The Effect of Elaboration Strategy on Developing EFL Reading Comprehension Skills Among Faculty of Education Students

By:

Shaimaa Hamdy Abd El-Azeem Abd El-Fattah

Assistant Lecturer at the Department of Curricula, Instruction and Educational Technology[TEFL]

Dr. Fatma Sadeq Mohamed

Professor of EFL Curriculum, Instruction & Educational Technology Faculty of Education Benha University

Dr. Mona S. Mahmoud Zaazaa

Professor of EFL Curriculum, Instruction Educational Technology And vice-dean of environmental and community affaires Faculty of Education Benha University

Dr. Eman Mohamed Abdel-Haq

Professor of EFL Curriculum, Instruction & Educational Technology And Dean of Faculty of Education Benha University

2021

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Shaimaa Hamdy Abd El-Azeem Abd El-Fattah

Dr. Fatma Sadeq Mohamed

Professor of EFL Curriculum, Instruction & Educational Technology
Faculty of Education
Benha University

Dr. Mona S. Mahmoud Zaazaa

Professor of EFL Curriculum, Instruction & Educational Technology
And vice-dean of environmental and community affaires
Faculty of Education
Benha University

Dr. Eman Mohamed Abdel-Haq

Professor of EFL Curriculum, Instruction & Educational Technology
And Dean of Faculty of Education
Benha University

ABSTRACT

The present study investigated the effect of elaboration strategy on developing some EFL reading comprehension skills among Faculty of Education students. The design of the study was pre-post one experimental group design. The study participants consisted of 30 students selected from second year students enrolled at the English section in the academic year 2020-2021 at Faculty of Education, Benha University at the second term. The instruments and materials of the study were: an EFL reading comprehension skills checklist including six main skills and 20 sub-skills, an EFL reading comprehension skills pre-posttest and a rubric for scoring it and text modification strategies based program. The EFL reading comprehension skills test was administrated to the participants then they were taught inference as a text modification strategy. After that, they were post-tested using the EFL reading comprehension skills test. The findings of the study revealed that EFL reading comprehension skills were enhanced due to the use of elaboration strategy for developing EFL reading comprehension skills among second year EFL majors.

Key words: Text Modification – Elaboration strategy– EFL reading comprehension skills

ملخص البحث باللغة العربية:

هدف هذا البحث إلى التعرف علي فاعلية استخدام استراتيجية التوضيح فى تنمية مهارات الفهم القرائي فى اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية لدى طلاب الفرقة الثانية شعبة اللغة الانجليزية بكلية التربية جامعة بنها. لقد تم استخدام التصميم التجريبي ذو المجموعة الواحدة (قبلي بعدي) و لقد بلغت عينة الدراسة ثلاثين طالبا تم اختيارهم عشوائياً من طلاب الفرقة الثانية المقيدين بشعبة اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية التربية ببنها. شملت أدوات الدراسة: قائمة بالمهارات اللازمة لهؤلاء الطلاب مقسمة إلى ست مستويات رئيسية و 20 مهارة فرعية و اختبار قبلي بعدي لقياس مهارات الفهم القرائي لدي العينة. تم تطبيق اختبار الفهم القرائي للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية قبليا على المشاركين ثم التدريس لهم باستخدام استراتيجية التوضيح. بعد ذلك ، تم تطبيق الاختبار بعديا لقياس مدي التقدم في مستوي أدائهم. تم اجراء الدراسة في الفصل الدراسي الثاني من العام الجامعي 2020/2021. وقد كشفت النتائج أن مهارات الفهم القرائي للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية تم تنميتها نتيجة لاستخدام استراتيجية التفصيل و أكدت النتائج فاعلية استخدام استراتيجية التفصيل في تنمية بعض مهارات الفهم القرائي للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لدى طلاب الفرقة الثانية في شعبة اللغة الإنجليزية بكلية التربية.

كلمات مفتاحية: التعديل النصي، استراتيحية التفصيل، مهارات الفهم القرائي باللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية.

Introduction:

Text comprehension requires mental processes to appreciate, understand and recognize essential information within the text. Therefore, the reader can draw information that is directly or indirectly stated within the text to understand its purpose (Rodriguez, 2017).

Miller (2002) mentioned that reading comprehension is the reader's ability to grasp meaning from any type of written material (text). Snow (2002:11) defined reading comprehension as "the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language" . Both verbs "either extract or construct", were used to refer to the importance and the insufficiency of the text as a determinant of reading comprehension which has three elements: the reader who is comprehending, the text that is to be comprehended and the activity in which comprehension is part of. Brassell, Rasinski and Yopp (2008) defined reading comprehension as an active process in which the reader does not get the meaning by just reading the text but it requires the reader to use the notion of grasping meaning from the overall text.

