



*The Effect of Peer Tutoring Technique on Iraqi EFL College
Students' Performance in Reading Comprehension*



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ملخص البحث

يعد الفهم القرائي من المهارات الأساسية في تعلم اللغة و الصعبة الاتقان في الوقت ذاته . وإتقان مهارة الفهم القرائي في اللغة الإنجليزية هي من أولويات متعلمي اللغة الانكليزية كلغة الأجنبية ولذلك هدف البحث الحالي إلى معرفة تأثير استخدام تدريس الإقران كأسلوب تعليمي على أداء متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في الفهم القرائي.

افترضت الدراسة الحالية عدم وجود فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين متوسط درجات الأداء للمجموعة التجريبية الذين يدرسون مهارة الفهم القرائي باستخدام تقنية تعليم الأقران عن المجموعة الضابطة التي تدرس بالطريقة التقليدية. تتألف عينة هذه الدراسة من طلاب المرحلة الثانية / قسم اللغة الإنجليزية / كلية الآداب خلال العام الدراسي ٢٠١٩-٢٠٢٠. استمرت تجربة الدراسة لمدة ثمانية أسابيع وبدأت في ٢٤ فبراير وانتهت في ٢٤ أبريل ٢٠٢٠. تم اختيار الدراسة عمداً من قسم اللغة الإنجليزية الذي يتكون من ٧٠ طالب وطالبة ، وقد تم اختيار المجموعة الضابطة غير المعادلة للاختبار البعدي كتصميم تجريبي ، وتشير نتائج التحليل إلى وجود فرق دال إحصائية بين المجموعة التجريبية والمجموعة الضابطة حيث أثبتت المجموعة التجريبية أنها أفضل من المجموعة الضابطة وتم الحصول على النتائج وفقاً للنتائج المحررة ، وقد تم وضع بعض الاستنتاجات والتوصيات.

كلمات مفتاحية: تدريس الأقران؛ تقنية؛ الاستيعاب القرائي.

Abstract

Reading comprehension is usually considered as the core skill in language learning. It is the most difficult skill to master. Mastering reading comprehension skill in English is a priority for foreign language (FL) learners. The current research aims at investigating the effect of using peer tutoring as a teaching technique on Iraqi EFL college students' performance in reading comprehension.

The current study hypothesized that there are no statistically significant differences between the performance of the experimental group (taught reading comprehension by using peer tutoring technique and that of the control group (taught reading comprehension according to the traditional method. The sample consists of 2nd stage/ English Department / College of Arts during the academic year 2019-2020. The experiment of the study lasted for eight weeks. It started on the 24th of February and ended on the 24th of April, 2020. The sample of the study has been intentionally chosen from the English department.

It consists of 70 students. The non-equivalent posttest control group has been chosen as the experimental design. The results indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the experimental group and the control group where the experimental group proved to be better than the control group. According to the results obtained, conclusions have been drawn, and some recommendations have been set.

Keywords: Peer Tutoring; Technique; Reading Comprehension

Section One : Introduction

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Language and communication are at the heart of human life. The main aim of learning English as FL is how to communicate and interact with others. Harmer (1983:32) states that learning FL takes place most successful when learners are put in communicative situations in the target language. Any language has four skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking). Rivers (1993: 259), reading skill plays an important role in learning FL. It enables learners to enhance their knowledge in all fields, and not only as a means of information and pleasurable activity. Goodman (1967: 129 -36) states that reading is a psycholinguistic process in which the reader guided by the knowledge being read, reconstructs an encoded message by selecting syntactic and semantic cues as he proceeds. The ability to predict or select tentatively the cues is necessary for the comprehension of the material

Williams (1985:1) argues that reading is a complex skill that consists of the identification of letters, recognition of words, discrimination and thereby sampling of ideas, prediction of the forthcoming content, and the intention of the meaning of the text. Sikiotis, (1981:300) asserts that reading comprehension is an essential step for EFL learners, it allows learners to be in contact with the living language; besides, it has an important role in determining whether a person will succeed in mastering a foreign language or not. For Brown (2001:306), reading efficiency in English as a foreign language includes two main aspects, reading speed and reading comprehension for most second language learners who are already literate in a language, reading comprehension is primarily a matter of developing appropriate, efficient strategies.

As for the researcher's observation and interviews, she notes that learners are still unable to read a foreign text with a degree of comprehension. She claims that the level of students in reading comprehension is low. Students fail to relate their prior knowledge, recognizing the author's idea beyond the printed page.

Consequently, many studies have shown the students' weakness in RC. Though, this may attribute to the methods and techniques used by teachers. Using traditional methods and techniques in teaching RC may affect the improvement of RC.

This study attempts to investigate the effect of peer tutoring technique as a new trend in teaching reading comprehension. It is one of the techniques which may be used to facilitate the improvement of RC.

The Peer tutoring technique is used as cooperative learning where the class is divided into groups and the learners become "experts" on one part of the material and each member teaches the content to his partner that encourages individual as well as group accountability (Keith 2011:123).

1.2 Aim of the Study

The present study aims at investigating “ the effect of peer tutoring technique on Iraqi EFL college students ‘performance in reading comprehension”

1.3 Hypothesis of the Study

It is hypothesized that there are no statistically significant differences at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the mean scores of reading comprehension of the experimental group who is taught reading comprehension according to peer tutoring technique and that of the control group who is taught reading comprehension according to the traditional method.

