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Improving ESP Students' Reading Comprehension Proficiency by Using Scanning Techniques

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to reveal if the use of scanning techniques can improve ESP students' reading comprehension proficiency. A sample of 20 ESP students was chosen randomly and divided into two groups, their ages ranged between 20 and 21 years old. The control group was taught through traditional methods of reading comprehension and the experimental group was taught through the scanning technique. Both groups were administered a reading comprehension test and questionnaire to find out if they were aware of using scanning techniques in the learning of enumerating texts. Data was analyzed by using a t-test on the scanning technique. The researcher uses pre-test and post-test. The collected data were analyzed by using the T-test formula. The result of data analysis showed that the mean score in the post-test for the experimental group is higher than the mean score in the controlled group. The pre-test and post-test comparison showed that the participants achieved a higher level of reading comprehension proficiency following the instructions. The findings of the study indicated that the reading scanning technique was more effective in improving the reading comprehension ability of ESP students than traditional methods of reading comprehension.

Keywords: ESP; Reading comprehension; scanning techniques

IJRSSH

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the four essential language skills for learners who learn English for specific purposes, and it should be mastered well.

Reading comprehension is the action of understanding what you are reading, and without comprehension, reading is considering as a way of nothing and not more than chasing a character on a page. The ability to characterize, main ideas in a text is an essential key to reading comprehension. (Hare & Milligan, 1984)

Good reading comprehension comes only with practice. Students need reading comprehension skills to achieve the educational goals and anticipation, which are needed in the classroom settings. As Larsen-Freeman (1986) states reading schemes in the target language should be taught from the beginning of language mandate, and the main aim of learning a foreign language is to be able to read its compositions.

One of the main techniques that can be used in the class room by English professors to improve student's reading comprehension is the scanning techniques. Teachers demand to be conscious, of reading strategies and techniques to facilitate students' reading, nevertheless of the methods they adopt to use in the classroom. (Richards, 2002:22)

The Problem

Reading is a very complex powerful process; it involves the mutual support between the eyes and brain. Harmer (1991:153)

ESP Students faced many problems and difficulties when learning a language in the classroom, and one of these problems is the limited time for the students to read the passage carefully, and many of them fail to acquire such knowledge due to difficulties in comprehending such texts within the fixed time. It happens because the common activity in the classroom is the set of collection between some skills and components of English

The result is the students lose their time because they are busy with difficult words and read every word in the text. Students had trouble with reading comprehension because they did not grasp the content of the text and what technique that they used when they are reading a text to get or to know the content of the text. Jafari &Shokrpour (2012) explain that student' failure in understanding the English texts, because they are lack of English proficiency and less effective reading strategies use.

Reading comprehension is the operation of comprehends and constructing meaning via interchange and collaboration with a written text.. Poor readers are not only

unwilling to read, but they also often score poorly in execution tests. The defeat in answering reading comprehension questions correctly could only show that they failed to understand the given texts .Snow, (2002, p.11) .To solve this problem, the teacher should the appropriate techniques to make the students' reading comprehension better. By using new technique, students are able to understand the texts and straight their attention to the details to improve their reading comprehension**.**

The Significance

Reading is a process of interaction between the reader and the text, in which readers use their knowledge to make up meaning. (Grellet, 1989), and Brown (2001) specifies scanning as one of the reading strategies. He defined scanning as a strategy to find a certain piece of information without reading through the whole text**.** The readers are not necessary to read every single word in the text to be efficient readers, they only need to find the information they need from the text without reading the whole text to make them able to govern their time effectively.

There are some techniques that can be used to save ttime. One of the techniques is scanning techniques. (Wallace, 2004).The significance of being able to understand the written materials increases notably in all academic areas as students transfer from one stage to another (Clarke, Truelove, Hulme, & Snowling, 2013; Wong, 2011).

Scanning is the technique for finding certain information quickly in a text while ignoring its broader meaning; it investigation for main words or idea in a written text .it considers as one of the key component in developing students 'reading comprehensions. (Brown, 2001: 30)

Nunan, 2015, p. 70) asserts "When a teacher directs his learners to look quickly through a text to find keywords, without expecting them to understand everything, she is urging them to use the strategy of scanning"

The Aim of the Study

The study aimed to find out how scanning techniques can improve ESP Students' performance in reading comprehension.

The Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that:

1-There isn't any significant improvement in the ESP college students' performance in reading comprehension by scanning technique.

2-There is a significant difference between the ESP college students' performance in

reading comprehension by scanning technique.

The Limits

The research is limited to:

1. ESP fourth -year college students in the College of political sciences / Al- Nahrain University during the academic year (2018-2019).
2. The prescribed textbook is" New Headway-Upper-intermediate Student's Book**."**

LITERATURE REVIEW

What is Scanning?

Scanning is a reading technique used in reading when students want to search for certain information, such as: (keywords, concepts or ideas. Moreover, the student knows exactly what that student is looking for.

Edge (2000) defines scanning as a reading strategy where the readers gaze through the text for certain information (p. 195).

Scanning also allows finding details and other information in a hurry. Scanning is not a reading method in the true meaning of the word. It is a search that demands a reader to be carried over the material until he finds what he needs then stops and reads as much as necessary to answer his question (Ophelia H. Hancock in Sukirah 1988:9).

Scanning is a critical test-taking skill that permits students to read questions closely and know how to look back in the text quickly to realize the answer.

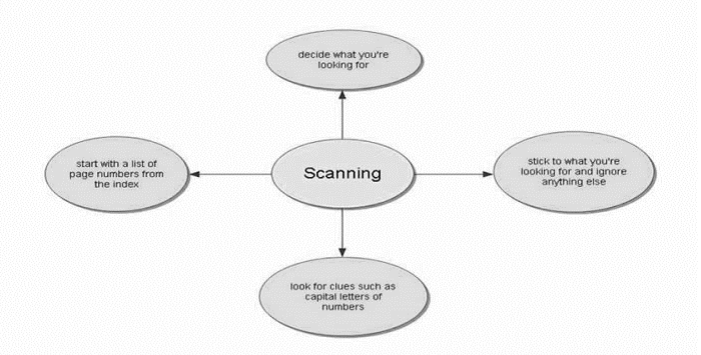

***Figure* 1 shows the scanning process**

Scanning Teaching Technique

Teaching English especially reading skills should be administed to the students through employ, many originative techniques.

Scanning is a great technique that helps students to read long, complex, and pieces.it is a technique to be used when we want to find specific information quickly.

Nuttall (1996) argues that scanning doesn't take out the need for an accurate reading, but they enable the reader to pick out parts of the text, that is worth waste time on. Through scanning technique, the learners will be simple and readily, comprehend the text.

Scanning is a reading technique used when the reader has the ability to locate certain details quickly**.** Maxwell, (1972)

Learners who learn reading for academic purposes try to recognize the main spot of a paragraph, to indicate on ambiguous words, phrases, or sentences, and to summarize their reading.

Sarwono (2013: 2), scanning is a technique used to find certain information by looking at the text, and moving your eyes quickly down the page to find information, or answer for certain questions we need.

How to scan a text?

1. Before you start scanning for information, you should try to understand how the text is coordinate. State the particular information you are looking for.
2. Underline or circle the main t information while reading the text (numbers, dates names etc.)
3. Read each question completely before starting to scan, then, identify the keyword and scan the text for it.
4. Move your eyes quickly all over the text; from left to right, up or down.
5. Read and skip through sections of the passage. (Abby. 2013)
6. When you have found the needed information, carefully read the sentences carefully to be sure that you have fixed the right information.

The Advantages of Scanning

The advantages to scanning techniques are as follow:

a. Scanning helps the students to get information quickly, directly, and specifically.

b. Scanning helps the students to understand the organization of the text perfectly and follow the linearity of the passage.

c. Scanning helps the students to save time to read the long passage.

d. Scanning helps the students to figure out the main idea easily.

e. Scanning helps to stimulate to be active in both asking and answering the question about specific information and clues related to the text. Grellet (1981:19) in Winarti (2010:15),

f. The students are practiced running their eyes over a text quickly to determine specific information (Suparman, 2005: 55)

The Disadvantages

The disadvantages of scanning techniques as follows:

1. Scanning means reading quickly, which means that students identifying specific information, we often have to go back and re-read the entire passage again to understand.

