



Analyzing the Challenges and Strategies of Teaching Reading Comprehension to English Language Learners with Learning Disabilities

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Abstract

This qualitative study explores the difficulties and approaches related to enhancing ELL students' reading comprehension for students with learning disabilities in Lahore District, Pakistan. The aim of this study was to explore the general difficulties faced by ELLs with learning disabilities in comprehending written material and identifying effective strategies for teaching these students. The study participants are five teachers currently practising special education, all with a minimum of 5 years of experience in teaching in the Lahore district, Pakistan. The methodology used is interviews with teachers and the data collected is analysed through the approach of thematic analysis. The theoretical background for the study was Vygotsky's concept of ZPD, as the latter focuses on the notion that certain tasks should be slightly beyond the learner's immediate grasp. Linguistic challenges emerged as a result of language barriers, cultural issues rooted in diverse cultural backgrounds, and environmental constraints that hindered the provision of special education due to limited resources. Key teaching practices that earlier have been described as effective include the use of graphic aids and organizers, differentiated and individualized approaches to student instruction, and culturally related instructions. The general implications of the study are the need for continuous professional development of teachers; the integration and collaboration between special education teachers and other stakeholders and the general need for education, learning, and development of ELL learners with learning disabilities. In sum, this study emphasized the need to support ELLs with learning disabilities in Pakistani language teaching contexts about reading comprehension and provided useful recommendations and suggestions to practitioners and policymakers for improving the poor reading skills that characterize this group of learners.

Keywords: Challenges in Reading, Cultural Differences, Inclusive Practices, Learning Disabilities, Reading Comprehension Strategies, Resource Limitations, Special Education, Zone of Proximal Development.

1. Introduction

ELLs are students for whom English is not their first language or for whom English is taught as an additional language to their first language(s) (ASHA, n. d.). Such students experience many significant difficulties in the process of education, for instance, learning disability, language impairment, and sociocultural adaptation (Artiles & Kozleski, 2007). Specifically, ELLs with learning disabilities are always a special consideration because of the various complexities they present. Learning disability (LD) is a term that describes the learning disorder which is a diverse and broad classification of disabilities that involve a student's ability to process, understand, or utilize information, be it spoken or written, in learning situations (ASHA, n. d.). Such disorders are the consequence of atypical brain development and organization. They include dyslexia, which is difficulty in reading; dysgraphia, which is difficulty in writing; and dyscalculia, which is difficulty with mathematics or related tasks. Bilingual students with learning disabilities may struggle due to the language barrier. Learning disabilities among ELLs can vary widely based on the population and the definition used. However, the studies show that ELLs have higher chances of being placed in special education programs for children with learning disability, which provides evidence of further necessity of identification and remedial measures (Snow & Biancarosa, 2003). Acquiring language and learning disabilities jointly complicate the learning process for students presenting these issues and for teachers who ought to teach and support them. However, to prepare some practical solutions for these learners, it is important to look at the appropriate teaching methodology for ELLs with LDs to enhance teaching and learning purposes (Cummins, 2008).

1.1. ELL and LD in Pakistan

English is a very significant language in Pakistan as it is often used to gain education as well as for job promotion. Nevertheless, there are difficulties in content acquisition such as ELL students' language barrier for English language learners and LD students for learning disabled students. Pakistan also has ELLs from multilingual and multicultural backgrounds, where Urdu is the official language of Pakistan, and English language is used as a medium of instruction in many schools (Tariq, 2018). As the above discussion shows, ELLs have numerous cognitive transactions in switching between the two languages used in the classroom: L1 and English for academic purposes. However, it has become evident that learning disabilities among ELLs in Pakistan are increasing despite having limited literature and research in this area. Other students who experience learning disabilities encounter difficulties when it comes to learning to read, write, and do mathematics, which are significantly influential in affecting educational progression (Mahmood, 2016).

There is a significant shortfall of scholarship addressing how education policy and practice in Pakistan attend to ELLs and students with LD. Housing a large number of such students, limited research-based support services, and professional development opportunities are available to teachers to meet such students' needs (Tariq, 2018). Thus,

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the following recommendations should be considered to meet these challenges of teaching ELLs with learning disabilities in Pakistan: Cultural and linguistic accommodations should be employed when teaching ELL students having learning disabilities. Teachers and principals should use responsive learning strategies, including implementing personalized education plans, accommodations, and adjustments for reading instruction for these students.

The following article discusses how reading comprehension is important for success in schools. It is firmly established that reading comprehension is one of the most important skills that such students need to acquire at school, to achieve good results in each subject. It involves understanding and interpreting text to derive meaning and connect it to existing knowledge (Huang, 2019). This study of reading develops the ability of the students to acquire new information, understand its meaning, and explain such facts and information to other people.

In academic contexts, the ability to read with some understanding is important for students to understand textbooks, research articles, and other academic documents. Thirdly, it pertains to the comprehension of concepts. Students need to analyze information from various sources to arrive at improved conclusions (Huang, 2019). Moreover, it results in better test performances and academic accomplishments, as indicated by Kim (2020) and Melzer (2016).

