



The Influence of Training Strategies on Reading Skills among Libyan Learners of English

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ABSTRACT

Receptive skills of reading require special comprehension skills for Libyan learners of English.. In order to improve these skills certain strategies should be considered by the teachers. Research in the field has already proved that specific strategies can be employed with Libyan learners of English.

The research population was the students of the third and fourth-year who study at Tripoli Local University and Alrefak University and the number of students were 60 students, divided into two groups 30 subjects in the experimental group and 30 subjects in the control group. Initially, training reading strategies should be practiced for students in order to give great help to first year Libyan universities students in English.

In this paper the researcher used two tests pre-test, post-test and a questionnaire for the students respectively as a data collection instrument to record comments about the sessions and the students' performances. Findings are discussed and analyzed in detailed with reference to the reviewed literature and the proposed strategic instruction.

Keywords: strategic instruction , development, reading strategies, Tripoli Local University , Alrefak University

تأثير استراتيجيات التدريب على مهارات القراءة لدى متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية الليبيين

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الملخص

تتطلب تدريس مهارات القراءة مهارات فهم خاصة لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية الليبيين لغرض تحسين هذه المهارات. حيث يجب أن ينطبق معلمون اللغة الإنجليزية استراتيجيات معينة لغرض تطوير مهارة القراءة. أثبتت الأبحاث في هذا المجال بالفعل أنه يمكن استخدام استراتيجيات محددة مع كل من متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية في ليبيا.

تكونت عينة الدراسة من 60 طالبا تم اختيارها من السنة الدراسية الثالثة والرابعة في قسم اللغة الانجليزية في جامعة طرابلس الاهلية وجامعة الرفاق. حيث تم تقسيمهم الي مجموعتين مجموعة تجريبية ومجموعة ضابطة وضمت كل مجموعة 30 طالبا.

وعلى هذا الاساس، تسعى الدراسة الحالية إلى تطوير مهارة القراءة عن طريق ممارسة استراتيجيات القراءة التدريبية من أجل تقديم مساعدة كبيرة لطلاب السنة الثالثة والرابعة بالجامعات الليبية في اللغة الإنجليزية .



استخدمت هذه الدراسة اختباران قبلي وبعدي وكذلك استبيان، كأداة لجمع البيانات لتسجيل التعليقات حول الدروس وتقييم أداء الطلاب. وتمت مناقشة النتائج وتحليلها بالتفصيل مع الإشارة إلى الدراسات السابقة التي تمت مراجعتها والدروس الاستراتيجية المقترحة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: أداء الطلاب، التدريس الاستراتيجي، استراتيجيات القراءة، تطوير، جامعة الرفاق

1. Introduction

In the realm of language education, the pursuit of effective training strategies and instructional approaches to enhance reading compilation skills among non-native learners stands as a crucial endeavor. In this context, the researchers attention turns to the specific cohort of Libyan learners, whose unique linguistic and cultural background shapes their learning experiences.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the defectiveness of using conventional training strategies and teaching methodologies when it comes to cultivating reading compilation skills in Libyan learners. By delving into this subject matter, the aim of this paper is to highlight the inherent challenges and limitations that educators and stakeholders face when designing and implementing instructional practices in this context.

Throughout this study, the researcher will explore the diverse factors that contribute to the defectiveness of current strategies, considering linguistic barriers, cultural disparities, and the specific characteristics of the Libyan educational landscape. By synthesizing existing research and drawing upon empirical evidence, the researcher endeavor to provide valuable insights and recommendations to address these shortcomings and pave the way for more effective pedagogical approaches.

This examination holds significant implications for educators, policy-makers, and curriculum developers who strive to create inclusive and tailored learning environments for Libyan learners. By unraveling the complexities surrounding the teaching and learning of reading compilation skills, we take a step forward in promoting educational equity and empowering Libyan learners on their journey towards linguistic proficiency and academic success.

