Abstract

Many students in middle to late primary level who have learnt to be good text decoders experience difficulties in comprehension. They are often able to read a text at an age appropriate level with high percentage accuracy in word recognition however when asked to retell or answer questions they are not able to demonstrate understanding of the text.

The hypothesis of this study is that teaching Year Six students who are accurate text decoders but have difficulties in comprehension, to use synonyms and paraphrase text increases their reading comprehension. Research on the development of comprehension skills suggests that teaching student strategies to use when reading can increase their comprehension ability; the paraphrasing strategy is suggested to help students recall facts they have read. In this study students were taught an acronym, RAP, to help them remember this strategy:

Read the text.

Ask yourself questions about the main ideas and details.

Put the ideas into your own words and try to change as many words as you can.

The study compared the results of two groups of students; a control group, and an intervention group, who were taught to use synonyms and paraphrase texts. Results indicate support for the hypothesis as the comprehension scores of all students in the intervention group indicated some improvement in at least one area of testing, fiction or non-fiction. Monitoring of the use of synonyms during the teaching sessions, along with post-test results of students' paraphrasing indicated significant improvement by all students in the intervention group.

The results suggest that teaching the use of synonyms and paraphrasing text using the RAP acronym is a successful strategy, and should be explicitly taught to assist students to improve in their reading comprehension ability.

Introduction

Many students in middle to late primary level who have learnt to be good text decoders experience difficulties in comprehension. They are often able to read a text at an age appropriate level with high percentage accuracy in word recognition however when asked to retell or answer questions they are not able to demonstrate understanding of the text. The difficulties they have in clearly comprehending texts, especially non-fiction, impacts on all areas of their learning as students at this level are required to 'read to learn', that is to use information they gain through reading to increase their knowledge in other areas.

In order to enable students to comprehend text Sorrell (1996) suggests that it is necessary to teach them strategies to use while reading. In defining reading he refers to the work of Bender (1996) in stating that most definitions of reading are based on the concept that "reading is the act of searching for and understanding the meaning of the written word" (p.2). He notes that students with learning disabilities who have difficulties with reading comprehension need specific instruction to increase their ability to be active thinkers and questioners when reading (p.2).

In examining the research on teaching comprehension skills Sorrell (1996) noted that teaching strategies to students with learning difficulties, could increase their comprehension ability. "Students with learning difficulties can benefit from direct instruction in comprehension strategies; the problem for teachers is to decide what type of intervention to provide" (p.3). He discusses the need to teach before, during and after reading strategies to assist students to gain meaning from text. He suggests using the paraphrasing RAP strategy, developed by Schumaker, Denton & Deshler (1984) as an after reading strategy, to help students recall the facts they have read. In this strategy students are taught an acronym, RAP, to help them remember the comprehension strategy:

Read a paragraph

Ask yourself, "What are the main idea and details in this paragraph?"

Put the main idea and details into your own words.

Katims and Harris (1997) also discuss the importance of teaching students strategies to engage in text and construct meaning "learning strategies are techniques, principles, or routines that enable students to learn to solve problems and complete tasks independently". They believe that students of varying abilities can be taught strategies that will enable their comprehension of a text to improve and promote thinking skills. Katims and Harris (1997) completed a study using the paraphrasing strategy as developed by Schumaker, Denton, & Deshler (1984) believing that teaching this strategy would significantly increase the reading comprehension of students.

In their study Katims and Harris (1997) investigated the effects of teaching the paraphrasing strategy using the RAP acronym to groups of students, with and without learning disabilities. It was found that the teaching of this strategy was an effective procedure for all students as using the acronym helped students to remember, think about and use the steps in the strategy. They state that the findings from their instructional intervention study lend support for teaching students with and without learning difficulties, in regular classrooms, a cognitively based paraphrasing strategy to improve reading comprehension (Katims and Harris, 1997).

Parker, Hasbrouck and Denton (2002) noted that comprehension in reading is about the reader understanding what is read. They state that skilled readers differ from unskilled readers, "in their use of general world knowledge to comprehend text literally as well as draw valid inferences from texts, in their comprehension of words, and in their use of comprehension monitoring and repair strategies." They identify a number of reasons why students demonstrate poor comprehension including their failure to understand key words and sentences, how sentences fit together and how the information fits together in a meaningful way.

The Paraphrasing Strategy (Schumaker, Denton and Deshler, 1984) is identified by Parker, Hasbrouck and Denton (2002) as one of a number of strategies, which can be used to improve students comprehension. It is a strategy used to teach students 'how to

learn' rather than teaching specific content or skills. Teaching the use of synonyms as part of the paraphrasing strategy can help to address the issue of children experiencing difficulties in comprehension of key words.

Fisk and Hurst (2003) note, "when students are taught a technique for how to paraphrase text, paraphrasing can strengthen comprehension of both fiction and nonfiction" (p.182). They suggest the use of a similar process to that developed by (Schumaker, Denton and Deshler, 1984), which includes four steps:

1. Initial reading and discussion
2. Second reading with note-taking
3. Written paraphrase
4. Sharing paraphrases

They refer to a number of researchers who found paraphrasing to be effective in increasing comprehension and state that when a student can restate the main ideas in their own words this shows that they have understood the thoughts. "Paraphrasing for comprehension is an effective reading strategy that helps students process and comprehend what they are reading and learning" (p.184).