2. Scanning means poor difficultly to comprehend and recollection of material in various texts. (Beare, 2006:2)

What is reading comprehension?

Reading comprehension is defined as the ability to read a text, and how to, processes it, and understand its meaning. It is an important activity for students to become efficient readers (Grabe &Stoller, 2002). It's the ability to understand and to look at words and to figure out their meaning in a variety of contexts. Students who surpass in reading comprehension often have successful academic careers.

Suk (2016) explains that "Reading ability is an important second-language (L2) skill in academic settings, where L2 learners are required to read to learn and complete related tasks" (p. 73). It is a thinking process. Keene and Zimmerman (1997:47) state, "teaching reading comprehension is mostly about teaching thinking".

It is the power to understand a written passage of text. Learning how to read is an amazing sensation. Learning how to comprehend what we read is an authorized feeling.

Reading comprehension is the operation to get an accurate understanding of the writer's message through jointly extracting and structure meaning by participate reader's background knowledge and interaction and copartner-ship. Indrayani (2014)

Related Studies

Some researchers, who have conducted similar research, having the same issue in using scanning techniques, This study is similar to (Riris ,2017) in his research, tries to find out the effect of scanning technique on students' reading comprehension In Narrative Text.The final result of data analysis showed that the mean score of the experimental students is higher than the control group, which means that teaching reading using the scanning technique was effective to improve students' reading comprehension.

Another research was conducted by (Yanti, 2019), his study aimed to investigate the significant effect of scanning technique on students' reading comprehension in the narrative text His study has done a deal with descriptive quantitative method. The result of data analysis showed that using the scanning technique can improve the students' reading comprehension. It could be seen by the students" scores. Where, the score of the experimental group is higher than the control group.

The study is also similar to (Nur Sehang, 2012). The research intended to solve the problems faced by the students in reading comprehension .He tries to prove the effectiveness of the scanning technique in

developing students' reading comprehension. The results show that there is a positive improvement in the students' competence in reading comprehension.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The researcher employed a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design to find out the importance of using the scanning technique in improving the ESP students' reading comprehension.

Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study consists of all fourth ESP college students' in the college of political Sciences at Al-Nahrain University for the academic year 2018/ 2019. The total number for four sections is 80 students. The sample of this study consists of 20 ESP College students; their ages are between 19 and 21, who were selected randomly.

The Instrument of the Study

To achieve the purposes of the study, the researcher used the following instruments:

1) Reading comprehension test (as pre-posttest) was designed to measure the students' capability in using scanning techniques.

2) The Questionnaire was given for students who get treatments through scanning techniques.

Reading Comprehension Test

To achieve the aims of the study, the researchers prepared a reading comprehension test. The test was given after the experiment to see if the scanning technique can improve the ESP students' reading comprehension.

The Students ' Questionnaire

A questionnaire was given for students who get treatments. The questionnaire gave information about students' responses to scanning techniques in improving reading comprehension proficiency in answering the questions. The questionnaire consisted of 10 statements. The result of the questionnaire was scored based on the Likert Scale. The scores range from 1—5. (See Appendix A)

The instruction of lesson plan

The researcher explains the new technique to the participants in the experimental group to be sure that each student learned how to use it.

Before the experiment began, students were given an introduction to the course, then a timed reading practice test using a passage taken from the textbook, followed by the pretests.

The treatment was conducted during the second semester of the academic year 2018-2019. It consisted of two sessions of instruction each week typically 50 minutes in duration and lasted for eight weeks .The program included different reading

comprehension passages taken from the book "New Headway upper-Intermediate student's book".

The researcher makes his efforts to explain the unknown words before showing the material, and to know how to use Wh- --questions and multiple choices in finding the information related to the topic and the keywords of the questions, so the students can get an idea about the passage and try their best to comprehend an English text.

The Pre-Test

A pre-test was given to every participant in both the experimental group and the control group before conducting the experiment teaching process.

The reading comprehension passage was taken from the book "New Headway Upper-Intermediate student's book under the title "Lost and Found ", page 10.