1.1. The Problem of the study:

Training strategies play a significant role in improving reading skills among EFL learners. Training strategies are so important and their aim to facilitate not only the reading process for students and also give them a clear view about what they are reading. It has been noted that many Libyan learners of English language, have difficulties with reading skills. Most of Libyan learners of English have the ability to read, but unfortunately, they always failed in the achievement of comprehension in reading, owing to the fact that they are unable to use certain effective reading strategies or lack of understanding of these strategies, that help them to access comprehension in reading. So, this study tries to help them improve their reading skills by using different reading strategies.



1.2. Research questions

This paper aims to answer the following main and sub-questions:

▪ The main question

To what extent can training reading strategies help Libyan learners of English to improve reading skills?

▪ Sub-question:

What are the participants in the experimental group think of training reading strategies ?

1.3. Hypothesis of the study:

Training reading strategies can help Libyan learners of English to improve their reading skills.

1.4. Objective of the study:

This study aims to achieve the objective below:

- To explore the use of training strategies in teaching their reading skills
- to develop training reading strategy model that may affect developing the reading skills

1.5. The significance of the study:

The significance of this study lies in its potential contributions to the field of education and language instruction for non-native learners. By investigating the impact of linguistic barriers, cultural backgrounds, and instructional challenges of reading comprehension skills, the study aims to shed light on the shortcomings of conventional teaching strategies. The findings can provide valuable insights for educators and stakeholders in developing more effective and tailored instructional practices, thus enhancing the learning outcomes of Libyan learners. Ultimately, the study seeks to bridge the gap between existing strategies and the actual needs of non-native learners, leading to more inclusive and successful language education.

2. Literature Review:

Strategy as a word means to achieve or reach specific purpose by planning and developing something strategy instruction as term refers to a methodical plan, consciously adapted and monitored to improve one's performance in learning. Reading strategies are considered as one of the features of cognitive psychology which are essential for a successful comprehension (Zare.P, & Othman, M.. (2013:P.188). To put it simply, reading strategies are techniques and method learners use to make their reading effective. These can be called as conscious behaviors which readers use before, during and after reading to gain meaning from text. Studies (Miller and Perkins (1990), Cotterall (1990), Hasan (1994), Wisaijorn, P. (2003), Panmanne, W. (2009), Rizki Maulana Sahab, (2014)) have shown that strategy instruction can considerably enhance EFL learners' language skills, particularly reading comprehension skills.



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In recent years, training strategy in reading comprehension has become very important. Therefore, teachers should follow different strategies in their EFL classrooms. A particular strategy developed by Palincsar and Brown (1984) proved to be more successful in developing the reading comprehension skills of the EFL learners. This method uses prediction, clarification, questioning and summarizing to improve the learners' comprehensive skills, and also based on the more participation of the learners rather than the teacher's participation.

According to Anderson (2005:1), "reading is an active, fluent process which involves the reader and the reading material in building meaning". Crystal (2007:209), likewise, points out that reading "crucially involves appreciating the sense of what is written: we read for meaning". Dubin and Bycina (1991) stated that "academic reading or reading for the purpose of learning has become one of the most important methodological topics in the field of teaching English to speakers of other languages" (195). Despite this appreciation of the significance of reading comprehension, many Libyan university students show poor reading skills in English. From the foregoing, one can conclude that, during the reading process, information from visual, semantic, conceptual and linguistic sources combines to make sense of sentence and phrases.

Reading comprehension has been studied extensively within language research. Some studies on reading comprehension, which were done by Casanave (1988), Miller and Perkins (1990) found training strategy to be a successful method to improve reading comprehension for the second language (L2) readers. Miller and Perkins (1990) added that they consider that training strategy can motivate L2 students' consciousness of the positions of individuals, group and teacher in the learning process. In a small-scale study involving four adult ESL students in a pre-university English proficiency course, however, Cotterall (1990) discovered positive reactions to detailed explanations about the use of strategies of training a resultant improvement in reading ability. Hasan (2012) goes further and states that the better reading performances of students exposed to training strategy compared to those using traditional methods at Kuwait University.

For the learners to understand the text, application training strategy has been necessary. Training strategy together with good vocabulary can enable learners, particularly Libyan ones, to improve reading comprehension. It offers students the opportunity to use English to serve many of the language functions and notions that are typical of the communicative approach (Hasan 2012). Training strategy appears to help students develop their reading ability in both L1 and L2 settings. While the volume of research conducted in L1 contexts has been vast, the amount in EFL situations is relatively small. A number of factors related to training strategy use in some of these situations require further investigation.