Lee and Van Colln (2003) also discuss the importance of teaching cognitive strategies to improve comprehension stating, "multiple strategy approaches for reading comprehension have been developed to increase positive results over those of singular strategies"(p.3). On this basis, and noting studies that had found the paraphrasing strategy effective, they conducted a study in the use of the paraphrasing strategy (Schumaker, Denton & Deshler, 1984). They found positive effects in reading comprehension and paraphrasing from teaching this strategy but suggested that results should be treated with caution and further research is needed.

The present investigation aims to examine the effect of teaching the paraphrasing strategy to a small group of students in their final year of primary schooling, with a particular focus on the use of synonyms as a skill to assist in paraphrasing. This will assist students to develop their understanding of the meaning of key words within a text. These students

are able to decode text at an age appropriate level, but do not display a good understanding of texts read and they experience difficulties in completing comprehension tasks. The students do not demonstrate the ability to use strategies to assist in their comprehension, often continuing reading even when they are not gaining meaning from the text. The hypothesis is that teaching Year Six students who are accurate text decoders but have difficulties in comprehension, to use synonyms and paraphrase text increases their reading comprehension.

Method

Design

The study uses a case study OXO design. Gains in paraphrasing ability and reading comprehension, following explicit teaching of the use of synonyms and the paraphrasing strategy, are monitored for upper primary students. The study compares two groups of students, a control group and an intervention group.

Participants

All students chosen to participate in the study are currently completing their final year of primary schooling, Year 6, with ages ranging from 10-11 years. Students were chosen based on their scores on TORCH testing which took place for all students within the regular classroom at the beginning of the current school year. Students were required to complete a cloze exercise following the reading of the text "The Cats". Students chosen scored Stanine 6 or below, for their year level. The classroom teacher identified them as students who could benefit from additional assistance to work on developing strategies to assist them in understanding texts. They are able to accurately decode when reading, but experience difficulties in completing comprehension tasks and using information gained through reading to learn in other curriculum areas.

Procedure

In pre-testing for this study students were assessed using PROBE (Prose Reading Observation, Behaviour and Evaluation of Comprehension). PROBE reading assessment

(Parkin, Parkin & Pool, 2002), includes assessment of reading accuracy and comprehension skills. The writers note that this testing was designed by educators who recognized, "that a high level of reading accuracy did not always correlate with a corresponding depth of understanding" (p.6). Due to the difficulties these students demonstrated in completing comprehension tasks, they were not assessed using an age appropriate task but on the text designed for students approximately six months younger.

Students completed both the fiction and non-fiction tasks to enable a more thorough picture of the child's reading ability to be gained. It has been noted during ongoing monitoring of progress at the school that many students demonstrate different abilities when reading fiction and non-fiction texts. Students were required to read the passage aloud and a running record was taken, they were then asked the comprehension questions written for each passage. Six types of questions are used, literal, reorganisation, vocabulary, evaluation, reaction and inference. Students were then asked to paraphrase the first paragraph of the fiction passage in response to the instructions:
"Read these sentences. Try to say them in your own way and change as many words as you can." All student responses were taped to enable analysis of results. Students' entry scores, chronological age at time of testing and the passages used are shown in Table 1.

Table 1   Post-Test Scores All Students

Student	Age (1/3/05)		Pre Test			
(Intervention)	(Yrs.Mths)	Text	Reading		Comprehension	
		(Reading Age)	% Accuracy		% Score	
			Fiction	Non-Fiction	Fiction	Non-Fiction
A	11y5m	10.5-11.5	88	91	60	30
B	11y6m	10.5-11.5	96	97	30	20
C	10y11m	10.0-11.0	99	99	30	40
D	11y3m	10.0-11.0	98	96	50	10
E	11y6m	10.5-11.5	98	99	40	30
F	11y8m	10.5-11.5	90	93	60	20
Average Score			94.8	95.8	45.0	25.0
(Control)						
G	11y3m	10.0-11.0	99	97	50	80
H	11y9m	10.5-11.5	100	98	80	40
I	11y3m	10.0-11.0	98	96	80	70
J	11y2m	10.0-11.0	98	97	60	50
Average			98.8	97.0	67.5	60.0

Score							

PROBE reading assessment uses the term 'reading age' to refer to the combination of scores for decoding, 96%+, and comprehension, 70%+. Following pre-testing a group of students was chosen for the intervention group to be taught the use of synonyms and the paraphrasing strategy. The reading accuracy of these students ranged from 88%-99% on the text leveled at approximately six months lower than their current age. All achieved less than 70% on comprehension tasks, with most scoring significantly lower on the non-fiction comprehension component of testing. (Table 1)

The teaching procedure was based on John Munro's (2005) Comprehension-Paraphrasing teaching strategy with an emphasis on teaching students to identify synonyms for key content words. (Appendix 1) During each session students reflected on the reading material from the previous session then paraphrased sentences from that text. The RAP acronym was used to assist students in recalling what was required when paraphrasing:
Read the text.
Ask yourself questions about the main ideas and details.
Put the ideas into your own words and try to change as many words as you can.