1.4 Limits of the Study

The present study is limited to:-

- 1- Use peer tutoring technique in teaching reading comprehension of the experimental group.
- 2- Second stage students during the academic year 2019-2020.
- 3- Teach many units that include different passages to the experimental group.

1.5 The Value of the Study

This study can be useful in:-

- 1- Improving Students' reading comprehension.

2- Helping EFL curricula designers to impose peer tutoring techniques in teaching RC.

3- Leading to further studies in other fields of TEFL.

1.6 Definitions of Basic Terms

The terms defined in this section include (1) peer tutoring technique, (2) Reading Comprehension,

1.6.1 Peer Tutoring Technique

Koppes (2002: 1) defines peer tutoring technique as a "cooperative learning technique in which students spend a part of their time in pursuit of common goals".

The researcher defines peer tutoring technique operationally as a cooperative learning technique that was created with goals of reducing conflict and enhancing positive educational outcomes.

1.6.2 Reading Comprehension (RC)

Harris and Hodges (1982:266) define reading comprehension as "the linguistic process of reconstructing the intended message of a text by translating its lexical and grammatical information into meaningful units that can be integrated with the reader's knowledge and cognitive structures".

1.6.3 Performance

Borman (2003:87) defined the term performance as " the total expected value of an individual behavior over a standard period for maintaining once enhancing the psychological, social, or organization. This section presents the nature of the reading (henceforth RC) process dealing with the nature of reading comprehension. Then a detailed description of the peer tutoring technique.

Section Two: Review of Literature

This section presents the nature of the reading (henceforth RC) process dealing with the nature of reading comprehension. Then a detailed description of the peer tutoring technique will be also presented.

2.1 Reading Skill

Otto et al. (1977: 237) state that reading is a “complex process comprises several interrelated factors such as visual discrimination, auditory discrimination, memory, and cognitive development.” Grellet (1981: 3) believes that getting the required information out of the written text in an efficient way depends on the understanding of that text. Chall and Stahl (2004: Int.) conceive reading as an “activity characterized by the translation of symbols or letters into words and sentences that have meaning to the individual”. The ultimate goal of this activity is to acquire the ability of understanding written material, evaluating it, and using it for one’s own needs. Most of the definitions of reading fall into two categories. The first one restricts it to the decoding of written words into sounds and this is certainly in the early stage of language learning. The second one concentrates on comprehension as the aim of reading.

2.1 The Nature of Reading Comprehension (RC)

Reading and comprehension are strongly connected; the main aim of all instructional readings is to enable readers to comprehend different types of texts. Therefore, it is too difficult to find a source about reading that does not approach comprehension. Thus, what is comprehension? Grellet (1995: 3) and Lenz (2005:1-5) answer this question by stating that comprehension is the “ability to construct meaning from a text through decoding the writer's words and using previous knowledge about the target text to expand and modify one’s understanding and knowledge”.

Cripe (2011:3) states that comprehension is a skill that is significant to create a love of reading and it is usually the basis for every reading task. Comprehension is defined as the ability to understand something or gaining meaning from a text. On the other hand, reading comprehension is defined by Wigfield and Lutz (2005:45) as "the process involved in deriving or constructing meaning from a text". Reading comprehension primarily involves cognitive processes. Phongsatha (2008:18) considers RC as a holistic process of grasping meaning from written text through the

interaction of 1) the reader's knowledge, 2) the reader's ability to explain the written text, and 3) the situation in which the text is read.

2.2 .1 Levels of Reading Comprehension

RC is a skill that requires readers to use their mental process which means that the reader extracts the meaning through what he reads and gets the main idea at different levels of comprehension. College (2006: 11) states that reading comprehension has four levels which are: the literal level; this includes stating facts-data-specifics-traits-setting timeline/process steps. The inferential level requires building on facts which means prediction-drawing conclusions-perceiving meaning. The third level is the evaluative level: in this level, the judgment is mainly based on the reality or fantasy, whether it is fact or opinion, - cause-effect -desirable ideas-comparisons validity- appropriateness-Worth; acceptable. the fourth level is the appreciative level. In this level the response based on: language- author's values-imagery, the style of the author's purpose., the author's language use, and the emotional reaction to the author's ideas, ,

2.2.2 What Make Reading Comprehension Difficult?

Although it is evident that reading comprehension includes many different operations and that difficulty in reading comprehension can be an outcome of various weaknesses, it is not quite explicit where these difficulties may originate from. There may be various reasons resulting in deficient reading comprehension. Kaschak et al., (2009:22) attribute the cause of reading comprehension difficulties to individual differences among learners in comprehension skills; for example, how quickly they learn to read, how readily they comprehend what they read and how easy it is for them to hunt the information. Difficulties with reading comprehension have also been attributed to a range of clinical disorders such as early-onset "hydrocephalus" which is a common human neurological abnormality and causes a problem with the flow of the fluid that surrounds the brain leading to change in memory or the ability to reason or think

Dehn (2008:38) states that there is a “relationship between reading comprehension and working memory. Reading comprehension and learning through reading depends both on working memory and on long-term memory. These require different structures of memory which can affect reading comprehension in different ways. The working memory affects the ability to preserve information in the mind at a given moment and subsequently activates long-term memory during reading. Problems with the working memory hinder essentially the processing of long sentence constructions and, through that, their understanding. Problems and deficits in long-term memory lead to difficulties in understanding the vocabulary used in a text or the meanings of links or references between concepts in language. The working memory refers to the immediate mind operations concerned with simultaneous storage and handling of information and plays a significant role in complex cognition such as language comprehension, learning, and reasoning”

2.3 Peer Tutoring

Peer tutoring is a pedagogical strategy that uses peer interaction for the purpose of teaching and learning. Peer tutoring may include same/cross-age and same/cross-ability learners. Within peer tutoring, peers act one-on-one teachers and employ a class of practices and strategies to provide each other with individualized instruction, repetition, and clarification of certain subjects (Rubie-Davies, 2013:375). In other words, peer tutoring is the process between two or more learners in a group where one of the learners acts as a tutor for the other group members. Peer tutoring can be applied among learners of the same age or learners belonging to different age groups.