To conclude, training strategy can motivate learners, improve their reading ability, and offer them the opportunity to use English that serves as function and notion in communication. Moreover, it helps learners to improve their level in reading comprehension in both L1 and L2 sittings.



3. Methodology

This section addresses the general methodology of the study. It includes the design applied in the research, the study sample, alongside the tools utilized in the study. Additionally, the section covers the instruments, procedures, data collection, and statistical analysis

3.1. Methodology of the research

In order to answer the research question and meet the aims of this study, mixed methods were used; a descriptive qualitative method was adopted in this study as well as a quantitative method, and these were used to facilitate the understanding of the data collected. The research sample consisted of 60 participants, were chosen the third and fourth-year students at Tripoli Local University and Alrefak University. The sample was divided into a control group and an experimental group, and the primary tool for data collection was the pre-test and post-test . Both groups were subjected to the pre-test to assess their proficiency in reading skills. The experimental group was then subjected to intensive training on the training reading strategies to develop their reading skills. Participants also were given a list of questionnaires.

Additionally, in the treatment training sessions, participants were given several reading tasks to practice with various reading strategies. The tests were designed in alignment with the research problem and objectives. Both groups were subsequently subjected to a post-test to determine whether the experimental group showed improvement compared to the control group in favor of the pre-test and post-test. The experimental group showed improvement, and the pre-test and post-test results were quantitatively analyzed using 'T-tests' to measure and compare the outcomes of the two groups. The analysis was conducted by using an SPSS software. To ensure the validity of the study's instruments, the test was reviewed by professors and experts in English departments in both Universities.

3.2.The Sample of the Research

The sample of this study were third and fourth-year students at Tripoli Local University and Alrefak University. The third and fourth-year students were chosen because it was expected that they would have had more exposure to tertiary English reading instructions than first- or second-year students. The 60 subjected were chosen randomly from the whole population of 340 students. All the participants were from the same area and consequently had the same cultural, social and educational background. They were studying English as a foreign language during the academic year 2017/2018. The participants were equally divided into two groups: 30 were in the control group and 30 in the experimental group. The purpose of this study was to copare the participants' performance before and after Appling training reading strategies and to evaluate their impact on improving their reading skills.

3.3.Instruments

The data for this study was collected by mix methods: a pre-test, a post- test and a questionnaire. The pre-test was given to both groups; the experimental and control



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groups. Both of the groups will be tested later to find out if there is a significant differences in their performance.

3.4. Data Collection Procedures

The participants in the research group studied the proposed training reading strategies, while the control group students were taught reading comprehension using the traditional approach. The latter followed the instructional guidelines used by the regular reading teacher. This involved the following procedure: (a) the teacher asked questions about the reading selection, mostly relating to the main ideas of the passage; (b) the students read silently, skimming and scanning the passage trying to find answers; (c) detailed reading and discussion of the content followed. Difficult words were discussed with students; and (d) the teacher asked questions to check understanding, and led classroom discussions about important concepts. The periods allocated for reading for both groups were the same.

After ten weeks of training, the researchers administered a post-test to both groups to determine if there were any statistically significant differences. The mean, standard deviation, T-test, and correlation coefficient between the pre- and post-test periods as well as a questionnaire were then calculated to analyze the results.

3.1.1. Qualitative Data

The procedure for analysing participants' views of the training reading strategies obtained from the students' questionnaire and their responses of the training sessions involved three main steps. Firstly, it transcribed and coded the data. Secondly, it systematically organised and thematically categorised the data, putting it in comparable groupings. Finally, it summarised the participants' responses in short statements/phrases.

3.1.2. Quantitative Data

The quantitative analysis in this research was applied to the data obtained from the measurements of the skills and from the closed questions in the students' pre-test and post-test. In the first stage, the researcher coded all the data responses which came from the mentioned tests and measured by using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) files according to the type of data. Both descriptive statistics (mean, scores, percentage and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (t-test) were employed.

