

Does Test Taking Experience Make a Difference?: In Strategy Use and Test Scores

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The purpose of the study is to examine whether taking tests makes differences in test score and test-taking strategies while learners are taking a reading test. In particular, the study investigates which types of questions and test-taking strategies are improved by test experience. For the study, participants were seventy-one Korean university EFL students, out of whom thirty-seven had three simulated tests and thirty-four didn't have before the test. Results of a ANOVA indicate that differences between two groups are made in reading test score and some test-taking strategies. In details, test-takers got higher scores, showing improvement in the types of main idea and detail questions. The analysis of data, also, revealed that test-takers made use of test-taking strategies more frequently along with a remarkable difference in frequent use of managing strategy, one of three test-taking strategies: reasoning, guessing, and managing strategies. Consequently, the study showed that test experience helps the students gain higher score in main ideas and detail information questions not in inference question. Also, out of three types of test-taking strategies only managing strategy was more frequently used by test-takers. The study suggests that experience in tests could contribute to developing managing strategy effectively in answering to reading questions within limited time, but it is less likely to lead test takers to employ reasoning and guessing strategies relevant to successful reading comprehension.

[test-taking strategy/reading strategy/reading comprehension
/시험전략/독해전략/독해]

I. INTRODUCTION

The effect of testing on teaching and learning has been one of the main interests in SLA. As a number of Korean college students take the TOEIC test, the focus of teaching and learning in Korea has been placed on how testees improve their score on the test. Also, language researchers and teachers put great importance on whether the better results and the process that testees have had finally cause them to reach a certain level of language ability even though the constructing and practicing body of the test are somewhat independent of teaching institutions.

As the process, strategy that facilitates successful language learning has been taken into consideration as much as linguistic knowledge, and much research has been conducted such as what kinds of strategy or how frequently learners use. In reading comprehension, Anderson (1991) states that recent research has been a shift in attention from a reading product to reading process like strategy use. It is getting more interested in on-going process while learners are reading and understanding reading materials. This change came from the idea that strategy use reveals reader's resources for understanding (Block, 1986). In other words, strategy use can tell us what resource readers employ while reading a passage wherever the resource is; in the passage or out of the passage.

Based on previous studies, the study aimed to find out whether there is any difference between the students with and without test experience. That is to say, the study was to find out whether taking tests makes difference in test score and strategy use. It's not surprising that test takers with test experience get higher score than test takers without test experience because test taking experience might contribute to improving test score. The study specially focused on what question types are improved by test experience. Additionally, the study intended to investigate which effect the test experience has on the strategies, examining the difference in test-taking strategy use in a quantitative and a qualitative aspects. It hypothesized that taking a test itself might assist testees to make a better selection of appropriate test-taking strategies. Moreover, It examined whether higher scores would be attributed to specific kinds of test-taking strategies in the

reading comprehension test. Therefore, the research questions were as follows:

1. Does taking a test make a difference in reading score? (main idea, concrete ideas, inference question)
2. Does taking a test make a difference in using test-taking strategy concerning frequency and kinds?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Reading Strategies

Oxford (1990) defines learning strategy as specific action, behaviors, steps, or techniques that students often intentionally use to improve their progress in developing L2 skills. Examining learning strategy explains L2 learners have every intention of selecting specific skills or techniques to enhance their language ability. Especially, reading strategy can be defined as "plans for solving problems encountered in construction meaning" (Duffy, 1993, p.232). It ranges from bottom-up vocabulary level such as looking up an unknown word to more comprehensive one such as connecting what is being read to what's already been known.

Based on the brief that strategies can facilitate the internalization, storage, retrieval, or use of the new language (Oxford, 2002), reading strategy can help L2 learners promote their reading ability. Mi-Jeong Song (1999) reported that reading strategies and L2 reading ability had a linear relationship, which meant reading strategy was directly connected to reading ability. The study showed that the reading strategy had the greatest impact on L2 reading ability than any other variables. In reading processes, therefore, L2 learners who know what to use or when to use are more likely to improve their reading ability. Furthermore, Mi-Jeong Song (1999) suggested that instruction of the strategic component should be incorporated in their reading syllabus since use of reading strategies critically affected successful reading comprehension. Bernhardt (2005) illustrated a compensatory model of second language reading which categorizes factors into three; L1 literacy, L2 language knowledge and unexplained variance including

comprehension strategies and content knowledge. Especially, Bernhardt (2005) emphasized the importance of the reading comprehension strategies, noting fifty percent of L2 reading comprehension depends on the strategies. As the various studies show, reading strategy is a necessary and important factor in helping L2 learners improve their reading comprehension.