Hardman and Green (2011:142) state that peer tutoring is also known as peer teaching or peer learning. It is an instructional strategy in which learners work in pairs to reinforce each other's learning. Peer tutoring has been widely used in educational institutions to strengthen learners' cognitive and social learning. Goodlad and McIvor (2007:52) maintain that peer tutoring can be

understood through the social interaction (or socio-cultural) theory of cognitive development which asserts the importance of peer interaction to acquire knowledge and then internalize it. Schoen (2008:40), constructivism does not favour asking learners to find the correct answer themselves; instead, it is based on the assumption that learners construct their understanding with the help of others. Constructivism stresses that learners accept others' perspectives and encourage them to listen and interact with each other. Constructivist classrooms are often called "learner-centered" because they concentrate on the active participation of the learners in their learning.

2.3.1 Types of Peer Tutoring

The structure of peer tutoring is diverse and involves some forms:

Same-age Peer Tutoring. Same-age peer tutoring is a model that is usually used in most schools, especially at primary and secondary levels. This type of tutoring takes limited teacher time and can be used to help learners who need support to keep up with the task of the group by having text read with or by a more able learner. Cooperative work situations such as reading and writing can all be done reciprocally by a same-age tutor (Hornby et al., 2013:135).

Cross-age Peer Tutoring.

This type involves an older learner being chosen to teach a younger learner. It works best when the peer tutor has a willingness to work with learners. The difference in age between tutor and tutee seems to be critical in this form of peer tutoring and determines who harvests the greater benefit from the scheme. It has been found that "the greater the difference in age and ability, the more gains accrue to the tutees", whereas the closer in age and ability the pairs are, the greater are the improvements for the tutors (Lieberman and Houston-Wilson, 2008:80).

Structured Peer Tutoring.

This type of peer tutoring is implemented for certain topics, to follow a well-structured plan prepared by the teacher. This type is usually used by a skillful teacher who can plan well in advance and is familiar with how to combine tutors and tutees appropriately for the sake of obtaining good results (ibid).

2.3.2 Peer Tutoring as a Teaching Technique

The word 'technique' refers to a plan or activity which is designed to achieve a certain goal. This technique is an important factor of success for any organization or any other project work. Without it, one cannot progress within the schedule, nor can he move from one stage to another effectively. It is important to have a well-planned program design and a careful selection of learners to perform as peer tutors (peer mediators).

Mitchell (2008:52) mentions that peer tutoring is an active instrument for enhancing the overall effectiveness of teaching. It can be used in all subject areas, not only in reading; its influence extends to math, science, social studies, etc.

The current study aims at increasing learners' performance in reading comprehension through the use of peer tutoring. Gordon (2005:7) and Mitchell, (2008: 54) mentions the steps of peer tutoring technique as follows:

The teacher divided the class into groups, low performers are the tutees, high performers are the tutors.

There is a need for good preparation and training of tutors. This training will need to include how to use reading comprehension strategies, brainstorming, prediction, etc. It is a good idea to give tutors some practice with one another before getting to work with tutees

The materials selected must be well understood by tutors, and must be well defined and clear.

The tutors should be trained to present the material through modeling, supporting correct answers, responding to errors, and giving constructive feedback, as well as giving praise and

reinforcement to their peers to create a positive atmosphere among learners

The teacher should monitor and supervise the peer tutoring process actively, and they should assess the peers' progress systematically (ibid).

2.3.3 Peer Tutoring and Reading Comprehension

Diden et al (2012:166) state that peer tutoring is a kind of teaching and how to teach their classmates basic reading skills and help to improve learners' reading fluency and comprehension. One of the studies in the methods of teaching English as a foreign language has proved that peer tutors working with other learners using techniques such as passage previewing, listening to a passage before reading the text, prediction, and summarizing can significantly increase word recognition, reading fluency, and comprehension. Furthermore, Boyle and Scanlon (2010:216) assert that peer tutoring is an effective technique for both high-level learners (tutors) and their tutees, especially when learners are carefully matched and progress is continuously monitored. Many researchers have found that peer tutoring techniques increased reading comprehension and reduce the difficulties that learners faced.

Section Three: Methodology of the Study

This section will present the methodology and procedures that are followed to get the aim of the study and to verify the hypotheses. It contains the experimental design, population and sample selection procedure, the construction of peer tutoring technique, the pre-post test, equivalence of the samples, and finally the statistical methods.

3.1 The Experimental Design

It is especially useful to determine the effectiveness and impact of programmers, methods, and techniques. The experiment is defined as "a situation in which the researcher objectively observes phenomena which are made to occur in a strictly controlled situation where one or more variables are varied and the others are kept constant" (Best and Kahn, 2006:157).