1.2. Rationale for the Study

Based on these considerations, there is an obvious rationale for investigating reading comprehension difficulties in ELLs with learning disabilities because both factors are significant educational concerns. Initially, problems with linguistic and cultural accommodation present ELLs with challenges that affect their English reading comprehension development. Secondly, students with learning disabilities may struggle with reading or require specific accommodations to be appropriately taught during reading sessions (Swanson & O'Connor, 2009). As a targeted investigation of specific vulnerable populations, this research aims to investigate the nature of learning disability in ELL students and identify instructional methods that will promote comprehension abilities in these students. Educators and policymakers must understand these challenges and take action to improve students' academic achievement.

2. Literature Review

In the following section, some of the challenges of ELLs in reading comprehension in English will be described based on linguistic, cultural, and educational variables that exist for learners acquiring the language (Abedi & Herman, 2010). These obstacles may affect their way of processing text thus affecting their results in the school.

A major concern for ELLs is that they are not familiar with the English language to the same extent and, as such, may have limited literacy skills a consideration of large-scale comprehension of texts is going to be relative to their language abilities. ELLs may have difficulties learning particular word meanings, grammatical relations, and certain phrasal expressions, which are very important for reading comprehension. There are other barriers to learning that ELL students experience in comprehending text which is gleaned from cultural differences. Since the context of the texts may be inaccessible and may contain cultural concepts that ELLs can hardly understand (Abedi & Herman, 2010), necessary background knowledge can also be lacking. More so, ELL students may communicate differently in their writing and reading, expecting distinct features and meanings from the text (Liang & Dole, 2006). The problems that are inherent in education; are the lower use of good reading materials and instructional techniques that do not fit the needs of ELLs, and rather give a further blow to reading comprehension (August & Shanahan, 2006). ELLs can also experience difficulties in comprehending scholastic materials due to language on lexical background constraints including content domain vocabulary when content language is required (Abedi & Herman, 2010).

To meet these needs, there are instructional interventions that would help to increase children's command of English as a second language encourage the growth of new words, and cultivate cultural sensitivity. Gaining access to appropriate reading materials and other types of texts is crucial for ELLs to improve their fluency and comprehension skills (August & Shanahan, 2006). Thus, the following are the lists of specific challenges that ELLs with learning disabilities commonly encounter.

2.1. Challenges Encountered by ELLs with Learning Disabilities

Specifically, learning disabilities complicate the difficulties that ELLs have in learning English, along with overlaying them with cognitive impairments to increase the difficulties these students have in comprehending reading materials (Loreti, 2014). These may affect their learning ability and social interaction, and consequently replaying their performance if not provided with adequate assistance. The use of differentiated language is one of the biggest barriers to learning for students categorized under the ELLs with learning disabilities. These students have ELA deficits and the subskills involved in reading include using more vocabulary, syntactic structures, and general comprehension strategies. The challenges they face can make it difficult for them to understand and engage with English text effectively. Also, children with learning difficulties that affect cognitive processing such as dyslexia and Auditory Processing Disorder augment obstacles related to reading difficulties for ELLs. These limitations influence ELLs reading development, which in turn responds to word identification, text and textual features, general comprehension, and comprehension of main ideas and details. A second academic challenge that ELLs with LD encounter is limitations in working memory, which affects their ability to actively process the information encountered during the reading process. This restricts their capability of mapping new information against old knowledge which is essential for comprehending the information.

Furthermore, executive functioning difficulties, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), can impact English language learners (ELLs) with learning disabilities by hindering their ability to maintain focus during reading lessons. This can make it difficult to stay concentrated while reading and comprehending the material. Additionally, the lack of adequate support services for many ELLs is another significant challenge they encounter. This can be attributed to limited English proficiency, which may result in restricted access to necessary support services and resources in certain specialized fields. Consequently, children in these circumstances may struggle to receive the appropriate interventions and accommodations needed to facilitate their learning according to their abilities. The challenges require a comprehensive intervention technique, involving expert methodology, instructional approach, early identification, and remedial education. It also requires a collaborative approach that includes input from teachers, parents, and professionals (Swanson & O'Connor, 2009). This paper emphasizes that learning disabilities make it necessary for generalizing ELLs to receive differentiated instruction that caters to their unique needs to help them improve their ability to comprehend texts and succeed academically.

This paper focuses on the teaching strategies for reading comprehension in general and explores the various aspects of reading. Overcoming difficulties of learners with learning disabilities in comprehending text in ELL can be achieved by incorporating various teaching strategies based on instructional approaches that fit ELL's needs. These strategies are meant to reinforce language skill acquisition, increase the cognitive processing of text information, and encourage readers' active involvement in the text-reading process. (Gersten et al., 2008, p. 29). One effective technique is known as direct teaching of strategies. This involves explaining to students what strategies are and demonstrating how they can be used while reading. These strategies include making predictions, asking questions, making sense of unknown terms or concepts, summarizing the text, and relating the text to one's own experiences. This approach assists the ELLs with learning disabilities learn how the strategies applied can be done on their own.

The other key approach involves directly explaining and teaching words in a comprehensible context for ELLs using objects, pictures, word examples, and relevant items. This strategy is based on teaching and practising high-utility words and, more substantially, the subject-specific words within a text. Even here ELLs with learning disabilities need to be mindful of the text structures like cause and effect, similarities and differences, and intention and solution. It also helps them to arrange and analyze materials more proficiently. Regarding the teaching and learning aspect, graphic organizers are helpful for ELLs with LD to assist them in comprehending certain components and structures of the text. These organizers facilitate meaning construction by presenting an illustration of how the text's content and features are connected and related to one another. To explain the concept of scaffolded reading tasks, it is necessary to define the term 'scaffolding' in this context and to describe the kinds of scaffolding. It can be done before reading, as a way of revisiting what students know before going through the text and during reading, for example through guided reading and think-aloud.