Educational research shows the importance of reading to enrich the educational process in general. Jubani, Lama and Gjokutaj (2012) reported that students who can read and understand achieve high scores than their poor colleagues at school. Moreover, Bolos (2012) and Buyuktasapu (2012) stated that students who read more stories than others perform much better in reading and writing and so in comprehension. Spooner, Gathercole and Baddeley (2006) said that understanding is the end goal of reading comprehension, because reading comprehension helps in gaining more consciousness about the information found in different texts. So, many students who lack the skill of understanding texts have some weaknesses in decoding skills.

Many educationists assured the importance of reading comprehension because students' success and progress in schools depend on their ability to read and understand. Crain-Thoreson, Lipman and Mccledon-Magnuson (1997) point out that there is a positive correlation between reading comprehension and school success. It can be concluded that excellent reading comprehension skills is crucial for dealing with different types of texts. It increases the reader's enjoyment of

reading and helps readers academically as well as professionally. It helps achieve better in the whole fields of the general life. Any lack in reading comprehension skills obviously affects the student's success at school. The final end of reading is comprehension and understanding. So, reading without understanding is frustrating and aimless. The final goal of comprehension is to develop the students' knowledge, skills and experiences.

Shcumm (2006) asserted that the comprehension process involves an understanding of words and how these words are used to create meaning. Comprehension entails three elements: the reader, the text and the activity or the task.

 1. The reader who is the one who comprehends. The reader must have specific abilities such as cognitive abilities, motivation and various types of knowledge, in order to comprehend the text.

 2. The text which must be comprehended. The features of the text have a large effect on comprehension. Comprehension does not occur by simply extracting meaning from the text. Texts can be easy or difficult, and the factors in which the text is considered an easy or a difficult one, have a strong relation to the readers' knowledge and experience.

 3. The activity in which comprehension is a part. A reading activity involves one or more purposes, some operation to process the text at hand, and consequences of performing the activity. The consequences of reading are part of the activity. Some reading activities lead to an increase in the knowledge that the reader has. Another consequence of the reading activity is finding out how to do something.

Based on the previous section, it can be said that students' reading levels differ for many reasons. So, teachers have to play an important role in moving students from lower levels to higher ones. Teachers have to search for different strategies and methods to allow students to understand different types of texts including modification strategies. Teachers have to clarify to the students how the modified material is the same as the original source, with the same ideas just with different words. In this way, readers with certain difficulties may have their reading skills improved not only through increased vocabulary, but through word association as well.

Text modification or input modification is based on Krashen's (1985) input hypothesis which explains that comprehensible input can lead to acquisition so that input can be made comprehensible by simplifying it. In other words, input must be comprehensible so that acquisition can happen. Input can be made comprehensible in two ways: pre-modified input and interactionally modified input. The pre-modified refers to input which is modified before being supplied to the learner; the latter refers to input that is modified through negotiation for meaning in interaction. Parker and Chaudron (1987, p. 110) mentioned that pre-modified input is classified into three types: simplification, elaboration, and enhancement. Simplification makes changes to the input so it provides fewer difficulties in the syntactic and lexical fields. Some features of simplification may include, adding sentence connectors, repeating some words and phrases, sentence splitting, deleting subordinate clauses in order to eliminate the length and complexity of sentences. On the other hand, elaboration refers to changes in which unfamiliar linguistic items are paraphrased with redundancy and explicitness. Elaboration may happen through paraphrasing, restating, slowing the rate of speech, clearer pronunciation and emphatic stress. The third kind of pre-modified input is enhancement, which refers to typographical enhancement (written input) and intonational enhancement (oral input).

The advantage of modifying texts is to allow students who have some problems in FL proficiency that of the original text to read the modified text with sufficient understanding to comprehend the message. The measures of text modification can make a reading text better for vocabulary acquisition, more comprehensible, and more accessible (Nation, 2001).

Suseno and Cahyono (2016) stated that the employment of text modification is important due to several reasons. First, it provides comprehensible input so that the students can easily decode the meaning. Second, it is more appropriate to implement text modification in classroom context than in communication strategies. Third, text modification fosters students' affective factors (i.e. self-confidence, motivation).

Kulkarni and Shivananda (2019) demonstrated that text modification is also based on natural language processing (NLP) which is used to extract information from text. NLP has many techniques that is important to be utilized during the text

modification process. Noun phrase extraction is crucial in analyzing the "who" in a sentence, parts of speech (POS). Tagging is another crucial part of NLP that involves labeling the words with a part of speech such as noun, verb, adjective, etc. POS is the base for question answering and word sense disambiguation. Another important technique of NLP is extracting entities from text. It is to identify and extract entities from the text, called named entity recognition which is a subtask of information extraction that requires locating as well as identifying named entity mentioned in unstructured text into predefined categories. Also, extracting topics from texts is another NLP technique named as topic modeling.

Parker and Chaudron (1987) coined the term of elaboration. Young (1999:351) defined elaboration as modifications that "involve writing authentic discourse so that explicitness and redundancy can compensate for unfamiliar linguistic items". Nation (2001) defined elaboration as another way of making texts accessible for learners. In short, "the goal of elaboration is to improve text coherence through clarification, repetition, and explicit connections" (Kim & Snow, 2009, p. 131).

