

Teaching year 2 students to paraphrase and use synonyms improves literal comprehension.

Abstract

The aim of this project was to teach two students a comprehension strategy to help them understand texts at a literal level. The students were good decoders, had completed Reading Recovery, a full intervention reading program, and had some good reading strategies in place. The students were taught to use synonyms and paraphrasing while reading to improve literal comprehension.

The intervention program consisted of a total of 10 lessons.

Each session was approximately 30 minutes in duration.

Synonyms were identified and listed each session.

Students were explicitly taught the paraphrasing strategy at sentence level.

The teacher modelled how to paraphrase.

The students articulated the strategy before and after each teaching session.

Students were given opportunities to practice the strategy and were provided with feedback.

Pre & post testing was conducted.

The implication of this study was that explicit teaching of synonyms and paraphrasing can improve literal comprehension.

This study found that the explicit teaching of synonyms and paraphrasing while reading slightly improved literal comprehension.

Introduction

'Comprehension in reading means understanding what is being read'. (Parker, Hasbrouck, Denton 2002) In my experience, as students move from first two years of school into grade 2 it seems that their ability to read and decode text is higher than their ability to understand and comprehend text to at least a literal level. Students don't stop to reflect on their reading to ensure they understand what they have read. It also seems that somehow the message that your reading has to make sense and that it has to say something to you is not there with younger students. Students continue reading without stopping to reflect or think about what they have read and whether it makes sense to them. The difficulty of comprehension at the literal level is an area that younger students have difficulty in. Students must be explicitly taught the comprehension strategies. For the strategy to be learnt by the students the teacher must guide the students through the process with explicit modelling, and talking through each step of the process so students see the strategy in action. Students must be given many opportunities to practise these strategies in their own reading with monitoring and feedback by the teacher. As Educators we cannot simply assume that students know how to comprehend text. Parker, Hasbrouck, Denton (2002) state "students demonstrate poor comprehension for several reasons" among the reasons are: "Failure to understand key words. Failure to understand key sentences. Failure to understand how sentences relate to one another." It seems that in teaching young students, this is the area that I see as needing explicit teaching. Comprehension doesn't just happen it has to be taught.

In researching this area, studies suggest that ‘the paraphrasing strategy has been demonstrated to significantly increase reading comprehension of students with and without learning disabilities’ (Katims & Harris, 1997). Paraphrasing is a reading strategy in which the student reads the text and then is able to say what has been written in their own words. This strategy was developed at the University of Kansas by Schumaker, Denton, & Deshler (1984) and uses the acronym RAP. “Read a paragraph. Ask yourself what is the main idea and details of this paragraph? Put the main idea into your own words”. Katims & Harris (1997) stated that the use of the acronym helped students remember the steps and use the strategy. It is an after reading strategy to help students recall what they have read and put it into their own words. Paraphrasing has been a successful strategy because it “incorporates all modes of communication including reading, writing, listening and speaking.” (Fisk & Hurst 2003)

A research by Lee, & Von Colln (2003) into Cognitive Strategy Instruction in which paraphrasing was used as a strategy, shows that it is “an effective means of teaching children who display learning difficulties”. And further that the Paraphrasing strategy “has shown to have a positive effect in reading comprehension”, in a student that displayed “seemingly irreversible learning behaviours” and who showed difficulties in reading comprehension. The findings in their research suggest the usefulness of the paraphrasing strategy in addressing comprehension problems. This research was conducted with one student and there were improvements in the students paraphrasing score. My action research was similarly conducted with 2 students where the instruction was directed and very specific towards the two students.

Most of the research into paraphrasing requires students to work at the paragraph level. Fisk & Hurst (2003) state “Paraphrasing is not meant to be a word-by-word translation but rather a genuine rewriting concentrating on expressing main ideas and supporting evidence...” For the purposes of this study and due to the fact I am working with younger students, I have used the Munro Paraphrasing strategy, which paraphrases at the sentence level “paraphrasing involves readers retelling a sentence ‘in their own words.’ Their task is to generate a literal representation of a sentence read by substituting as many as the words and phrases in it” (Munro 2002) An implication for this strategy is the teaching of synonyms. Students need to be able to have a good bank of vocabulary to be able to use this strategy effectively. The use of this particular paraphrasing strategy for young readers is further supported by Munro “ since paraphrasing involves working on one sentence at a time in terms of its literal meaning, one might expect this strategy to be acquired earlier than the other two-infering and summarizing-and to be easier.” Explicitly teaching students to stop after they have read 1 or 2 sentences and think about how they can say what they have read in another way is a strategy that will improve younger students ability to understand text read.