The students have to read a text, and then read comments or answer questions prepared by the researcher about the text.

In the pretest, most of the students in the two groups did not answer some of the questions and complained about the limited time (30 minutes) that the researcher gave. See Appendix (B)

The pilot study

The pilot Test is held by the writer outside the two groups, experimental and controlled groups. The usability of the test was tested through a pilot study of 10 students who were excluded from the sample were chosen from another department in the same college. It was performed to check the test items. The researcher had 10 multiple choices in conducting the pilot test.

The Treatment

After conducting the pretest, the researcher conducts a treatment, the experimental group, and control group will be taught by using the same materials but with a different technique. The experimental group will be taught by using the scanning technique and the control group will be taught through the traditional method.

The researcher during the treatment gave students fixed time in some activities. It was given 2 minutes to discover or underlines the keywords in the passage. At the first lecture, they read the passage word by word, not to scan the text so that they were slow to find the words. The researcher also gave a fixed time (2 minutes) when exercising the students in scanning the main idea. At the second lecture, the students showed progress in using scanning techniques to save their time in answering questions although most of them were slow in reading comprehension, but the next meeting they became faster and faster to find and answer the questions.

The researcher applied a scanning technique for eight meetings. In collecting the data about the students' reading

comprehension, the researchers used to test which consisted of 10 Wh---questions', and 5 items for multiple- choice questions. The researcher analyzed the data by using statistical analysis.

The Validity of the Test

The validity of a test refers to the ability to do attest. It is the extent to which how well an assessment accomplishes, the functions for which it is being used. Messick (1989, p. 6).

The researchers gave the exam to many professors, and teachers of the English language. They were asked to see the validity of the test whether it is appropriate or not. The test was modified according to the Jury members' comments and suggestions.

Reliability of the Test

Reliability indicates, to the degree of consistency in a method that measures some thing

and to the lack of error. It refers to the accuracy or recur capability of the test scores. (Fraenkel & Wallen,2003). Cronbach Alpha was used and it was (0.65)

The Post-Test

The researcher gave the ESP students in the experimental and the control group the same reading passages under the title "The Peter Pan Generation" page 59, taken from the same selected book, to see if there are differences between the two groups.

The limited time for the test was 20 minutes. The tests consisted of ten questions of wh---questions, and 5 items for multiple- choice The score for each item of the question was 3 marks and 2 marks for multiple- choice questions. Therefore, the total scores were 50.

See Appendix (C)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Data Analysis

The study aims to find out if the use of scanning techniques can improve reading comprehension for ESP college students. The results showed that the differences in ESP students reading comprehension proficiency were improved after the given treatment. Therefore, it can be concluded that there was a significant difference in students' reading performance before and after being taught by using scanning techniques T-test was used. The results are shown in the following table.

Table 1 The Pre-test Result of Experimental and Control Groups

Group	No.	Mean	SD	T .Test	F
Experimental	20	70.75	2.61	0.74	0.35
Control	20	67.53	4.32		

To ensure whether there is any significant difference between the two groups in their reading comprehension proficiency in the pre-test. The t-test formula has been used. The mean score of the experimental group 70.75 and it is 67.53 for the control group. It means that there are no statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups at the significance level of 0.05 in the pretest which indicates the equivalence of the two groups. (See Table 1)

Table 2 The Post-test Result of Experimental and Control Groups

Group	No.	Mean	SD	T. Test	F
Experimental	2o	86.72	1.76	13.41	0.14
Control	2o	71.32	2.30		

Table 2 shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the control and experimental groups in the post- test in favor of the experimental group, which appears from the means of both experimental and controlled groups. The mean score of the experimental was 86.72, while the mean score in the control group was 71.52. The results showed that there significant difference between the means of both groups due to the use of scanning techniques. As a result, the Null hypothesis was rejected at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$).

Table 3 *Paired* t-test comparing the performance of the experimental group on the reading pre- and post-tests.