Students were then introduced to the new text, identifying key words and brainstorming synonyms for these. Students used the synonyms to paraphrase sentences from the new text. At the end of each session students were required to complete a paraphrasing task independently, writing down a sentence in their own words. This task was used to monitor the progress of students with the number of synonyms used being recorded after each session. Students were encouraged to use a thesaurus to assist them in identifying synonyms, which they could use when paraphrasing. During the final three sessions students were asked to identify synonyms independently, without the thesaurus, then paraphrase the sentence.

Students in the intervention group were withdrawn from the regular classroom program for 30 minute sessions three times a week. During some weeks the number of sessions or duration of the session varied due to other things happening within the school or

classroom program. Although 12 sessions were originally planned, it was only possible to complete 10 sessions.

Students in the control group continued to participate in the regular classroom program. Following the four weeks of teaching for the intervention group, all students were assessed again using the same materials and procedure used during pre-testing.

Materials

Four different texts were used during the sessions, two fiction and two non-fiction (Appendix 1). Two sessions were spent on the first two texts then three sessions on the last two. This was to enable students to become familiar with the vocabulary related to the topic, which was considered to be helpful especially when working on non-fiction texts. The texts were chosen from collections of material for students in middle primary years, the Fry Readability Procedure was used to determine the appropriate level. The text, Endeavour, was used as the first non-fiction text however students experienced some difficulty paraphrasing this text so lower level reading material was chosen for the remaining sessions.

Results

Results indicate support for the hypothesis that teaching Year Six students who are accurate text decoders but have difficulties in comprehension, to use synonyms and paraphrase text increases their reading comprehension. The comprehension scores of all students in the intervention group indicate improvement in at least one area of testing, fiction or non-fiction. (Appendix 2, Table 2) Gains made by the intervention students were greater than those of the control group as shown through the comparison of the average pre and post-testing scores (Figures 1 and 2). However it should be noted that students in the control group demonstrated higher comprehension scores in pre-testing.
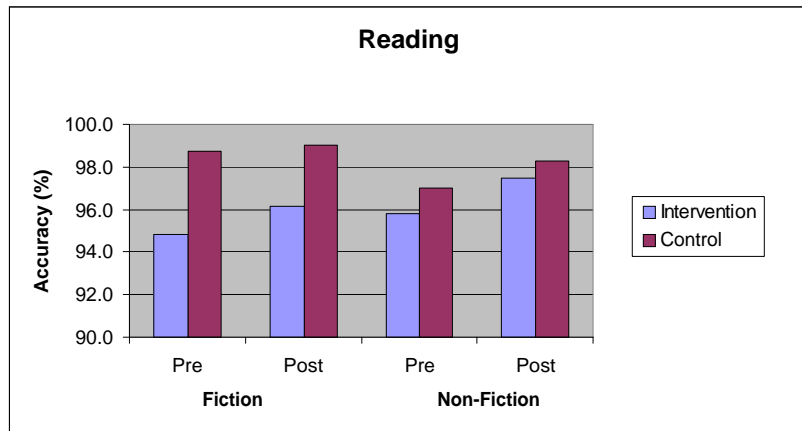
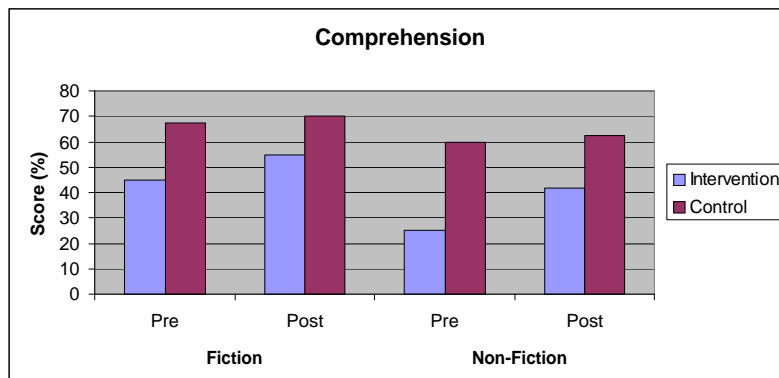Figure 1   Average Reading Accuracy Scores

Figure 2   Average Comprehension Scores

During post-testing it seemed that students in the intervention group had not made significant progress, with the improvement only an increase of one or two questions answered correctly. (Appendix 2, Table 2) Considering that these students experience greater difficulties in comprehension than the control group, the improving trend demonstrated in the results is pleasing.

Ongoing monitoring of the use of synonyms by students in the intervention group, during the teaching sessions showed improvement by all students, with most doubling their use of synonyms by the final session. (Appendix 2, Table 4) Post-testing results also indicate improvements in paraphrasing by students in the intervention group, while two students in the control group made some progress. (Appendix 2, Table 3) During post-testing

