



The Effectiveness of Socio-Affective Strategy Used with Primary School Students with Learning Difficulties in French to Improve Reading Comprehension: A Case Study of Fourth-Grade Students in Constantine

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Abstract

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of socio-affective strategy employed with fourth-grade elementary students who struggle with learning French and to assess their contribution to improving reading comprehension. To achieve this goal, we followed several steps to develop and implement this educational strategy, which French language teachers designed. The central research question addresses how socio-affective strategy can improve reading comprehension among primary school students with learning difficulties in French?

The study was conducted with 54 students who experienced difficulties and obstacles in learning the French language. The effectiveness of the socio-affective strategy was assessed through various tests and measures, including an intelligence test, The Myklebust Test (Myklebust Pupil Rating Scale), and performance-based assessments in French to determine the student's current language proficiency levels. Additionally, pre-and post-tests on reading comprehension were administered after implementing the strategy.

The study employed specific protocols and a quasi-experimental design, utilizing single and two-group models. Several statistical tools were used, including Cronbach's alpha for internal consistency, Spearman-Brown's split-half reliability method, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests to assess the normality of the data distribution related to reading comprehension, and Wilcoxon tests to examine differences between pre-and post-implementation comprehension scores. Cohen's *d* (1988) was applied to estimate the effect size and gauge the strategy's impact on reading comprehension improvement.

The descriptive and quasi-experimental approaches were chosen due to their alignment with the characteristics and nature of the study. The final results revealed statistically significant differences

between pre-and post-test scores in reading comprehension, indicating the positive impact of the socio-affective strategy on fourth-grade students struggling to learn French.

Keywords: Socio-affective strategy, reading comprehension, French language learning difficulties

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Introduction

The acquisition of foreign languages plays a significant and influential role in fostering communication and integration with different peoples and cultures. It also enables learners to access global scientific and literary heritage. The responsibility for teaching and learning language skills rests primarily with schools. If schools succeed in developing language skills in students, particularly at the elementary level, they establish a solid foundation upon which future stages of education can build.

In language education, strategies are part of the psycholinguistic perspective. As noted by Hurd (2005:1-19), strategies are essential for teachers in the classroom. They consist of the teacher's tangible actions to create conditions conducive to learning the subject matter. Reading comprehension is a fundamental cognitive skill in learning and acquiring any language, requiring mental effort from the learner and didactic effort from the teacher.

While this applies to language education, learning foreign languages is particularly central. Considering the nature and status of the French language within the educational curriculum at various levels in our country, many students need help learning this language. A significant obstacle for students in dealing with French is the difficulty they face in comprehending the texts they read.

Therefore, teaching reading comprehension strategies in French can assist teachers of this subject in supporting and guiding students by developing their skills and building their knowledge to transfer acquired knowledge. Teachers must diversify the use and application of instructional strategies and select the most suitable ones to ensure their effectiveness. These strategies should adapt to students of varying levels, and teachers should provide the necessary tools to help students learn to read more efficiently and improve their skills in this area.

Given the above, the current study seeks to answer the following research question: *To what extent is the socio-affective strategy applied by fourth-grade French teachers effective in improving reading comprehension among students who struggle with learning this language?*

Accordingly, the study's hypothesis is as follows: *H1: The socio-affective strategy used with elementary school students struggling with learning French contributes to improving their reading comprehension.*

Study objectives:

- Identify the primary challenges fourth-grade students face in learning French and their reading comprehension of French texts.
- Examine the effectiveness of the socio-affective strategy in improving the reading comprehension of fourth-grade students with difficulties learning French.

Study significance:

- This study demonstrates how to apply the socio-affective strategy during French language classes in elementary schools, highlighting its importance in enhancing students' reading comprehension of French texts.
- The study may also benefit curriculum developers in the future, allowing them to teach French more appropriately and straightforwardly. This could help achieve equal learning opportunities for students of different levels and abilities.

Terms of the study:

Socio-affective strategy: As Garner (1990: 245) noted, Educational strategies refer to organized practices and actions used by instructors to deliver educational content and resources to maximize students' learning outcomes with minimal effort. Language teaching strategies are divided into direct and indirect teaching methods. Indirect methods, in particular, emphasize the teacher's role in motivating students and capturing their attention, thus encouraging active participation in the learning process. The socio-affective strategy is one of these indirect approaches, focusing on effective communication and emotional awareness. Its primary goal is to motivate students and increase their learning drive. Anne-Sylvie (2021: 40-41) noted that this strategy is essential in enabling students to grasp various concepts and information. It strengthens constructive communication and fosters positive relationships within the classroom, encouraging collaborative teamwork to achieve common goals.