The multisensory approaches can also help and benefit ELL students with learning disabilities when teaching and reaching for reading comprehension through visual stimuli and manipulatives eventually and kinesthetic successive. Taking into account the student's needs as a priority, this approach caters to all learning styles. Another effective method involves integrating technology, which can help with reading comprehension through the use of interactive tools, text-to-speech software, audiobooks, and other related resources. These tools are just helpful tools that are targeted to make facilities more user-friendly for people with disability. Finally, yet importantly, two processes are the keys to success – collaboration and differentiation. Working with special educators, speech therapists, accommodation specialists, and other professionals to develop ways and means of making changes to instructions given to these ELLs and teaching them in small groups and means that can be used to teach these students can go a long way in improving their reading skills among ELL learners with learning disabilities. This way of managing lessons and concepts is quite beneficial to diverse students, and it fosters academic success. Applying these approaches can contribute to the enhancement of learning and implementation for reasonably and permanently preceding ELLs with learning disabilities so that they can understand texts in academic situations.

2.2. Strategies for English Language Learners (ELLs) with Learning Disabilities

Cores suggest that if these strategies are adopted the reading comprehension results of ELLs with learning difficulties will be enhanced. These include strategies aimed at improving vocabulary and reading comprehension, handling learning disabilities that affect students' ability to process information, and facilitating full participation of the student concerning the reading text. Some studies in this aspect include a combination of explicit instructions about the strategies involved in teaching reading comprehension as helpful to ELLs with LD. Therefore, I've worked on demonstrating how to use prior and other strategies including predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing for improved comprehension.

Direct instruction of vocabulary, moreover using the words incidentally has also been reported to be functional for EL learners with LDs. This strategy enables students to gain new vocabulary and independently decode the meaning of words, which is critical for comprehending the passage. Also, enhancing ELLs with learning disabilities' ability to read cognitive strategies for identifying and comprehending different text structures can improve their reading comprehension capabilities. Graphic organizers, which use visual displays of information found in the text aid the coordination of knowledge within students and in particular the ability to make appropriate connections. Hence, the facilitation of reading tasks through the division of the tasks into several sessions, which are easily manageable by the learners, accompanied by necessary support for ELL learners with learning disabilities is appropriate. For instance,

instead of relying on words and sounds alone, the use of other forms of teaching aids such as drawings, and body movements when explaining a concept also do well in ensuring that these students comprehend what is being taught. Adapting the use of technology tools such as text-to-speak software and audiobooks in teaching reading to ELLs with a learning disability will benefit the teaching-learning process. Last, integrating with special education educators and other professionals to modify the way of teaching can enhance the learners' performance in reading comprehension since the lessons are categorized to meet the myriad of students' needs. In conclusion, evidence has shown that these strategies can be beneficial when put into practice since they help ELLs who suffer from learning disabilities better comprehend what they are reading in academic contexts such as classrooms.

2.3. Gaps in Existing Research

Although there is a vast amount of literature, on how to teach the ELLs with LD students in the teaching of reading comprehension the following gaps can be noted in the literature. Surprisingly, there is only a little research that targets ELLs who also have learning disabilities, though the aforementioned difficulties suggest that further study of this population is warranted. Further research should be conducted to explore the detailed aspects of their experiences and to address their requirements as effectively as possible. In addition, although some methods such as explicit teaching and vocabulary enhancement have received some support, further research is necessary to determine which approach is most effective for improving the reading comprehension skills of ELL students with learning disabilities. It is important to note that there is a lack of cross-sectional studies on how English Language Learners (ELLs) with learning disabilities comprehend text, taking into account cultural and language factors. It is crucial to ensure that assessments and interventions are culturally appropriate to address the specific needs of these learners. Furthermore, there is a paucity of literature on developing teachers who work with these children. Therefore, more research proposals focusing on training teachers to provide the best solutions are needed. It also foresees the necessity of execution of longitudinal studies to assess the impact of interventions for the ELLs suffering from learning disability in the future. The limited information from past studies may enable one to determine the extent of the effectiveness of these interventions in a year and to get the best practices on the matter. There is a paucity of literature emphasizing how parents can assist in the teaching of reading comprehension to ELLs having learning disabilities. To fill in existing gaps more research should be conducted concerning the effects of parental involvement on students.

Despite the potential that technology has as a delivery tool for meaningful reading comprehension instruction, there is a scarcity of research addressing its usefulness for ELLs with learning deficits. There is still much research to be done to find out how technological advancements can be used to get the best out of the students. To fill these gaps in the literature, it is important to establish the appropriate strategies that should be implemented to enhance the results of learning comprehension in ELL students with learning disabilities. Future research should attempt to develop such gaps and make significant contributions to a better understanding of how to help individuals in this category.