There have been a number of empirical on the influence of reading strategy use on L2 reading ability (Carrell, 1989; Grabe, 1991). Some studies have reported that learners' strategy use has something to do with their language proficiency (Dreyer & Oxford, 1996). Barnett (1988) introduced the concept of perceived strategy that is what a learner thinks and reports to use during his or her reading process. His study examined that how real or perceived strategy use affected L2 comprehension focused on reading through context. The result showed that reading comprehension proficiency increased with better use of the reading strategy through context. In other words, students who considered their strategies the most productive actually understood through context better than those who did not. Barnett insisted that the readers' perception of strategy use served a good indicator for successful reader in reading comprehension.

Also, research in L2 has shown that types of reading strategy are different between more proficient and less proficient readers. Keiko (1999) divided the extensive English reading class into two groups in order to examine differences in types of reading strategy. The result showed the more proficient students used top-down strategies, while the less proficient students used bottom-up strategies in their reading. The finding supports the researches (Block, 1992; Schoonen, Hulstijn, & Bossers, 1998) which the more proficient readers preferred a top-down and meaning-based approach, but the less proficient L2 readers usually used a bottom-up and word-based approach. According to their studies, more proficient readers were able to use appropriate strategies in the reading text since they were aware of what problems they had to solve or could ignore in the process of reading and understanding the text.

In addition, successful readers tend to use reading strategies in different ways according to style and purpose of text (Kirby, 1988), which contributes to improving their reading comprehension. It means that they have multiple reading strategies and choose the ones appropriate to reading contexts and style. They

include jumping forward and backward in the text to find information, making prediction, paraphrasing, interpreting the text, and constructing summaries and conclusion (Wallace, 2001).

With regard to frequency of strategy use, Sungae Kim's study (1993) reported that more proficient readers used the strategies more frequently than the less proficient in spite of the fact they both used the similar kinds of reading strategies. It is interesting that they use the almost same kinds of strategy and the only difference lies in how often they use.

Anderson (1991) examined the individual differences in strategic reading while learners were taking a test and reading an academic text. The participants were asked to mark and report the strategies used by think-aloud protocols. The finding showed that both more and less proficient readers appeared to be using the same kinds of strategies while engaged in two reading tasks. With the result, Anderson (1991) suggested that strategic reading was not only a matter of knowing what strategy to use, but also the reader should know how to use successfully and how to orchestrate with other strategies. That is, less proficient readers seem to be aware of strategies that are considered to work efficiently but may not know how to use them successfully in the application of the strategies. Anderson, therefore, argues that readers should be able to apply them strategically since it is not sufficient to know about strategies in order to be a successful reader.

2. Test-taking Strategies

To get a better test result, test-takers need and use specific kinds of strategy as well as linguistic knowledge. Identifying test-taking strategies is a tool to measure learners' recognition process. Cohen (2000) defines "test-taking strategies as test-taking processes that the respondents have selected and that they are conscious of, at least to some degree" (p. 129). Therefore, test-taking strategies mainly include cognitive strategies used for understanding and recalling new information, and metacognitive strategies which regulate test-takers' own cognition and evaluate their progress.

Test-taking strategy is related to reading comprehension in that test takers should read and answer a given question in the same way as readers try to find the important information from the text. Phakiti (2003) investigated whether the strategies, both cognitive and metacognitive, had an influence on reading test performance. The results showed that the strategy use had a positive relationship to the test results. Therefore, he insisted test performances could be affected by test-taking strategies, not to mention their individual factors such as interest and background knowledge. Similarly, Purpura (1998) reported that cognitive and metacognitive strategies had a direct relationship, but the two strategies were not directly and positively related to the test results. He mentioned that metacognitive strategies were indirectly related with reading test results while cognitive ones had a direct relationship. In this context, Soyoung Lee (2001) pointed out that students should learn reading strategies including cognitive and metacognitive strategies to improve real reading abilities as well as to get good scores at school so that the students could become good readers and test-takers at the same time.

