

## Enhancing critical reading skills through summarizing and paraphrasing strategies to improve comprehension and analytical thinking in learners

Pande Putu Resmia Ovieta<sup>1</sup>, I Nyoman Suka Sanjaya<sup>2</sup>,  
Nadia Idri<sup>3</sup>, Ahmet Selçuk Akdemir<sup>4</sup>, Sadia Ayub<sup>5</sup>, Dr.  
Mahmood Eshreteh<sup>6</sup>, Selinay Gündoğan<sup>7</sup>

Politeknik Negeri Bali INDONESIA<sup>1,2</sup>

University of Bejaia, Aboudaou Campus, 06000, ALGERIA<sup>3</sup>

Malatya Turgut Ozal University, School of Foreign  
Languages Türkiye, TURKEY<sup>4</sup>

Lincoln University College (LUC), MALAYSIA<sup>5</sup>

Hebron University, PALESTINE<sup>6</sup>

Social Sciences University of Ankara, TURKEY<sup>7</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Email: [suka.sanjaya@pnb.ac.id](mailto:suka.sanjaya@pnb.ac.id)

**Abstract** - This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of summarizing and paraphrasing techniques in enhancing reading skills, particularly focusing on developing critical reading abilities. The research employs a mixed-methods approach involving a quasi-experimental design complemented by qualitative analysis. Participants included high school students divided into experimental and control groups; the experimental group received targeted instruction in summarizing and paraphrasing strategies within the context of critical reading exercises. Data were collected through pre- and post-tests assessing reading comprehension and critical thinking, alongside observation and interviews to gain insights into students' engagement and strategy application. The analysis revealed that students trained in summarizing and paraphrasing demonstrated significant improvement in identifying main ideas, synthesizing information, and evaluating textual arguments compared to the control group. Qualitative findings underscored enhanced metacognitive awareness and deeper engagement with texts when students actively practiced these strategies. The results support the hypothesis that integrating summarizing and paraphrasing into critical reading instruction promotes not only comprehension but also analytical skills essential for academic success. In conclusion, this study highlights the pedagogical value of explicit instruction in summarizing and paraphrasing to cultivate critical reading competencies. It recommends incorporating these strategies systematically in reading curricula to foster higher-order thinking and empower students to become independent, reflective readers.

**Keywords:** paraphrasing, critical reading, reading comprehension, metacognitive strategies, paraphrasing, summarizing

### 1. Introduction



Reading is a fundamental skill essential for academic success and lifelong learning. Developing strong reading skills enables learners to comprehend, analyse, and evaluate texts effectively (Afflerbach, 2020). Among the many strategies that support reading competence, summarizing and paraphrasing play crucial roles in helping readers condense information, restate ideas clearly, and engage critically with texts (Purdue, 2024). Summarizing involves distilling the main ideas and key points into a concise form, while paraphrasing requires restating content in one's own words without altering the meaning (Harris, 2022; Hidayati, 2022). Both practices encourage active reading and deeper understanding by forcing readers to process and reformulate information meaningfully.

The significance of integrating summarizing and paraphrasing in reading instruction is heightened in the context of critical reading—the ability to not just understand, but also to question, interpret, and evaluate texts (Paul & Elder, 2019). Critical reading skills empower students to discern biases, assumptions, and implications within texts and cultivate independent thinking. Summarizing and paraphrasing sharpen these skills by requiring readers to identify essential points, synthesize information, and articulate meanings accurately. Moreover, in academic writing and research, these skills help avoid plagiarism by properly re-expressing sources while maintaining intellectual integrity (Howard et al., 2010).

Despite their importance, many students struggle with effectively summarizing and paraphrasing, often due to difficulties in distinguishing between paraphrasing and copying, or in identifying core ideas within complex texts (Jaidka et al., 2011). Enhancing these skills through targeted instructional approaches is thus imperative.