Students with difficulty learning French: In this study, this term refers to students between 9 and 10 enrolled in the fourth grade of primary school, which is the second year of the second stage of primary education and the penultimate year of the five-year program. These are typical students who face challenges, specifically in learning French and comprehending French texts. They show lower academic performance in French, as determined by the study's diagnostic tools. However, they do not exhibit academic or developmental difficulties, nor do they suffer from disabilities, mental or emotional disorders, or hearing and vision impairments. Furthermore, they have yet to repeat the fourth grade and possess average to above-average intelligence.

Learning difficulties: Learning difficulties refer to obstacles that hinder the achievement of educational goals. These difficulties may be related to the student's social, economic, or psychological circumstances or the learning process itself, including teaching methods, the teacher's personality, or the school environment (Al-Luqani & Al-Jamal, 1999: 151).

Comprehension: Comprehension is a cognitive ability that enables individuals to understand and process concepts and information. It involves analyzing texts to interpret the meanings of both written and spoken language, extracting main ideas, and clarifying their meanings. Comprehension also involves connecting various pieces of information and applying them in specific contexts.

Reading: Atta (2006) defines reading as "a process that requires understanding meanings and linking the meanings conveyed by words to personal experience." This makes the psychological processes involved in reading highly complex (Atta, 2001: 163).

Reading comprehension: As cited by Al-Sayed (2010) and Al-Qahtani (2018), reading comprehension is "the ability to understand and construct meaning from a written text." It is thus a constructive, interactive mental process that the reader engages in through the content of the text, aiming to extract its overall meaning. This mental activity connects the visual information in the text with pre-existing knowledge stored in memory, which is reflected through behavioral indicators of comprehension (Al-Qahtani, 2018: 581).

In this study, the operational definition of reading comprehension refers to "texts taken from the fourth-grade textbook, as well as external books, accompanied by questions related to the content of each reading text. The researcher prepared these questions in collaboration with French language teachers to assess students' reading comprehension."

Study tools:

- Observation grid.
- Draw-a-Person test.
- Myklebust Test (is used to assess specific learning abilities and identify learning disabilities in children).
- Diagnostic evaluation test in French.
- Pre- and post-tests measuring reading comprehension levels in French before and after applying the socio-affective strategy.

Methodology:

- Descriptive method.
- Quasi-experimental method.

Design type: Single-group design.

Study boundaries:

- **Spatial boundaries:** The study was conducted in several primary schools in Constantine, specifically in Ali Mendjeli's new city, Zouaghi, and Ibn El Charqi, within the time constraints and based on the facilities provided to us.
- **Human boundaries:** The study population included ten primary schools, encompassing a group of 116 fourth-grade students from various schools in Constantine. The academic records of these students were analyzed, and those who scored $> \text{ or } = 5/10$ in French were excluded, as they were considered proficient in the subject. This exclusion resulted in a final sample of 54 students.

Study procedure:

At the beginning of September, during the first week, we contacted the administration of the elementary schools where we conducted our study to obtain a list of students. These students were selected by the French language teachers, who greatly assisted us in this process. Each teacher guided us to a certain number of students who had faced difficulties and challenges in learning French in the previous school year (third grade). Our objective was to identify students with low grades, specifically in French, in the current academic year, excluding other subjects, and to pinpoint those struggling only with French language learning.

We also reviewed their files to gather information on their social background, health status, and economic conditions. We attempted to examine the students' French language performance from the previous year and managed to do so in two schools. However, other schools denied us access due to administrative refusal. Our goal was to calculate the annual average for the French language by subtracting their average scores in all other subjects (mathematics, Islamic education, technology, history, scientific and civic education, and Arabic) from their overall annual average in the third grade, leaving only their French score.

Since we could not obtain this data from all schools, we administered the Myklebust Test to detect learning difficulties and exclude students with general academic or developmental challenges. We also distributed questionnaires to the students to assess their performance in French and compare it with other subjects, allowing us to exclude students facing difficulties in all subjects. Our focus was solely on students struggling with French.

In the second week of September, around the 9th and 10th, we agreed with the French teachers of each class to ask all students to draw a man on paper using a pencil within a 20-minute timeframe. This task was designed to measure the intelligence level of students with low French grades the previous year.