The present investigation aims to study the effect of explicitly teaching paraphrasing by reading and saying it into your own words, with a focus on synonyms to assist the strategy. This will help students with comprehension at the literal level. This study will be conducted on two students who are good decoders but are unable to recall facts and events after they read.

Prediction

Teaching year 2 students to paraphrase and use synonyms improves literal comprehension.

Method

Design

This study used OXO design in which the improvements in the ability to paraphrase sentences after reading will improve literal comprehension. Each lesson followed a procedure similar to John Munro's Comprehension as outlined in Literacy Intervention Strategies, Paraphrasing.

Participants

Two boys were selected from my year 1/2 class. These boys are in year 2 both these students had received Reading Recovery, an intensive accelerated reading intervention program in year one. After completing Reading Recovery they seemed to have regressed in their reading ability. Both students text levels had dropped at the beginning of year school wide pre-testing. They do not voluntarily read books by choice. They must be reminded and monitored to take book homes as part of the school's Take Home Book program. They had good strategies in place in terms of re-reading, self corrections, and monitoring their reading, but they were not able to retell or recall many of the events or information in their reading, even though the texts they were reading were well below their instructional level.

Student A is 7 years, 7 months old. He had completed twenty weeks on Reading Recovery in year one. He completed the program in September 2005 and achieved level 16.

Student B is 7 years 5 months old. He completed Reading Recovery in April 2006 and achieved level 19.

Both students have difficulty staying focussed on a task especially in their reading group. At the beginning of year literacy testing both Student A and B were on text level 14. Their classroom reading group consists of 5 students, 3, year 2 boys and 3, year one girls. The group is working on texts around level 16-18. The students are very good decoders however the boys in the group have difficulty putting the reading message in their own words. These 2 boys after Reading Recovery are still unable to retell information. These students have poor expressive language and they are slow to respond to questions or make responses while reading.

These students were also identified as having difficulty expressing themselves especially in response to their reading

Student A is unable to sustain a discussion and conversation. He repeats his sentences particularly the beginning of the sentence he is trying to convey. He usually is only able to sustain a one or two sentence conversation. He has very poor concentration skills and is unable to stay focussed on a task for any length of time. He is also on a very intensive behaviour management plan.

Student B is very slow to respond in all areas. He reads very slowly, he speaks very slowly he works very slowly. If given extra time and prompts he can recall and retell information from the texts he reads. He is easily distracted and will not stay on task for a long period, he will do such things as sharpen his pencil.

Materials

The pre-test materials were taken from the reading materials in the school. PM (Nelson Thomson Learning) series at level 16.

Record Of Oral Language (ROL).

I created my own paraphrase test from the reading text and created my own synonym test with words from both pre and post test texts and other words.

Pre-Test text: More Spaghetti. Text level 16

Post-Test text: The Secret Cave. Text level 16

Text used in instruction: Comet Magazine articles

1. We love camping
2. Best friends
3. Hermit house

The texts from the magazines were graded using the Fry's Readability Scale at year 2 level.

Teacher created paraphrase sentences from Pre and Post Test texts.

Blank sentence strips.

Blank flashcards

Procedure

Student A and B were withdrawn from the group. Originally I introduced the paraphrasing strategy to the whole grade but because it was a new strategy and there were year 1 and 2 students, I got the impression, I was losing the whole grade and the two students definitely were not focussed or listening effectively.

I then decided to work with these students within their reading group but it quickly became apparent that both students were losing focus as soon as the other students were involved in the discussion. I therefore decided to only teach the two students as a group of two, in that way I could keep the focus on the task and to minimise distractions. In this way the students had quality one to one teacher time and interaction and less time where they would be able to lose concentration because the teacher was interacting with the other participants.

The students had 8 sessions of 30 minutes for over a 3 week period. These sessions ran during the daily literacy time, the pre and post assessment took place outside the reading time and the students were withdrawn for a one to one assessment.