The theoretical basis for this study draws from cognitive and metacognitive theories in reading comprehension and information processing. According to Flavell's (1979) metacognitive theory, effective reading involves self-awareness and regulation of cognitive strategies, of which summarizing and paraphrasing are key components. These strategies promote deeper processing by encouraging readers to evaluate, organize, and reformulate information (Pressley & Afflerbach, 1995).

From a sociocultural perspective, Vygotsky's (1978) theory emphasizes the social context of learning, suggesting that summarizing and paraphrasing benefit from guided practice and scaffolding, enabling learners to internalize critical reading habits. Additionally, dual process theories of reading view summarizing and paraphrasing as integrating both automatic word recognition and controlled comprehension processes to construct meaning (Kintsch, 1998).

Previous research highlights the positive impact of summarizing and paraphrasing on reading comprehension and critical thinking. Harris and Hodges (1995) identified summarizing as a foundational comprehension skill that supports recall and synthesis. Jaidka et al. (2011) differentiated paraphrasing from summarizing by their scope but confirmed that both functions require comprehension and language transformation skills. Research by Howard et al. (2010) links proficient paraphrasing to reduced plagiarism and enhanced academic writing quality.

Intervention studies show that explicit teaching of summarizing and paraphrasing strategies improves students' reading outcomes (Cutler & Graham, 2008). For instance, programs incorporating guided practice and feedback have led to gains in students' ability to capture main ideas and rephrase them appropriately (Joseph & He, 2023). However, challenges persist, including the tendency to rely on superficial word changes rather than conceptual transformation, signalling a need for instructional emphasis on comprehension and synthesis (Akbar, 2020).

Studies also illustrate the role of summarizing and paraphrasing in fostering critical reading. Critical reading entails analysing arguments and synthesizing perspectives, skills reinforced through summary writing and paraphrasing exercises (Paul & Elder, 2019). These skills enable readers to move beyond passive absorption to active interrogation of texts.

Various approaches and strategies have been studied to improve students' reading comprehension. Cárdenas (2025) examined the effectiveness of a focused, intensive reading approach, which was shown to improve students' reading comprehension. However, this study

did not fully explore the challenges students might face, particularly those related to the varying levels of reading skills within the classroom.

The study the important role of critical reading strategies in developing students' reading comprehension found the strategies, which involve analysing and evaluating texts, can enrich the reading experience. However, this study did not delve into the challenges students face in applying these strategies, particularly in contexts that do not encourage critical thinking (Rahmasari et al., 2024).

The study focused on the "Read, Ask, and Put" strategy to improve reading comprehension, concluded that this strategy is effective because it integrates questioning and note-taking, which helps strengthen students' understanding. However, they did not address whether this strategy can be effectively implemented in classes with large numbers of students or with diverse ability levels (Darmawan et al., 2024).

Prasetyo and Al Farhan (2024) highlighted the importance of summarizing activities in extensive reading classes. They found that this activity can help students focus on the main ideas of the text, deepening their understanding. However, they did not explore the impact of its implementation on students who are less experienced in reading long texts. The systematic review of summary writing as a way to improve reading comprehension, based on existing literature from 2014 to 2021 (Budianto et al., 2022) providing a comprehensive overview, this review was limited to summary writing as a single strategy and did not explore alternative approaches to teaching reading. The effectiveness of summary writing in improving students' reading comprehension demonstrated that summary writing can help students organize the main ideas of a text, but it did not explain the best methods for practicing this skill, especially in different contexts. This study also did not identify external factors that may influence the success of summary writing, such as student motivation (Hukom & Ferdinandus, 2024).

Despite evidence of their benefits, many educational contexts do not systematically integrate summarizing and paraphrasing into reading curricula with a focus on critical reading. Students often lack adequate training in these strategies, leading to weak reading comprehension, superficial understanding, and academic integrity issues (Akbar, 2020). This gap highlights several research problems: (1) How can instruction in summarizing and paraphrasing be optimized to enhance critical reading skills? (2) What pedagogical approaches best support students' development of these skills? (3) How do students apply summarizing and paraphrasing in authentic reading and writing tasks? (4) What are the challenges learners face in mastering these strategies, and how can they be addressed effectively?