At the end of the second week of September, in collaboration with the French teacher, we distributed exercises related to the diagnostic assessment, including various exercises (grammar, spelling, etc.), to evaluate their levels in French. We also used texts from the third-grade textbook to assess their general proficiency, particularly reading comprehension. The diagnostic assessment process took about a month. We worked with the French teachers throughout this period to avoid the potential for low scores from students with average abilities if the test was administered in a single session. We wanted to ensure that poor performance in the diagnostic test was not due to shyness in the presence of the researchers, forgetting what was learned during the long summer break, or lethargy from the three-month vacation.

After beginning the diagnostic test, we distributed questionnaires to the students who had low grades in French the previous year. This allowed us to gather sufficient information about the students from the

previous year and the diagnostic test. The students filled out the questionnaires during their free time, either in the schoolyard or, in some cases, with the researchers outside the school premises. Some teachers even allowed us to distribute the questionnaires during remedial sessions. We also provided a questionnaire for parents to supply more information about their children, especially for the Myklebust Test, which assesses learning difficulties.

Additionally, we distributed a questionnaire for the teachers to obtain specific information about the students with French learning difficulties and about the teachers themselves. We observed the students and teachers in every session, mainly how teachers handled students with learning difficulties. These observations were recorded using a specialized observation grid throughout the school year.

Starting in early October, we conducted a pre-test for reading comprehension by distributing texts to all students to gather their scores before applying the socio-affective strategy. This strategy was proposed to all teachers involved in our study, who cooperated by using exercises and questions from the fourth-grade French textbook. The strategy followed these key elements:

- Teachers should have interrupted students to correct their mistakes.
- Teachers encouraged students to participate, discuss, and express their opinions on lesson content.
- Teachers motivated students.
- Various methods and tools were used to capture students' attention.
- Teachers stimulated students' motivation and encouraged competition.
- Teachers incorporated students' names and personal experiences into assigned tasks, asking questions about their lived realities.

Presentation and interpretation of study results:

The following table presents the diagnostic assessment results for fourth-year elementary school students in the French language. These students, despite being of average or above-average intelligence and not suffering from any learning disabilities or developmental difficulties, experience challenges in learning the French language. The table includes metrics such as intelligence test scores, performance in different language skills (grammar, conjugation, oral and written expression), and reading comprehension before and after intervention.

Socio-affective strategy		French language level test result (diagnostic assessment test)		IQ test result	Learning difficulty results (Students without learning difficulties)		The student
Post-Test Result for Reading Comprehension	Reading Comprehension Pre-Test Result (for texts from the fourth-year textbook)	The result of the reading comprehension test for texts from the third-year textbook	Test results in grammar, morphology, oral and written expression (various exercises)	Intermediate level and above	T-score	Raw Total Grade	
5/10	3.5/10	3.25/10	4.5/10	95.69%	44	96	1
3.75/10	3.5/10	4/10	2/10	91.83%	36	56	2
4.5/10	2.75/10	2.75/10	2.5/10	94.73%	40	77	3
absent	6/10	1.75/10	4/10	101.08%	42	85	4
9/10	2.5/10	2/10	1/10	97.95%	35	52	5
5/10	3.5/10	4/10	3/10	104.04%	43	89	6
4/10	4.5/10	3/10	0.5/10	92.78%	39	72	7
4.5/10	3/10	2/10	1.5/10	110.75%	41	81	8
5.5/10	3/10	2.5/10	2/10	97.80%	36	54	9
5/10	4.75/10	3.75/10	3/10	104.16%	40	76	10
7.5/10	3.25/10	2.25/10	3.5/10	106.66%	37	58	11
3/10	3.5/10	4.25/10	2.5/10	115.95%	35	51	12
8.5/10	3/10	3/10	4/10	92.70%	38	66	13
7.25/10	3/10	3.5/10	2.5/10	101.13%	45	97	14
8/10	3/10	4/10	3.5/10	112.76%	42	85	15
6/10	7.5/10	2.75/10	1/10	97.89%	39	71	16
7.5/10	3/10	3.5/10	2/10	102.19%	44	96	17
4/10	3/10	3.75/10	0.5/10	106.45%	37	62	18
4/10	4.25/10	2/10	3/10	95.69%	43	88	19
9/10	6.5/10	2.75/10	3.5/10	106.38%	41	78	20
4.75/10	3.5/10	4/10	2.5/10	94.73%	36	53	21
3.25/10	3.5/10	3.75/10	3.5/10	94.68%	42	87	22
3/10	2.25/10	2.5/10	2/10	97.82%	40	73	23