Long (2007, p. 130) defined elaboration as "an approach to improving the comprehensibility of spoken or written texts that grew out of research findings on "foreigner talk discourse" in the 1970s and 1980s." Elaboration can be defined as any enhancement of information which clarifies or specifies the relationship between information to be learnt and the related information that is a learner's prior knowledge and experience or contiguously presented information (Hamilton, 1997, p. 299).

Chapelle (2003) demonstrated that input elaboration is used to help learners gain access to the meaning of the text by adding grammatical phrases and clauses such as defining appositives, relative clauses, and restatements. Unlike simplification which depends on removing the forms that learners should be exposed to in the input, the process of elaboration make an addition to the input in a way that should help to clarify meaning while maintaining the structural and lexical complexity that provides learners with input for acquisition.

Elaboration can come in three types: lexical elaboration, structural elaboration, and a combination of lexical and structural elaboration. There is also lexical elaboration of the explicit and implicit types (Chung, 1995). Elaboration attempts

to increase text comprehensibility by adding redundancy to the text or making the thematic structure of the text explicit. Redundancy includes repetition of constituents, paraphrasing, use of synonyms and definitions. Input enhancement, moreover, is a set of techniques to draw L2 learners' attention to L2 linguistic forms which are to be targets of learning. Input enhancement is primarily made in meaning- and communication-oriented situations to help L2 learners notice the linguistic forms which lack in their current interlanguage. It includes a set of techniques to draw L2 learners' attention to formal features in the L2 input. Input enhancement devices are classified into two major categories. The first category includes typographical enhancement devices which are such effects as boldfacing, italicizing, underlining or a combination of the typographical effects simultaneously. The other category includes intonational enhancement devices which are employed to enhance the oral language (Moradian, 2009).

Expanding content understandability is the main aim of text elaboration, and this can be done through providing meanings of difficult words. Moreover, it depends on rewording those sentences which contain complex syntactic structures. Many educators focus on input modification through elaboration because elaborated inputs incorporate all the material needed for L2 learners' acquisition of the second language. It also provides non-native speakers with common native speaker talk models (Kasgari, 2018).

Many researchers proposed actual techniques for elaboration, Yano, Long and Ross (1994) proposed five techniques for elaboration. The first is elaborating lower frequency words with higher frequency words. The second is clarifying unfamiliar concepts. The third is increasing redundancy by means of repetition and paraphrase. The fourth is making connections explicit. Finally, highlighting main concepts. Longer sentences can be more comprehensible if attention is paid to such additional features as the clarity of references to unfamiliar concepts, the removal of pronouns with unclear antecedents, the deletion of irrelevant details in distracting phrases, and the highlighting of important concepts. Many studies found that explicit lexical elaboration is the most significant technique to make the meaning of unknown words clear in the text. Explicit lexical elaboration depends on providing definitions or synonyms of the difficult words in the text (Moradian & Adel, 2011).

Many researchers dealt with lexical elaboration as an effective way of modifying input to increase text comprehensibility. There are many lexical elaboration devices such as explicit and implicit. The degree of explicitness of lexical elaboration devices depends on the four major characteristics of helpful context, as mentioned in by Konopak and Konopak (1986), as cited in Watanabe (1997, p.288), including (a) proximity of the illuminating context to the unknown word, (b) clarity of the connection between the context and the unknown word, (c) explicitness of the contextual information, and (d) completeness of the contextual information. Examples of explicit lexical elaboration devices include such structures as definition, questioning, naming, and description (Chaudron, 1982, p.175).

In contrast, examples of implicit lexical elaboration devices include such structures as apposition, parallelism, and paraphrase. The difference between the devices used in implicit lexical and explicit lexical elaboration is that in the case of implicit lexical elaboration devices, "there is usually little explicit indication of the relationships between the first lexical item mentioned and the following word(s) or phrase(s) meant to elaborate its meaning" (Chaudron, 1982).

Context of the problem:

Despite the importance of EFL reading comprehension skills, second year students at Faculty of Education still lack these skills. To the researcher's best knowledge, there are no studies in the Egyptian context that have dealt with text modification. Considering the English Language Teacher Education Program at Benha University, Faculty of Education, the researcher found that 10 theoretical hours and two practical hours were allocated from a total of 218 hours for the development of reading and creative writing skills distributed over the four study years. Students study four courses on reading and creative writing, one course each academic year.

Considering the English Language Teacher Education Program [*] at Benha University, Faculty of Education, the researcher found that 10 theoretical hours and two practical hours were allocated from a total of 218 hours for the development of reading and creative writing skills distributed over the four study years. Students study four courses on reading and creative writing, one course each academic year.