The first two sessions were used to explain why the group was meeting and what we were going to be learning. We played a game of matching two sentences that said the same thing but were written differently. We also played a synonym matching game where we matched words that meant the same thing. The following 6 sessions all followed the same procedure.

1. Reviewing and restating the strategy of paraphrasing.
2. Reading sentences paraphrased and synonyms from previous session.
3. Introducing and reading a 6-8 sentences paragraph of a text.
4. Selecting vocabulary to find synonyms.
5. Individual paraphrasing of each sentence.
6. Revising and restating the strategy used.

Following the sessions Post-Testing was administered which included Running Record, Record Of Oral language (ROL) synonym test.

Results

My results are supported by Munro 2002 thus while training did not increase paraphrasing ability when reading to a sufficient level to achieve significance, the training was enough to improve reading comprehension ability.

There were some gains in the paraphrasing score of both students, which may be due to the fact that the research was conducted with two students only and was very explicit and focussed. These students were very much made to keep focus and concentration during the teaching sessions and whenever they became distracted they were quickly brought back into focus. The use of aides such as highlighters and markers seemed to interest the students

Teaching synonyms was an area that required emphasis during the sessions. I selected words from the text that the students needed to provide another word for before they paraphrased. Upon reflection I needed to have done some more work on this strategy with the students. I realised that as Sedita, J.(2001) in her book Study Skills, states "Weaknesses, particularly at the semantic (word), syntactic (sentence) and discourse (paragraph) levels minimize the ability to play with words. Limited vocabulary and ability to construct complex sentences make it difficult for students to come up with a 'different way of saying things' in their own words". I need to continue to work with the students on synonyms and include some focus on vocabulary development in my teaching.

The Pre-test results for the Record Of Oral Language were as follows

Record Of Oral Language

PRE-TEST

Level 1 Part 1	STUDENT A	STUDENT B
My brother's knees are dirty	✓	✓
Pussy is drinking some milk	✓	✓
Sally is staying at home	✓	✓
John is buying me a boat	✓	✓
I know he's in there	✓	✓
There's another fire engine	✓	✓
She's driving her car quickly	✓	✓
<u>Level 1 Part 2</u>		
My father's radio is broken	✓	✓
Sally is riding her bike	✓	✓
Mary is going to town	✓	✓
Mary is giving me a book	✓	✓
I guess we're lost	✓	✓
Here are some more fish	✓	✓
He's playing his radio very loud	✓	✓
<u>Level 2 Part 1</u>		
That big dog over there is going to be my brother's	That big dog over there is gonna to be my brother's (P)	✓
The boy by the pond was sailing his boat	✓	✓
The boy flew to the top of the tree	The boy flew from the top of the tree (P)	✓

For his birthday Kiri gave him a truck	✓	✓
Can you see what is climbing up the wall?	✓	✓
Here comes the big elephant with children riding on his back	✓	✓
My brother turned the radio up very loud	✓	✓
<u>Level 2 Part 2</u>		
That old truck in there used to be my father's	That big truck over there used to be my father's (P)	✓
The cat from next door was chasing a bird	✓	✓
The dog ran through the hole in the fence	The dog ran through the hole next door	The dog ran through a hole in the fence (P)
For the holidays grandpa bought us a ball	✓	✓
The boy saw what the man was doing to the car	✓	✓
There is my baby riding in his pushchair	There is my baby riding in my pushchair	✓
The girl threw her book right across the room	The girl from her book right across the room	✓
<u>Level 3 Part 1</u>		
Be as quiet as you can when your father's asleep	Be as quiet as you can cos your father's asleep (P)	✓
My aunt and uncle want to start building a new house	✓	My aunt and uncle want to start building a new house (P)
The two cars drove along the road for along time	The two cars on the road were driving for along time (P)	✓
The shopkeeper sold my mummy some fresh cream	The shopkeeper sold my mummy very nice cream	The shopkeeper sold my mummy some soft cream
The girl saw who her mother was giving the cakes to	✓	✓
There are the books that you were reading at my place	✓	There is the books where you were reading at my place
My mother usually puts the cat under the house at night	✓	✓
<u>Level 3 Part 2</u>		
Be very careful swimming when there is a big wave	✓	Be very careful swimming when you swimming when there is a big wave (P)
That dog and the one next door like to chase the postman	✓	✓
All the children talked loudly to each other at the table	All the children talked loudly at each other at the table (P)	All the children talked very loud to each other at the table (P)