This research aims to address these problems by exploring instructional interventions that integrate summarizing and paraphrasing with critical reading exercises, focusing on their effect on students' reading comprehension and analytical writing.

## 2. Method

This study employs a mixed-methods research design combining quantitative and qualitative techniques to explore the effectiveness of summarizing and paraphrasing strategies in enhancing critical reading skills.

### 2.1 Participants

The participants are high school students from diverse academic backgrounds, including English as a Second Language (ESL) learners and native speakers. They were divided into two groups: an experimental group receiving explicit instruction in summarizing and paraphrasing integrated with critical reading exercises, and a control group following the standard reading curriculum.

### 2.2 Research Design

The quantitative component uses a quasi-experimental pre-test-post-test control group design. Reading comprehension and critical reading skills were assessed before and after a 10-week instructional intervention using standardized tests and researcher-developed assessments. Pre-



tests established baseline reading ability, while post-tests measured gains attributable to strategy instruction.

The qualitative component involved classroom observations, think-aloud protocols, and semi-structured interviews to gain insight into students' use of summarizing and paraphrasing during critical reading tasks. This approach helped capture how students cognitively engage with texts and apply learned strategies in authentic contexts.

### **2.3 Instructional Intervention**

The experimental group underwent weekly sessions focused on teaching summarizing – identifying main ideas and condensing information – and paraphrasing – reformulating text in their own words without losing meaning. Instruction was contextualized within critical reading tasks, such as analysing arguments, identifying bias and evaluating evidence, thus ensuring transferability of strategies to higher-order thinking.

### **2.4 Data Collection and Instruments**

Quantitative data: Reading comprehension tests (multiple-choice and open-ended questions), critical reading assessments targeting inference and evaluation, and Likert-scale surveys measuring student confidence in reading skills.

Qualitative data: Audio recordings of think-aloud reading sessions, observation notes documenting strategy use, and interview transcripts exploring students' perceptions and challenges with summarizing and paraphrasing.

### **2.5 Data Analysis**

Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential tests (t-tests, ANCOVA) to determine the statistical significance of differences between groups and over time. Effect sizes were calculated to assess practical significance. Qualitative data were coded thematically, focusing on patterns of strategy use, cognitive engagement, and metacognitive awareness. Triangulation of observational, verbal, and survey data enhanced the credibility of findings.

## **3. Results and Discussion**

### **3.1 Results**

This study investigated the impact of teaching summarizing and paraphrasing strategies on students' critical reading skills, employing both quantitative and qualitative methods to capture a comprehensive picture of learning outcomes. The data indicate that students who received explicit instruction in these strategies exhibited notable gains in critical reading compared to peers who followed traditional curricula without focused strategy training.

Quantitative analysis reveals that the experimental group's overall reading comprehension and critical analysis abilities significantly improved. Pre-test mean scores in this group increased from 57.50 to 76.61 on post-tests, a gain that statistical testing confirmed to be significant beyond chance ( $p < .001$ ). In contrast, the control group, which followed the regular reading program without specialized instruction in summarizing or paraphrasing, showed a more modest but still positive improvement from 52.50 to 61.47. The effect size calculated (Cohen's  $d$ ) underscores the practical meaningfulness of the intervention for enhancing students' critical reading skills (Cohen, 1988).

The improvements in the experimental group align with existing literature advocating for the explicit teaching of reading strategies as a catalyst for better comprehension and analytical thinking. According to Pressley and Afflerbach (1995), strategies like summarizing compel students to identify main ideas and essential information, enhancing their ability to selectively attend to relevant content and disregard tangential details. Paraphrasing demands rewording content which strengthens semantic processing and supports deeper cognitive engagement by encouraging learners to internalize and express meanings in their own terms (Harris, 2022).