Besides, examining the National Academic Reference Standards (NARS) revealed that it focused on reading skills as a basic skill in the EFL Teacher Preparation Program. NARS noted that graduated students enrolled at the English section, Faculty of Education must be able to:

- Understand author's aim.
- Derive meaning from context.
- Elicit implicit meaning.
- Identify main idea and detailed ideas.
- Analyze texts.
- Renew his linguistic knowledge continually.
- Use grammar to analyze.
- Interpret and criticize texts.
- Use grammar and rhetoric in understanding and writing text.
- Understand content of various texts and the bases of their organization.

According to the literature, many studies investigated that the weakness in reading comprehension skills in the academic texts may be due to the text itself, text length, text structure, text complexity, text density, text significance, text ambiguity, text discourse, text proportion and text content and sequence. The case that require a certain degree of treatment which is inferencing strategy.

To document the problem of the present study, the researcher conducted a pilot study on a sample of 20 second year students enrolled at the English section at Benha Faculty of Education during the second term of the academic year 2018-2019. The researcher used a reading comprehension test from Long (1980). The test includes questions that measure the three levels of reading comprehension (literal, inferential and creative/critical as questions (1,3,4,6,11,12,15) measures literal level, questions (2,5,9,16) measures inferential level and questions (7,8,10,13,14) measures critical/creative level. The results showed that second year students lack EFL reading comprehension skills

According to the pilot study, second year students have a problem in moving from the comparatively simple, short, adapted, direct and varied texts at secondary stage to the authentic, long, complex texts that they face at college.(

better to authenticate the results of the pilot study by referring to percentage of low performance in each level of comprehension) Therefore, students cannot understand simple questions about a text or answer them as a whole. Therefore, it is evident that there is a great need and importance in developing reading comprehension skills for second year students in the English Section at Benha Faculty of Education.

Statement of the Problem:
In spite of the importance of the EFL reading comprehension skills and the need for enhancing them among second year students at faculty of education, they seem to lack these skills. This study was an attempt to develop second year students' EFL reading comprehension skills.

Questions of the Study:
To investigate this problem, the present study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What are the EFL reading comprehension skills required for second year students at faculty of education?
2. How can inferencing strategy be used for developing EFL reading comprehension skills among second year students at the Faculty of Education, Benha University?
3. What is the effect of using inferencing strategy in developing some EFL reading comprehension skills among second year students at faculty of education?

Hypotheses of the study:
The study has one main hypothesis and six sub hypotheses as follows:
There is a statistically significant difference in the overall EFL reading comprehension skills between the mean scores of the participants in the pre and posttest in favor of the post test. The six sub hypotheses are:

1. There is a statistically significant difference in the first reading comprehension level which is literal skills between the mean score of the participants in the pre and posttest in favor of the post test.
2. There is a statistically significant difference in the second reading comprehension level which is comprehension skills between the mean score of the participants in the pre and posttest in favor of the post test.

3. There is a statistically significant difference in the third reading comprehension level which is application skills between the mean score of the participants in the pre and posttest in favor of the post test.
4. There is a statistically significant difference in the fourth reading comprehension level which is analysis skills between the mean score of the participants in the pre and posttest in favor of the post test.
5. There is a statistically significant difference in the fifth reading comprehension level which is synthesis skills between the mean score of the participants in the pre and posttest in favor of the post test.
6. There is a statistically significant difference in the sixth reading comprehension level which is evaluation skills between the mean score of the participants in the pre and posttest in favor of the post test.

Method

Participants

The participants consisted of thirty second year students enrolled at the English section at Faculty of Education, Benha University at the second semester of 2020-2021 academic year (N=30).

Design

The present study is a partially mixed research methodology. It combines both quantitative and qualitative methods of collecting data to help in bridging the gap between quantitative and qualitative research. To conduct the quantitative analysis the pre- post experimental group design was used. The study participants were tested before and after conducting the program. In addition, a qualitative analysis of the students' performance is provided.

Instruments and materials

In order to fulfill the purposes of the study, the following instruments were designed:

- An EFL reading comprehension skills checklist prepared by the researcher.
- An EFL reading comprehension skills pre-posttest prepared by the researcher and a rubric to score it.

An EFL reading comprehension skills checklist

The EFL reading comprehension skills checklist was designed for identifying the EFL reading comprehension skills required for second year faculty of education students. Therefore, the EFL reading comprehension skills have been derived from review of literature and related studies including Torky (2021); Farihat (2020); Radaideh (2020); Sa'aleek (2020); Ma'Dievna and O'G'Li (2019); Zahran (2019);

Elhawiet (2019); Ibrahim (2019); Šamo and Mikulec (2018); Tampubolon and Rajagukguk (2017) and El-Sayed, Qoura & El-Hadidy (2017).

An EFL reading comprehension skills test

The researcher prepared a pre-post EFL reading comprehension skills test. The purpose of the test was to determine the students' level before and after the experiment. The test items cover the EFL reading comprehension skills identified by jury members. The EFL reading comprehension skills test consisted of twenty questions covering all the main skills and sub skills. Each question was different in the length of correct answer and in depth of question. The questions were 5 closed ended questions and 15 open ended ones.