3.1.3. The Sessions of the training reading strategy

The training reading strategy considering the preliminary data from the test administered to a sample of ten students, the researcher sets out to design a new training reading strategy, following the Vygotskian socio-cultural theory of cognitive progress to design the procedure (Xiao 2007). The suggested training strategy encourages students to develop their reading comprehension skills. This training reading strategy consists of a number of sessions with certain materials, methodology, activities and an evaluative assessment. The training reading strategy consists of a two-hour sessions given over a period of ten weeks. Each session has its learning objectives, reading materials and methodology. The first two sessions were introductory and were informed



by the argument that subjects can read more effectively if they learn reading comprehension, while the other two sessions were introduced and identified how can the training reading strategy can help students to improve their reading comprehension skills.

4. Data Analysis :

To answer the research questions in order to meet the aims of the study, quantitative and qualitative methods have been adopted to analyze the collected data from the students' pre-test , post-test and questionnaire. Students have been completed their responses after the implementation of the training reading strategies. The tests have been related to information about the students' general and EFL backgrounds and recorded the students' performance and attitudes to reading, the sessions and the development of skills by training reading strategies. The responses have been read and collated, and note has been made of frequently occurring answers.

4.2.Pre- Intervention Strategy

At the beginning of the present research, a pre-intervention strategy was developed and administered for the experimental group and the control group. The pre-intervention strategy contained two parts - the measurement of skills and the students' perceptions - and was used before the implementation of the training reading strategy. The following table shows that the mean scores of the 60 student participants in both measurements were 29.03 for the control group and 29.47 for the experimental group. These scores demonstrate that both groups were relatively similar as the difference between them was not statistically significant, $t(58) = .233, p = .816$ (two-tailed)

Table 1. Learners' perceptions about the importance of different strategies while reading text

Dimensions	Control group		Research groups	
	M	SD	M	SD
Self-evaluation	5.67	1.51	5.77	1.41
Reading activity	5.20	1.32	5.37	1.52
Importance of reading	5.13	1.28	5.23	1.22
learning techniques	7.23	1.96	7.00	2.05
Analyzing the text	5.8	1.45	6.07	1.60
Total	29.03	6.99	29.47	7.41

Self-evaluation

The table shows the results for the differences between the mean scores and standard deviations on self-evaluation across the two groups, which was carried out using an Independent Samples t-test. The results show that the mean score (5.77) and standard deviation (1.41) of the research group were not significantly different from the mean score (5.67) and standard deviation (1.51) of the control group, $t(58) = 6.86, (p < .01)$. This indicates that the students were at the same level and they had no background knowledge about the skills of self-evaluation.

Reading activity



The participants' responses for this skill shows that the mean score (5.37) and standard deviation (1.52) of the research group were similar to the mean score (5.20) and the standard deviation (1.32) of the control group, $t(58) = 6.40$, ($p < .01$). The results indicate that the students in both groups had similar skills. The mean score of the research group was 5.23 and standard deviation was 1.22, whereas in the control group the mean score was 5.13 and standard deviation was 1.28.

Importance of Reading

There are similarity of the mean score and standard deviation across the two groups, using the independent samples t-test. The results show that the mean score (7.00) and standard deviation (2.05) of the research group were similar to the mean score (7.23) and standard deviation (1.96) of the control group. This indicates that the students were at the same level.

Learning Techniques

In terms of learning techniques, the participants' responses show that there are no differences between the mean scores and standard deviations across the two groups. The results of the independent samples t-test revealed that the students' learning techniques were not significantly different before the training strategy intervention. The mean score of the research group was 5.23 and standard deviation was 1.22, whereas in the control group the mean score was 5.13 and standard deviation was 1.28.

Analyzing the Text

The differences in the mean scores regarding the analysis of the text between the two groups were conducted using the Independent Samples t-test. The results show that the mean score (6.07) and standard deviation (1.60) of the research group were not significantly higher than the mean score (5.80) and standard deviation (1.45) of the control group. This result gives an indication that the students in both groups were similar in their scores.

The Main Findings

In summary, these findings suggest that the performances of the two groups were almost at the same level in reading. The mean score (29.47) and standard deviation (7.41) of the research group were similar to the mean score (29.03) and standard deviation (6.99) of the control group in all the skills. These results reflect similarities between the two groups in all the skills addressed above.

