

Story Structure and Reading Comprehension in the Hearing-Impaired

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The aim of this dissertation is to find the effect of story structure change on reading comprehension in normals and hearing-impaired.

So as to accomplish this, thirtysix subjects (18 normals and 18 hearing impaired) were taken for the study. They are of the ages 8-9, 9-10 and 10-11 years. The degree of the hearing loss ranged from moderately severe to profound SN loss.

Four stories were selected from the stories prepared by Rama (1980). These are considered as the original stories. The revised versions of these are the stories with the change of sentence structure.

Each group was divided into two sub-groups in both normals and hearing-impaired subjects. While one sub-group was given an original story-1 and a revised story-2, the other sub-group of the same age was given the revised version of the original story-1 and the original story-2. The reading comprehension was tapped through questions.

The results showed that the normals had minimum differences between the original and revised versions of the stories in all age groups. However, the hearing impaired subjects performed significantly better in the original stories as compared to the revised stories.

This clearly implies that reading comprehension is not affected in the normals inspite of the change in story structure, while story structures do affect the reading comprehension in the hearing-impaired. That is, changing the sentence structure in terms of length, simplified syntax and vocabulary, hinders the reading comprehension.

Hence, this study also implies that the hearing-impaired subjects should be reading well-written stories/materials which are naturally cohesive instead of basal materials which are developed to meet a predetermined set of rules for syntax, sentence length or vocabulary.