Moreover, Anderson, Bachman, Perkins, and Cohen (1991) stated that test-takers used different strategies according to test-takers' proficiency levels, test type, and test difficulty. Most of the researchers consider that the strategies which more proficient students use are different from those of less proficient students. Yamashita's study (2003) showed that the more proficient students underwent different test-taking processes from the less proficient. Based on Yamashita's categories, which falls into clause, sentence, text and extra-textual level, the more proficient used text-level information more frequently than the less.

For another aspect of strategy use, Chamot and Kupper (1989) stated that the less proficient failed to use appropriate strategies required to complete tasks although they had test-taking strategy lists in their cognitive domains and recognized that they should use the appropriate strategies. Jeong-Won Lee and Meeja Ku (2005) showed that more proficient readers did not use more various strategies than the less proficient. In other words, the less proficient made use of as various test-taking strategies as more proficient readers. According to the study, however, the readers with more proficient reading abilities use strategies

more frequently. That is, the significant difference lies in how often they use the strategies.

Question types of the test play an important role in deciding test-taking strategies. Jeong-Won Lee (2002) made an investigation into the relationship between test items and test-taking strategies used by EFL readers. The result revealed that appropriate strategies in reading comprehension test could be used differently, depending on test items, and test-takers' reading ability. Also, Anderson et al. (1991) reported that test-takers used different strategies according to the question type while taking an ESL reading comprehension test. Therefore, Test-takers may try to employ the most appropriate strategies according to the question type. To control the question type variable, Jeong-Won Lee and Meeja Ku (2005) exposed students to the similar types of questions to a real one three times before taking the real test so that they were familiar with the question types and were able to express the strategies they used more exactly.

Regarding strategic approaches to test, Anderson (1991) drew the conclusion that test-taking strategies should be taught, emphasizing the 'when' and 'why' of strategy use as much as the 'what'. Jeong-Won Lee (2002), also, suggested that the test-taking strategies should be reported closely and taught so that the test-takers could get a better achievement. That is why there can be common strategies which are effective in any circumstances although the effect of the strategy can vary with a condition and a learner.

III. METHOD

1. Participants

The participants for the study were 71 university students from two universities in Gyunggi-Do and Choongnam, Korea. Like other most Korean college students, they have been studying and learning English more than nine years. They are mainly freshmen and a few sophomores. They were taking a two-hour TOEIC class per week in preparation for TOEIC test. The universities offer students special courses for TOEIC for their future job. It's one of a whole general

English program including two-hour English conversation class taught by native instructors. The textbooks that they used have the similar questions on the TOEIC test in a variety of topics.

In addition, the university in experimental group provides three chances to take simulated TOEIC test per the semester unlike the other university. The simulated test provided by an agency has the same format as the actual TOEIC test including 100 LC and 100 RC questions. The scores of the each test are informed to the students after their taking a test. On the other hand, the other college student group, as baseline data for comparison, was not given any simulated TOEIC while taking the TOEIC preparation course.

2. Materials

1) Reading Comprehension Test

The reading comprehension test consisting of nine passages and 28 questions was selected among the questions of the simulated TOEIC provided by a TOEIC agency. The level of the test seems to be a little higher than the students' textbook. The questions are usually primarily for business and from everyday situations and language in business settings. Questions of the test are categorized into three type; main idea, detail, inference questions. Main idea questions are like "What is being advertised?", "What is the purpose of the letter?", and "What is the announcement about?". The detail questions in the test are like "When will the service be provided?", "What kind of books does Edward sell?" The questions like "What's the writer's opinion?" "Who might use the product?" belong to inference questions. Based on the category, the test has eight main idea, thirteen concrete, and seven inference questions. The reliability of the reading comprehension test was .776. The relatively high Cronbach's alpha on the test indicated that the participants' responses were consistent across items of the scale in measuring reading ability.