To achieve the aim of the current study, a non-randomized posttest control group design is adopted by the researcher, in which students are not randomly assigned to treatment groups. This design can be shown as follows:

Table 3.1 Experimental Design

Groups	The Test	Independent Variable	The Test
EG	Pre Test	Peer Tutoring Technique	Post Test
CG	Pre Test	Traditional Method	Post Test

Both groups (experimental and control) are selected to be the sample and subjected to a post-test. The independent variable (peer tutoring technique) is administered to the experimental group only. The students' scores on the dependent variable (reading comprehension) are measured by the pre-post-test, which is compared to see whether there is a significant difference between both groups or not.

3.1 Population and Sample Selection

The population of the study is limited to 2nd stage students at the college of Arts/ Iraqi university during the academic year 2019/2020. The total number of the study sample is 70 students: 35 students in EG and 35 in CG. These groups are randomly chosen where section A represents EG and section B stands for CG. That means that section A would receive the treatment "peer tutoring" while section B would receive the traditional method.

Table (3.2) Subjects of the Study

Group	No. of Students	
	Before Exclusion	After Exclusion
CG	36	35
EG	38	35
Total	74	70

Post-test administered to the two groups to determine which group was better in reading comprehension. The aim of testing, the two groups' performance was to verify the impact of employing the independent variable (peer tutoring) on the dependent variable (reading comprehension).

3.2 Equivalence of Subjects

To confirm that both EG and CG were initially equivalent, the two groups were equalized in the following variables:

1. The subjects' age;
2. The father level of education;
3. The mother level of education;
4. The subjects' scores in the first term; and
5. The subjects' performance in reading comprehension on the pretest.

3.2.1 Age of Testees

T-test formula for two independent samples has been used, it is found that there is not statistically significant differences between the two groups, the calculated t-value is 0.063, whereas the tabulated t-value is 2.00 at 68 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance.

Table 3.3 T-test Statistics for the Subjects' Age

Variable	Group	No	M	SD	DF	t-value	
						Calculated	Table
Subject' age	EG	35	181.03	5.475	68	0.063	2.00
	CG	35	177.94	5.941			

3.3.2 The Level of Father's Education

The Chi-square formula has been applied, in the father's level of education. It has been found that there is no significant difference between the EG and CG since the computed value which is 0.473 is lower than the table value which is 9.49 at 4 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance.

Table 3.4 The Level of Father's Education

Gro up	N o.	Prim ary	Intermed iate	Second ary	Bache lor	High er Studi es	D f	Chi-value	
								Compu ted	Tabula ted Table Tabulat ed
EG	35	5	9	9	7	6	4	0.473	9.49
CG	35	6	8	9	5	6			
Tota l	70	11	17	18	12	12			

3.2.3 The Level of Mother's Education

Table (3.5) explains that there is no significant difference between (EG) and (CG) in this

variable, the calculated value is 1.572 while the table value is 9.49 at 4 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance.

Table 3.5 The Level of Mother's Education

Group	No.	Primary	Intermediate	Secondary	Bachelor	Higher Studies	Df	Chi-value	
								Computed	Tabulated
EG	35	7	7	8	6	7	4	1.572	9.49
CG	35	7	9	6	7	6			
Total	70	14	16	14	13	13			

3.2.3 The Level of Mother's Education

Table (3.5) explains that there is no significant difference between (EG) and (CG) in this variable, the calculated value is 1.572 while the table value is 9.49 at 4 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance.

Table 3.5 The Level of Mother's Education

Group	No.	Primary	Intermediate	Secondary	Bachelor	Higher Studies	Df	Chi-value	
								Computed	Tabulated
EG	35	7	7	8	6	7	4	1.572	9.49
CG	35	7	9	6	7	6			
Total	70	14	16	14	13	13			

3.3.4 The Subjects' Level of Achievement in the First Term

After applying the t-test formula for two independent samples, the mean scores of EG and CG in the first term are 65.88 and 66.05 respectively, and shows that there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups at 68 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance since the computed t-value is 0.878, while the tabulated t-value is 2.00.

Table 3.6 Subjects' Achievement in English in the First Term

Variable	Group	No	M	SD	DF	t-value	
						Calculated	Table
First-term scores	EG	35	65.88	16.388	68	0.878	2.00
	CG	35	66.05	12.380			

3.3.5 The Subjects' Performance in Reading Comprehension on the Pretest

The mean scores of both groups are compared on the pretest. As displayed in Table 3.7, the mean score of the CG is 12.53, while the mean score of the EG is 12:77. The calculated t-value is found to be 0.489 at 68 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance, which signals that there is no statistical difference between the performances of both groups on the pretest. This reinforces that the subjects who were assigned as EG and CG were not initially different but homogeneous in their performance on the reading comprehension pretest.

Table 3.7 The Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of Students' Performance in Pre-test

Variable	Group	No.	M	SD	DF	t-value	
						Calculated	Table
Subject's Performance on the Pretest	EG	35	12.53	2.355	68	0.489	2.00
	CG	35	12.77	2.988			

3.4 Controlling Extraneous Variables

A basic weakness in any study is that other possible variables could influence the dependent variable; these variables are known as extraneous variables, for they can bias the findings of the study. Extraneous variables are independent variables that have not been controlled. Therefore, the investigator's task is to eliminate their effect

When the researcher has specified peer tutoring technique as the independent variable and reading comprehension as the dependent variable, she has done her best to neutralize some of the extraneous variables as much as possible to avoid contaminating the findings of the study. The common variables that may influence the results of the experiment are the following:

3.4.1 History

This variable is referred to as “specific incidents or circumstances, other than experimental treatment, that may be occurred between the beginning of the treatment and the posttest measurement and may make changes in the dependent variable ” (Best and Kahn., 2006:293). This variable was controlled because nothing important happened during the period of the study.