Group	Pre test		Post test		Student T-value	Significant differences
	The median	Standard deviation	The median	Standard deviation		
Experimental	5.99	1.316	9.00	1.239	10.522–	0.000
Control	5.05	1.677	6.50	1.231	3.639–	0.002

Table 3 shows that there are statistically significant differences between the pre and post-performance tests at the significance level of 0.05 for both the control and the experimental groups. The mean score in the control group is 5.05, while in the experimental group is 5.99 in the pre-test and the mean score in the post test for the control group is 6.50 , and 9.00 in the experimental group.

It is observed that the improvement in students' proficiency for the experimental group is greater than that of the control group. This is due to the great impact of using scanning techniques to improve ESP students' performance in reading comprehension.

Discussion of the Results

The results of the study showed that there was a significant difference in reading comprehension after the treatment in using the scanning technique, and that indicated that training was effective for the experimental group.

During the practicing procedures, the researcher focused on improving reading skills through scanning techniques, while the students in the control group were not used to use this technique. The students who participated in the study showed motivation and attraction during the training period.

Harmer (2001, p.69) asserted that "students need to be able to scan the text for particular bits of information they are searching for."

The result approved that there was a positive impact on students reading performance due to the scanning technique and that point out through the experimental group scores.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

Based on the result of the data analysis, the researcher found that the use of scanning techniques can help students to comprehend English text easily.

The researcher used an experimental design to measure the improvement in reading comprehension which was proved by the statistical data analysis that there is a significant improvement of ESP students' reading comprehension before and after being taught by using scanning techniques. With the scanning techniques, students can save time, and being more active, and that was proved by their score after the treatment.

learning by using scanning technique can help students to comprehend English text easily because students can understand the context or the gist of the text without reading the whole of the text so It is suggested to English teachers for using scanning technique in teaching reading.

Recommendations

The researchers recommended the following:-

1) It is recommended to include the scanning technique as one of the teaching strategies in schools and colleges in teaching English.
2) Teachers should train well on scanning techniques not only in reading comprehension skill, but with all English activities.
3) Teachers should apply different exercises in class including scanning strategies
4) Further studies could organize similar research in different levels of education such as elementary, senior, or postgraduate students, since the technique is appropriate for any level.

Suggestions

The researcher puts some suggestions for further research as follow:

1) Teachers should provide many chances for the students to perform the techniques of scanning as an alternative reading strategy to improve their reading comprehension.

2) Teachers should care about the level of difficulties when using scanning technique, by choosing a good material, and explain the word of the text, to reduce the difficulties faced by the learners in the learning process by giving clear instructions to the students before using the new technique.

3) English teachers should pay more attention to using scanning techniques in teaching reading comprehension by giving clear instructions to the students before using the new technique.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

The ESP Students' Questionnaire

Dear student,

Please fill in the following questionnaire for a research on the use of scanning technique in improving reading comprehension proficiency. .

.