9.5/10	6.5/10	4.5/10	1.5/10	98.92%	42	85	24
4/10	4.5/10	3.75/10	2/10	106.66%	38	63	25
8.5/10	3/10	3/10	2.5/10	109.89%	44	96	26
8/10	3.5/10	2.75/10	4.5/10	93.75%	36	57	27
8.25/10	4.25/10	4.5/10	1/10	108.42%	42	86	28
5.75/10	4/10	2.5/10	4/10	92.22%	37	59	29
4.5/10	4/10	3.5/10	2.5/10	117.20%	45	101	30
6.75/10	5/10	2.75/10	4.5/10	105.49%	43	90	31
5.25/10	2.75/10	3.25/10	2.5/10	111.11%	39	72	32
5/10	5.5/10	3/10	0.5/10	92.47%	35	51	33
7/10	2.5/10	2.5/10	2.5/10	107.60%	43	88	34
7/10	5.5/10	3/10	3.5/10	115.30%	43	89	35
4.75/10	5.25/10	3.75/10	4.5/10	117.02%	36	54	36
4/10	3.75/10	2.5/10	1.5/10	92.22%	38	67	37
5/10	5.5/10	3.25/10	3/10	93.47%	45	99	38
2.75/10	3/10	3.75/10	1/10	105.26%	37	61	39
2.75/10	2.25/10	2.5/10	2/10	91.75%%	44	95	40
8/10	3.75/10	3.75/10	4/10	95.69%	36	56	41
6.75/10	4/10	3.5/10	0.5/10	95.74%	38	63	42
2.75/10	2.25/10	2.25/10	4/10	103.22%	40	77	43
8.5/10	3/10	3/10	3.5/10	109.76%	37	62	44
9.5/10	7.5/10	3.5/10	2/10	106.38%	41	82	45
4/10	3.75/10	2.5/10	1.5/10	95.74%	35	50	46
3.75/10	2.75/10	2.5/10	2/10	90.52%	40	74	47
5.25/10	3.25/10	3/10	4.5/10	110%	45	98	48
5/10	3.25/10	2.75/10	3.5/10	93.75%	39	70	49
5.25/10	6.75/10	4.75/10	4/10	127.47%	36	55	50
4.5/10	3.75/10	2.5/10	2.5/10	90.52%	42	84	51
3.5/10	3/10	2.25/10	1.5/10	92.70%	40	75	52
8/10	5/10	3.5/10	0.5/10	105.31%	37	58	53
7.25/10	2.75/10	4.5/10	3/10	98.88%	44	96	54

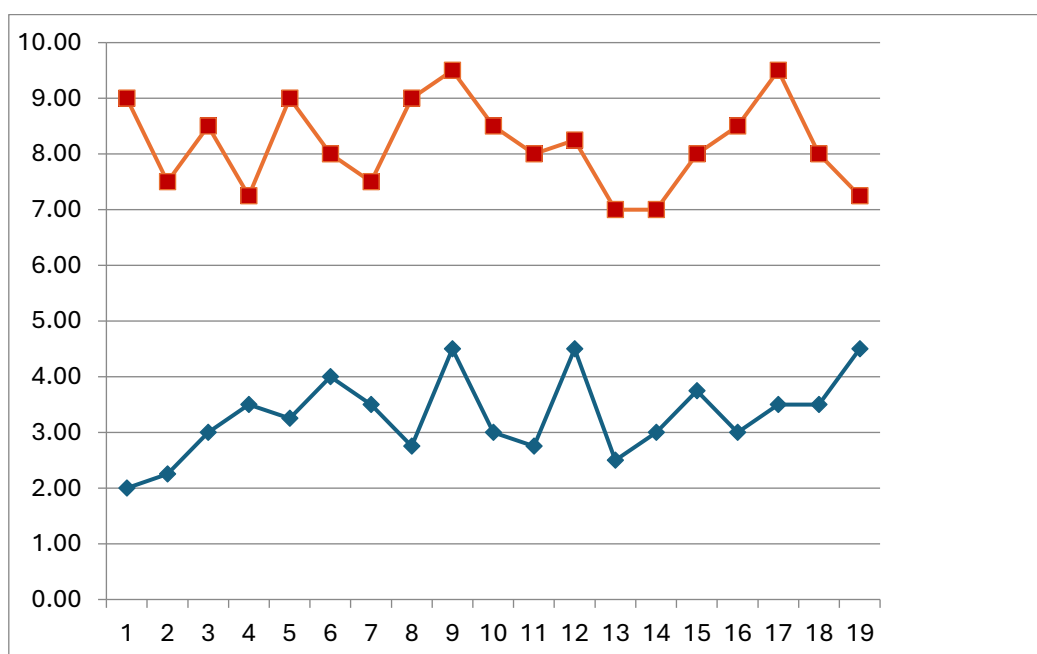
The table shows fourth-year primary-year primary school students' French language diagnostic assessment test marks. They are typical students (who do not suffer from academic or developmental learning difficulties) and have an average or higher level of intelligence. However, they suffer from difficulties learning the French language, in comparison to their results after implementing the Socio- affective strategy.