3.4.2 Maturation

Gray (2009:144) states that maturation is “the physical or mental changes that may occur in individuals over time such as aging, learning, psychological and biological factors, which may also affect the post-test scores”. Since the study experiment lasts for 8 weeks, such a variable hasn't indicated any change the period of the experiment (two months) was not long enough that student's responses in the posttest might be attributed to changes that might appear over time.

3.4.3 Selection Bias

Christensen (1980:98) states that selection bias is seen when a differential selection procedure is used for placing individuals in the experimental group and the control group. To avoid this factor, the researcher randomly assigned one group as (EG) and the other one as (CG).

3.4.4 Instrumentation

Instrumentation is another variable that may threaten the internal validity when there is a difference in the standardization of the instruments used in measurement (Martella et al., 2013: 42). This variable has been controlled by employing a unified test and adopting the same scoring plan for both groups

. 3.5 Experiment Application

The experiment has been started on the 24th of February 2019 and ended on the 24th of April 2019. That is; it lasts for eight weeks; five lessons are dedicated to each group per week. The students in both groups (EG) and (CG) had the same circumstances except that

the EG received the treatment of peer tutoring for teaching reading comprehension, while the (CG) was taught reading comprehension by employing the prescribed technique.

3. 6 Tools of the Study

To achieve the aim of the study, the investigator has employed two reading comprehension tests: a pretest and a posttest. Below is a detailed description of the tests, as well as their validation, item analysis, and reliability.

3.6.1 Test Construction

3.6.1.1 Pretest

The pretest aims to make equalization for both groups in their previous level of reading comprehension. The pretest consists of two passages: one is about *Smash and Grab*, and the other is *A puma at large*. The techniques involved in the pretest are the following :

1. Answer questions (5 items); two scores for each item.
2. Give the synonym of the following words (5 items); one score for each item;
3. Choose the correct answer (5 items); one score for each correct item
4. Write a summary of the above passage in no more than (50) words. (10 marks)

3.6.1.2 The Posttest

The posttest also involves two passages. The first passage entitled *the double life of Alfred Bloggs* and *An Unknown Goddess* contains the following activities:

- a. Answer the following questions (10 items); two scores for each item.
- b. Give the synonyms of the following words(5 items) one score for each item
- c. True/false items (5 items); one score for each correct item.
- d. Write a summary of the above passage that is not more than (50) words. (10 marks)

The subjects are asked to read the chosen passage carefully and to answer the questions attached to it. The total number of items is 20, and the total score is 60 marks.

3.6.2 Validity

Jackson (2008:70) states that validity is a test that measures and assesses what it intends to measure. The main types of validity are face, content, construct, and empirical. Face validity, as stated by Mcburney and White, (2009:131) is often used to indicate the idea that a test should appear superficially to test what it is supposed to test; On the other hand, content validity is defined by Phillips (2009:117) as the scope to which the tools of the study represent the content of the program as a representative sample of the items in a certain study. Low content validity means that the tool of the study does not represent the true sample of the study; whereas high content validity means that the tool represents a good balance of the study (ibid).

For ensuring the face and content validity of the tests, they were checked by experts in the field of methodology and linguistics. The experts were asked to give their notes regarding the test items; therefore, the researcher adjusted some procedures and items. Then, the experts agreed with a percentage of 100 that the tests were valid in their face and content.

* The jury members' names are presented here according to their scientific rank in the following:

Asst. Prof. Istabrq Rasheed (College of Basic Education, University of Mustansiriyh Ph.D.).

Asst. Prof. Mo'ayad Rasheed (M.A., Al-Mustansiriyah University / College of Basic Education)

Asst. Prof. Abdul Wahad Salman (College of Fine Arts / Baghdad University Ph.D.).

Instructor Bilal Ali (M.A., Al-Mustansiriyah University / College of Basic Education)

3.6.3 Pilot Study

After ensuring the jury's agreement on the validity of the tests, the posttests were piloted on 20 February 2019 on two samples from the same population. The pretest was administered to a group of 30 students at the 2nd stage. The posttest piloted on the same sample on 24 April, and 2019. The purposes of piloting the tests were to:

1. Guarantee the clarity of the test instructions and items,
2. Determine the difficulty level and discrimination power of test items,
3. Calculate the reliability of the tests, and
4. Determine the average time needed to answer the test items.

The results of the pilot study have been demonstrated. The directions of the test items are clear, and there is no ambiguity in the test. The time that students are allotted to answer questions fluctuates between 40 to 50 minutes. Hence, the average time needed for answering the test is 45 minutes. This refers that the time of one lesson is enough for students to answer each test.

3.6.4 Item Analysis

Mousavi (1999:187) stated that item analysis is a statistical process that manipulates students' responses to each item; it determines the difficulty and discrimination level of the items

In analyzing the items of the tests, the following steps are adopted:

1. Score the test papers
2. Rank the papers from the highest to the lowest score,
3. Divide the test papers, selected 27% of the papers with the highest scores and 27% of the papers with the lowest scores,
4. Tabulate the testees in the upper and lower groups who answered each item correctly,
5. Estimate the difficulty and the discriminatory power of each item.