The EFL reading comprehension test was corrected using a rubric prepared by the researcher. The rubric was used to assess students' EFL reading comprehension skills. Each skill in the rubric was scored from "3" to "1". "3" refers to the highest performance and "1" refers to the lowest performance. The questions from 1 to 5 take 1 mark for each question (closed ended questions). Questions from 6 to 20 take 3 marks for each item (open ended questions). The total mark of the test was 48.

Determining the validity of the study instruments

Considering the face validity, the EFL reading comprehension skills checklist and test, was submitted to a number of jury members in curriculum and methods of teaching EFL (N=11). After modifying the list of EFL reading comprehension skills according to the jury members' modifications, the final form of the EFL reading comprehension skills checklist included six main skills with twenty sub skills. Considering the test, the jury members were requested to judge whether the test items were clear and appropriate to the study sample and whether the test items measure the EFL reading comprehension skills that they are supposed to measure. Jury members suggested some modifications and the researcher has taken them into account.

Considering the content validity, some jury members were asked to determine if the test items measure the EFL reading comprehension skills that they are supposed to measure. They agreed that the test was a valid tool for measuring EFL reading comprehension skills. To make sure of the validity of the EFL reading comprehension test, the researcher analyzed the data and measured the degree of validity between each item of the test and the overall test

Determining the Reliability of the study instruments

For estimating the reliability of the EFL reading comprehension test, the researcher used test re-test method. The researcher administered the test at the beginning then

re-administered it after two weeks to the same participants (N=22). The correlation co-efficient (r) between the mean score of the first and the second administration of the test was measured by using Pearson formula. So, the reliability co-efficient was (0.95) that showed high reliability of the test. The researcher used the inter rater and the correlation between the raters were calculated and computed and it was (.98) so the correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

The Experimental Treatment

The Following procedures were conducted in the present study:

Pre-testing:
Having conducted the validity and reliability of the study tools, the researcher pre-tested the study participants using the EFL reading comprehension skills test to measure their level in EFL reading comprehension skills before implementing the program. Pre-test statistics revealed that the study participants are lacking in EFL reading comprehension skills.

Experimentation of the Program:
After pre-testing, The experimentation was administered to the study participants (N=30) by the present study researcher. At the beginning of the experiment, the objectives, importance and characteristics of the program were presented to the study sample. After the introductory session, the rest of the instructional sessions were introduced to the study sample. At the beginning of each session, the participants were informed about the role of the teacher, the role of the students, the instructional materials and the various tasks. At the end of the experimentation, the participants' progress in EFL reading comprehension skills was checked after the implementation of the experimentation using the EFL reading comprehension test .

Post-testing:
The researcher posttested the study participants, after conducting the experiment using the same instrument (the EFL reading comprehension test). Post-testing the participants of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of the experimentation.

Goals of the text modification strategy

The text modification strategies based program aimed at developing EFL reading comprehension skills for second year students enrolled in the English section, faculty of Education, Benha university. Therefor, the program was utilized to:
1. Identify the importance of text modification strategies based program in English language in particular.

2. Identify the importance of EFL reading comprehension skills in general and to second year faculty of Education students in particular.
3. Improve their intelligibility of reading comprehension skills.
4. Improve their reading and reading comprehension skills to read and understand English.
5. Work more independently.

Objectives of the text modification strategy

Based on the EFL reading comprehension skills checklist, the objectives of the text modification strategies based program were identified. Therefore, the program was utilized to:

- ✦ Know what are text modification strategies.
- ✦ Recognize the importance of text modification strategies.
- ✦ Skim the text for the main ideas.
- ✦ Scan the text for specific details.
- ✦ Identify the meaning of the key words in the text.
- ✦ Use semantic fields (word mapping).
- ✦ Make inferences about the reading text.
- ✦ Describe the main events mentioned in the text.
- ✦ Make predictions about the reading text.
- ✦ Summarize the text in a simple form.
- ✦ Compare facts to make choices.
- ✦ Illustrate the relations between ideas (cause and effect, comparison and contrast).
- ✦ Interpret figures such as graphs, maps and diagrams.
- ✦ Make generalizations.
- ✦ Analyze the reading text according to its structure.
- ✦ Visualize the important ideas in the paragraphs.
- ✦ Distinguish the difference between the literal meaning and the implied one.
- ✦ Paraphrase ideas in an elaborated way.
- ✦ Draw conclusions from the author's words.
- ✦ Agree or disagree with the author's points of view.
- ✦ Judge the accuracy of the information given in the text.
- ✦ Debate around the contrasting points in the text.

Framework of the Program

The content of the text modification strategies based program consisted of twenty sessions. The program begins with an orientation session and the objectives of the program for the study sample in which the researcher is going to present what text

modification strategies based program is as well as what the EFL reading comprehension skills students are going to learn.