3. Theoretical Framework

This theory is often referred to as the Zone of Proximal Development, which presents a kind of timeline that helps to indicate which skills a child is currently developing or is about to develop, according to the learning theorist Vygotsky. This is from Vygotsky's theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which is a theoretical framework that can be used in managing a focalisor's investigation into teaching reading comprehension to ELLs with learning disabilities. According to the ZPD, learning happens at a place where a learner can thrive at a higher level than his current capability with the aid of a better peer or an expert. From the perspective of teaching and reading comprehension the ZPD of ELLs with learning disabilities is considered to work within the domain of learning activities that is slightly beyond the current capacity of the learner, but within the scope of the learning potential of the child.

The ZPD framework supports what Van Meter and Pressley (1999) described as a theory of scaffolded instruction by enhancing the teachers' ability to offer support aimed at achieving better learning comprehension (Gersten et al., 2008). Specific support for ELLs with LD might entail accelerated instruction in important skills such as comprehending and applying reading strategies, understanding specific vocabulary, and identifying different text structures. The ZPD approach will be useful for approaching the tasks in the class as it will allow for selecting the most appropriate level for each ELL with learning disabilities and providing the necessary support for enhancing their reading skills. This approach recognizes culture and language as valid characteristics of learning and provides a focus on interaction and engagement in learning.

3.1. ZPD and Reading Comprehension for ELLs with Learning Disabilities

The concept of ZPD Vygotsky thus appears to be one of the most useful theoretical models for explaining the overall reading comprehension difficulties in learning among ELL students with low learning ability and for making potential interventions for the improvement of the issues (Vygotsky, 1978).

The ZPD postulates that ELLs with learning disabilities have a certain "zone" of developmental potential that includes problem-solving and knowledge acquisition, both within the learner's potential and with the assistance of a more knowledgeable partner or teacher (Vygotsky, 1978). When it comes to reading comprehension, it suggests that these students will not be able to understand text at a level that they are incapable of understanding but would be something they are developing towards and can only be possible with some assistance. This understanding underlines the necessity to address the needs of ELLs with learning disabilities and offer the necessary support and environmental accommodations to help them transfer from the level they operate within to the level that is possible for them.

According to the ZPD framework, it is advisable to teach ELLs with learning disabilities with materials that are slightly higher than their instructional level but not beyond their realization zone since they can learn and perform under the assistance of a teacher or a more knowledgeable peer, as per the social learning theory of Vigotky (1978). This process can be described as compatible with the idea of scaffolded instruction, which implies that the teacher gives specific guidance for the students to attain the desired level of understanding. For instance, Hutchinson (2003) illustrates that teachers can use graphic organizers to facilitate the teaching and learning process of ELLs as it makes them able to connect ideas which in turn enhances comprehension, a concept supported by Gersten and colleagues (2008). In addition, it is crucial to introduce direct teaching of reading as a strategy where learners with disabilities can predict, ask questions, clarify, and summarize to enable themselves and enhance their skills. (Gersten et al., 2008). In summary, the theoretical model of the ZPD developed by Vygotsky can be considered an effective instrument in identifying the deficits in reading comprehension of ELL students with learning disabilities and using this theoretical background to construct an efficient learning strategy. One can agree with the statement that targeted support, extending just a bit beyond their existing knowledge, but within their capability for growth with appropriate coaching, will enable these students to read with understanding and succeed academically.

4. Research Questions

The research questions and objectives of this study are designed to explore the following:

1. What are the difficulties associated with learning among ELLs with learning disabilities in comprehending texts?
2. What methods can be helpful in improving the reading comprehension of ELLs with LD?
3. What implications for practice can educators and policymakers derive from this study regarding reading instruction for ELLs with learning disabilities?

5. Research Methodology

Therefore, the research undertakes a qualitative study method to examine the challenges and practices of teaching reading comprehension to ELLs with learning disabilities in the Lahore district, Pakistan. Qualitative research is preferred when examining subjects in depth, and in this case, it will be instrumental in understanding the teachers' standings, observations, and behaviors concerning teaching reading comprehension to this group. For the present study, the participants were selected from the Lahore district of Pakistan and included five teachers with at least five years of experience teaching in special education. The criteria for participant selection make sure that the participants have adequate knowledge and experience to contribute to the understanding of the difficulties involved in teaching reading comprehension to ELLs with learning disabilities, as well as ways to ameliorate the same. Interviews with teachers and students are conducted using semi-structured questions and the lessons are observed in class. There are advantages to semi-structured interviewing because the interview style is guided but not as rigid as a structured interview, which is beneficial when exploring teachers' views, incidents, and practices concerning teaching students to comprehend what they read. Class observations can also give good instances and yield tangible evidence of processes that occur in a class that can help one see how the teacher incorporates certain strategies in managing ELLs with learning disabilities in the class. This is in line with data analysis where attention is focused on the thematic analysis of the teachers' responses. Thematic analysis is a process of drawing out, constructing, and reporting patterns (themes) in the data collected (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Drawing from this approach, it was possible to note typical trends of general difficulty as well as patterns connected to the problem and its solutions in an attempt to teach reading comprehension to ELLs with learning disability; thus, revealing helpful information on what should be done. In conclusion, this methodology can be seen as a meticulous and all-inclusive toolbox to look at challenges and approaches to teaching reading comprehension to ELLs with learning disabilities in the Lahore district, Pakistan. This study would like to employ a qualitative method integrating interviews and observations and utilize thematic analysis so that valuable suggestions could be given to educators as well as policymakers who deal with this population.

