

The Effectiveness of a Proposed Program Based on English for Specific Purposes in Developing Reading Comprehension Skills and Attitudes towards Learning EFL Among Student-Teachers of Arabic Language

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Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of a proposed program based on English for Specific Purposes in developing reading comprehension skills and attitudes towards learning EFL among student-teachers of Arabic Language. Three main instruments were administered to seventy male and female students: reading comprehension skills checklist, reading comprehension skills test and attitudes scale. The participants received a reading comprehension program based on English for Specific Purposes for twelve weeks. The data, collected in the form of a range of measures: literal, inferential, and critical reading comprehension skills as well as the attitudes of students towards learning EFL, were subjected to t-tests. The results indicated that after the implementation of the program, the participants achieved higher levels in the post-administration of the reading comprehension skills test as well as in the post-administration of the attitudes scale than in the pre-administration of both of them. The results reflected support for the proposed program. They highlighted the positive effect of teaching English for Specific Purposes on students who need certain characteristics in the introduced language in order to develop their reading comprehension skills and attitudes towards learning EFL.

Keywords: English for Specific Purposes/ reading comprehension skills/ attitudes

I) Introduction

In modern times, students and professionals feel an urgent need to learn languages in order to be well-qualified in their studies and -later on- in their future careers. English language is one of these languages. It is considered nowadays one of the most prominent used languages around the whole world.

This leads teachers to consider the possibility of including English for Specific Purposes (ESP) as a tool for their students who want to go deeper into specific fields of knowledge and who want – at the same time – to develop their skills in English Language (Rodriguez, 2014:106).

“In ESP courses, the communicative approach is generally used but the materials themselves are tailored to specific needs” (Richards, 2015:77). That is why, ESP makes use of needs analysis through various tools like observation, interviews, situation analysis and

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analysis of language samples in order to determine the kinds of communication and skills learners would need to develop.

The mastery of ESP can include different skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening) and components (structure, lexicon); however, the significance of the reading skill has been highlighted in the recent years (Dreyer & Nel, 2003:349-365).

Reading comprehension – in particular - can be developed using ESP because it is highly related to interaction with texts in active and purposeful ways. It demands students to “understand, analyze and interpret meaning of the English reading texts in an interactive way making use of their background knowledge and linguistic experience in order to build logical connections among the ideas of the text and find suitable solutions for the required reading tasks” (Hasan, 2013:11).

II) Review of Literature and Related Studies

A. *English for Specific Purposes (ESP)*

In ESP, English is used for specific rather than general purposes. This demands certain differences in the characteristics of the introduced language which include:

1. Vocabulary choice.
2. Grammar.
3. Kinds of texts selected.
4. Functions of language.
5. Need for developing certain language skills. (Richards, 2015:78)

To achieve what has been mentioned, teachers should make use of authentic texts that allow learners to read real information in the target language and become acquainted with the vocabulary, structure and expressions of English Language that they actually need in their studies and in their future careers.

Jacobson, Degener & Purcell-Gates (2003: 13) asserted that it is better for students to receive instruction which utilizes authentic, or real life, materials and activities and which are also grounded in the context of the learner’s life outside of class. Thus, using authentic materials can encourage students to become more engaged and interested in learning English as a foreign language.

B. *English for Specific Purposes and Reading Comprehension*

There are many reasons for getting students read English texts, and considering that an important part of the teacher’s job. Students read texts in English either for study purposes, for their careers or simply for pleasure. Anything teachers can do to make reading easier for students must be followed (Harmer, 2000: 68).

Reading comprehension plays a crucial role in ESP language courses. Much of the learning material is presented to the learners in ESP courses in the written form, and they should be able to read the text in order to understand it (Farahani, 2018: 79).

Scholars have classified the reading comprehension skills into various taxonomies. According to Burns, Roe & Ross (1999: 219-227) various categories of comprehension are used by the reader to understand the goal of the writer: “literal comprehension” and “higher-order comprehension”. Literal comprehension is the most basic and directly stated type. Higher-order reading comprehension involves higher-order considering processes which include: interpretive reading, critical reading, and creative reading.

In his study, Abd El Motaal (2010: 146) adopted the following reading comprehension skills: making judgement, guessing, making inferences, making decisions, analyzing and solving problems, identifying the main idea, evaluating, describing, interpreting, creating and predicting.

Richards (2015:453) affirmed that most reading courses focus – through activities – on the development of some essential reading skills as: skimming, scanning and making inferences.

Abdelhalim (2017:38) adopted, in her study, three main classifications to the reading comprehension skills: literal comprehension, inferential / interpretive comprehension and critical comprehension. She also explained them in detail.

C. The Reading Process

In addition to the previous classifications of the reading comprehension skills, the current research considered the reading process (pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading) which students use in their activities.

The reading process has three subsequent stages as follows:

- Pre-reading: which helps learners to read efficiently, enhances understanding and is related to students’ previous knowledge (Lebauer, 1998: 5). In this stage, teachers provide students with activities such as brainstorming, guessing, and analyzing titles.
- While-reading: which permits learners to carry out active reading with activities that include arguing, summarizing and questioning.
- Post-reading: which includes activities such as group discussion, summarizing, questioning, filling out charts and completing a text (Rodriguez, 2013: 108).

D. Reading Comprehension Development, Attitudes, English for Specific Purposes and Communicative Language Teaching Research

Various studies were conducted to investigate the effect of using ESP and CLT on developing reading comprehension skills and students’ attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language. The findings of these studies indicated that using these two approaches can help learners overcome their difficulties in reading and comprehension.