4.3.During Intervention Strategy

As most of the data from the students' perceptions of the training strategy were qualitative, It shows that students' perceptions of the training strategy included their understanding of reading comprehension.

Table 2 The importance of the previous categories in any reading passage in control group



N	Training Strategy	Frequency Distribution				
		5	4	3	2	1
1	Self Evaluation	-	13.33%	73.33 %	6.67%	6.67%
2	Reading activity	-	16.67%	50%	23.33%	10%
3	Importance of reading	-	-	63.33 %	36.67 %	-
4	Learning Techniques	-	3.33%	80 %	13.33%	3.33%
5	Analayzing the text		3.33%	30%	63.33%	3.33%

Keys: 5= v. important; 4= important; 3= uncertain; 2 = less important, and 1 = not important

Self-evaluation:

With regard to the level of **Evaluation**, only 4 students, 13.33 %, agreed that it is an important skill. The majority of students 73.33 %, (22 out of 30) were uncertain that **Evaluation** is the most essential skill in any reading passage Overall, 2 students, 6.67 %, regarded it as a less important skill and another two, 6.67 %, said it was not important at all. These findings indicate that the majority of participants were uncertain in their responses because they did not have any idea about reading strategy technique. Nevertheless, the few students who gave positive responses commented that if the passage is interesting and exciting to read they can respond without problems.

Reading activity

In the case of **reading activity**, half the students 50 % (15 out of 30), were uncertain. This skill was viewed as less important or not important at all by 23.33%, (7 out of 30). Only three students 10 % found this skill important in developing reading skills; while 16.67 % (5 out of 30) of the students were of the view that it is only an important skill.

Importance of Reading :

It was found that students had varying attitudes concerning this skill; hence, the responses were coded according to a number of categories. Some participants 63.33 %, (19 out of 30), were uncertain. About 36.67 %, (11 out of 30), of participants were of the opinion that it is a less important skill. A few participants agreed.

Learning Techniques:

In making **techniques**, 80% (24 out of 30), of the students were not sure and did not give clear answers in their responses. Some participants (4 out of 30), 13.33%, stated that making



techniques is less important. Only one student, 3.33%, indicated that as a skill, making **techniques** is important. These results show that students have no idea about making **techniques** of any reading text.

Analyzing the Text:

The results revealed that only one student (3.33%) states that this skill is important in any reading text; however, most of the students (19 out of 30), 63.33%, indicated that this is less important skill. However, (9 out of 30), 30% were uncertain about this skill. Meanwhile, 3.33% thought that it was not important at all. The large number of students who gave negative responses suggests that they are not able to engage with this level of comprehension; therefore, they would benefit from a remedial class.

4.4. Post Measurement of Skills

The data from measurement of skills was analysed to determine the statistical difference between the control group who are taught by the traditional method and the research group who experienced the intervention study (the training strategy). The independent sample t-test was used to evaluate the impact of the training strategy on the student participants' effectiveness in applying reading comprehension skills.

Table 3: Means and standard deviation scores of research and control group post-test

Dimensions	Control group		Research groups	
	M	SD	M	SD
Self -Evaluation	5.73	1.48	9.53	2.75
Reading activity	5.30	1.34	8.67	2.50
Importance of reading	5.20	1.19	8.30	2.30
Learning Techniques	7.20	2.09	11.03	2.59
Analayzing the text	5.97	1.60	9.87	2.72
Total	29.40	7.70	47.4	12.86

Self-evaluation:

Evaluation of the differences between the mean scores concerning self-evaluation across the two groups was carried out using the Independent Samples t-test. The results show that the mean score (9.53) and standard deviation (2.75) of the research group were significantly higher than the mean score (5.73) and standard deviation (1.48) of the control group; $t(58) = 6.51, p < .01$ (two-tailed). This result demonstrates that the training strategy plays a role in enabling students to improve their skills of self-evaluation in any English texts.