Comment on the table:

Based on the table presented, we observe the diagnostic assessment test scores in French for fourth-grade students. These students have average or above-average intelligence (90% and above) and do not suffer from academic or developmental learning difficulties. However, they struggle significantly with learning the French language, as evidenced by their shallow scores, all below 5/10, indicating weak academic performance in this subject.

These results highlight that, despite having no intellectual or academic learning challenges, these students need help learning French. The socio-affective strategy, a modern educational approach, was applied to address this. This strategy aims to improve language teaching methods, enhancing learners' academic performance, fostering their autonomy, and altering their perceptions and attitudes toward the language.

The results from the pre-and post-reading comprehension tests show a marked improvement in the student's academic performance in French following the application of the socio-affective strategy. Each student's reading comprehension results improved compared to their previous performance, demonstrating the effectiveness of this strategy in enhancing the learners' proficiency and promoting their independence in learning foreign languages. This aligns with what researchers and previous studies have shown regarding language education for non-native speakers.



Diagnostic assessment test (The result of the reading comprehension test)

Social-affective Post-Test (Post-Test Result for Reading Comprehension)

Comment:

The figure above presents an illustrative graph depicting the performance of students whose reading comprehension levels improved after the application of the socio-affective strategy (achieving scores of 5/10 or higher) in comparison to their results on the French reading comprehension placement test (*Test de niveau en compréhension de lecture*). It is evident from the figure that the difference between the student's scores on both tests is significant. All students showed marked and clear improvement in their post-test results for reading comprehension in French after implementing the socio-affective strategy, with an increase of at least four points compared to their original performance.

Before testing the study's hypothesis, the normality of the distribution of reading comprehension variables - related to the socio-affective strategies - was verified for both the pre-test and post-test assessments. The sample consisted of fourth-grade students with difficulties in learning the French

language. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and the Shapiro-Wilk test were used, and the results of the normality tests are presented in the following table.

Variables	Test	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test	Shapiro-Wilk Test
Reading comprehension for the socio-affective strategy		Statistics	Df
	Pre-test	0.190	52
	Post-test	0.173	52

Commentary: The table above shows that the reading comprehension data related to the socio-affective strategies in both the pre-test and post-test assessments are not normally distributed, as the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test values are statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). This necessitates the use of non-parametric tests to assess the hypothesis.

Interpretation of results based on the study hypothesis:

The study hypothesized statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test in reading comprehension following the implementation of socio-affective strategy among fourth-grade students with difficulties learning the French language.