Procedures of the Program

This is implemented in four phases: text structure instruction, modeling for the strategy usage, guided practice and independent practice as follows:

Phase one

Text structure instruction is implemented in three stages: the introduction of the text structure, the comprehension stage and the evaluation stage. During the instruction of the text structure stage, the researcher explains the rationale for different types of text and shows parts as well as sub parts of the text structure using a graphic organizer. This stage lasts for all session with all text types.

In the comparison stage, the researcher reads the sample text and compares it to the text structure.

Phase two: modeling phase

During this phase the teacher models the strategies holistically- these strategies include:

- Setting a goal for reading and motivating students.
- Activating background knowledge of the topic and predicting the text content.
- Placing the predicted ideas on a graphic organizer for before reading.
- Defining important information units in the text and placing on the graphic organizer for during reading.
- Comparing the predicted ideas with ideas in the text.
- Writing a summary of the text for after reading.

Furthermore, the teacher uses several procedural facilities in this stage. The teacher uses think sheet and answers some of the students' questions. The teacher uses a prediction sheet to group and label the brainstormed ideas on the prediction schema. The teacher summarizes the text by following the order of text structure. The teacher asks the students to do the same with their own text.

Phase three: guided practice

In this phase, the students are required to perform all strategies used in before, during and after reading:

- The students are guided and given prompts and feedback reading practice.
- The researcher guides the preparation and use of three think sheets and two graphic organizers for strategy instruction.

- The orientation for transition from guided practice to independent practice is the students' independence implementation of the strategy

Phase four: independent practice
a. The teacher encourages the students to practice independently, however, corrective feedback is provided when necessary.
b. The criterion for completion is writing a summary including all components.
c. Independent practice begins for all students after establishing a stable baseline in terms of correct answer rates for reading comprehension questions.
d. Instruction continue until the students demonstrate mastery of the strategies included .
e. Post instruction: after completion of instruction, at least three post instruction probes are administered.

Findings of the study

Quantitative Analysis of the Findings
The findings of the present study are presented in the light of the hypotheses of the study. Using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) program version (18), the paired sample t-test was used. The present study contains one main hypothesis and six sub hypotheses related to the EFL Reading Comprehension skills test.

Findings of the main hypothesis:
This hypothesis states that, "There is a statistically significant difference in the overall EFL reading comprehension skills between the mean scores of the participants in the pre and posttest in favor of the post test." This main hypothesis includes six sub hypotheses describing the twenty sub skills of the EFL reading comprehension skills test.

Table 1
The mean scores, standard deviations, t-value and level of significance of the experimental group in the pre and post assessment in the overall reading comprehension skills.

group	N.	Mean	S.D.	t- value	D. F.	Sig.
pre	30	23.3000	4.21941			

	Group	N.	Mean	S.D.	t-value	D. F.	Sig.
Overall reading post comprehension skills.		30	40.9333	3.26880	-16.1359	29	0.01

It is clear that the mean scores of the experimental group in the post assessment (40.9333) are higher than the mean scores in the pre assessment (23.3000). The t-value is significant at the (0.01) level. So, this hypothesis was confirmed.

Testing sub Hypothesis (1)
This hypothesis states that, "There is a statistically significant difference in the first reading comprehension level which is literal skills between the mean score of the participants in the pre and posttest in favor of the post test."

Table 2
The mean scores, standard deviations, t-value and level of significance of the experimental group in the pre and post assessment in the literal skills

	Group	N.	Mean	S.D.	t- value	D. F.	Sig.
Literal skills	Pre	30	3.4333	1.50134	-7.21171	29	0.01
	Post	30	6.3000	0.98786			

It is clear that the mean scores of the experimental group in the post assessment (6.3000) are higher than the mean scores in the pre assessment (3.4333). The t-value is significant at the (0.01) level. So, this hypothesis was confirmed.

Testing sub Hypothesis (2)
This hypothesis states that, "There is a statistically significant difference in the second reading comprehension level which is comprehension skills between the mean score of the participants in the pre and posttest in favor of the post test."

Table 3
The mean score, standard deviations, t-value and level of significance of the experimental group in the pre and post assessment in the comprehension skills

	group	N.	Mean	S.D.	t- value	D. F.	Sig.
comprehension skills	pre	30	5.6000	1.16264	-13.4973	29	0.01
	post	30	9.9000	1.34805			

It is clear that the mean scores of the experimental group in the post assessment (9.9000) are higher than the mean scores in the pre assessment (5.6000). The t-value is significant at the (0.01) level. So, this hypothesis was confirmed.

Testing sub Hypothesis (3)
This hypothesis states that, "There is a statistically significant difference in the third reading comprehension level which is application skills between the mean score of the participants in the pre and posttest in favor of the post test."