2) Test-taking Strategy

The questionnaire used in this study was adapted and modified from the one of Eunkyong Haam (2006). The questionnaire of the study was developed based on test-taking strategy and reading strategy including cognitive, meta-cognitive and compensatory strategies. While she made up 30 questions including 22 test-taking and eight general strategy questions, the questionnaire for this study consists of 21 questions including 13 test-taking strategies (See Appendix) and eight general questions. Out of the 22 questions from the Eunkyong Haam's questionnaire, 13 test-taking strategies related with TOEIC questions were selected. The other nine questions were deleted because there were no such types of question in TOEIC as 'Filling the blank,' 'Filling the blank with adequate conjunction', 'Putting a sentence for logical ordering', 'Completing a summary sentence', 'Guessing what the underlined pronoun refers'.

The questionnaire was divided into two sections: 13 test-taking strategies and 8 general strategies. They were mixed to prevent students from noticing which item belongs to one or the other. The questionnaire used a seven-point Likert scale from one to seven. 13 test-taking strategies were divided into three categories: reasoning, guessing, and managing based on Jeong-Won Lee's category (2002). According to the category, reasoning includes using background knowledge and contextual clues to get the correct answer. Guessing depends on illogical abilities. Managing includes skipping some parts of reading to answer the given questions in a limited time. The test-taking strategies used for the study have five reasoning, three guessing and five managing one. The reliability of the test-taking strategy questionnaire was .669. The relatively high Cronbach's alpha on the questionnaire indicated the participants' responses were consistent across items of the scale in measuring strategy use.

3. Data Collection

The test and the questionnaire were administered one week before they took final exam of spring semester, 2008. The students of experimental group completed three opportunities to take simulated TOEIC test on-line. In fact, taking a simulated TOEIC was mandatory without exception because whether they take the on-line test was reflected on the students' final grade for the course.

For this research, a total of 71 students was asked to take a reading comprehension test within 20 minutes. They read passages and answered the questions by marking their answers on a multiple-choice answer sheet. On the same day just after taking the test, the instructors read the each item in English and explained terms and expression in Korean to make it clear. Then, they were asked to recall and indicate to what extent they used test-taking and general strategies while taking the reading comprehension test.

4. Data Analysis

The analysis was done to examine what the difference was in answering three different types of TOEIC questions: finding main idea, concrete details, and making inference. Also, the data were analyzed to find out what was a difference in using test-taking strategies. To achieve this, one-way ANOVA was carried out using SPSS version 14. One way ANOVA was used to identify differences in answering to the questions and in using the test-taking strategies between test-takers and non-test-takers. For the first research question, the dependent variable was each number of correct answer to three categorized questions. The extent of test-taking strategy that the students marked was used as the dependent variable for the second research question. Whether or not they had experience in taking simulated tests is an independent variable. The alpha level was set at .05 for one-way ANOVA.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Score on Reading Comprehension Test

1) Main Idea Question

According to Table 1, the mean of test score of test-takers was 14.86 while that of non-test-takers was 11.97. It's not surprising that test-takers got higher scores than the others, but what is more interesting is what types of question they were better at by looking into the data in details.

First of all, out of 28 questions, 8 questions were included in main idea questions starting with "What is being advertised?", "What is the purpose of the letter?", and so on. The mean of main idea questions of test-takers was 4.30 whereas the other students got 2.74 in main idea questions. This difference is statistically meaningful. That means the one-way ANOVA showed a significant group difference for the dependent variable within .05 significance level of the test. It is assumed that the test experience helped the students find out key information from the reading passage.

2) Detail Question

13 detail questions were included in the test such as "When will the service be provided?", "What kind of books does Edward sell?" Regarding detail questions, the mean of test-taker was 8.19, and that of non-test group was 6.97. The students who had experience in simulated tests were better at answering detail questions than the others. The difference is meaningful in statistics referring to level of significance of the test in ANOVA. The test experience improved the students' ability to find concrete and specific ideas as well as main idea.

3) Inference Question

In the reading comprehension test, there are seven inference questions that are recognized the most difficult ones for test-takers to answer. In general, to answer main idea or detail questions, readers read the idea stated on the printed page and determine author's literal meaning. However, regarding inference questions, readers are expected to use not only the information the writer provides but also the facts they already know to make an educated guess or prediction. As it's expected, the students of the both groups had the lowest number of correct answers among all three types of questions irrespective of their test experience. Of course, there was a little difference between two groups, but it's not statistically meaningful. This indicated that test-takers were not better at answering inference questions. The result reminds us of David B. Kim's statement (2008) that a teacher should focus on teaching how to draw out their own conclusion when the information is not stated directly in order to improve the students'

abilities of making inferences. Considering logical inference that ensures high level of reading proficiency (Il Jin Shin, 2005) is believed to be cultivated through problem-solving and thinking ability (Jeong-ryeol Kim & Jee-yeon Shin, 2008), it is hard to say that test experience alone leads to logical inference ability.