students were again asked to paraphrase the first paragraph of the fiction passage then results were analysed for the use of synonyms and ideas paraphrased. Scores of the intervention group improved significantly, from an average of 35% synonyms used or ideas paraphrased to 63%, compared with an average of 16% to 25% for the control group. (Figure 3) It is interesting to note the higher starting point in the intervention group.
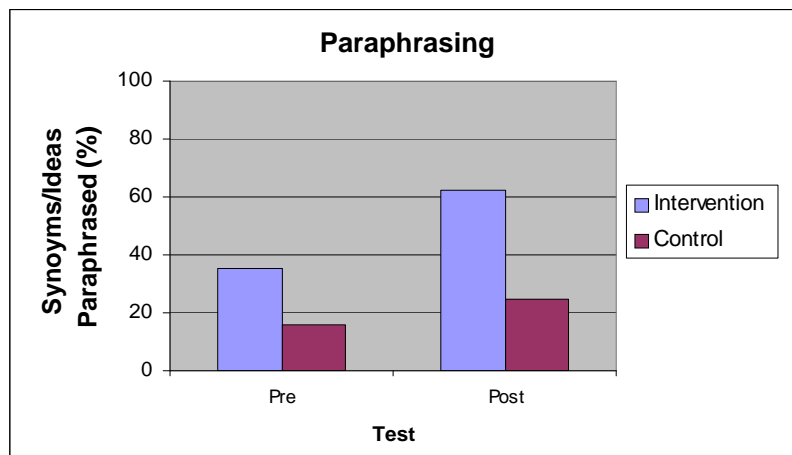

Figure 3   Average Paraphrasing Scores

Student A (Figure 4) demonstrated improvement in the use of synonyms in the teaching sessions however sometimes she used phrases rather than replacing words with synonyms, e.g. 'covered in water' for 'wet'. In completing the written task in the final session and during post-testing she left out some ideas when paraphrasing. The gains demonstrated in post-testing were not significant, from two ideas to three. Student A also showed improvement in her reading comprehension ability indicated in the comprehension score and reading accuracy. During post-testing she was monitoring her reading, increasing the self-correction of reading errors from 8% to 37% for the fiction text and from 10% to 43% for non-fiction. Her comprehension scores also improved, from 60% to 80% for the fiction text, and she was able to answer more inferential questions. (Appendix 2, Table 2)
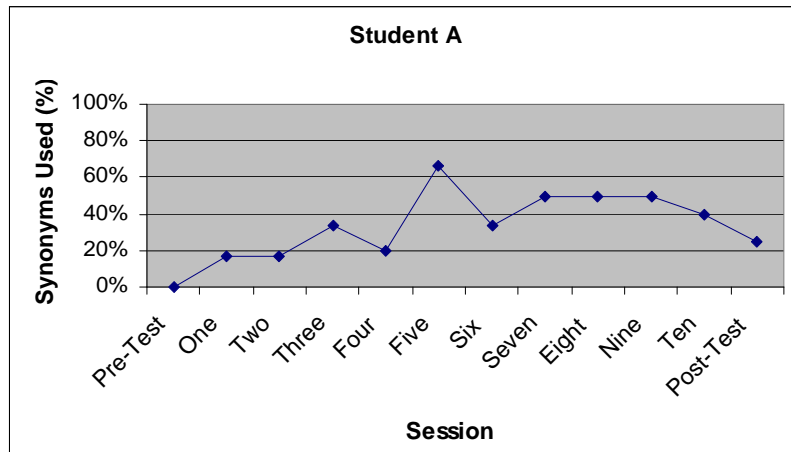
Figure 4   Synonyms Used by Student A

Student B (Figure 5) showed significant improvement in the use of synonyms throughout the teaching sessions. She sometimes used incorrect grammatical structures when paraphrasing e.g. 'the rain was frozen' for 'the rain was icy' and used phrases like 'dripping wet' for 'wet'. She left out some ideas when completing the written task at the end of each session and during post-testing. Although increasing the use of synonyms and paraphrasing during post-testing, her results in reading and comprehension did not appear to change significantly. Student B, who is not a confident student, participated enthusiastically in the teaching sessions however she became hesitant in the testing situation. It would have been more effective to assess her on an easier text and she may have benefited from the use of lower level texts in the teaching sessions.