The new teacher read our class a fairy story	The new teacher read our class a new fairy story (P)	✓
The teacher knows how much wood we will need for the house	The teacher knows how much wood we will need for the house (P)	The teacher knows how much wood we will need for the house (P)
There goes the fireman who put out the fire in the factory	There goes the fireman who put out the fire in the factory	There goes the fireman who put out the fire in the factory
My brother often puts some bread outside for the birds	My brother often puts some bread outside for the birds (P)	My brother often puts some bread outside for the birds (P)
	28 correct out of 42 = 66%	33 correct out of 42 = 78%
	9 sentences paraphrased out of 14 incorrect responses.	6 sentences paraphrased out of 9 incorrect responses.
	5 sentences incorrectly repeated out of 14 incorrect responses .	3 sentences incorrectly repeated out of 9 incorrect responses.

Record Of Oral Language

POST-TEST

Level 1 Part 1	STUDENT A	STUDENT B
My brother's knees are dirty	✓	✓
Pussy is drinking some milk	✓	✓
Sally is staying at home	✓	✓
John is buying me a boat	✓	✓
I know he's in there	✓	✓
There's another fire engine	✓	✓
She's driving her car quickly	✓	✓
<u>Level 1 Part 2</u>		
My father's radio is broken	✓	✓
Sally is riding her bike	✓	✓
Mary is going to town	✓	✓
Mary is giving me a book	✓	✓
I guess we're lost	✓	✓
Here are some more fish	✓	✓
He's playing his radio very loud	✓	✓
<u>Level 2 Part 1</u>		
That big dog over there is going to be my brother's		✓
The boy by the pond was sailing his boat	✓	✓
The boy flew to the top of the tree	✓	✓
For his birthday Kiri gave him a truck		✓
Can you see what is climbing up the wall?	✓	✓
Here comes the big elephant with children riding	✓	✓

on his back		
My brother turned the radio up very loud	✓	✓
<u>Level 2 Part 2</u>		
That old truck in there used to be my father's	✓	✓
The cat from next door was chasing a bird	✓	✓
The dog ran through the hole in the fence	The dog ran through the hole	✓
For the holidays grandpa bought us a ball		✓
The boy saw what the man was doing to the car	✓	✓
There is my baby riding in his pushchair	✓	✓
The girl threw her book right across the room	✓	✓
<u>Level 3 Part 1</u>	✓	
Be as quiet as you can when your father's asleep	✓	✓
My aunt and uncle want to start building a new house	✓	✓
The two cars drove along the road for a long time	✓	✓
The shopkeeper sold my mummy some fresh cream	✓	✓
The girl saw who her mother was giving the cakes to	✓	✓
There are the books that you were reading at my place	✓	There is the books that you were reading at my place (P)
My mother usually puts the cat under the house at night	✓	✓
<u>Level 3 Part 2</u>		
Be very careful swimming when there is a big wave	✓	Be careful swimming when you swimming when there is a big wave (P)
That dog and the one next door like to chase the postman	✓	✓
All the children talked loudly to each other at the table	All the children talked loudly at each other at the table (P)	✓
The new teacher read our class a fairy story	✓	✓
The teacher knows how much wood we will need for the house	✓	The teacher knows how much wood we will need for the house (P)
There goes the fireman who put out the fire in the factory	✓	✓
My brother often puts some	My brother often puts some	My brother often puts some

bread outside for the birds	bread out for the birds (P)	bread outside for the birds (P)
	39 correct responses out of 42 = 92%	37 correct responses out of 42 = 88%
	2 sentences paraphrased out of 3 incorrect responses	5 sentences paraphrased
	1 sentence incorrectly repeated	

Both Students improved in their Record of Oral Language Test. In the Post-Test both students increased their overall score in repeating sentences accurately. Student B did not make any errors by repeating sentences which changed the meaning of the sentences. Most notably the results improved for Student A who has the most difficulty concentrating on a task and being focussed. These explicit teaching sessions in a two-student group have been good for this student because he was able to internalise the explicit teaching message to paraphrase and to listen carefully. The opportunity to get immediate feedback and use the strategy whilst under the guidance of the teacher has greatly assisted both these students. Student B paraphrased 5 sentences which was one less than the Pre-Test.