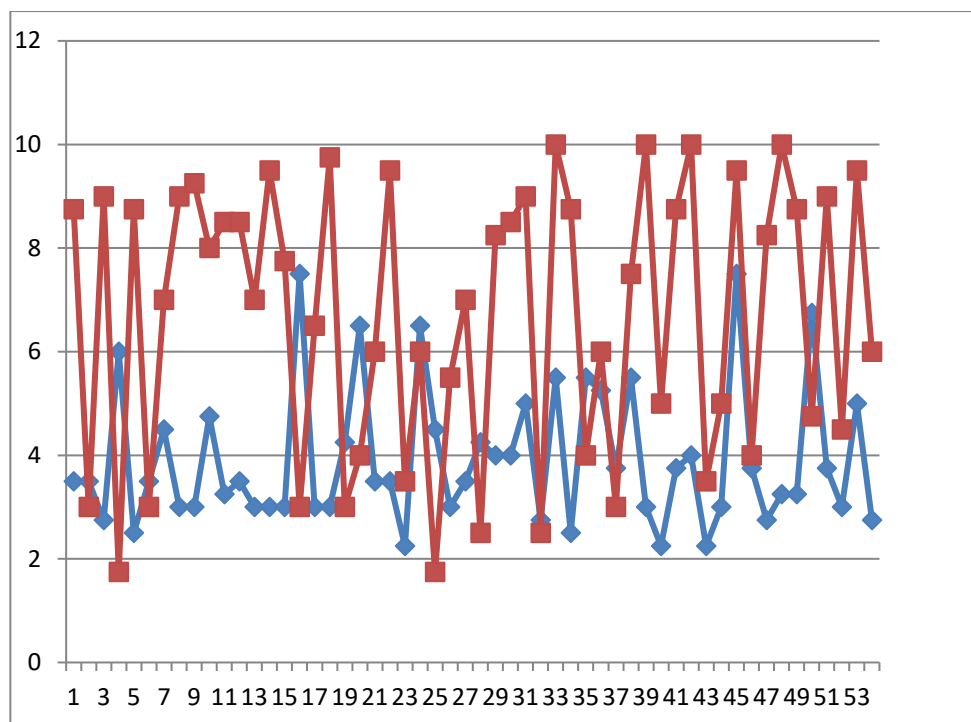
The Wilcoxon test was employed to examine the differences between paired samples to test the hypothesis, which states: "There are statistically significant differences between the mean pre-test scores and post-test scores in reading comprehension following the application of socio-affective strategy among fourth-grade students with difficulties in learning the French language." Additionally, Cohen's d effect size (Cohen, 1988) was calculated to assess the extent to which the socio-affective strategy contributed to improving reading comprehension in these students.

Group	N	Mean Ranks	Sum of Ranks	Pre-test Mean	Pre-test SD	Post-test Mean	Post-test SD	Z-value	p-value	Effect Size (d)
Negative Ranks	13	13.46	175	3.92	1.34	6.68	2.62	-4.888	<0.001	0.88
Positive Ranks	41	31.95	1310							
Ties	0	---	---							

Table: Results of the Wilcoxon test for the differences between pre-test and post-test reading comprehension after applying socio-affective strategy.

The table shows that the Z-value is significant ($Z = -4.88$, $p < 0.001$), indicating significant differences between the reading comprehension pre-test and post-test scores after applying socio-affective strategy among students with difficulties learning French. The post-test mean score (6.68) with a standard deviation of 2.62 is significantly higher than the pre-test mean score (3.92) with a standard deviation 1.34. Furthermore, the mean rank of positive ranks (31.95) is higher than that of negative ranks (13.46). The calculated effect size d (0.88) is considered significant, as it exceeds the threshold of 0.80 according to Cohen's (1988) guidelines.

The results support the hypothesis, revealing statistically significant differences at the 0.001 level between the pre-test and post-test mean scores in reading comprehension after implementing socio-affective strategy among fourth-grade students with difficulties learning French. Consequently, socio-affective strategies contribute to the improvement of reading comprehension in these students.



Socio-affective Pre-Test (Reading Comprehension Pre-Test Result (for texts from the fourth-year textbook

Socio-affective Post-Test

Graphical Representation of Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores in Reading Comprehension After the Application of Socio-Affective Strategies

The graph above illustrates the pre-test and post-test scores in reading comprehension following the implementation of socio-affective strategy. It shows that the post-test scores are higher than the pre-test scores, indicating improved reading comprehension among students with difficulties learning French after applying socio-affective strategy.

Discussion

As Boulay (1985: 16) states, "we can renew educational methods and strategies, improve the techniques of teaching French, and develop appropriate and updated textbooks and curricula. However, the teacher is the key player in transmitting knowledge between the teacher and the student and in fostering positive interaction in the classroom, which is essential for the success of the teaching-learning process. The teacher acts as the guide and mentor in the educational process. Therefore, we can say that if the teacher is passionate about their profession and well-trained, they can address the gaps and deficiencies in the educational system. Ultimately, the teacher is the primary factor in the success or failure of education and no quality education can exist without skilled teachers."