Reading activity

The above table shows the results of the analysis of the participants' responses in the post-test. (8.67) and standard deviation (2.50) of the research group that were significantly higher than the mean score (5.30) and standard deviation (1.34) of the



control group, $t(58) = 6.40, p < .01$ (two-tailed). Overall, apart from students who missed lessons or turned up late for the sessions, the participants in the research group achieved high scores. The results supported the hypothesis that the training strategy may influence and improve the students' reading activity.

Importance of reading

The differences between the mean score and standard deviation concerning importance of reading across the two groups were demonstrated using the Independent Samples t-test. The results reveal that the mean score (8.30) and standard deviation (2.30) of the research group were significantly higher than the mean score (5.20) and standard deviation (1.19) of the control group, $t(58) = 6.18, p < .01$ (two-tailed).

Learning Techniques:

The results of the evaluation of the differences between the mean score and standard deviation on evaluating a text across the two groups carried out using the Independent Samples t-test. The results show that the mean score (11.03) and standard deviation (2.59) of the research group were significantly higher than the mean score (7.20) and standard deviation (2.09) of the control group, $t(58) = 6.86, p < .01$ (two-tailed). This indicates that the training strategy for students has an impact on their evaluation skills.

Analyzing the Text

The participants' responses to the post-test was analysed to confirm whether there were any improvements in the students' ability, therefore, to evaluate the impact of the training strategy intervention. The Independent Samples t-test was used, $t(58) = 6.64, p < .01$ (two-tailed). These findings therefore suggest that the training strategy had a significant impact on the students' ability to analyzing any passage.

The Main Findings

To see whether the intervention study affected the reading comprehension skills among EFL student teachers in Libya, the frequencies with which the participants used reading comprehension skills in Libyan universities before and after the training strategy were compared. This demonstrated the impact of the training strategy on reading comprehension skills in EFL student teachers in Libya.

5. Discussion and implications:

The paper attempts to clarify arguments from findings and then discuss such findings. To the best of my knowledge no existing study has attempted to identify problems concerned with training reading strategies in the Libyan context. Therefore, my paper sets out to identify these problems and describe the findings associated with the two questionnaires. (Pre-Intervention-during intervention- post-intervention). It is important to clarify here that the students had no such previous experience in reading comprehension skill strategy instruction and the sessions provided were also limited only to the chosen participants. However, the sessions proved to be encouraging



The results showed a marked improvement in the students' reading comprehension skill. The results indicated a significant increase in the students' reading comprehension between the administration of the questionnaire, despite the fact that the students worked with a teaching and learning method with which they were initially unfamiliar. The questionnaire has been managed to offer information about the students' general and training reading strategies backgrounds, and collected information related to the students' thoughts to training reading strategies as a successful means of developing this skill. All participant students completed it. Most of them had not been exposed to a teaching technique similar to training reading strategies previously, and all commented that they believed it has been beneficial to their reading in EFL and other subject areas. The training sessions and model lesson have been considered to be important in the study, especially as most students have been not familiar with training reading strategies.

5.1. Recommendations of the Study

Based on the findings of the study, it can be recommended that there is a need for fieldworks, training sessions for teachers, seminars, workshops and special attention towards training reading strategies skills.

5.2. Suggestions for Further Studies

Based on my research findings, there are possibilities for future studies relating to teaching EFL to Libyan students. For instance:

- Further research is needed to investigate the effectiveness of training reading strategies on developing students' listening and writing skills.
- Research into how EFL students elsewhere in Libyan Universities and other Arab countries can use various theories underpinning the training reading strategies.

6. Conclusion:

This paper has been highlighted that there is strong need for training reading strategies. This strategy has shown to be successful for both L1 and L2 students. This study has found that there is an effect on L2 students in which the teacher traditionally directed activities. Reading ability has been not strong and not a popular cultural pastime. Improvements in performance in reading comprehension tests have been attained over the period of the study and students and teacher have been made positive comments about the benefits of the teaching and learning process. Numbers of cultural factors have been noted that need to be considered to allow Libyan students to fully realize their potential in English language and academic study. These cultural traits, while not insurmountable, pose significant obstacles to teaching and learning in EFL specifically and education generally if not considered by the educator. Approaches that have been culturally sensitive and recognize the strengths and weaknesses of students from all backgrounds will assist students to develop skills in their English language and in other academic areas.

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