Figure 5   Synonyms Used by Student B
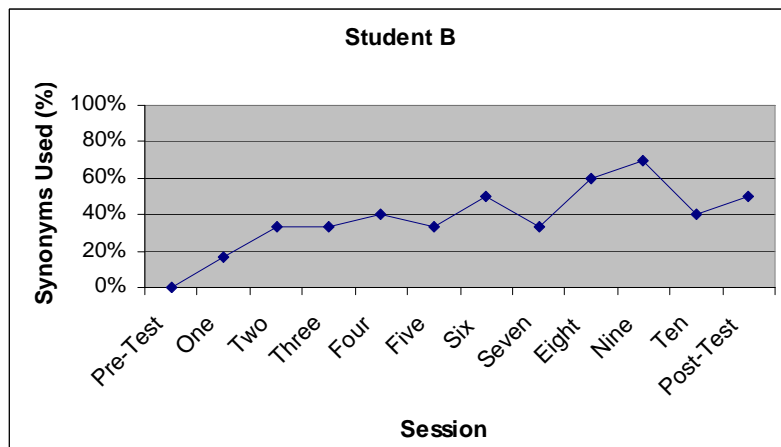
Student C (Figure 6) participated with enthusiasm in all activities including pre and post testing; she was able to articulate the RAP acronym and strategy from the second session. Apart from session four when she could not replace the word 'repaired', and used 'about 10' for 'several', her use of synonyms increased significantly throughout the teaching sessions. She experienced difficulty with oral language and understanding vocabulary e.g. using 'freezing' for 'shivering' and 'straight-forwardly' for 'calm'. Her results in post-testing demonstrated a 60% increase in the use of synonyms and she was often able to paraphrase ideas when she wasn't using synonyms. Student C's reading accuracy rate did not vary during pre and post testing, her comprehension scores improved on both tasks. (Appendix 2, Table 2)
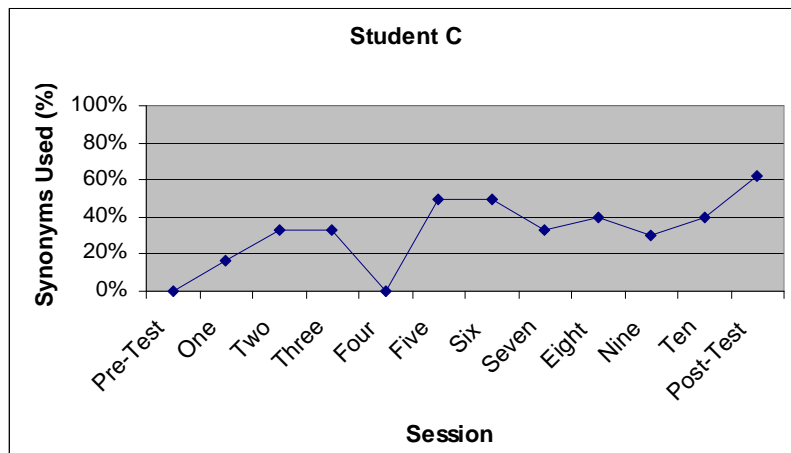

Figure 6   Synonyms Used by Student C

Student D (Figure 7) was not a confident participant in the group, often waiting to hear the responses of others before contributing herself. Although demonstrating improvement in the use of synonyms when paraphrasing she often rearranged words already in the text. She experienced difficulties during sessions six and seven when she was not able to generate synonyms for 'ship' or 'help', even after group brainstorming, but her results improved again in the following sessions and at post-testing. Her reading accuracy increased slightly at post-testing with greater phrasing and expression when reading the fiction text. She made significant gains in her comprehension of the non-fiction text; the only question answered correctly in pre-testing related to her previous knowledge but in post testing she was able to answer 50% questions correctly.
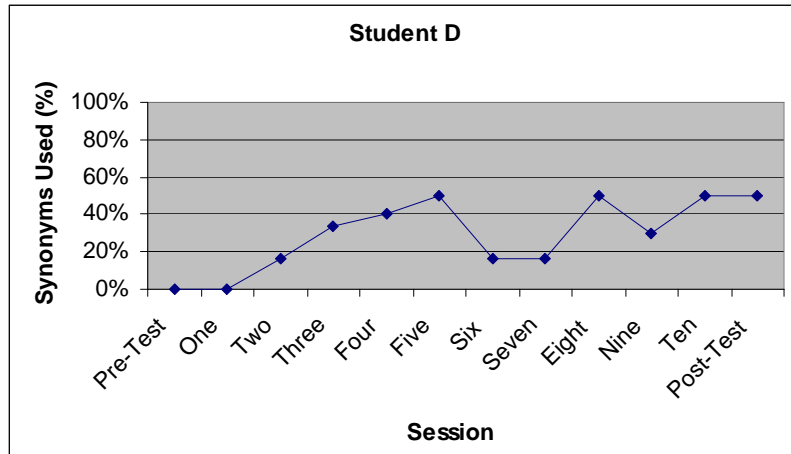
Figure 7   Synonyms Used by Student D

Student E (Figure 8) was able to use synonyms in pre-testing then continued to make progress during the teaching sessions. She made good use of the thesaurus to generate synonyms however the number of synonyms used decreased in the final sessions when students were asked to complete the task without the thesaurus. Her paraphrasing showed understanding of the ideas in the text although she sometimes added other ideas e.g. 'the splattering rain' for 'rain'. When completing the written task, Student E was observed to be rereading and replacing some words with synonyms. Her use of synonyms increased during the sessions (17%-60%) and she was able to paraphrase 87% of the ideas in the final passage but these results were not reflected with gains in comprehension. Although she read test passages fluently she experienced difficulty with questions related to vocabulary and did not go back to the text to locate answers.
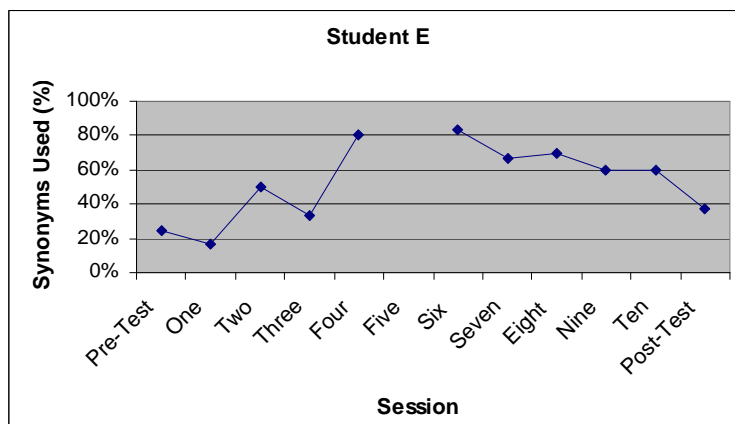