The level of difficulty refers to the percentage of learners who answered the item correctly. That is, if the item obtained a high percentage, it will be easy; conversely if it obtained a low percentage, it will be difficult. Hence, if test items are too easy or too difficult, they will lack the necessary power of discrimination.

The item whose difficulty level ranges from 20% to 80% seems to be acceptable (Bloom, 1971:66).

Whiston (2013:73) states that discrimination power is “the degree to which an item correctly differentiates among the testees on the behavior domain of interest”. The purpose of item discrimination is to evaluate the quality of a particular item. This process is achieved by testing the relationship between total test performance and performance on each item. By discriminating the examiners can decide if an item discriminates positively or negatively, or does not discriminate at all (See table 3.8) and table (3.9).

<i>Q1</i>	<i>DL</i>	<i>DP</i>	<i>Q2</i>	<i>DL</i>	<i>DP</i>	<i>Q3</i>	<i>DL</i>	<i>DP</i>
1	0.45	0.33	1	0.56	0.18	1	0.42	0.36
2	0.55	0.31	2	0.66	0.32	2	0.78	0.30
3	0.50	0.42	3	0.62	0.36	3	0.47	0.37
4	0.52	0.30	4	0.52	0.32	4	0.75	0.32

Table 3.8 The Difficulty Level and Discriminating Power of the Pretest

Table 3.9 The Difficulty Level and Discriminating Power of the Posttest

<i>Q1</i>	<i>DL</i>	<i>DP</i>	<i>Q2</i>	<i>DL</i>	<i>DP</i>	<i>Q3</i>	<i>DL</i>	<i>DP</i>
1	0.56	0.32	1	0.56	0.19	1	0.43	0.37
2	0.45	0.35	2	0.69	0.35	2	0.78	0.30
3	0.51	0.43	3	0.65	0.37	3	0.59	0.39
4	0.55	0.39	4	0.54	0.33	4	0.77	0.36

3.6.5 Reliability of Tests

Reliability is “the consistency of test results on its repeated applications on the same sample under corresponding circumstances” (Das and Das, 2008:249). A test with good reliability indicates that the test-takers will get the same test score over repeated testing, as long as no other extraneous factors have affected the test score (Isaac and Micheal,1977:89)

The methods used to find out test reliability in the present study are Kuder- Richardson Formula 20 for objective test items and Alpha Cronbach for subjective ones. The K-R 20 is limited to tests in which each item has only two possible answers. The reliability sample consisted of 30 students selected from the same stage.

3.6.5.1 The Administration of Pretest

Kuder- Richardson formula 20 has been applied. The reliability of the test is found to be (0.87), which indicates that the test is reliable and acceptable. This procedure has been conducted concerning the objective items of the pre-test. Concerning the subjective test items, the Alpha Cronbach formula was also used to measure their consistency and reliability, yielding test reliability of 0.83 which is considered acceptable.

3.6.5.2 The Posttest

To assess the reliability of the objective and subjective items of the posttest, Kuder-Richardson formula 20 is employed by the researcher, yielding a reliability coefficient of (0.89), which indicates high reliability. Through the application of the Alpha Cronbach formula for subjective items, the reliability coefficient is found to be 0.88; which is considered acceptable.

3.6.6 The Final Administration of the Pre and Posttests

After ensuring the validity and reliability of the tests, and conducting statistical analysis of their items, the two tests were finally administered to the main sample of the current study (EG and CG) on the 24th of April, 2019, respectively. In this administration the following factors were considered:

1. The process of supervision and proctorship was done by the researcher herself with the assistance of a teacher from the same department to prevent cheating.
2. The two classrooms in which the tests were conducted were identical and had the same conditions in terms of size and lighting. There were enough spaces among students.
3. The instructions of the tests were made clear by the researcher herself.
4. The students were asked to write their answers on the test papers themselves (which were provided with ample space for this purpose) to save time and effort and to ensure a standardized format for all responses.
5. The students were informed in advance of the time allotted for each test (45 minutes for the pretest and 50 for the posttest).
6. The date of the posttest was declared in the school board announcements to inform the students of its importance and ensure their full presence.
7. The process of scoring the test papers was done by hiding the students' names and mixing the papers of the two groups to ensure the objectivity of scoring and avoid bias to any group.

3.6.7 The Scoring Scheme

Mehrens and Lehmann (1991: 54) state the objectivity of scoring refers to the extent to which the personal judgment of the scorer affects the score credited to a particular response. After conducting the test a scoring scheme is decided as follows:

1. In question one, giving two grades for the correct answer.
2. In questions two and three, one grade for the correct answer.
3. In question four, 10 marks are allotted
4. Giving zero for the wrong and blank answer.
5. The researcher counts the total grade for each student by collecting the grades of each correct answer.

Section Four: Results, Conclusions, and Recommendations

4.0 An Introductory Note

This section is dedicated to displaying the result of the study and its interpretation. Conclusions are drawn, as well as some recommendations are put down.

5.1 The Results

The aim of presenting the result is to verify the hypothesis of the study which indicates that “there is no statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the subjects who are taught reading comprehension by using peer tutoring technique and those who are taught reading comprehension by using the prescribed method”.