Further qualitative data analysis from classroom observations and student interviews revealed increased metacognitive awareness among students exposed to strategy instruction. These students demonstrated heightened self-monitoring behaviours, such as consciously identifying key points in texts before attempting summarization and checking paraphrased passages for fidelity to the original meaning. This reflective practice resonates with Flavell's

(1979) metacognitive theory, which holds that effective learners actively regulate and evaluate their cognitive processes, resulting in improved learning outcomes.

Participants also reported greater confidence and enjoyment in reading activities, attributing their success to understanding how to break down complex texts into manageable segments. One student remarked, "Summarizing helps me not get lost in long paragraphs; I can pick out the main ideas and remember them better." Another noted, "Paraphrasing makes me feel like I really understand what I am reading because I have to explain it in my own words." These testimonies highlight the motivational benefits of strategy learning, consistent with findings by Joseph and He (2023).

Despite these positive outcomes, some challenges emerged. A subset of students initially struggled with distinguishing between simple word substitution and genuine paraphrasing, sometimes producing paraphrases that were too close to the source text or distorted original meanings. This difficulty emphasizes the need for continued scaffolding and feedback, as progressive mastery is essential for effective critical reading and responsible academic writing (Akbar, 2020). Systematic error analysis of student paraphrases also revealed common issues such as omission of key information or inaccurate interpretation, which may partially account for variances in individual performance gains.

The control group's modest improvement suggests traditional reading programs provide some benefit but lack the depth and engagement fostered by explicit strategy training. Their outcomes align with reports by Dupils (2006), who underscored that passive reading approaches, wherein students read without targeted strategy practice, tend to result in surface-level comprehension and limited analytical skills.

Comparative analysis indicates that the use of summarizing and paraphrasing not only improves surface comprehension but enhances students' critical reading abilities, including inference-making, evaluating arguments, and synthesizing perspectives. These skills are foundational for academic literacy and lifelong learning, underscoring the importance of integrating explicit strategy instruction systematically in education (Paul & Elder, 2019).

The mixed-methods data support the hypothesis that summarizing and paraphrasing strategies facilitate significant gains in critical reading skills. They do so by empowering students with tools to actively process, reorganize, and internalize information, fostering autonomy and metacognitive control. This evidence advocates for pedagogical reforms emphasizing reading strategy instruction tailored to developing higher-order literacy skills essential in contemporary education.

Students trained in paraphrasing were notably more adept at restating and recalling main ideas in their own words, significantly enhancing both their understanding and retention of reading passages. This skill of rephrasing content in personalized language promotes deeper cognitive processing, moving beyond surface reading to more meaningful engagement with texts. As Akbar (2020) highlights, paraphrasing nurtures active reading, enabling learners to internalize concepts and thus supporting the development of higher-order thinking skills that are fundamental to critical reading.

Paraphrasing involves a nuanced cognitive process where students reinterpret the text's message without altering its intended meaning. This requires balancing comprehension with linguistic creativity, encouraging learners to dissect complex sentences and reassemble information cohesively. By doing so, students move from passively receiving information to actively constructing knowledge—a shift critical for academic literacy. The process also aids in consolidating memory, as paraphrased material is more personally relevant and better integrated into existing knowledge frameworks (Harris & Hodges, 1995).

Similarly, summarizing enhances learners' ability to identify key points, synthesize information, and evaluate arguments efficiently. The skill of condensing larger passages into concise summaries supports learners in discerning essential ideas amidst details, a requirement for critical analysis (Vandermeij & P, 2007; Nieuwerburgh & Allaho, 2018). Summarization demands that students read attentively to understand implicit and explicit messages, fostering discrimination between significant and peripheral content. This focused reading ability

underpins many critical reading competencies, including inference, evaluation, and synthesis (Paul & Elder, 2019).

Qualitative data from classroom observations and student interviews support the quantitative improvements recorded. Many students reported increased confidence in handling complex texts, buoyed by their growing facility with these strategies. One student noted that summarizing acted as a mental scaffold, allowing clearer comprehension and reducing cognitive overload. Another shared that paraphrasing compelled him to engage with challenging vocabulary and syntax at a level previously unattainable, boosting both confidence and comprehension.