6. Analysis of teachers' responses according to the research questions

6.1. Teacher 1

Response: "First, they face issues with language because they have difficulty with comprehending English writing: language usage, particularly the meaning of certain words and their grammar is a problem; second, learning disabilities can prevent them from understanding concepts: while they can read the text, they cannot make likely conclusions while making a synoptic view of the text."

Response: "Graphic organizers and any other physical things that connect the tapes– I understand it will help these students to structure their thoughts and to see the structure of the text better. In addition, I use many practical tasks and examples from real life to introduce information to the students."

It will be valuable for educators to participate in professional development workshops aimed at developing strategies for ELLs with LD; Furthermore, the policymakers should intervene by offering increased support and services for inclusive schools to support these students.

6.2. Teacher 2

Response: "One of the main issues is the lack of funding and additional learning materials or assistance for these learners; often, they cannot acquire supplementary or remedial resources that may benefit them, such as tutoring and tailored approaches to improving their learning."

Thus, it becomes critical to differentiate the instruction, and this requires that the teacher offer direct instruction, which will involve identifying particular students who need instructions and then differentiating with them individually.

Response: “Students with special needs should involve more educators especially those specializing in special education and other professionals essential for the well-being of these children more funding and resources should be provided by the policymakers in support of inclusion of the students with learning disabilities”.

6.3. Teacher 3

However, one challenge is the lack of adequate understanding of cultural diversity. ELLs with learning impairments hail from diverse cultures, and their cultural experiences may differ from those of native English students in some way.

Response: He found that to engage these students, curriculum integration of cultural references and examples is useful to make the lecturer and lesson relatable. He also employs a lot of group and peer interaction in the classroom.

Response: Teachers should retain professional development related to cultural sensitivity and diversity; therefore, they are well-prepared to address the needs of ELLs with learning disabilities. Education policymakers should incorporate cohesiveness, understanding, and relevance to the ELL student population within curriculum and instruction practices.

6.4. Teacher 4

There is a weakness of low specificity concerning instructions.

More often, they are addressed in the same way as the other students with LDs as a group, which does not get them far.

Response: It helped me to identify that I give more attention to these students requiring extra attention like one or two students in a class, a teacher may provide them with individual coaching or lead them to a small group teaching for them to understand the information I repeat it a lot until it gets into their heads.

Response: Teachers must demand increased funding and provision of facilities such as furniture and equipment, teaching aids, and services for such students, including the use of computers and other similar equipment, and trump for more favourable policies for such learners, teachers, and institutions implementing policies for the habilitation of such children in school.

6.5. Teacher 5

Response: “Thus, one of the difficulties is that there are very few cases when there are no misconceptions in learning disabilities, first, many students with learning disabilities remain unrecognized or misidentified; as a result, they do not receive proper guidance and instructions.”

Response: “Regarding teaching strategies/techniques, I have noted that the use of multiple teaching modalities like oral, graphical, and tangible can work well,” I added, “Noting that students with attention deficits have too much reinforcement and positive feedback to help them develop confidence.”

Educational administrators should be trained on how to identify students with learning disabilities. This also implies that policymakers need to ensure that all policies are in place and every child is given a fair chance to learn with adequate support.

7. Thematic analysis

Analysis of the findings in this section, I provide the thematic analysis of the teachers’ responses on the difficulties and possible approaches to the implementation of comprehension instruction for ELLs with LDs and possible implications for practicing teachers and educational policymakers.

The exceptional learner aspect of ELLs often poses learning difficulties in integration due to language barriers and issues with vocabulary. These students cannot understand texts in clear English, which limits their reading ability. If not addressed, a child might struggle to overcome these barriers thus affecting his/her academic achievement and learning ability. In the case of ELLs with learning disabilities, culture also poses a seemingly significant cause of difficulties in comprehending texts. It is equally important to appreciate that most of these students come with different cultural realities and therefore may have different ways of perceiving and comprehending what is written. Those educators working with such learners must understand such cultural variations and integrate culturally appropriate content into their lessons so that the learners may have a better appreciable way of understanding what is taught in class.

Another problem area highlighted is the lack of accommodation and resources for ELLs with Learning disabilities. Schools are poorly equipped to teach these students and provide them with extra support such as coaching and materials which are needed to develop better reading comprehension. This underlines the urgency of raising the financing and focusing on promoting the creation of the conditions, with which students with considerations can be fit. To tackle these challenges, teachers often use teaching strategies such as graphic organizers to help guide students with learning disabilities (LDs) and English language learners (ELLs). Graphic organizers help these students by providing a visual plan and structure for understanding the organization of a text, making it easier for them to comprehend and focus on the content. Incorporating the need to support the learning needs of ELL students with Learning disabilities teachers note that differentiation for learners should be done at the individual level. Since learners differ in their specific difficulties and ways of learning, teachers need to adapt the approaches implemented to solve or mitigate these challenges.