Student Name---------- Time: 20 minutes

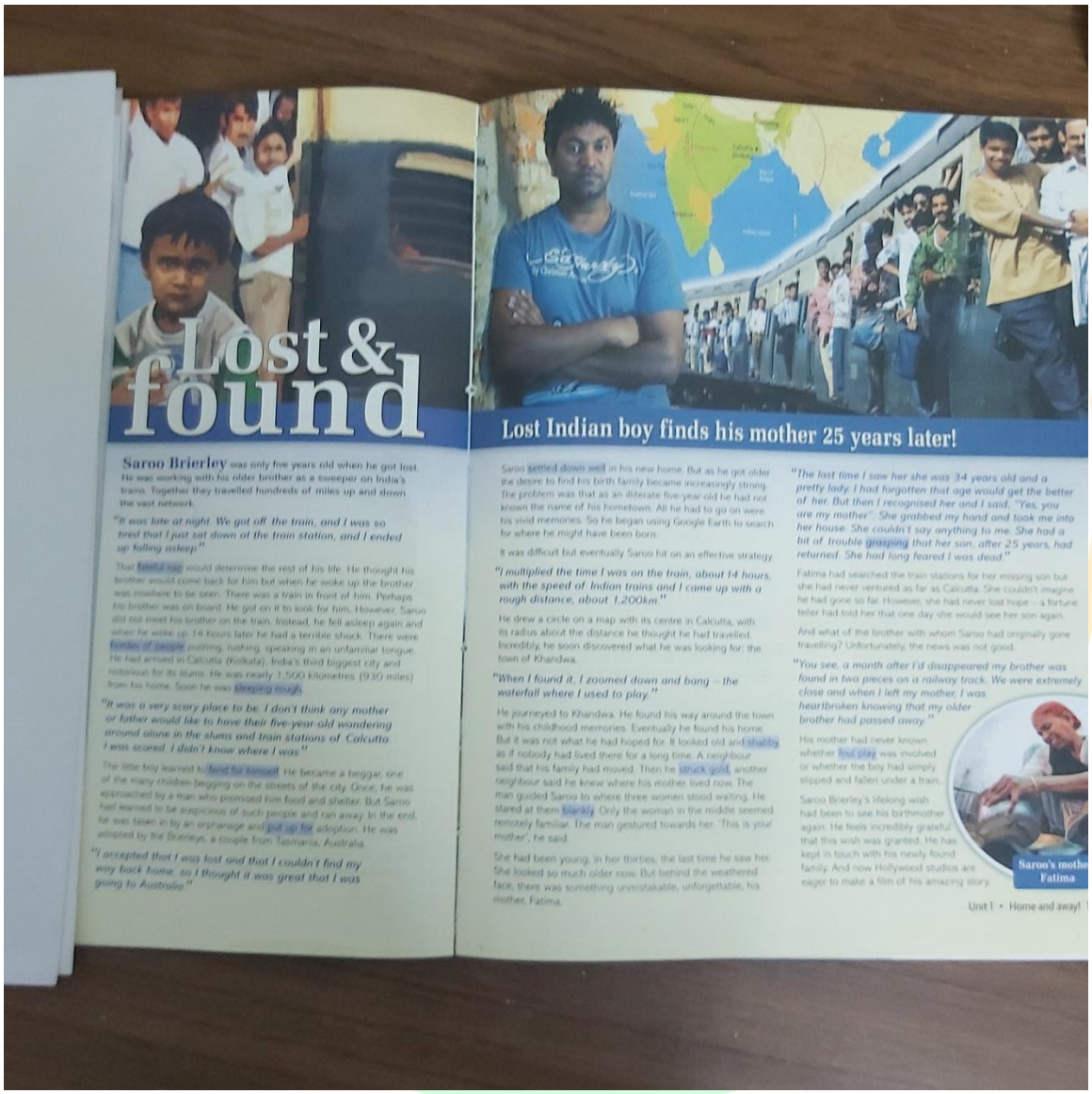
No	Description	Never	Rarely	Some times	Often	most often
1	Using scanning technique made English reading comprehension simple					
2	Scanning technique made me guess what the text will be about.					
3	By Scanning technique I can find out the main topic idea of a text easily.					
4	Scanning technique helps me to distinguish the main ideas from supporting details.					
5	Scanning technique helps me to find out specific information from the text quickly.					
6	I can analyze long sentences and phrases through scanning technique					
7	Scanning technique can help me to guess the meanings of unknown words or phrases from the context					
8	Scanning technique gives me the chance to decide what to read and what to ignore					
9	Scanning technique helps me by getting some specific points by looking at the whole text.					
10	Using scanning technique shorten the time in reading the whole passage					

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix B

Sample of Reading comprehension Pre-Test

Q:-1-Read the text carefully and answers the questions below.



Lost & found

Lost Indian boy finds his mother 25 years later!

Saroo Brierley was only five years old when he got lost. He was working with his older brother as a sweeper on India's trains. Together they travelled hundreds of miles up and down the vast network.

"It was late at night. We got off the train, and I was so tired that I just sat down at the train station, and I ended up falling asleep."

That fateful nap would determine the rest of his life. He thought his brother would come back for him but when he woke up the brother was nowhere to be seen. There was a train in front of him. Perhaps his brother was on board. He got on it to look for him. However, Saroo did not meet his brother on the train. Instead, he fell asleep again and when he woke up 14 hours later he had a terrible shock. There were hordes of people pushing, rushing, speaking in an unfamiliar tongue. He had arrived in Calcutta (Kolkata), India's third biggest city and notorious for its slums. He was nearly 1,500 kilometres (930 miles) from his home. Soon he was sleeping rough.