Figure 8   Synonyms Used by Student E

Student F (Figure 9) is a student with an articulation difficulty who comes from a non-English speaking background. He sometimes used grammatically incorrect forms of words when writing synonyms e.g. 'notice' for 'saw', 'contact' for 'called'. He was able to use synonyms in pre-testing and was often the group member able to generate a number of synonyms for each word. Although he was absent for two sessions his use of synonyms improved consistently following the second session. During post-testing Student F was able to paraphrase 90% of the ideas in the passage. (Appendix 2, Table 3) His reading accuracy did not change significantly, with many errors reflecting his ESL background and articulation difficulties, for example not articulating the 's' sound at the end of words. His comprehension of the non-fiction text at post-testing showed greater understanding, from 20% to 50% correct answers, however he experienced difficulties with the questions based on vocabulary and reorganisation. (Appendix 2, Table 2) He appeared to be using prior knowledge rather than referring back to the text to answer questions.
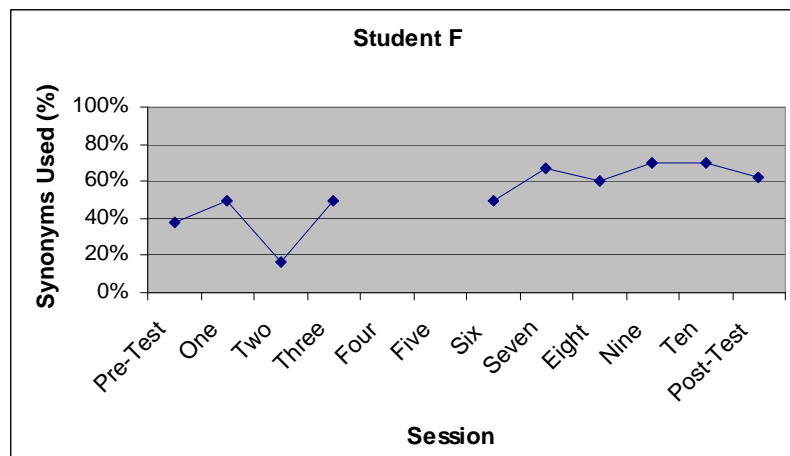
Figure 9   Synonyms Used by Student F

Students in the control group demonstrated significantly less improvement in paraphrasing in post-testing with two students replacing one word with a synonym. Student H was able to paraphrase 50% of ideas during pre-testing with 63% of ideas paraphrased in post-testing. Students G and I showed no progress and student J was able to paraphrase 25% ideas in post-testing. Students J and I demonstrated improvement in reading accuracy at post-testing particularly on the non-fiction task, which was also

reflected in the improvement in their comprehension scores. Students H and J demonstrated improvement in comprehension on the fiction task. (Appendix 2, Table 3)

Discussion

In reflecting on the results of this study there is support for the hypothesis and the research, which suggests that, teaching students strategies to use when reading improves their comprehension ability. Students improved in the use of synonyms and paraphrasing and demonstrated some gains in reading comprehension. The intervention would need to take place over an extended period of time to bring about significant change however the trends indicated in the results are positive. Students in the control group generally were more fluent readers who approached texts with confidence; they demonstrated the use of strategies including looking back at the text and rereading to answer comprehension questions.

The results lend support for the work of Sorrell (1996), Katims and Harris (1997), Parker et al. (2002), Fisk and Hurst (2003) and Lee and Van Colln (2003) who suggest that teaching the paraphrasing strategy will improve students' comprehension of text. There appeared to be a positive effect on students' comprehension but as mentioned by Lee and Van Colln (2003) further research is needed. This was particularly demonstrated by the improvements in the comprehension scores of Students A, C, D and F, especially of non-fiction texts, following the intervention. (Appendix 2, Table 2)

The use of the RAP acronym was beneficial in helping students remember the steps of the strategy, as suggested by Katims and Harris (1997). When asked what to do to help you read and understand a text, students frequently responded with enthusiasm, "Rap It!" They were able to articulate the steps to follow when paraphrasing a text and it was beneficial to have the reminder of the acronym displayed in poster form. (Appendix 1) At the end of the final teaching session when students discussed what they had learnt, they stated that the strategy helped them understand what they were reading. Student D said that she had used paraphrasing when completing written work at home.

Parker et al (2002) noted that many students have poor reading comprehension because they have difficulty understanding key words. This was noticeable in the intervention group of students who often found it difficult to generate synonyms. When using the thesaurus they needed assistance to identify appropriate synonyms sometimes suggesting words that did not fit the meaning as used in the text. During one session there was discussion about the word 'several' and that replacing it with 'a couple' or 'a hundred' would change the meaning.

Students' use of synonyms during post-testing did not always reflect their use during teaching sessions, as indicated by the scores of students A, E and F. (Figures 4, 8, and 9) During post-testing only two students of four tested on the first paragraph of Parrot (PROBE) were able to generate synonyms for 'house' or 'mate'. They may have benefited from the brainstorming of synonyms, use of the thesaurus and discussions about texts, which took place during teaching sessions, but were not part of the testing situation. This may also explain the lack of confidence in approaching the text demonstrated by Student B during post-testing.