Regarding applying the socio-affective strategy by French language teachers, it was observed that 21 out of 54 students in the sample (38.88%) improved their reading comprehension in French. From the researcher's perspective, this strategy is one of the most effective methods for improving students' language proficiency, particularly in foreign languages like French. This conclusion is supported by various studies on the subject, including that of Maria Causa, who emphasized the effectiveness of instructional strategies based on communication and interaction in the classroom. These strategies improve student performance in foreign languages, enhance the relationship between teacher and student, and foster connections among peers in the classroom, facilitating the acquisition of linguistic concepts with their complete meanings and implications. As Causa (2002: 59) notes, "Through the teaching-learning process, the teacher of a foreign language (French) aims to achieve goals related to the

transmission of knowledge, skills, and competencies by teaching students various linguistic skills and how to learn and master the requirements of that language." Teachers must recognize that students need prior knowledge to communicate efficiently in a foreign language. Thus, they must assist students using socio-affective strategies, such as guidance, support, explanation, and error correction after the student has finished answering, without interrupting them (error pedagogy) (Causa, 2002: 60).

Similarly, Cicurel (2005: 149) argues that to enhance students' language abilities and enrich their vocabulary in a foreign language, teachers should focus on psychological support and improve their relationships with students to facilitate the reception and comprehension of information. This view aligns with Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), as cited by Bange (2006: 75-76), which refers to the distance between a student's current level of development—where they can solve problems independently—and their potential level of development, where they solve problems with the help of others. Vygotsky's model underscores the importance of social interaction in learning, highlighting the gap between what a student can do alone and what they can achieve with assistance. This forms the core of socio-cognitive theory and is closely related to the socio-affective strategy, an indirect teaching method where theoretical knowledge is transformed into practical experience. The primary goal of this strategy is to motivate students, encourage them to study, boost their learning drive, foster initiative by involving them in group tasks, and build their confidence, allowing them to overcome fears and discover and develop their abilities. As Bange (1992: 75) emphasizes, this helps students build balanced personalities capable of adapting to changes.

Based on these core principles, the socio-affective strategy focuses on the holistic development of students by enhancing cognitive skills such as perseverance, alertness, self-management, organizing behavior, retaining information, and reviewing lessons. The researchers observed these effects while documenting classroom interactions (using observation tools) as teachers applied the socio-affective strategy. The participation and enthusiasm of many students, particularly those struggling with French, increased significantly. Their behavior changed, their morale improved, and they showed more interest in French, participating more in class discussions, raising their hands to answer questions, and even preparing for lessons at home.

Additionally, the socio-affective strategy enhances social skills, such as communication, respect for others' opinions, and embracing diversity (which the researchers observed across students of varying levels). It also fosters positive relationships between students and their French teachers, as well as among peers, which the researcher noted. This is because the socio-affective strategy emphasizes respecting students' feelings by not interrupting their responses, even when incorrect, and encouraging and motivating them to share their views on lesson content without fear or embarrassment. Furthermore, teachers engaged students' attention using posters, drawings, and images; some even incorporated recorded songs on computers.

Moreover, the strategy promotes student motivation and competition by incorporating students' names and personal experiences into the lessons and asking questions inspired by their real-life contexts. As for the emotional aspect, the socio-affective strategy helps students manage emotions like anger or fear. Through its application, students learn how to regulate their feelings—whether fear, anxiety, or anger—and interact respectfully with others by listening and responding appropriately, allowing them to balance their emotions effectively.

In conclusion, applying the socio-affective strategy by French language teachers fosters students' confidence, encourages positive behaviors, strengthens their relationship with their teachers, and nurtures their initiative by involving them in group tasks with their peers.

Conclusion

Studying French as the first foreign language in primary schools offers an enriching experience for the average student. French is a crucial language for communication in Algeria and holds significant importance. As noted by Nabil Hafez (2004:135), referencing Schwartz (1997:1), "for students who

struggle to learn it, French can be a stressful and exhausting experience, with learning the language presenting a formidable challenge." Thus, while French serves as an enriching experience for students without learning difficulties, it poses a considerable challenge for those who face difficulties acquiring it.

To achieve the desired goals of reading comprehension in French for all primary school students - including those who struggle with learning the language - and to ensure comprehensive proficiency by the end of this stage, our current study complements the efforts of researchers in this field. It seeks to identify the types of difficulties faced by fourth-grade students in learning French, the factors contributing to these challenges, and which educational strategies are most effective in improving the reading comprehension of these students.

The results of this study demonstrate that improving reading comprehension in French for students who struggle requires the implementation of specialized strategies for teaching foreign languages, including the socio-affective strategy.

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