitude towards reading a text without pre-reading activities, whereas group two expressed positive attitude to using pre-reading activities before reading the text.

Although the findings have rejected the null hypothesis and confirmed the research hypothesis, that is the pre-reading activities have positive impact on L2 learners' comprehension ability of the target text, the study has some flaws and limitations. First, the study was restricted in setting and gender. It involved only two post-basic state schools out of 83. It was also restricted to male students. This was mainly because of the difficulty to access girls' post-basic education schools due to the nature of the country.

The second limitation of my study was that it was limited to only two sample groups of students. Given enough research time and access to female schools, the researcher would have involved other participant groups from both genders which might have revealed different results. Another limitation resides in the comprehension test instructions and

questions which were written in English only. By doing so, the researcher could not make sure whether control participants' low performance was due to understanding the questions or due to understanding the text content. It would have been better if an Arabic translation of all the reading instructions and questions was provided.

Nevertheless, the findings of this study might support preceding research on the effectiveness of the pre-reading activities and how they facilitate L2 learners' comprehension ability of the target text. Alemi and Ebadi (2010), for example, have contended that pre-questioning and vocabulary pre-teaching help in activating students' prior knowledge of the text. McDonough et al. (2013) also have pointed out that pre-reading activities aim at capturing learners' attention to the type of information they are going to read about. Therefore, it might be of urgent need for teachers and syllabus designers to incorporate pre-reading activities to the reading texts students read. These pre-reading activities could be in different forms and types. Al Maghsoudi (2012, p. 198) suggests the following pre-reading activities: 'previewing, pre-teaching vocabulary, and pictorial context'.

## 6. Conclusion

The reading skill has spurred many studies in L2 teaching and learning. One of the most prevailing issues in this regard is how to maximize ESL learners' comprehension ability of what they read. McDonough et al. have pointed out that the concept of reading as a skill has evolved in recent years from the 'text as object' to the 'text as a process' (2013 p. 111). Another major contribution in the teaching and learning of the reading skill is that of schema theory which brought tremendous change to the way how learners can achieve better understanding of what they read. Schema theory-based pre-reading activities have been exploited in this study to find out if they have any effect on learners' comprehension ability. Thus, the pre-text or lead-in activities hypothesis and its significance in enhancing learners' understanding of what they read have been validated through the empirical results provided in the result analysis section. That is to say, experimental participants outperformed significantly control group. Besides, both groups showed a degree of agreement with the importance of the pre-reading activities in facilitating L2 learners' comprehension ability.

This leads us to the conclusion that educators and syllabus designers need to reconstruct their vision regarding the teaching of the reading skill. That is to say, teachers as well curricular designers need to provide learners with suitable pre-reading activities that engage them cognitively and effectively in the target text. Such schema theory-based pre-reading activities might include vocabulary pre-teaching, contextual pictures, preview questions and many others. These schema-based pre-reading activities should not be limited to only the reading skill, but it might be essential to incorporate them in the teaching of the other skills; listening, speaking, and writing as they have proven their impact on learners' comprehension ability.

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## Appendix 1

The Reading Comprehension Test Sample for both Control and Experimental participants



BY Nick Bilton/The New York Times News Service | December 29, 2014 , 9 : 30 AM GST  
(URL: <http://timesofoman.com/article/53352>)

**1** My New Year's resolution for 2015 is not going to be focused on eating healthy food or to start going to the gym every day of the week or to save more and spend less. Those challenges are easy compared with a goal I'm setting for myself. In 2015, I'm going to stop texting while walking.

**4** The realization that I may have a problem (along with a lot of other people) hit me smack in the face, literally, a few weeks ago when I was strolling through Kennedy International Airport, avoiding obstacles with my peripheral vision as I clambered out a text message. Without any warning (as I couldn't actually see), I involved in a head-on collision with another man who was also texting while walking.

**9** The thud sent both of us off balance and we almost fell. As we both regained our footing, we looked at each other with a sense of disgust and embarrassment. Adding to the poignancy of the incident was that no one around us had seen our accident because, as I soon realised, they were walking and texting, too. If it weren't for the

gadgets in our hands, we might have looked like extras from the Walking Dead.

**13** As a society, we now spend almost half of our walking hours looking at screens, according to numerous reports. People have admitted to using their smartphone in meetings and even in the toilet. And according to a 2013 research report compiled by Liberty Mutual Insurance, 70 per cent of people in the United States admit to texting and walking.

**17** Beyond the thoughtlessness of walking texters, there are safety problems. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, distracted pedestrians are involved in thousands of accidents and even fatalities each year. Dr. Dietrich Jehle, a professor of emergency medicine at the University at Buffalo in New York, estimates that of those tens of thousands of pedestrian-related emergency room visits, 10 per cent are a result of texting while walking. People end up with broken legs and concussions.