Including multicultural components in instruction is also crucial. In the same way, teachers should ensure that the content used in teaching enhances the cultural references for ELLs with LD, thereby assisting them in learning. To overcome these challenges and put into practice the strategies suggested, there must be prepared educators who receive sustained PD and training. This training should involve what culturally responsive instruction means for diverse ELLs, especially those with learning disabilities, and how to implement culturally responsive instruction. In conclusion, there is a need for all students regardless of their ethnic backgrounds and abilities to be integrated into education and supported. Inclusive education policies should also be promoted, and school-based resources should be directed to supporting ELLs with learning disabilities so that the students' needs increase effective access to education.

Table 1. Summary of the Themes

Research Question	Initial Codes	Sub-Themes	Main Themes	Theoretical Framework
RQ1: Challenges	Language barrier	Language proficiency	Linguistic challenges	Vygotsky's ZPD
RQ2: Strategies	Cultural differences	Cultural relevance	Cultural challenges	
	Lack of resources	Resource availability	Resource challenges	
	Graphic organizers	Visual aids	Visual support	
RQ3: Implications	Differentiation	Individualized support	Tailored instruction	
	Cultural integration	Cultural relevance	Culturally relevant	
	Professional development	Training and Awareness	Educator preparedness	
	Inclusive practices	Inclusive education	Support for diversity	

7.1. Identification of Key Challenges Faced by ELLs with Learning Disabilities in Reading Comprehension

The thematic analysis of the teachers' responses highlights several key challenges faced by English Language Learners (ELLs) with learning disabilities in reading comprehension: The thematic analysis of the teachers' responses highlights several key challenges faced by English Language Learners (ELLs) with learning disabilities in reading comprehension:

Linguistic Challenges: They do not have adequate language to cope with language delays and insufficient word knowledge through which they cannot understand English language-inclined texts.

Cultural Challenges: Culturally relevant instruction can be a valuable resource for helping English Language Learners (ELLs) with learning disabilities to interpret and understand the content they are reading, as cultural differences can present barriers to the way students comprehend text.

Resource Challenges: The absence of support, proper guidance, and suitable learning materials for ELLs with learning disabilities hinders their reading comprehension.

Following the data, the assessment of the key components of effective teaching strategies has been described in detail. Based on the teachers' responses and thematic analysis, several effective teaching strategies can be identified to support the reading comprehension development of ELLs with learning disabilities: Based on the teachers' responses and thematic analysis, several effective teaching strategies can be identified to support the reading comprehension development of ELLs with learning disabilities:

Visual Support: When ELLs have learning disabilities, graphic organizers and visual aids can help them understand the writer's perspective and the organization of ideas in the text.

Tailored Instruction: It is further important to provide specific practical differentiated and individualized instruction catering to the learning needs of ELLs with learning disabilities to enhance their reading comprehension abilities.

Culturally Relevant Instruction: Integrating cultural artefacts into the teaching process can be beneficial when working with ELLs with learning disabilities as they make the connection and can better understand the notion.

Professional Development: Teachers and other educational personnel are to undergo training and professional development in areas of cultural sensitivity, diversity, and instructional strategies for ELLs with learning disabilities to enhance their understanding of instructional practices for facilitating the development of their reading comprehension.

Based on the areas enumerated above, the following is a brief on features that teachers could adopt in the attempt to enhance the reading comprehension of the ELLs with learning disabilities: With such strategies in place, ELLs with learning disabilities are assured of a favorable environment where they can excel. Specific challenges identified for this premise and conclusion include the following Language Proficiency ELL students with learning disabilities have difficulties in comprehending text in English: because of their restricted linguistic knowledge, they tend to have sizable difficulties in comprehending the English language, particularly in regions such as the use of complex words and complex grammar forms:

Cultural Differences: This affects how ELL learning-disabled students decode and make sense of text experiences with text difficulty.

Resource Limitations: The absence of assets and services to the target population, such as increased and distinct instructional material for ELL with LD students, results in severe barriers to their enhancement of reading comprehensibility.

Intercessions for Teaching ELLs with Learning Disabilities Nitza Arpin's successful teaching strategies for ELLs with learning disabilities include the following:

Visual Support: Graphic organizers and visual displays enhance the ELL's learning disabilities by providing them with a framework of thinking to aid in the understanding of text structure needed for comprehension.

Tailored Instruction: It is imperative to underpin an elaboration of specific teaching strategies regarding differentiated and individualized instruction targeted ELL students with LD to promote their comprehensive reading abilities.

Culturally Relevant Instruction: This paper explains how to address culture in the ELLs with learning disabilities classroom: Using culture ensures that students are engaged with the material to increase their understanding of important concepts.

Professional Development: Educators need training in diversity, cultural competence, and practices to support ELLs with learning disabilities for improved learning and reading proficiency.

In sum, the results of the current study stress the need for identifying linguistic and cultural differences, and instructional and cultural resources when aiming to enhance ELLs' learning disability reading skills with Anglophone classroom teachers. In consideration of the indicated pertinent literature and the theoretical model, the interpretation of the refers to the accounts of the community. This affords potential for prospective and practicing teachers as well as for scholars to get an understanding of the problems inherent in teaching reading comprehension to ELLs with LDs.