The Synonym Test results were as follows:

SYNONYM TEST

	PRE-TEST		POST-TEST	
	STUDENT A	STUDENT B	STUDENT A	STUDENT B
1. scared	afraid	frightened	scary	frightened
2. spaghetti	pasta		pasta	
3. better	good			good
4. try				have a go
5. happy	laughed	excited	laughed	excited
6. friend		friend	someone to play with	playing
7. pleased	thank you		proud	happy
8. looked		look	see	see
9. around		round		round
10. laughed	happy	happy	happy	happy
11. feeling		better		better
12. wanted		want	want	want
13. short	small	little	small	small
14. everyone		everybody	everybody	everybody
15. everybody		everything	all	all
16. never		ever	wouldn't	ever
17. good		excited	excellent	
18. near	close	close	closer	close
19. fast	speed	faster	speed	quick
20. find	look	found	look	found
	10 out of 20 = 50%	16 out of 20 = 80%	16 out of 20 = 80%	18 out of 20 = 90%

Student A & B showed improvement with the synonym test. This was as the result of the teaching the students were instructed that they always had to try and say something. Students were encouraged to always think about the words and think about what it reminded them about. An example of this is the word 'friend' students thought about their own friends and the words they came up with reflected this: 'someone to play with' and 'playing' which is what these students do with their friends.

As a result of the teaching both students increased in Post-Testing, with student A making the most improvement.

Upon reflection these words are not all very suitable words as a synonym test, words such as feeling, around, find, everyone and everybody were not very easy words to find a synonym for.

The Paraphrase Test results were as follows:

PARAPHRASE TEST

PRE-TEST

Title: More Spaghetti

	STUDENT A	ANALYSIS
Tommy was happy today.	Tommy was very excited today	Gave a synonym for happy
But Tommy was a bit scared too	But Tommy was afraid	Gave a synonym for scared
I'm pleased you have come to stay.	I am very pleased that you came to stay here.	Repeated sentence and added 'very'
But he was feeling scared and now he wanted to go home.	He really wanted to go home.	Gave idea in second part of sentence.
Robert's mother gave them some milk and a banana each	Robert's mother gave them some milk and a banana til dinner time.	Repeated the sentence and added an idea from the story 'til dinner time'
The boys got out Robert's racing cars and truck to play with until dinner time.	Robert pulled out some cars.	Gave one idea from the first part of the sentence.

	STUDENT B	ANALYSIS
Tommy was happy today.	Tommy was very happy today.	Added 'very'
But Tommy was a bit scared too	He was a little scared	Did not provide a synonym
I'm pleased you have come to stay.	I'm happy for you to come to stay.	Gave a synonym for pleased
But he was feeling scared and now he wanted to go home.	But he was very scared.	Repeated the first part of the sentence omitted second idea in sentence.
Robert's mother gave them some milk and a banana each	Robert's mother went to get milk and a banana each.	Gave a synonym for the sentence.
The boys got out Robert's racing cars and truck to play with until dinner time.	Robert went to play with the toy car and the toy truck.	Paraphrased the first ideas from the sentence omitted the second idea.

Student A was able to paraphrase the one-idea sentences.
 Student B was able to paraphrase the one-idea sentences.

Student A could only paraphrase one idea from a two-idea sentence.

PARAPHRASE TEST

POST-TEST

Title: The Secret Cave

	STUDENT A	ANALYSIS
Dad stopped the car at the camping ground by a lake.	Dad stopped the car near the lake.	Paraphrased the two ideas from the 3 ideas in the sentence.
This looks like a good place for camping.	Here is a good place for camping	Changed the beginning of the sentence.
We have to put the tent up first.	We put the tent up first.	Omitted some words but didn't change the sentence.
Katie helped to get the bags and other things out of the car.	Katie got the bags out of the car.	Paraphrased the 1 idea from the 2 ideas in the sentence.
Joe and Dad looked everywhere but they couldn't find Katie	Joe and dad couldn't find Katie because she was in the cave.	Gave a reason from the text rather than paraphrase the sentence.
I will be getting dark soon.	It will be getting dark.	Didn't paraphrase. Omitted a word.
They went inside the cave.	Dad and Joe went inside the cave.	Paraphrased 'the' for the characters
But remember you must not go away by yourself again.	Never go away by yourself	Paraphrased the sentence.

