



An Empirical Study on the Role of Emotion Regulation Strategies in Enhancing Reading Comprehension among Non-English Major Students

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Abstract: English reading comprehension requires integration of linguistic and emotional factors. This study examines how emotion regulation strategies impact reading proficiency among non-English majors under academic stress. Using mixed-methods research with 120 participants, we tested hypotheses that emotion monitoring strategies enhance reading comprehension and that students vary in their understanding and application of these strategies. Results showed significant improvements in reading scores ($p < 0.01$) for students using emotion regulation techniques. Qualitative analysis revealed three key themes: self-awareness building, cognitive adjustment, and reflective practice. Findings suggest that systematic emotion monitoring can effectively enhance reading comprehension by helping students manage negative emotions and maintain optimal learning states.

Keywords: emotion regulation, reading comprehension, non-English majors, academic stress, cognitive processing

1. Introduction

Reading comprehension serves as a critical indicator of English language proficiency, influenced by both cognitive and emotional factors. While traditional approaches focus primarily on linguistic skills, emerging research highlights emotions' significant impact on learning outcomes. This study investigates how emotion monitoring strategies can enhance reading comprehension among non-English major students.

Academic pressures frequently cause emotional fluctuations that affect cognitive functioning and reading performance. Emotion monitoring strategies — involving systematic observation, regulation, and adjustment of emotional responses — offer promising approaches to mitigate negative emotional effects while harnessing positive aspects for improved learning outcomes[1].

1.1 Research Problem

Current educational systems often overlook non-cognitive factors, particularly emotions, in English reading instruction. Students experiencing emotional difficulties during reading may incorrectly attribute poor performance to ability deficits rather than emotional states. This gap necessitates investigation into emotion regulation's role in reading comprehension enhancement[2].

1.2 Research Objectives

- (1) Investigate how emotions directly impact English reading comprehension abilities among non-English majors
- (2) Assess current understanding and implementation of emotion monitoring strategies during reading
- (3) Evaluate the effectiveness of tailored emotion monitoring strategies in enhancing reading performance

1.3 Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Questions:

- Can emotion monitoring strategies effectively enhance English reading proficiency among non-English major students?
- How do students demonstrate understanding and application of emotional regulation strategies?

Hypotheses:

H1: Emotion monitoring strategies significantly enhance English reading proficiency, improving comprehension, speed, and vocabulary

H2: Students vary in understanding emotion monitoring strategies, with effective users demonstrating superior reading performance

2. Literature Review

2.1 Emotions and Reading Comprehension

Research consistently demonstrates emotions' profound influence on cognitive functioning. Positive emotions enhance

learning by increasing motivation, attention, and memory retention, while negative emotions like anxiety and frustration disrupt cognitive processes and reduce performance (Dewaele & Alfawzan, 2018; Ainley & Hidi, 2014).

2.2 Emotion Monitoring Strategies

Emotion monitoring strategies, as meta-cognitive regulation forms, involve systematic observation, evaluation, and adjustment of emotional responses. Previous research demonstrates their effectiveness across academic domains, including language learning (Baker & Brown, 2018; Oxford, 2017).

Key components include:

Self-awareness and acceptance: Recognizing and embracing emotional states during reading

Emotion analysis: Examining emotional origins and their impact on comprehension

Cognitive adjustment: Modifying thought patterns based on emotional insights

Reflection and summarization: Reviewing emotional experiences to consolidate learning

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative pre-post experimental design with qualitative content analysis to comprehensively examine emotion monitoring strategies' impact on reading comprehension[3].

3.2 Participants

120 non-English major university students participated, randomly assigned to experimental (n=60) and control (n=60) groups. Participants had comparable English proficiency levels and no prior emotion regulation training.

3.3 Instruments

Reading Comprehension Test: Standardized assessment measuring comprehension accuracy, speed, and vocabulary understanding

Emotion Monitoring Strategy Questionnaire: Self-report measure assessing strategy awareness and application

Semi-structured Interviews: Qualitative exploration of students' experiences with emotion regulation

3.4 Procedure

The experimental group received 8-week emotion monitoring strategy training, including self-awareness exercises, emotion analysis techniques, and cognitive adjustment practices. The control group received standard reading instruction. Pre-post assessments measured reading comprehension changes, with interviews conducted post-intervention.

4. Results

4.1 Quantitative Findings

4.1.1 Descriptive Statistics

Pre-intervention reading scores showed no significant differences between groups (experimental $M=72.3$, $SD=8.4$; control $M=71.8$, $SD=8.9$). Post-intervention, the experimental group demonstrated substantial improvement ($M=84.7$, $SD=7.2$) compared to controls ($M=73.1$, $SD=8.6$).

4.1.2 Hypothesis Testing

Paired samples t-tests revealed significant improvements in the experimental group's reading comprehension ($t(59)=8.42$, $p<0.001$, $d=1.52$), while controls showed minimal change ($t(59)=1.23$, $p=0.224$). Between-group analysis confirmed significantly greater improvement in the experimental condition ($F(1,118)=47.32$, $p<0.001$, $\eta^2=0.29$)[4].

Hierarchical regression analysis indicated emotion monitoring strategies explained 34% of variance in reading improvement beyond baseline scores ($R^2=0.34$, $F(3,116)=19.87$, $p<0.001$).

4.2 Qualitative Findings

Content analysis of interview data revealed three overarching themes:

4.2.1 Enhanced Self-Awareness

Students reported increased awareness of emotional states during reading, enabling better recognition of anxiety or frustration that previously hindered comprehension.

4.2.2 Improved Cognitive Control

Participants described developing abilities to adjust negative thought patterns and maintain focus despite challenging

texts.

4.2.3 Reflective Learning Practices

Students emphasized the value of post-reading reflection in consolidating learning and building confidence for future reading tasks.

4.3 Integration of Findings

Quantitative evidence strongly supported both hypotheses, with qualitative data providing rich contextual understanding of how emotion monitoring strategies facilitate reading improvement. Triangulation revealed convergent evidence for the effectiveness of systematic emotional regulation in academic contexts.

5. Discussion

5.1 Theoretical Implications

Findings extend existing literature by demonstrating specific mechanisms through which emotion regulation enhances reading comprehension. Results support cognitive-emotional integration models, suggesting that addressing emotional dimensions is crucial for optimal learning outcomes.

5.2 Practical Implications

Results indicate that emotion monitoring strategy training should be integrated into English reading instruction. Educators can implement systematic approaches including self-awareness building, emotion analysis, and reflective practices to enhance student performance[5].

5.3 Limitations

Study limitations include relatively short intervention duration and focus on university-level students. Future research should examine long-term effects and applicability across different educational levels and cultural contexts.

6. Conclusion

This study provides compelling evidence that emotion monitoring strategies significantly enhance English reading comprehension among non-English major students. By systematically addressing emotional dimensions of learning, educators can help students achieve better academic outcomes. The integration of cognitive and emotional approaches represents a promising direction for language education, emphasizing the importance of holistic learning strategies that consider both intellectual and emotional factors in academic success.

Future research should explore optimal training durations, cultural adaptations, and technology-enhanced delivery methods for emotion monitoring interventions. The findings contribute to growing evidence supporting emotion-cognition integration in educational practice.

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