Table 4
The mean score, standard deviations, t-value and level of significance of the experimental group in the pre and post assessment in the application skills

	group	N.	Mean	S.D.	t- value	D. F.	Sig.
Application skills	pre	30	5.1000	1.18467	-13.2458	29	0.01
	post	30	8.7667	1.22287			

It is clear that the mean scores of the experimental group in the post assessment (8.7667) are higher than the mean scores in the pre assessment (5.1000). The t-value is significant at the (0.01) level. So, this hypothesis was confirmed.

Testing sub Hypothesis (4)
This hypothesis states that, "There is a statistically significant difference in the fourth reading comprehension level which is analysis skills between the mean score of the participants in the pre and posttest in favor of the post test."

Table 5
The mean score, standard deviations, t-value and level of significance of the experimental group in the pre and post assessment in the analysis skills

	group	N.	Mean	S.D.	t- value	D. F.	Sig.
Analysis skills	pre	30	2.0667	1.04826	-7.58076	29	0.01
	post	30	4.4667	1.19578			

It is clear that the mean scores of the experimental group in the post assessment (4.4667) are higher than the mean scores in the pre assessment (2.0667). The t-value is significant at the (0.01) level. So, this hypothesis was confirmed.

Testing sub Hypothesis (5)

This hypothesis states that, "There is a statistically significant difference in the fourth reading comprehension level which is synthesis skills between the mean score of the participants in the pre and posttest in favor of the post test."

Table 6

The mean score, standard deviations, t-value and level of significance of the experimental group in the pre and post assessment in the synthesis skills

	group	N.	Mean	S.D.	t- value	D. F.	Sig.
synthesis skills	pre	30	2.5667	0.62606	-8.57629	29	0.01
	post	30	4.4667	1.19578			

It is clear that the mean scores of the experimental group in the post assessment (4.4667) are higher than the mean scores in the pre assessment (2.5667). The t-value is significant at the (0.01) level. So, this hypothesis was confirmed.

Testing sub Hypothesis (6)

This hypothesis states that, "There is a statistically significant difference in the sixth reading comprehension level which is evaluation skills between the mean score of the participants in the pre and posttest in favor of the post test."

Table 7

The mean score, standard deviations, t-value and level of significance of the experimental group in the pre and post assessment in the evaluation skills

	group	N.	Mean	S.D.	t- value	D. F.	Sig.
Evaluation skills	pre	30	4.5333	0.97320	-9.00301	29	0.01
	post	30	7.3667	1.27261			

It is clear that the mean scores of the experimental group in the post assessment (7.3667) are higher than the mean scores in the pre assessment (4.5333). The t-value is significant at the (0.01) level. So, this hypothesis was confirmed.

Qualitative Analysis of the Findings

The present study focused on and increasing the students' prior knowledge about the content of the texts and their reading performance using text recall, written questions and the key word sorting sentences. Also the study stressed choosing the

text of familiarity with the student either the content or the style, the case which helped them demonstrate superior reading performance of literal and inferential comprehension and problem solving when they were provided more cohesive texts with sentence connectives (e.g., phrases that explicitly linked ideas together using topic headings and topic sentences). This result is consistent with Cheng (2019).

The present study exposed the students to variety of expository text and text modification strategy to follow to give them the opportunity to practice text modification learning of information texts as an entry for reading comprehension. The present study depended on the common core state standards for English language arts and literacy as well as national association for best readers and best practices thus the students learned how to be able to use text features to locate facts and identify main ideas of the texts and text structures including sequence elaboration and so on. They also acquired how to organize the text and give a simplified and modified form based on the text structures. The present study provided the students with different scaffolding patterns to perform text modification, employing adjunct aids to highlight the structure and creating visual representation of the text structure this results are consistent with Chandrasekar et al (2017).

Discussion of the Study
The results of the study indicated that the most developed skill is comprehension skills. This result may be due to the various activities used in the text modification strategies based program. These activities included providing students with some worksheets and tasks such as main ideas, questioning and summarizing sheet in which students wrote down every main idea for each paragraph and asked a question about the main idea. Also, in clarifying sheets, students had to write down the unclear sentences or phrases they encounter while reading the text. Using prediction sheets helped students improve their prediction skill. Students were asked to write down their predictions about the text by looking at the title of the text before reading the text.

Considering the inference strategies, the researcher found that some low level students concentrated more on the words when they read a passage due to the number of unknown words in the reading passages. The teacher observed that when they encountered an unknown word, they stopped reading the rest of the passage and tried to find the meaning of the word. To them, understanding a passage meant knowing all the words in the passage. But some of intermediate level students tried to understand the whole passage by looking at the context and getting the general idea of the passage; they did not spend most of their time on

trying to guess the meanings of unknown words. Instead, they used their knowledge of the world, grammatical knowledge and word association knowledge in order to guess. These activities and worksheets helped the students of the experimental group to achieve such improvement.