Table 1

Results of Reading Comprehension Test

Item (number)	Group	N	Mean	STD	p
Main idea (8)	non-test	34	2.74	1.46	.000**
	test	37	4.30	1.58	
Detail (13)	non-test	34	6.97	1.70	.017*
	test	37	8.19	2.45	
Inference (7)	non-test	34	2.26	1.11	.691
	test	37	2.38	1.28	
Total (28)	non-test	34	11.97	2.43	.000**
	test	37	14.86	3.99	

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .001$.

2. Test-taking Strategy

1) Overall Total Strategy

In the use of test-taking strategies, the overall frequency mean of test-takers was 69.57, while that of non-test-takers was 60.68 as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Results of Types of Test-taking Strategy

Type (number)	Group	N	Mean	STD	p
Reasoning (5)	non-test	34	22.32	3.69	.512
	test	37	22.95	4.22	
Guessing (4)	non-test	34	19.71	4.28	.716
	test	37	20.05	3.74	
Managing (4)	non-test	34	18.65	3.26	.000**
	test	37	26.57	3.87	
Total (13)	non-test	34	60.68	8.48	.000**
	test	37	69.57	8.46	

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .001$.

The result revealed there was a difference between two groups that was significant in statistics ($p=.000^{**}$). This means that having experiences in simulated tests caused a change in frequency of strategy use. Test experiences brought about more frequent strategy use in test situations, and it might lead students to improve reading comprehension score in such a short time through simulated tests.

2) Reasoning Strategy (1, 2, 5, 7, 10)

For the study, the strategies used were divided into reasoning, guessing, and managing strategy. First of all, question No 1, 2, 5, 7, and 10 belong to reasoning strategy as shown in Table 3. According to Table 2, the mean of reasoning strategy of test-takers was 22.95 while that of non-test-takers was 22.32. Although there was a little difference between two groups, it was not meaningful in statistics ($p=.51$). In details, each item did not show any statistically significant difference in mean between two groups. Both groups of students showed similar extent of strategy use and they used the reasoning strategy least among three types of strategy.

3) Guessing Strategy (3, 4, 11, 12)

Guessing strategy is what readers use in case of facing difficulty in understanding indirect and implicit information on text. It includes question No 3, 4, 11, and 12 (Table 3). There was no significant difference between two groups although test-takers employed a little more frequently. For each item, the means were not significantly different in statistics. Using contextual clue and background knowledge are recognized as an effective strategy when readers face difficulty in understanding passage stated on the text, but they were not remarkably improved by the simulated tests.

4) Managing Strategy (6, 8, 9, 13)

Managing strategy is an essential and necessary strategy when students take a test under time constraint. Question No. 6, 8, 9, and 13 fall into this category.

Table 2 shows that the mean of managing strategy of test-takers is 26.57 while that of non-test-takers is 18.65. The difference between two groups was significant in statistics ($p=.000^{**}$). Test-takers used managing strategies much more frequently than non-test-takers. The managing strategy gained highest popularity among three types of test-taking strategies. Compared with the other strategy types, managing strategy seems to be more testee-friendly because it encompasses processes to answer the given questions in a limited time.

Table 3

Types of Test-taking Strategy

Type of strategy	No	Question
Reasoning	1	I browse the whole passage roughly to find general topic and gist. (<i>browsing</i>)
	2	I usually read the first and the last sentence more carefully. (<i>reading the first and last</i>)
	5	I keep reading the given passage carefully rather than guess or think of what the passage might be. (<i>keeping reading</i>)
	7	I stop periodically while reading and mentally go over or review whether I understood what was said. (<i>periodical stop</i>)
	10	I read the passage repeatedly until I understand the meaning. (<i>repeated reading</i>)
Guessing	3	While reading the given passage, I think what I know about the topic. (<i>thinking background</i>)
	4	If the given passage is about what I already know, I try to use my background knowledge to solve the question. (<i>using background</i>)
	11	If there is vocabulary that I don't know the exact meaning, I try to guess the meaning from the context of the given passage. (<i>guessing</i>)
	12	If there is a sentence that I don't understand during reading the passage, I try to use my background knowledge to compensate my understanding. (<i>compensating background</i>)
Managing	6	I underline the important words or phrases while reading. (<i>underlining</i>)
	8	If I think what the answer is, I stop reading the passage or the options. (<i>stopping reading</i>)
	9	If the question is about 'Finding the purpose of the writing', I usually try to find the phrases that can show the writer's intension such as 'I'd like' or 'please.' (<i>finding an expression</i>)
	13	If the question is about 'Understanding graph and chart', or if there is a picture in the given test item, I look through them first before reading the given passage. (<i>looking through pictures</i>)