Existing Literature: These have been corroborated by the challenges highlighted by the teachers in the study; language barriers, cultural backwardness, and restricted resource endowment as documented in the body of knowledge. For example, Cummins (1984) has found that ELLs with learning disabilities have a weak authority in language use when compared to regardless, and thus their reading comprehension is weak. Also, cultural factors affect the way these students comprehend texts, therefore, whenever these learners are in the classroom, there should be cross-culture, relevant pedagogy (Nieto, 2002). Furthermore, while the ability of ELLs to receive adequate support and resources has been identified as a major problem affecting their literacy development, specifically when they have learning disabilities, the problem has been highlighted as a major issue by Harry and Klingner (2006).

7.2. Relevance of Theoretical Framework

The conclusions are discussed by pointing to a theoretical framework, specifically Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). According to the ZPD, learning occurs in a zone where a learner is capable of reaching a higher level of learning with the assistance of someone who possesses a greater level of knowledge. In the context of teaching reading comprehension, ZPD focuses on presenting material that is challenging for the student but still within their potential comprehension with proper guidance. This means teachers should use strategies such as visual support, individual or culturally sensitive approaches, and instruction that matches the ZPD level of English Language Learners with learning disabilities. These strategies can help improve the reading comprehension of these students.

8. Discussion

The results obtained in this research signify several theoretical and practical implications for future research in the field of teaching reading comprehension to ESOL/ELD learners with learning disabilities. In future studies, it would be beneficial to increase the number of participants and include diverse districts across Pakistan. This expansion would allow for a broader understanding of the issues and help in developing comprehensive strategies. Second, because the study's design permitted the identification of teaching interventions that enhance ELLs with LD with their reading comprehension, future research could investigate the efficacy of particular teaching methodologies for boosting the reading ability of such students. Preventative and intervention trials could compare the effectiveness of various instructional methods toward increasing reading ability to optimize educational practices for students with known low reading levels. It is suggested that future research could focus on how different technologies can help in teaching reading comprehension to ELLs with learning disabilities. Further investigation is warranted to explore related intervention strategies such as educational software and apps, which may offer more support and stimulation for these students. Further research should be devoted to learning new strategies and practices in the instruction of reading comprehension in ELLs with learning disabilities and more attention should be paid to the unique difficulties faced by such learners and the overall academic success of such students. It is important to develop strategies for the instructional approaches used in ESL classrooms for the targeted ELLs with LDs that would be effective for their unique needs and help them comprehend the content in the English language. Most of these students are at risk of dropping out, and they struggle with language barriers, cultural shock, and a lack of learning materials and resources. When these issues are addressed, teachers can provide an enabling environment of learning for all students with the desire to enhance their performance.

The study's implications for teaching practices provide valuable insights and strategies for teaching reading comprehension to ELLs with learning disabilities. This research shows that a one-size-fits-all approach is not effective. Based on the analysis of samples, it is suggested that teachers should incorporate elements of the learning

process that accommodate the presence of ELLs with specific learning disabilities. This involves providing tailored instruction that considers each child's abilities in the class. Individualized teaching that caters to the needs of each child is particularly important in this context. Forcing students who face such barriers to learn in a one-size-fits-all teaching model does not work to address these needs and, therefore, teachers must try to understand those obstacles and develop methods to help these learners. However, cultural relevancy best supports the conclusions drawn with specificity to culturally relevant pedagogy. Including culture-sensitive content and references in teaching, and learning can assist English as second language learners with learning disabilities to learn better. It not only effectively facilitates the learning for these students but also helps create a harmonious and inclusive cultural atmosphere in class. These strategies combined with greater training and professional development for educator concerns for cultural competence for diversity and instructional practice for learning disability for the ELL student population are recommended by the researchers to be implemented by educators. Thus, developing their professional knowledge and practical skills in these issues will enable the teachers to fulfil effective literacy education for ELL learners with LD and develop an inclusive classroom culture.

In this study, the study results highlight the areas of difficulties and the consequent learning needs of ELLs with LD in reading comprehension; the above underlines the useful instructions to offer to the ELLs in question. These research questions guided the exploration of challenges and strategies, adopting Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development perspective in analyzing the findings. The first research question was meant to find out the particular challenges faced by ELLs with a learning disability while comprehending the reading process. From the work, it was discovered that these students experience learning difficulties as a result of language, learning, attention deficit, working memory, and other learning-related issues, and inadequate access to support services. These challenges make the learners fail to comprehend English text, as well as in comprehending the intended meaning. The second research question was related to finding out more about teaching practices in the context of the instructed ELLs with LDs that facilitate their reading comprehension. Some of them are relevant to the current study: These are; explanation of skills and strategies, with emphasis on vocabulary enhancement, text organization, use of graphic aids, reading assignments with support, integrated use of media, and group learning alongside making accommodations for learning differences. These strategies provide means to strengthen language comprehension and processing, as well as to encourage the readers' highly active interaction with the given text.

The implications derived from the present study call for promoting the use of differentiated classroom environments for the definition and implementation of comprehension instruction for ELLs with learning disabilities. Categorized by Level of Evidence for culture and diversity: 3 – Strong recommendation educators should receive ongoing professional development related to cultural competency, and culturally responsive instructional practices for such students. Therefore, by acknowledging and attending to the needs of ELLs with learning disabilities, teachers should ensure that any barriers should be removed to provide for an enhanced learning environment that's responsive to the student's needs and abilities. In general, the conclusion of this study yields ideas to the existing research regarding the utilization of strategy for teaching reading comprehension to ELLs with learning disabilities. It emphasizes the ways of managing all the student's needs with a focus on those and the ways of cooperating with other professionals to build individualized learning-teaching plans. Thus, it is possible to improve the antecedents in these areas so the teachers may help the ELLs with learning disabilities to develop language for reading comprehension and promote constructive learning environments.