	STUDENT B	ANALYSIS
Dad stopped the car at the camping ground by a lake.	Dad stopped the car near the lake.	Sentence paraphrased.
This looks like a good place for camping.	This looks like a very good place to camp.	Added very.
We have to put the tent up first.	We have to put the tent up.	Changed the order of the words.
Katie helped to get the bags and other things out of the car.	Katie helped to get all the things out of the car.	Paraphrased the sentence.
Joe and Dad looked everywhere but they couldn't find Katie	Joe and Dad tried to find Katie and they looked all over the place.	Paraphrased the sentence.
I will be getting dark soon.	It was nearly night time.	Paraphrased the sentence.
They went inside the cave.	Dad and Joe went inside the cave.	Paraphrased the sentence.
But remember you must not go away by yourself again.	Don't ever go away by yourself again.	Paraphrased the sentence.

In conclusion both students showed some improvement in their ability to comprehend text at a literal level while using the paraphrasing strategy. However the results are not conclusive.

From the beginning these students did not realise that they could:

- say the words they had read in another way.
- use the words in the text when they were retelling.
- pause after they have read a sentence and say that sentence in another way to help them understand.

By the conclusion of the teaching sequence they were at least able to say what they were reading in their words at a very basic level.

These students had seen themselves as struggling readers, they have had some literacy assistance every year since grade prep. These students don't have good self-efficacy, they don't believe they are good readers.

Discussion

The teaching session were very difficult at first the students seemed very disinterested. I had originally started teaching the strategy to the whole class but I soon realised that it was such a new strategy that it was very difficult for all children to understand it in a large group setting. I then moved the strategy to the small group to which student A and B worked in during the daily reading literacy sessions. This too seemed very difficult for student A and B to stay focussed and to concentrate. I then decide to work with the two students separately within the daily literacy session.

The first two sessions were very difficult and it took lots of time to focus the students in to the task and to the new strategy. They were very unfocused and disinterested. The texts I was using were photocopies from the Comet magazine. I decided to bring in highlighters so the students could highlight the sentences, which we were working with. This seemed to be a good incentive and each session the students would be excited about the highlighter colour they wanted to use. Another disappointing observation I made was at the beginning of the each session we reviewed the paraphrasing strategy and explicitly stated what it was and what we do, we used the words; *'after I read I can stop and think about the sentence I have just read. I can say it another way. This helps me to understand what I am reading.'*

Well you can imagine my dismay when the students would review the strategy with a response of when you read you can 'sound it out' it took three sessions of explicit teaching to change the automatic response of 'sound it out'.

When the teaching was conducted as a large group or in a smaller group the two students targeted were not concentrating or focussed but when the explicit teaching was directed at the two students only, they were more focussed.

Both students needed and in fact depended on the prompting by the teacher for their responses. It helped the students that we generated a list of synonyms for some of the words before we paraphrased sentences from the text. The quality of their sentence paraphrasing was very limited and very basic. In some cases the paraphrased sentence used basic words which made the sentence lesser quality, words such as good, happy, etc were sometimes used which I feel did not produce a high quality paraphrased sentence. As these students are still only in year 2 it is advisable to continue with the teaching of this strategy. I feel that with continued practise and including vocabulary and synonym work together with the comprehension strategy of visualising these students will significantly improve in their comprehension of reading text.

Finally, at least the students were not automatically saying that we should 'sound it' out after we read!

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Appendix

Lesson 1

Synonym matching game.

Saying a word in another way.

Each student was given 3 words to say another word to mean the same thing.

Each student was given 3 words on flashcards and they had to say another word for the word. The students alternate word was written on a flashcard.

Lesson 2

Paraphrasing sentences.

Saying a sentence in another way to mean the same thing.

Each student was given a sentence written on a sentence strip. They had to find a sentence that meant the same thing from a group of sentences on sentence strips.

This was repeated 3 times.

Each student was given a simple one idea sentence. They had to say the sentence in another way. The students sentence was written on a sentence strip.