"It was a very scary place to be. I don't think any mother or father would like to have their five-year-old wandering around alone in the slums and train stations of Calcutta. I was scared. I didn't know where I was."

The little boy learned to fend for himself. He became a beggar, one of the many children begging on the streets of the city. Once, he was approached by a man who promised him food and shelter. But Saroo had learned to be suspicious of such people and ran away. In the end, he was taken in by an orphanage and put up for adoption. He was adopted by the Brierleys, a couple from Tasmania, Australia.

"I accepted that I was lost and that I couldn't find my way back home, so I thought it was great that I was going to Australia."

Saroo settled down well in his new home. But as he got older the desire to find his birth family became increasingly strong. The problem was that as an illiterate five-year-old he had not known the name of his hometown. All he had to go on were his vivid memories. So he began using Google Earth to search for where he might have been born.

It was difficult but eventually Saroo hit on an effective strategy.

"I multiplied the time I was on the train, about 14 hours, with the speed of Indian trains and I came up with a rough distance, about 1,200km."

He drew a circle on a map with its centre in Calcutta, with its radius about the distance he thought he had travelled. Incredibly, he soon discovered what he was looking for: the town of Khandwa.

"When I found it, I zoomed down and bang – the waterfall where I used to play."

He journeyed to Khandwa. He found his way around the town with his childhood memories. Eventually he found his home. But it was not what he had hoped for. It looked old and shabby, as if nobody had lived there for a long time. A neighbour said that his family had moved. Then he struck gold, another neighbour said he knew where his mother lived now. The man guided Saroo to where three women stood waiting. He stared at them blankly. Only the woman in the middle seemed remotely familiar. The man gestured towards her. 'This is your mother', he said.

She had been young, in her thirties, the last time he saw her. She looked so much older now. But behind the weathered face, there was something unmistakable, unforgettable, his mother, Fatima.

"The last time I saw her she was 34 years old and a pretty lady. I had forgotten that age would get the better of her. But then I recognised her and I said, 'Yes, you are my mother'. She grabbed my hand and took me into her house. She couldn't say anything to me. She had a bit of trouble grasping that her son, after 25 years, had returned. She had long feared I was dead."

Fatima had searched the train stations for her missing son but she had never ventured as far as Calcutta. She couldn't imagine he had gone so far. However, she had never lost hope – a fortune teller had told her that one day she would see her son again.

And what of the brother with whom Saroo had originally gone travelling? Unfortunately, the news was not good.

"You see, a month after I'd disappeared my brother was found in two pieces on a railway track. We were extremely close and when I left my mother, I was heartbroken knowing that my older brother had passed away."

His mother had never known whether foul play was involved or whether the boy had simply slipped and fallen under a train.

Saroo Brierley's lifelong wish had been to see his birthmother again. He feels incredibly grateful that this wish was granted. He has kept in touch with his newly found family. And now Hollywood studios are eager to make a film of his amazing story.

Saroo's mother Fatima

Unit 1 • Home and away!

IJRSSH

1. Who is Saroo Brierely?
2. With whom he was working?
3. Why saroo's brother couldn't see his brother?.
4. Where was Saroo sleeping when he was tired?

5. How far is Calkatta from his house?.
6. By whom Saroo was adapted?
7. How old is Saroo when he was founded?
8. What was the strategy used by Saroo to find his family?
9. How long was the time from Calcutta to Khanadeva?
10. Did Saroo finally find his family?

Q:-2- Choose the correct answers for the following.

1. Saroo Brierley was only---------- years old when he got lost.

a. Ten b. five c. four

2. Saroo find his mother after----------.

a. 25 years b. 22years c. 20 years

3. Sareoo was working with his brother as--------.

a. worker b. painter c. sweeper

4. Saroo's neighbor guided him to where -------women stood waiting.

a. Two three c. one

5. Calcutta is the ----------biggest and notorious city in India.

a. Second b. third c. only

Appendix C

Sample of Reading comprehension Post-Test

The Peter Pan generation

NO mortgage.
NO marriage.
NO children.
NO career plan.