Further, students who mastered summarizing and paraphrasing displayed enhanced metacognitive awareness. These learners increasingly monitored their reading processes, questioning and connecting ideas within texts to support critical evaluation and inference-making. For example, during think-aloud exercises, proficient students paused to rephrase ambiguous sentences or summarize the content of paragraphs before proceeding, demonstrating reflective comprehension strategies aligned with Flavell's (1979) metacognitive model. This reflective practice is critical, as metacognition enables readers to regulate their understanding and adjust strategies when comprehension falters.

However, mastering paraphrasing posed challenges for some. A recurring difficulty was balancing word substitution with preserving conceptual accuracy. Some students initially performed literal paraphrasing, relying heavily on synonyms without restructuring ideas, potentially compromising the meaning. Guided practice and timely corrective feedback proved vital in gradually augmenting their skills, helping them shift toward more sophisticated reformulation of ideas. This aligns with Howard et al. (2010), who underscore that effective paraphrasing requires deep semantic understanding rather than mere surface word changes.

Teaching paraphrasing and summarizing also helped students combat plagiarism by encouraging genuine intellectual engagement and articulation of understanding in their own voice. This practice cultivates academic integrity and research credibility, essential aspects of scholarly work (Scribbr, 2024). By learning to summarize and paraphrase effectively, students gain competency in synthesizing source materials ethically and confidently.

Integrating summarizing and paraphrasing strategies in reading instruction fosters comprehensive critical reading skills that blend comprehension, analysis, and reflection. These strategies encourage active learning, metacognition, and ethical scholarship while supporting academic writing. Consequently, educational programs should prioritize explicit instruction in these skills, coupled with ample practice opportunities and formative feedback, to cultivate skillful, autonomous critical readers prepared for the demands of higher education and beyond.

### **3.2 Discussion**

The findings underscore the pedagogical effectiveness of integrating summarizing and paraphrasing strategies within critical reading instruction. The substantial gains in the experimental group suggest that explicit teaching of these skills fosters deeper comprehension and critical engagement with texts compared to traditional instruction methods. This aligns with prior research emphasizing the role of paraphrasing as an active learning strategy that promotes understanding rather than passive reading (Dupils, 2006; Brindley, 1994).

The active translation of ideas into students' own words was crucial in reducing plagiarism risk and enhancing academic writing quality, as noted by Akbar (2020), who observed that paraphrasing skills reflect critical and analytical reading outcomes. The development of summarizing skills simultaneously enabled students to capture essential ideas succinctly, aiding memory and facilitating synthesis (Harris & Hodges, 1995).

Students' metacognitive growth, observed through think-aloud protocols and interviews, aligns with Flavell's (1979) theory that self-monitoring and strategic planning are vital for effective reading comprehension. The combination of cognitive and metacognitive engagement through these strategies prepares students to approach texts critically, fostering skills such as inference, evaluation, and synthesis vital for academic success (Paul & Elder, 2019).

Moreover, the study's mixed-methods approach illuminated the challenges students face, such as difficulty in distinguishing between paraphrasing and mere synonym replacement. This insight confirms the need for structured, scaffolded instruction to help learners develop nuanced language transformation skills that maintain original meaning while using independent phrasing (Jaidka et al., 2011).

Incorporating summarizing and paraphrasing into critical reading curricula is demonstrated as both theoretically justified and practically effective. It not only improves comprehension but also nurtures critical thinking and academic integrity. For educators, these findings encourage systematic strategy instruction, regular practice, and feedback to support skill mastery. Future research might explore longitudinal impacts, diverse text genres, and digital reading contexts to extend these insights.

The results affirm the instructional value of summarizing and paraphrasing strategies in cultivating students' critical reading skills, enhancing both comprehension and analytical capabilities. The statistically significant reading score improvements among students who received targeted training demonstrate that these strategies are effective tools for promoting active engagement and metacognitive control during reading.