Lesson 3

Teacher reads: 'My Best friends'

Selected vocab was written on a chart.

Students asked to say other words for this word.

Selected sentences were written on sentence strips.

Students have a discussion about the sentence.

Students asked to say the sentence in another way. Using words from the synonym chart.

Students response was written on sentence strip.

Each student repeated paraphrasing a sentence 2-3 times. Re-read text. Re-read paraphrased sentences.

Review strategy: after I read I can stop and think about the sentence I have just read and say it another way. This helps me to understand what I am reading.

Lesson 4

Review the strategy

Re-read 1st paragraph of 'Best Friends'

Re-read paraphrased sentences.

Read 2nd paragraph of 'Best Friends'

Repeat steps 1-10 for each lesson.

The following 6 sessions all followed the sequence of lessons 3 and 4. a two paragraph text was used. The text was used on two consecutive days with a different paragraph used.

The texts were from 'Comet Magazine'

Lesson 5 and 6 – 'Hermit House'

Lesson 7 and 8 – 'We love Camping'

Record of Oral Language

Level 1 Part 1
My brother's knees are dirty
Pussy is drinking some milk
Sally is staying at home
John is buying me a boat
I know he's in there
There's another fire engine
She's driving her car quickly
<u>Level 1 Part 2</u>
My father's radio is broken
Sally is riding her bike
Mary is going to town
Mary is giving me a book
I guess we're lost
Here are some more fish
He's playing his radio very loud
<u>Level 2 Part 1</u>
That big dog over there is going to be my brother's
The boy by the pond was sailing his boat
The boy flew to the top of the tree
For his birthday Kiri gave him a truck
Can you see what is climbing up the wall?
Here comes the big elephant with children riding on his back
My brother turned the radio up very loud
<u>Level 2 Part 2</u>
That old truck in there used to be my father's
The cat from next door was chasing a bird
The dog ran through the hole in the fence
For the holidays grandpa bought us a ball
The boy saw what the man was doing to the car
There is my baby riding in his pushchair
The girl threw her book right across the room
<u>Level 3 Part 1</u>
Be as quiet as you can when your father's asleep
My aunt and uncle want to start building a new house
The two cars drove along the road for along time
The shopkeeper sold my mummy some fresh cream
The girl saw who her mother was giving the cakes to
There are the books that you were reading at my place
My mother usually puts the cat under the house at night
<u>Level 3 Part 2</u>
Be very careful swimming when there is a big wave
That dog and the one next door like to chase the postman
All the children talked loudly to each other at the table
The new teacher read our class a fairy story
The teacher knows how much wood we will need for the house
There goes the fireman who put out the fire in the factory
My brother often puts some bread outside for the birds

SYNONYM TEST

1. scared
2. spaghetti
3. better
4. try
5. happy
6. friend
7. pleased
8. looked
9. around
10. laughed
11. feeling
12. wanted
13. short
14. everyone
15. everybody
16. never
17. good
18. near
19. fast
20. find

Appendix

The aim of this intervention was to explicitly teach synonyms and paraphrasing strategies at a sentence level to improve literal comprehension.

This intervention has been designed to be used with year two students in a small group.

Each session is approximately 20-25 minutes duration.

Total of 8 sessions.

Intervention group worked in a small group within the classroom.

PARAPHRASE TEST

PRE-TEST

Title: More Spaghetti

Tommy was happy today.
But Tommy was a bit scared too
I'm pleased you have come to stay.
But he was feeling scared and now he wanted to go home.
Robert's mother gave them some milk and a banana each
The boys got out Robert's racing cars and truck to play with until dinner time.
Tommy was happy today.
But Tommy was a bit scared too
I'm pleased you have come to stay.
But he was feeling scared and now he wanted to go home.
Robert's mother gave them some milk and a banana each
The boys got out Robert's racing cars and truck to play with until dinner time.

POST-TEST

Title: The Secret Cave

Dad stopped the car at the camping ground by a lake.
This looks like a good place for camping.
We have to put the tent up first.
Katie helped to get the bags and other things out of the car.
Joe and Dad looked everywhere but they couldn't find Katie
I will be getting dark soon.
They went inside the cave.
But remember you must not go away by yourself again.

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