Then, application skills are the second high main skill to be improved. This result may be due to the various activities used in the text modification strategies based program. Text modification is based on some strategies such as elaboration strategies in which the researcher explained and provided students with motivation for actions or reaction to the text and to explicitly link events and sub-events as consequence, that in turn, may help in illustrating the relations between ideas. Also, inferencing strategies including reading between lines may allow for comparing different facts to select the best fact. These activities helped the students of the experimental group to improve application skills and are based on the reading comprehension skills.

Evaluation skills are the one that came next. This result may be due to the various activities used in the text modification strategies based program, since text modification strategies include making notes strategy as one of the inferencing strategies that allowed students to make notes about the reading text to decide the contrasting points mentioned in the text. This result may also be due to the varied opportunities of practice provided by the researcher in each session and in each assessment that was happening after each session including a simplified form of the whole text they were dealing with during the session. All this helped students to concentrate more and more during the independent practice phase in which students were asked to answer the questions of the reading text. These activities helped the students of the experimental group to achieve such improvement in evaluation.

On the other hand, the literal, analysis and the synthesis levels of reading comprehension skills were the least developed. It is clear that the least developed skills in the post assessment of the reading comprehension skills test are literal skills, analysis skills and synthesis skills. This result may be because the students already acquired some literal skills as the literal skills are the least level, including skills such as skimming and scanning. According to the sub skill which is using semantic fields, it may be improved because of the different types of concept maps the teacher introduced to the students of the experimental group including spider map, circle map and tree chart. The teacher also asked the students to underline the difficult words mentioned in the text and make a list of them with their synonyms

or easy and frequent words for them to be used in the phase of writing the modified form at least.

Then, the analysis skills are improved but come after the literal skills. The sub-skill of distinguishing the difference between the literal meaning and the implied one may need more practice for students. The teacher has to include more practice, activities and worksheets for this sub-skill. Concerning visualizing the important ideas in the paragraph, it can be said that it was developed because of the activities the teacher asked the students to practice for example, using read-pause-sketch as the students read the paragraph silently then pause and every one sketches the main idea then they share and discuss their drawings.

Implementing Visualization allowed the students to understand the entire text. During the process of reading, they read the text and connected it with their background knowledge. The students had an opportunity to share their knowledge among the group members so that they could understand texts. Moreover, Visualization could make the students active during the teaching and learning process of reading. The students read the text by themselves and tried to understand the text by having discussion with other students in the group. When they found difficulties, they asked the teacher to help them. All these steps allowed for the development of the analysis skills among the students of the experimental group. However, some students were passive during class discussion. It happened because of some factors. The students admitted that they did not want to speak in front of the class. They also said that other students would laugh at them when they spoke.

Synthesis skills are the least improved. This may be due to the fact that these skills are one of the higher order skills and they may be a little difficult for students to be acquired. Drawing conclusions from the author's words may need more practice. The reason behind considering these three skills as the least improved among the six main skills is that, these three skills are more practical and may need to be explained more and more. These skills need to be explained through direct instruction not in online sessions to provide more scaffolding. Two of these which are analysis and synthesis skills were almost the highest levels in the overall reading comprehension skills. Also, these skills may need to be addressed for

higher level students' third or fourth year students as these skills are considered as more complex than the first three main skills.

Conclusion:

Based on the aforementioned results, it can be said that the participants' EFL reading comprehension skills were developed after the implementation of the text modification strategies based program. It is clear that the first main hypothesis and its six sub hypotheses were accepted, confirmed and supported. Accordingly, the significant differences found in favor of the experimental group in the post assessment of the EFL reading comprehension skills test can be related to the implementation of the text modification strategies based program which has proved to be effective.

Before the implementation of the text modification strategies based program, most of the participants were found to lack EFL reading comprehension skills and have many problems in comprehending the reading passages. However, after the implementation of the text modification strategies based program, students themselves felt the improvement in their EFL reading comprehension skills. Their errors decreased because of the continuous feedback and scaffolding the teacher introduces through the text modification strategies based program resulting in an increase in EFL reading comprehension skills.

Recommendations of the study:
In the light of the findings of the study the following recommendations may be presented:
1. The objectives of teaching English language should concentrate on reading comprehension skills.
2. Adopting new methods for teaching Reading comprehension.
3. Using text modification strategies based programs instead of traditional methods in teaching reading comprehension skills should be encouraged.
4. Developers of English language curriculum should benefit from text modification based programs.
5. Teaching and learning reading comprehension skills through using text modification programs should be emphasized.

Suggestions for further research
The following areas are suggested for further research

1. Investigating the effectiveness of text modification based program in developing EFL other language skills among Faculty of Education students.
2. Investigating the effectiveness of text modification based program on special needs students.
3. Investigating the effectiveness of text modification based program in developing students' writing skills.
4. Developing remedial courses based on text modification activities for overcoming students` problem on the four language skills.
5. Replication of the study at various educational stages such as primary, preparatory and secondary stages.
6. A comparative study to find either simplification or elaboration is more effective.
7. Investigating the effectiveness of text modification based program in broader samples to increase the generalization of the findings.

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