T-test formula is used for two independent samples to manipulate the data of the posttest. The mean score of the (EG) is 33.88 with an SD of 7.863 and that of the (CG) is 21.53 with an SD of 8.447. Hence, there is a statistically significant difference in the overall performance of both groups on the posttest in favor of the experimental group because the calculated t-value (6.506) is higher than the tabulated value (2.00) at a 0.05 level of significance and 68 degrees of freedom.

The result of the current study states that the null hypothesis should be rejected and replaced by the alternative hypothesis which states " there is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the students' performance in reading comprehension" in favor of the experimental group who was taught by using peer tutoring.

Table 4.1 The Statistics of the Overall Performance of the Study Subjects on the Reading Comprehension Posttest

Group	No	M	SD	DF	t-value		Level of Significance
					Calculated	Tabulated	
EG	35	33.88	7.863	68	6.506	2.00	0.05
CG	35	21.53	8.447				

5.1.2 Interpretation and Discussion of the Results

The finding of the present study provides empirical evidence that advocates the use of 'peer tutoring' as an effective technique for teaching reading comprehension for the following reasons:

1. Peer tutoring provides a suitable atmosphere for learners to express their views with their peers and teachers. Also, discussion helps learners participate in argumentations about controversial issues, and thus helps them make reasoned judgments based on their value systems.
2. By peer tutoring, learners develop high-level thinking strategies and acquire vital skills for learning and success in daily life.
3. Peer tutoring creates face promotive interaction: it means that group members motivate one another.
4. In the peer tutoring technique, the group is a whole entity and all the members are responsible for the success or the failure of the group. This means that this technique has made a combination of two processes a) cooperation; when learners help each other, and b) competition; when learners compete to find out the answers.

4.2 Conclusions

On the base of the findings of this study, the following conclusions have be drawn:

1. Peer tutoring is an effective technique for teaching reading comprehension. Such a technique provides good practice in the target language for learners attempting to communicate in the FL.
2. Peer tutoring reinforces the belief that "what learners can do together today, they can do alone tomorrow".
3. Peer tutoring is a productive technique because, in it, each group receives peer encouragement and personalized support. On the other hand, cooperative group members help each other to decode and organize words accurately in the passage.
4. Learners working in a socially structured group can learn significantly better than learners working individually.
5. Learners who might otherwise be too shy or uncertain to participate in whole-class lessons usually engage actively in small groups.

5.3 Recommendations

Some recommendations can be presented in the light of the study results and conclusions, such as:

1. Using peer tutoring technique as a novel technique for teaching reading comprehension.
2. Implementing peer tutoring technique in the classroom because learning occurs in the process of social interaction with others.
3. Providing curriculum material as well as training on how to instruct learners in using peer tutoring techniques.
4. Using peer tutoring as a new technique for teaching EFL learners in writing and communicative skills because gives learners opportunities to negotiate to mean.
5. Encouraging learners to pose their questions which are considered a good psychological tool to enhance their met cognitive thinking during reading.
6. Instructing learners to practice mutual feedback and debate. Peers motivate one another to abandon misconceptions and search for better solutions and higher quality understanding will emerge.

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Pretest

“Q1/ Read the passage carefully and then answer the following questions below.

(10 Marks)

Smash and Grab

“The expensive shops in a famous arcade near Piccadilly were just opening. At this time of the morning, the arcade was almost empty. Mr. Taylor, the owner of a jewelry shop was admiring a new display. Two of his assistants had been working busily since eight o'clock and had only just finished. Diamond necklaces and rings had been beautifully arranged on a background of black velvet. After gazing at the display for several minutes, Mr. Taylor went back into his shop.

The silence was suddenly broken when a large car, with its headlights on and its horn blaring, roared down the arcade. It came to a stop outside the jeweler's. One man stayed at the wheel while two others with a black stocking

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over their faces jumped out and smashed the window of the shop with iron bars. While this was going on, Mr. Taylor was upstairs. He and his staff began throwing furniture out of the window. Chairs and tables went flying into the arcade. One of the thieves was struck by a heavy statue, but he was too busy helping himself to diamonds to notice any pain. The raid was all over in three minutes, for the men scrambled back into the car and it moved off at a fantastic speed. Just as it was leaving, Mr. Taylor rushed out and ran after it throwing ashtrays and vases, but it was impossible to stop the thieves. They had got away with thousands of pounds worth of diamonds".

1. Did a large car enter an arcade near Piccadilly or not?
2. How many thieves got out of the car?
3. Where was the owner of the shop?
4. Did they smash the window or not?
5. How long did the raid last?"

Q2 / Give synonyms of the following words

1. Expensive
2. Almost
3. gazing
4. smashed
5. Several

(5 Marks)

Q3/ Choose the correct answer

(5 Marks)

1. His whole future depends (at /on) these exams.
2. Our vicar is always (raising / rising) money.
3. The (loss / loose) of his wife was a great blow to him.
4. I left home (in common / in a hurry) so as not to miss the train.
5. He has done (his /him) best.

Q4/ Write a summary of the above passage in not more than (60) words.

(10 Marks)

"Q1/ Read the passage carefully and then answer the following questions below.

(10 Marks)

A puma at large

“Pumas are large, cat-like animals which are found in America. When reports came into London Zoo that a wild puma had been spotted forty-five miles south of London, they were not taken seriously. However, as the evidence began to accumulate, experts from the Zoo felt obliged to investigate, for the descriptions given by people who claimed to have seen the puma were extraordinarily similar.