During early teaching sessions students were rearranging words more than using synonyms and adding words, particularly descriptive vocabulary. However this decreased throughout the sessions, as they worked in the group paraphrasing parts of the text. The importance of maintaining meaning was often discussed in the group. The number of synonyms used by students in the written task did not always reflect their use of synonyms in oral responses during the rest of the lesson, when they had the opportunity to share and discuss ideas. Students B and D often had difficulty in expressing their ideas orally and brainstorming vocabulary. Along with Student A, their use of synonyms decreased in the final sessions when they did not use the thesaurus to complete the written paraphrasing task.

Sorrell (1996) stated that specific instruction can assist students to be active thinkers and questioners when reading (p.2). It was interesting to note when asking comprehension

questions during post testing that some students from the intervention group stated that they didn't know what a particular word meant e.g. vegetation. During pre-testing these students had attempted to answer without commenting on their knowledge or understanding. They appeared to have a greater recognition at post-testing that there were words they didn't understand. When discussing what had been learnt during the teaching sessions Student C discussed word meanings, stating that she hadn't really been thinking about the meanings of words when reading during pre-testing.

There are a number of factors that would need to be addressed if repeating this study or continuing teaching sessions with these students. Anecdotal notes from sessions indicate that students sometimes had difficulty understanding the texts, particularly subject specific vocabulary in non-fiction texts. They frequently made grammatical errors when paraphrasing text and would benefit on work to develop their oral language and understandings of words. This supports the work of Sorrel (1996) who suggested the need to teach students before, during and after reading strategies.

When reading the final text, "Caught in a Tempest", students were asked to picture the waves crashing on the beach to assist them in brainstorming synonyms. Student D stated that she couldn't picture things in her mind while other students were better able to generate synonyms once they had an image in their minds. All students in the intervention group would probably benefit from the use of lower level texts and work on visualising to improve their reading comprehension ability.

The performance of students varied for different texts making the choice of text a factor for this group of students. The final texts were chosen at a lower level than text 2, The Endeavour, with vocabulary that would be easier for students to understand and increase the possibilities for generating synonyms. The text, 'Caught in a Tempest' included more descriptive language, particularly the sentences chosen for the written paraphrase in sessions eight and nine. Students experienced greater success in generating synonyms for this text. It was interesting to note when using the Fry Readability Procedure that a collection of texts designed for students in middle primary years actually ranged in

reading levels from Year 2 to at least Year 7, making the choice of appropriate texts for these students an important consideration.

The results suggest that teaching the use of synonyms and paraphrasing text using the RAP acronym is a successful strategy, and should be explicitly taught to assist students to improve in their reading comprehension ability. Many students also need explicit teaching of skills such as visualizing. Whilst ongoing monitoring was taking place during the sessions, students did not receive feedback on the specific number of synonyms used in the task. An area that would be interesting to investigate would be how explicit feedback on this type of task would affect student progress and self-efficacy. It was also noticeable during pre and post testing that students didn't refer back to the text when answering questions, particularly on the non-fiction items. Another area of possible study would be the effect of explicit teaching of strategies to teach students to locate words in the text that give the answers to comprehension questions could be beneficial.

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Appendix 1

Teaching Unit   Paraphrasing

Teaching Year Six students who are accurate text decoders but have difficulties in comprehension, to use synonyms and paraphrase text increases their comprehension ability.

Session One

John Munro's Comprehension-Paraphrasing Strategy (2005)

Text: Elijah and the Caves

Introduce the strategy:
We are going to learn something you can do to help you read. It's called paraphrasing. You can use the word RAP to remember it. First you read the text. Then you ask yourself questions about the main ideas and details. Then put the ideas into your own words in complete sentences. Try to change as many words as you can without changing the meaning.

Teacher models paraphrasing and cues student activity:
We will read the first sentence together.
What is the main idea? Discuss ideas and details.

Let's practise changing some of the words.
Students brainstorm synonyms for some of the words, e.g. finished, disappeared, shouted

Now we will say it in our own words.
Teacher models then students practise the strategy.

Teacher reviews the action:
Let us look at what we did here. We read each sentence and asked ourselves about the main ideas then put it in our own words. We tried to change as many words as we could. See how it helped you to understand what the text said.

Do you have any questions?

Students practise:
Let's do this together with another sentence.
Students read text and practise paraphrasing.

Teacher reviews the action:
What do you tell yourself to do when you paraphrase?
Read the text.
Ask yourself questions about the main ideas and details.

Put the ideas into your own words and try to change as many words as you can without changing the meaning.

Students practise individually:
Now you are going to practise doing this to some sentences by yourself. Try to think of a different way of saying each sentence. Read each sentence. Ask yourself questions about the main ideas and details. Put it into your own words; try to change as many words as you can. Write down what you thought of.

Students review what they did:
Can you tell me what you know about paraphrasing and what steps you should follow to paraphrase a text?

Students articulate steps in paraphrasing.

Display poster showing the RAP acronym as a reminder for what to do when paraphrasing text.