Table 4

Results of questions of Test-taking Strategy

Question	Group	N	Mean	STD	p
1(R). I browse the whole passage roughly to find general topic and gist	non-test	34	5.47	1.19	.119
	test	37	4.92	1.69	
2(R). I usually read the first and last sentence more carefully.	non-test	34	5.35	1.54	.582
	test	37	5.54	1.32	
3(G). While reading the given passage, I think what I know about the topic.	non-test	34	4.62	1.37	.692
	test	37	4.49	1.41	
4(G). If the given passage is about what I already know, I try to use my background knowledge to solve the question	non-test	34	4.94	1.43	.603
	test	37	5.14	1.67	
5(R). I keep reading the given passage carefully rather than guess or think of what the passage might be.	non-test	34	3.74	1.56	.250
	test	37	4.14	1.34	
6(M). I underline the important words or phrases while reading.	non-test	34	4.44	1.54	.018*
	test	37	5.38	1.71	
7(R). I stop periodically while reading and mentally go over or review whether I understood what was said.	non-test	34	3.38	1.52	.491
	test	37	3.65	1.70	
8(M). If I think what the answer is, I stop reading the passage or the options.	non-test	34	5.09	1.52	.002*
	test	37	6.14	1.13	
9(M). if the question is about 'Finding the purpose of the writing', I usually try to find the phrases that can show the writer's intension such as 'I'd like' or 'please.'	non-test	34	4.09	1.40	.189
	test	37	4.54	1.46	
10(R). I read the passage repeatedly until I understand the meaning.	non-test	34	4.38	1.56	.350
	test	37	4.70	1.31	
11(G). If there is vocabulary that I don't know the exact meaning, I try to guess the meaning from the context of the given passage.	non-test	34	5.32	1.27	.071
	test	37	5.84	0.89	
12(G). If there is a sentence that I don't understand during reading the passage, I try to use my background knowledge to compensate my understanding.	non-test	34	4.82	1.34	.456
	test	37	4.59	1.24	
13(M). If the question is about 'Understanding graph and chart', or if there is a picture in the given test item. I look through them first before reading the given passage.	non-test	34	5.03	1.62	.034*
	test	37	5.81	1.44	
total	non-test	34	60.68	8.48	.000**
	test	37	69.57	8.46	

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .001$.

Looking into the details of the managing strategy, mean of underlining strategy (no. 6) by test-takers was 5.38 and that of non-test group was 4.44. The difference is statistically meaningful ($p=.018^*$). For the stopping reading strategy (no.8), the mean of test-takers was 6.14 and that of non-test takers was 5.09, the difference of which is statistically meaningful ($p=.002^*$). Out of 13 questions on the strategies, the difference is the largest. This result showed that the more tests the students took, the more frequently they used stopping reading. Stopping reading and moving another question is critical to save time for the more difficult questions and to make better use of test time. Finding an expression strategy (no. 9) didn't reveal the statistically significant difference although there showed a difference in mean in descriptive statistics. The students did not remarkably develop this strategy by the simulated tests. Only test experience is less likely to improve such a strategy and test-takers hardly tried to match specific questions with common clue phrases from the passage. With regard to looking through pictures strategy (no. 13), the mean of test-takers was 5.81 and that of non-test group was 5.03. The difference is statistically significant ($p=.034^*$). This means that students who had experience simulated tests intend to use more effective and strategic method according to the question type.