Like so many 30-somethings, Marianne Power admits she's one of them ...

The other day I had lunch with my father, who was in London on business. He took me to his favourite pub and started a conversation that he has, until now – miraculously – avoided. He coughed nervously, sank a glass of juice and got started – asking me about my plans for life: Did I see myself settling down and starting a family? Am I saving up to buy a house? What is the next step in my career?

There was a pause, I looked at him and shrugged, before muttering that immortal phrase, loved by teenagers: 'I dunno.' Except I'm not a teenager. I am 34!

"adultescent"

No Mortgage

No Marriage

No Children

No Career

"I dunno."

"You're not 20 anymore."

Life plans then and now

When my father was my age, he was putting my six-year-old sister and eight-year-old me through school, and had another three-year-old daughter at home. He had been running a business for ten years, he owned a house and had a pension.

I, on the other hand, live in a rented flat with my youngest sister. I have few savings to speak of. I certainly haven't got a pension. As for the idea of marriage and children, well, it's exactly that: just an idea – it's no closer to being a reality than it was when I was 23. My 'life plan,' as my father so sweetly called it, goes as far as this weekend.

'Don't you think you should start thinking about these things?' he asked. 'You're not 20 anymore.'

In many ways I am a fully paid-up member of adult society – I pay taxes, cast my vote and give money to charity – in other ways, I am in denial about my age. I behave in much the same way I did ten years ago. I am not alone. Last week, I read that there is a name for people such as me. We are the 'Peter Pan generation', a sizeable group of 25 to 40-year-olds who are avoiding the responsibility of marriage, mortgage, children for as long as possible.

The sociologist

Professor Frank Furedi, at the University of Kent, has been studying this phenomenon. He says:

'A word sometimes used to describe these people is "adultescent" – someone who refuses to settle down and make commitments, and who would rather go on partying into middle age. These people might live with their parents until they are in their 30s, continuing the life they had in their early 20s. Back in the 1970s, men typically got married at 24 and women at 22. Currently, the average age at which people marry is 32 for men and 30 for women. The average age for starting a family today is 28 for women, up from 24 in 1970.'

Why has this come about?

Well, you could blame the economy. Buying or renting a house gets more and more expensive. Every day we see headlines about adults having to move back home with their parents. Three million 20-to-34-year-olds now live with their parents – one in three men and one in six women.

However, Professor Furedi, who is in his 60s, says we cannot blame the economy. He believes that the root of our refusal to grow up is fear. We are scared of getting old because all our cultural values are with youth.

And, young people today are spoilt for choice. We can decide whether to get married or not, start a family or not, travel the world or not, stay in a job or try to find a new one. However, are we happy? So many choices can make us anxious and depressed. And of course, there is one decision that a woman cannot put off for ever, and that is whether to have a child.

I talk about these issues with my 'Peter-Pan' friends, but I've noticed, recently, that we are getting fewer in number. I now have many more friends who have found ways to buy a house and start a family.

They are very happy in their new phase of their life, while I am still clinging on to the old one. Perhaps, finally, it is time to grow up.

Unit 7 • Getting along 59

Q:-Read the text carefully and answer the questions below.

1. Where was Marianne's father working?
2. How old Marianne was"
3. How many years Marianne's father spend in running on?
4. Who is Frank Freud?
5. Why there is a chance in the coverage age of getting married?
6. What is the reason for the generation refusal to grow up according to Freud?
7. Did the new generation happy with their new phase of this life?
8. Where did men typically get married in the 1970s?
9. What is the article mainly about?
10. Why we could blame the economy?

Q:-2- Choose the correct answers for the following.

1. Marianne was--------years old.

a. 34 b.23 c.30

2. Peter pan generations is a sizeable group of---------.

a 25-40 b.30-40 c. 15-30

3. I n the 1970s men typically got married at----------.

a.24 b.20 c. 30

4. The average age for stating family is----------for women.

a. 28 b.20 c.30

5. ----------,20 –to-34 years-old now live with their parents.

a. one million two million three million