Sessions Two-Ten

All sessions followed the format below:

COMPREHENSION – PARAPHRASING/SYNONYMS

Activity	Task Description
Text Retelling Passage from Previous Session	Students re-tell passage from the previous session. They say what they remember about the text.
Text Reading Shared Reading Strategy. *Passage from Previous Session*	Students and teacher re-read passage from previous session. Teacher cues use of paraphrasing during the reading. "How would you say it another way?" Each student reads a sentence and then retells it in her / his own words, changing as many words as possible.
Reading *New Passage* Ask yourself questions about the main ideas and details.	Students read new text together. Discuss main ideas and details.
Brainstorm synonyms *New Passage*	Students brainstorm synonyms for selected key content words.
Text Reading Shared Reading Strategy *New Passage*	*Students say the paraphrasing strategy before they begin to read:* **"I will read the text then I will ask myself questions about the main ideas and details. I will put the ideas into my own words and try to change as many words as I can."** *Student reads passage. Teacher cues each student to paraphrase aloud after each sentence read in the text.*
Writing new sentences	Students are asked to paraphrase a sentence and write down what they thought of. Share and discuss sentences.
Reflection	Students comment on what has been learnt in the session.

Ref: John Munro Comprehension-Paraphrasing Strategy (2005)

<u>Texts</u>

Session	Text	Genre	Fry's Readability Level	Series	Pages
1	Elijah and the Caves	Fiction	Year 3	Wildcats	18-21
2	Elijah and the Caves	Fiction	Year 3	Wildcats	22-24
3	The Endeavour	Historical Recount	Year 6	Rigby Literacy Collections	44-45
4	The Endeavour	Historical Recount	Year 6	Rigby Literacy Collections	45
5	It Wasn't a Trick	Historical Recount	Year 4	Wildcats	2-4
6	It Wasn't a Trick	Historical Recount	Year 4	Wildcats	4-6
7	It Wasn't a Trick	Historical Recount	Year 4	Wildcats	6-8
8	Caught in a Tempest	Fiction	Year 5	Rigby Literacy Collections	16-17
9	Caught in a Tempest	Fiction	Year 5	Rigby Literacy Collections	17-18
10	Caught in a Tempest	Fiction	Year 5	Rigby Literacy Collections	18-19

Paraphrasing

Read the text.

Ask yourself questions about the main idea and details.

Put the ideas into your own words. Try to change as many words as you can.

Appendix 2

Table 2   Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test Reading and Comprehension

Student	Reading (%Accuracy)				Comprehension(%Score)			
	Fiction		Non Fiction		Fiction		Non Fiction	
(Intervention)	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
A	88	94	91	96	60	80	30	40
B	96	96	97	98	30	40	20	20
C	99	99	99	99	30	70	40	60
D	98	99	96	99	50	40	10	50
E	98	99	99	99	40	50	30	30
F	90	90	93	94	60	50	20	50
Average	94.8	96.2	95.8	97.5	45	55	25	41.7
(Control)								
G	99	99	97	97	50	50	80	70
H	100	99	98	98	80	90	40	40
I	98	98	96	99	80	70	70	80
J	98	100	97	99	60	70	50	60
Average	98.8	99.0	97.0	98.3	67.5	70	60	62.5

Table 3   Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing								
	Pre-Test				Post-Test			
Student	Synonyms	Ideas/words	Total	%	Synonyms	Ideas/words	Total	%
(Intervention)		paraphrased				paraphrased		
A	0	2	2	25	0	3	3	37.5
B	0	2	2	25	2	2	4	50
C	0	2	2	25	4	1	5	62.5
D	0	2	2	25	3	1	4	50
E	2	2	4	50	5	2	7	87.5
F	3	2	5	62.5	3	4	7	87.5
Average	0.8	2.0	2.8	35.4	2.8	2.2	5.0	62.5
(Control)								
G	0	1	1	12.5	0	1	1	12.5
H	0	4	4	50	1	4	5	62.5
I	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
J	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	25
Average	0	1.3	1.3	15.6	0.5	1.5	2.0	25

Table 4   Synonyms Used in Paraphrasing

	Pre	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	Eight	Nine	Ten	Post
Paraphrasing-Synonyms Used												
Session												
	Pre	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	Eight	Nine	Ten	Post
Possible	8	6	6	6	5	6	6	6	10	10	10	8
Student												
A	0	1	1	2	1	4	2	3	5	5	4	2
B	0	1	2	2	2	2	3	2	6	7	4	4
C	0	1	2	2	0	3	3	2	4	3	4	5
D	0	0	1	2	2	3	1	1	5	3	5	4
E	2	1	3	2	4		5	4	7	6	6	3
F	3	3	1	3			3	4	6	7	7	5
Paraphrasing-Synonyms Used (Percentage)												
Student	Pre	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	Eight	Nine	Ten	Post
A	0%	17%	17%	33%	20%	67%	33%	50%	50%	50%	40%	25%
B	0%	17%	33%	33%	40%	33%	50%	33%	60%	70%	40%	50%
C	0%	17%	33%	33%	0%	50%	50%	33%	40%	30%	40%	63%
D	0%	0%	17%	33%	40%	50%	17%	17%	50%	30%	50%	50%
E	25%	17%	50%	33%	80%		83%	67%	70%	60%	60%	38%
F	38%	50%	17%	50%			50%	67%	60%	70%	70%	63%
Average	10%	19%	28%	36%	36%	50%	47%	44%	55%	52%	50%	48%