Three strategies (no. 6, 8, 13) showing a statistically meaningful difference are very closely connected with taking a test rather than reading comprehension. The students of both groups seem to recognize that they should use the reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, using background knowledge while engaging their reading and taking a test. Also, both seem to try to use the strategies. However, it is worthy of noting that the more tests guarantee test-takers' use of the test-taking strategies more directly related with test conditions such as stopping reading, underlining, and looking at picture.

V. CONCLUSION

The present study attempted to reveal whether test experience made differences in test score and in strategy use. The study placed foci on (1) which types of reading questions were improved and (2) which types of test-taking strategies

were used more frequently through test experience. According to expectation, the result showed test-takers got higher scores than the others. Main idea and detail questions demonstrated remarkable difference except for inference questions. Also, the findings from the test-taking strategy questionnaire revealed a statistically significant difference in overall total between two groups. Among three types of test-taking strategies, especially managing strategy was used more frequently by the test-takers.

Jeong-Won Lee's study (2002) showed that reasoning strategies were more likely to explain better results than managing and guessing. However, our study showed that the only managing strategies except the others, might cause better test score. It seems interesting to look into the questions of managing strategies in details. First of all, frequent underlining strategy indicates that the students who experienced simulated tests modified reading input material to focus on the information critical to answer questions. In general, underlining strategy, as a way of creating structure for input, helps learners sort and organize the information that comes their way (Oxford, 1990). Underlining important words is beneficial to learning in the test situation as well as in reading comprehension by highlighting key words with main idea, purpose or important facts. While taking tests, underlining can help keep students from missing key points required for the given questions. Also, stopping reading strategy demonstrates that the students read the questions first and then read the part of the passage matched with the corresponding questions even though they were instructed to read reading passage first. Stopping reading and moving another question is critical to save time for the more difficult questions and to make better use of test time. Consequently, the students who had more test experience seem to keep test time in mind in order to use it strategically and effectively. The difference of looking through pictures strategy explained that test-takers try to choose and use the most appropriate method of each question type, since they are familiar with question types by their test experience. That means the test-takers have a variety of strategy and can use different strategy in different question types. The study came to the conclusion that test experience can help readers decide and use more effective and appropriate one from their repertory in a real test situation.

Another point is whether the study can explain a beneficial backwash effect on teaching and learning. Students who actively use cognitive and metacognitive

strategies in test-taking settings are more likely to use these strategies in non-test situations such as overall learning situations or reading comprehension (Eunkyong Haam, 2006). The results of the study did not support the hypothesis that the strategy developed through the process of taking the test can lead students to improve their reading comprehension ability. In other words, it is hardly evident that taking a test itself could provide supportive and corrective partnership with learning and teaching even though it is likely to help develop the restricted test-taking strategies.

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APPENDIX

Test-taking Strategy Questionnaire

* This is a questionnaire about test-taking strategies you use when you take English reading comprehension test. Read each question carefully and answer your opinion frankly.

Item	Question	Response
1	I browse the whole passage roughly to find general topic and gist.	①②③④⑤⑥⑦

2	I usually read the first and the last sentence more carefully.	①②③④⑤⑥⑦
3	While reading the given passage, I think what I know about the topic.	①②③④⑤⑥⑦
4	If the given passage is about what I already know, I try to use my background knowledge to solve the question.	①②③④⑤⑥⑦
5	I keep reading the given passage carefully rather than guess or think of what the passage might be.	①②③④⑤⑥⑦
6	I underline the important words or phrases while reading.	①②③④⑤⑥⑦
7	I stop periodically while reading and mentally go over or review whether I understood what was said.	①②③④⑤⑥⑦
8	If I think what the answer is, I stop reading the passage or the options.	①②③④⑤⑥⑦
9	If the question is about 'Finding the purpose of the writing', I usually try to find the phrases that can show the writer's intension such as 'I'd like' or 'please.'	①②③④⑤⑥⑦
10	I read the passage repeatedly until I understand the meaning.	①②③④⑤⑥⑦
11	If there is vocabulary that I don't know the exact meaning, I try to guess the meaning from the context of the given passage.	①②③④⑤⑥⑦
12	If there is a sentence that I don't understand during reading the passage, I try to use my background knowledge to compensate my understanding.	①②③④⑤⑥⑦
13	If the question is about 'Understanding graph and chart', or if there is a picture in the given test item, I look through them first before reading the given passage.	①②③④⑤⑥⑦

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