**22** This year, officials in the city of Chongqing, China, created a 100-foot stretch of pavement with pictures of cell phones painted on the ground, that it designated as a walking pathway while texting. While people in the United States seemed to look across the pond with envy at this advancement, officials in China said the point of the exercise was to remind people that “it is best not to play with your phone while walking”.

**27** A study published earlier this year in the medical journal PLOS One found that walking and using your smartphone at the same time affects people’s posture and balance, causing them to swerve and walk slower. As a result, researchers found, texting and walking can cause accidents, “including falls, trips and collisions”.

**31** Jack Nasar, an Ohio State University professor, led a study that found the number of people who end up in emergency rooms each year due to cellphone-related injuries more than doubled from 2005 to 2010. Nasar also found that those most likely to end up harmed are actually those people aged 16-25 being injured the most.

**Read the text and complete the following tasks:**

[50 marks]

**1.** Choose the appropriate title for this text.

**(3 marks)**

- A. Texters be happy! There are new cellphone properties for you!
- B. [Texters beware! Stop texting while walking!](#) (Bilton, 2014)
- C. Texters and innovations in mobile phones!

**2.** Choose the right option.

**(15 marks)**

- A. The writer decided to \_\_\_\_\_.
- eat healthy food  stop texting while walking  practise walking
- B. The writer was involved in a \_\_\_\_\_.
- car crash  boxing match
- head-on accident
- C. What was most disturbing was that people were \_\_\_\_\_.
- talking while walking  messaging while walking  smoking while walking

D. Each year thousands of accidents happen as a result of pedestrian's

- \_\_\_\_\_.
- preoccupied minds  unconsciousness
- illiteracy

E. \_\_\_\_\_ the number of injuries more than doubled due to cellphone usage.

- Within 5 years  Within 10 years
- Within 15 years

3. Answer with True or False. Write **T** for **True** and **F** for **False**.

(15 marks)

- A. The writer of this article decided to eat healthy food. (.....)
- B. People now spend nearly all their walking time looking at screens. (.....)
- C. Two years ago, a report revealed that 70% of people in the USA text while walking. (.....)
- D. People texting while walking end up with broken legs only. (.....)
- E. China was the first country to create a walking pathway for mobile phone users. (.....)

4. Complete the sentences with words from the box. There are two extra words. (12 marks)

distracted	realised	disgust	avoiding
numerous			
	fatalities		emergency
designated			

- A. Lots of research and \_\_\_\_\_ reports have been conducted on the impact of walking and using cellphone on people's balance.
- B. When I regained my consciousness, I \_\_\_\_\_ that everybody is texting while walking.



- C. I don't know why she looked at me with a feeling of \_\_\_\_\_.
- D. The woman is still \_\_\_\_\_ by the accident scene she saw few hours ago that she does not know where to go.
- E. \_\_\_\_\_
- F. This place is \_\_\_\_\_ for cell phone-walking texters.
- G. Every year many \_\_\_\_\_ happen due to texting while walking.

5. Find words in the text that match each of the following definitions. (5 marks)

- A. Walking leisurely and for pleasure: \_\_\_\_\_ (line 5)
- B. An instance of one moving person striking violently against another: \_\_\_\_\_ (line 7)
- C. Confess to be true: \_\_\_\_\_ (line 16)
- D. The process of developing and promoting a plan: \_\_\_\_\_ (line 24)
- E. Damaged or impaired: \_\_\_\_\_ (line 33)

**Appendix 2**

Pre-reading Activities used with Experimental participants prior to the reading test:

1. Watching a video with the same topic of the reading test  
Video Title: Dangers of Texting While Walking (Association Press, 2012)
2. Pre-teaching Vocabulary

- stroll = a short walk for pleasure = wander	- distract = prevent (someone) from giving full attention to something
- collision = smash = crash	- fatality = death / fatal = deadly
- realise = understand = recognise	- harm = damage = injury =
- admit = acknowledge = accept = confess	

3. Pictorial context: All three pictures are referenced in the reference section



Figure 1. Injuries Caused by Distracted Walking Quadruple (Megdies, 2012)



Figure 2. Even Walking While Texting Can Be Hazardous (Donald, 2010)



Figure 3. China Opens Separate Walking Lane for People Texting (2014)

#### 4. Preview Questions for discussion

- 4.1. Do you text while walking?
- 4.2. Did you have a hard time texting and walking?
- 4.3. What are the dangers of texting while walking?
- 4.4. What possible solutions for those who can never stop texting while walking?

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