A prominent aspect observed from qualitative data is how students' use of summarizing deepened their ability to distil essential information from complex texts. For example, one student, Aisyah, shared her experience:

*"Before, I used to just read the whole passage and get confused. But when the teacher taught me to find the main idea and then write it in a few sentences, I could remember better and understand what the text really meant."*

Aisyah's comment reflects the underlying mechanism of summarizing as a selective process. Instead of passively absorbing all information, students learn to identify and condense key concepts, improving comprehension and retention (Harris & Hodges, 1995).

Paraphrasing also proved transformational in encouraging cognitive reprocessing of information. Another student, Budi, described his approach:

*"I try to explain the passage in my own words so that I know I really understand it. Sometimes it's hard because I want to copy the exact words, but the teacher reminds us to think about the meaning and write it with our own ideas."*

Budi's reflection illustrates the challenges that novice learners face, notably in balancing fidelity to meaning with linguistic originality. This struggle aligns with literature highlighting "word-switching" pitfalls in paraphrasing, which educators must scaffold through examples, feedback, and practice (Akbar, 2020).

Think-aloud protocols recorded during reading sessions shed light on students' metacognitive engagement. For instance, during a critical reading task analysing the argument of a persuasive essay, a student named Clara verbalized:

*"Okay, this paragraph is about the importance of recycling. The main point is that recycling saves resources. So, I will write that the essay says recycling helps conserve natural resources... [pauses] maybe I can add that it's good for the environment because it reduces waste."*

Clara's verbalization shows both summarizing (identifying main points) and inferential thinking, reflecting the integration of comprehension and critical evaluation skills (Paul & Elder, 2019).

Despite these successes, analysis also revealed that several students needed ongoing support to avoid common errors in paraphrasing, such as (a) Over-reliance on synonyms without restructuring sentences. (b) Omitting key details which altered text meaning. (c) Paraphrasing which was too close to the original language, risking plagiarism.

For example, a student, Dita, paraphrased the sentence "The rapid increase in global warming demands urgent governmental policies" as "The fast rise in global warming calls for immediate government actions." While close in meaning, the paraphrase minimally deviates from original phrasing, necessitating further instructional attention.

Such errors underscore the critical role of formative feedback and scaffolded learning in the development of paraphrasing as a higher-order cognitive skill. According to Howard et al. (2010), successful mastery of paraphrasing transcends mere word substitution; it demands conceptual understanding and the ability to genuinely reframe and reconstruct ideas. This shift from surface-level linguistic manipulation to deep semantic engagement is essential to cultivating students' ability to process and express content meaningfully, promoting higher academic integrity and original thinking. Scaffolding strategies, such as guided practice, elaborated feedback, and modelling, encourage learners to internalize the principles of effective paraphrasing, thereby progressively enhancing skill acquisition.

In comparison, students in the control group predominantly relied on surface-level reading strategies such as highlighting and rereading. While these tactics may provide temporary engagement with texts, they fall short of fostering sustained critical engagement or analytical thinking. Dupils (2006) supports this notion, asserting that passive reading methods inadequately prepare learners for the demands of higher education, where deeper comprehension, synthesis, and critique are vital. The disparity in outcomes between the experimental and control groups in this study vividly illustrates how summarizing and paraphrasing operate synergistically to elevate critical reading development. They serve as cognitive tools that transition reading from passive reception to active construction of knowledge.

Furthermore, these strategies enhance not only straightforward comprehension but also stimulate metacognitive reflection, interpretation, and synthesis – core components of academic literacy (Flavell, 1979; Paul & Elder, 2019). As students summarize, they must distil complex information into essential points, strengthening their ability to analyse and judge the value of evidence and arguments. Paraphrasing requires re-articulating ideas thoughtfully, fostering deeper conceptual processing and personal intellectual engagement with content. Combined, these skills promote a robust, reflective approach to reading that prepares students for academic research and discourse.

The pedagogical implications of these findings are profound. Educators should explicitly integrate summarizing and paraphrasing instruction within literacy curricula rather than treating them as ancillary or remedial skills. Deliberate emphasis on these strategies equips students not only with practical reading tools but also with foundational skills for critical inquiry and scholarly writing. To maximize effectiveness, teaching should encompass diverse and authentic reading materials that challenge students to apply summarizing and paraphrasing within meaningful contexts, encouraging them to grapple with complex ideas and varied genres.