8.1. Potential Solutions and Recommendations for Learners with Disabilities

The suggestions provided in the study can assist in enhancing the assessment and monitoring of reading comprehension among ELLs with LD. Teachers should engage in continuous professional development considering cultural sensitivity, customs, and methodologies for ELL students with learning disabilities. The curriculum should include methods for teaching a diverse group of learners, multicultural education, and the use of visual aids. It is important to be mindful when teaching English Language Learners (ELL) with diagnosed learning disabilities. Teachers are encouraged to collaborate with special education teachers, language specialists, and other professionals to develop individualized lesson plans for these students. By working together, educators can provide the support needed for these students to improve their reading comprehension. With collaboration, educators can effectively ensure that such students get the necessary assistance to enhance their reading comprehension. Embedding technology in the kind of instructions that ELLs with learning disabilities undergo can again be of help. Computer programs and applications can provide curricular instructions and game-like activities that fulfil the individual needs of the learner. Moreover, teachers should engage guardians in their children's education, especially for ELLs with a learning disability. Guardians of the child are in a unique position to give an understanding of their children's learning process and can assist in expanding their learning at home.

8.2. Limitations of the Study

This study involved only five teachers teaching in the Lahore district, Pakistan, the findings might not be generalized to other environments. Also, the findings may be affected by response bias, which can be especially prevalent in educational research where educators might present socially appropriate answers or inflate their performance in enunciating reading comprehension to ELLs with learning disabilities. In addition, the present study limited the participants to only the teachers and did not interview ELLs with LD themselves and their perceptions could also be informative about their learning and learning needs.

8.3. Areas for Further Investigation

In light of these limitations for future research, the author thought it would be beneficial to conduct future research on the teaching of reading comprehension to ELLs with learning disabilities as a longitudinal study, thus providing a broader and more encompassing view of difficulties faced and strategies employed in the teaching of reading comprehensions to ELLs with learning disabilities over time. Further, one research study may focus on comparing the efficacy of various pedagogical approaches in enhancing the reading skills and gains of ELL learners with learning disabilities. Finally, an intervention study could investigate the effects of these particular teaching treatments on ELL readers with LD.

9. Conclusion

The specific focus of the research was to explore the difficulties involved in the process of reading comprehension when teaching ELL students with learning disabilities in the Lahore district, Pakistan. The study found several significant barriers that affect these students: language barriers due to language deficits, cultural barriers stemming from cultural diversity, and resource barriers caused by a lack of engaging instruction and relevant material. Additionally, the authors outlined best practices for educating ELLs with LD and improving their reading comprehension skills. These practices include the use of graphic images/organizers to support students' learning, tailored instruction to allow for differentiation, individualized learning and the use of culturally responsive instruction, involving culturally relevant topics in teaching. Besides, it is noteworthy that, if these challenges are not solved, there can be negative learning impacts on students with learning disabilities, who are enrolled as ELLs. Lack of support and involvement in school and community may result in poor academic performance and low self-esteem among these students making it probable for them to fail. Further, these students may face barriers towards the attainment of employment and education in their future which will continue to make cycling of poverty beat on. That is why it is critical for educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders to focus on the education of ELLs with LD and to identify and use explications within the practice to develop the ability to comprehend the written text. This entails offering programs for professional learning for educators, expanding access to learning resources and materials; as well as fostering effective practice of non-discriminatory practices in learning institutions. If these challenges are tackled then every child who may be learning journey, with language barriers learning difficulties, or disabilities, can be enabled to achieve academically and to the best of his/her ability. Enhancing reading comprehension for ELL with learning disabilities mentorship involves approaching the problem from several angles because of the specific difficulties that these children encounter in the course of their learning activity. To help ELLs improve their ability to comprehend written text here are some strategies that will help educators.

The following approach is helpful to facilitate improvement in reading competencies of ELLs with LD: Here are some of the key teaching practices: these include differentiated instruction which is the process of formulating instructional plans that can address the needs of each learner in the classroom and then supporting the learner as he struggles through the tasks. To facilitate learning and comprehension for ELLs with learning disabilities, the use of graphics like graphic organizers, picture prompts, and visual references will be very useful in aiding a better understanding of information content. Another important factor to consider is the use of culturally appropriate practices when incorporating cultural references into lessons. This can enhance the content's appeal and help students with learning disabilities who are learning English as another language. Teachers and language experts need to have the necessary expertise when designing interventions for these students. In addition, EVT must ensure continuous professional development for educators who specialize in cultural relations, diversity, and academicians' efficiency in teaching ELLs with LD. The use of technology can contribute another layer of support for ELLs with LD in learning tasks, for example, the use of educational software, etc. Finally, promoting parental engagement to support development is also helpful as the parents are in a unique position to propose their child's learning requirements in school and enhance learning in their homes. Concerning the discussed strategies and the specific requirements of ELLs copulating with learning disabilities, teachers will be able to facilitate positive changes within the field of reading comprehension for such students and help them achieve their educational potential.

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