The hunt for the puma began in a small village where a woman picking strawberries saw a large cat only five yards away from her. It immediately ran away when she saw it, and experts confirmed that a puma will not attack a human being unless it is cornered. The search proved difficult, for the puma was often observed at one place in the morning and at another place twenty miles away in the evening. Wherever it went, it left behind it a trail of dead deer and small animals like rabbits. Pawprints were seen in a number of places and puma fur was found clinging to bushes. Several people complained of cat-like noises at night and a businessman on a fishing trip saw the puma up a tree. The experts were now fully convinced that the animal was a puma, but where had it come from? As no pumas had been reported missing from any zoo in the country, this one must have been in the possession of a private collector and somehow managed to escape. The hunt went on for several weeks, but the puma was not caught. It is disturbing to think that a dangerous wild animal is still at large in the quiet countryside”.

1. What sorts of reports were received by London zoo?
2. Who saw it first?
3. What did it leave behind it?
4. Were paw – prints and puma fur found as well or not?
5. What was heard at night?”

Q2 / Give synonyms of the following words

(5 Marks)

- 1- Spotted
- 2- - Obligated to
- 3- - Claimed
- 4- - Extraordinary
- 5- Similar

6- Q3 Write (T) to correct sentence and (F) to incorrect one (5 Marks)

1. The reports were similar in nature
2. The animal seen up at tree.
3. The hunt for puma began in a small town.
4. A puma did not stay in one place.

5. The experts were sure that the animal really was a puma.

**Q4a/ Write a summary of the above passage in not more than (60) words.
(10 Marks)**

Posttest

Q1/ Read the passage carefully and then answer the following questions below. (10 Marks)

The Double Life of Alfred

“These days, people who do manual work often receive far more money than clerks who work in offices. People who work in offices are frequently referred to as 'white collar workers' for the simple reason that they usually wear a collar and a tie to go to work. Such is human nature, that a great many people are often willing to sacrifice higher pay for the privilege of becoming white-collar workers. This can give rise to curious situations, as it did in the case of Alfred Bloggs who worked as a dustman for the Ellesmere Corporation. When he got married, Alf was too embarrassed to say anything to his wife about his job. He simply told her that he worked for the Corporation. Every morning, he left home dressed in a fine black suit. He then changed into overalls and spent the next eight hours as a dustman. Before returning home at night, he took a shower and changed back into his suit. Alf did this for over two years and his fellow dustmen kept his secret. Alf's wife has never discovered that she married a dustman and she never will, for Alf has just found another job. He will soon be working in an office as a junior clerk. He will be earning only half as much as he used to, but he feels that his rise in status is well worth the loss of money. From now on, he will wear a suit all day and others will call him 'Mr. Bloggs', not 'Alf'”.

1. What did Alfred tell his wife when they got married?
2. What did he dress each morning before he left home?
3. Did he change into overalls or not?
4. What did he do before going home at night?
5. For how long Alfred did this last.”

Q2 / Give synonyms of the following words (5 Marks)

- 1- Sacrifice.....
- 2- Privilege.....
- 3- Curious.....
- 4- Embarrassed.....
- 5- Discovered

Q3/ Write (T) to correct sentence and (F) to incorrect one (5 marks)

1. His fellow dustman keep his secret.
2. His wide did not know the truth.
3. People who work in offices are frequently referred to as “white collar workers”
4. Alf was not embarrassed to tell his wife about his job.
5. Alf’s wife has never discovered that she married a dustman.

Q4/ Write a summary of the above passage in not more than (60) words. (10 marks)

Q1/ Read the passage carefully and then answer the following questions below, (10 Marks)

An Unknown Goddess

“Some time ago, an interesting discovery was made by archaeologists on the Aegean island of Kea. An American team explored a temple which stands in an ancient city on the promontory of Ayia Irini. The city at one time must have been prosperous, for it enjoyed a high level of civilization. Houses -- often three storeys high -- were built of stone. They had large rooms with beautifully decorated walls. The city was equipped with a drainage system, for a great many clay pipes were found beneath the narrow streets. The temple which the archaeologists explored was used as a place of worship from the fifteenth century B.C. until Roman times. In the most sacred room of temple, clay fragments of fifteen statues were found. Each of these represented a goddess and had, at one time, been painted. The body of one statue was found among remains dating from the fifteenth century B.C. Its missing head happened to be among remains of the fifth century B.C. This head must have been found in Classical times and carefully preserved. It was very old and precious even then. When the archaeologists reconstructed the fragments, they were amazed to find that the goddess turned out to be a very modern-looking woman. She stood three feet high and her hands rested on her hips. She was

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wearing a full-length skirt which swept the ground. Despite her great age, she was very graceful indeed, but, so far, the archaeologists have been unable to discover her identity”.

1. Where did the archaeologists find clay fragments?
2. What did they represent?
3. Had they once been painted or not?
4. Where was its heard found?
5. Were the fragments reconstructed or not?”

Q2 / Give synonyms of the following words

(5 marks)

1. Explored
2. Ancient
3. Prosperous
4. Beneath
5. Fragments

Q3/ Write (T) to correct sentence and (F) to incorrect one (5 marks)

1. Her identity was known.
2. The temple which the archaeologists explored was used as a place of worship.
3. She stood eleven feet high and her hands did not rested on her hips.
4. She was wearing a full-length skirt.
5. Beneath means ‘under ‘

Q4/ Write a summary of the above passage in not more than (60) words. (10 marks)

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