Additionally, collaborative learning environments play a pivotal role in reinforcing strategy acquisition. Peer review sessions enable students to evaluate and refine their paraphrasing and summarizing, generating critical feedback in a supportive setting. Iterative practice, coupled with teacher guidance and feedback, helps internalize cognitive strategies, reducing reliance on superficial techniques and fostering sustained cognitive growth (Pressley & Afflerbach, 1995). Such instructional frameworks align well with sociocultural educational theories emphasizing social interaction and scaffolding as crucial to learning complex skills (Vygotsky, 1978).

Moreover, educators should incorporate technology-assisted tools judiciously, using software that supports paraphrasing and summarizing practice while promoting ethical academic conduct. However, technology must be complemented by human instruction to address the nuanced understanding and metacognitive skills essential for quality paraphrasing and summary writing.

This study validates summarizing and paraphrasing as indispensable strategies for nurturing critical reading and literacy development. By transitioning students from passive recipients of information to active, reflective readers, these strategies cultivate essential cognitive

and metacognitive skills that underpin academic success. Consequently, educational stakeholders are encouraged to prioritize these instructional methods systematically, ensuring learners are equipped to meet the complex literacy demands of contemporary academia and beyond.

#### 4. Conclusion

This study has examined the vital roles summarizing and paraphrasing play in enhancing critical reading skills among students. Summarizing, defined as condensing the main ideas and essential points of a text in a shorter form, and paraphrasing, which involves restating specific sections in new words while retaining original meaning, are foundational strategies that deepen comprehension and foster critical thinking (Scribbr, 2024). The investigation demonstrated that explicit instruction in these strategies leads to notable improvements not only in students' reading comprehension but also in their ability to evaluate, interpret, and synthesize textual information critically.

One core conclusion is that paraphrasing promotes active engagement with reading materials by encouraging students to process and internalize information thoroughly. As learners transform the ideas into their own linguistic frameworks, they develop stronger cognitive connections with the content, enhancing understanding and recall (Howard et al., 2010). Summarizing complements this process by helping students identify hierarchical structures in texts, distinguishing main arguments from supporting details – a crucial step in critical reading (Purdue, 2024). Therefore, teaching these strategies fosters metacognitive awareness, allowing students to self-monitor their comprehension and adjust reading approaches as needed (Flavell, 1979).

Moreover, the research revealed practical benefits extending beyond comprehension. Proficiency in paraphrasing plays a significant role in academic integrity by reducing plagiarism risks while empowering students to articulate complex ideas confidently (Howard et al., 2010). Summarizing enables them to integrate diverse scholarly perspectives coherently, supporting well-structured argumentative writing and research synthesis.

Despite demonstrated effectiveness, challenges remain. Students often confuse paraphrasing with superficial word substitution, which can compromise meaning and academic quality. This underlines the necessity for sustained, scaffolded instruction combined with instant feedback. Educators must emphasize conceptual understanding alongside linguistic transformation, equipping learners with skills to navigate complex texts critically and responsibly (Akbar, 2020).

Pedagogically, integrating summarizing and paraphrasing into critical reading curricula aligns with both cognitive and sociocultural learning theories. It reinforces the notion that reading is an interactive, strategic process shaped by prior knowledge, motivation, and social context. Guided practice, collaborative learning, and iterative feedback create an optimal environment for internalizing these strategies (Vygotsky, 1978; Pressley & Afflerbach, 1995).

Summarizing and paraphrasing are indispensable tools for cultivating proficient, critical readers capable of engaging thoughtfully with texts across disciplines. They enhance comprehension, promote analytical thinking, and uphold ethical scholarship. Therefore, educational stakeholders are encouraged to incorporate systematic, explicit instruction of these skills in reading programs to prepare students effectively for academic challenges and lifelong learning.

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