Yasin (2009) investigated the effectiveness of a developed English Language course on enhancing reading and writing skills in English among Faculties of Applied Arts students in the light of the ESP approach and the students’ needs. The researcher used students’ needs analysis questionnaire, English for Specific Purposes challenges list, reading and writing

checklists, pre-post achievement test and rubrics for students' presentations as instruments for one group experimental sample of students. The results demonstrated improvement in the identified reading and writing skills and in all the students' performance on the achievement test.

Another study by Baron (2013) explored the impact of an active research project on improving the reading comprehension and vocabulary of undergraduate students of English for Specific Purposes majors, at a police training institute in Colombia. Six reading comprehension workshops based on the cognitive language learning approach were held to improve students' reading skills, and also their autonomy. Data were collected using different sources as field notes and progress reviews. They indicated the improvement of reading comprehension and students' active participation in the learning process.

In his study, Hasan (2013) investigated the effectiveness of a proposed communicative approach-based program in developing English language reading comprehensions skills and attitude towards English for first year students of the English Department, Faculty of Education, Hodeidah University. The sample of the study was divided into an experimental and a control group. A reading comprehension checklist and a pre-post reading comprehension test were used as instruments of the study, in addition to a pre-post attitude scale. Based on the results of the study, it was concluded that the proposed program had a positive effect on developing the reading comprehension skills of the experimental group as well as their attitudes towards English as compared to the control group.

Rodriguez (2014) conducted a study on a group of law students at a Colombian private university. The study focused on the effect of applying reading through English for Specific Purposes under the criteria of the Communicative Approach. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, the students' oral and written samples and the researcher's journals. Results showed that reading for specific purposes encouraged learners to increase both vocabulary and knowledge about their field of study and also motivated them to use English in similar situations.

In his study, Amin (2016) aimed at developing the used English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course at Integrated Thebes Institute (ITI) on the basis of need analysis and interests as well. The participants of the study were freshmen engineering students. The researcher collected data through a needs analysis questionnaire, an interests' questionnaire, a semi-structured interview and a reading-writing performance test. Findings of the study showed that the course developed the students' reading and writing skills according to their technical areas of study.

Hoa & Mai (2016) also conducted a survey for teachers and students at universities in Hanoi by listing the factors related to teaching English for Specific Purposes. Researchers provided ideas for increasing the effectiveness of teaching English for Specific Purposes.

Based on the previously-mentioned related studies, the aim of the current study is to investigate the effectiveness of a proposed program based on English for Specific Purposes in

developing reading comprehension skills and attitudes towards learning EFL among student-teachers of Arabic language.

Context of the problem

In the light of the researcher's experience in the field of student-teachers of Arabic language teaching, she observed their need of a specialized English language program based on English for Specific Purposes in order to help them develop their reading comprehension skills and their positive attitudes towards learning EFL. This could help them to be well-qualified in their studies, and later on in their future careers.

In addition, the researcher conducted a pilot study. She analyzed the answers of the questions of three specialized reading comprehension texts of twenty student-teachers of Arabic language. Results of the sample analysis revealed that about 60% of the students who shared in the pilot study could not answer about 50% of the questions of the reading comprehension texts correctly.

Moreover, the results of the previous studies assured the need of focusing on English for Specific Purposes as a base for developing students' reading comprehension skills and attitudes towards learning EFL.

Statement of the problem

The problem of the study could be stated in the need of student-teachers of Arabic language of a specialized English language program based on English for Specific Purposes that could help them develop their reading comprehension skills and attitudes towards learning EFL.

Consequently, the current study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the reading comprehension skills needed for student-teachers of Arabic language?
2. What are the assumptions upon which the proposed program is constructed?
3. What are the components of the proposed program?
4. What is the effectiveness of the proposed program in developing student-teachers of Arabic language reading comprehension skills?
5. What is the effectiveness of the proposed program in developing student-teachers' attitudes towards learning EFL?

Aims of the study

The current study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of a proposed program based on English for Specific Purposes in:

1. Developing student-teachers of Arabic language reading comprehension skills in EFL.
2. Developing student-teachers of Arabic language positive attitudes towards learning EFL.

The study variables

1. The independent variable

The proposed program based on English for Specific Purposes constructed to develop student-teachers of Arabic language reading comprehension skills and attitudes towards learning EFL.

2. The dependent variables

- Performance of the experimental group on the post administration of the reading comprehension skills test.
- Performance of the experimental group on the post administration of the attitudes scale towards learning EFL.

Hypotheses of the study

1. There is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 between the mean scores of the experimental group students' performance on the pre-administration and post-administration of the reading comprehension skills test as a whole in favor of the post-administration of the test.
2. There are statistically significant differences at 0.01 between the mean scores of the experimental group students' performance on the pre-administration and post-administration of the reading comprehension skills test in each sub skill in favor of the post-administration of the test.
3. There is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 between the mean scores of the experimental group students' performance on the pre-administration and post-administration of the attitudes scale towards learning EFL as a whole in favor of the post-administration of the scale.

Delimitations of the study

1. The study was confined to developing students' following reading comprehension skills:
 - a. Identifying the main idea of a text.
 - b. Identifying the supporting details.
 - c. Guessing the meaning of new vocabulary.
 - d. Recognizing cause and effect.
 - e. Comparing and contrasting.
 - f. Distinguishing facts from opinions.
 - g. Summarizing the text.
2. The study was also confined to seventy student-teachers of Arabic language who were enrolled in the General Diploma in Education at Cairo University.
3. The study was conducted in the second term of the academic year 2017-2018. One lecture per week, two hours each.

Definition of terms

1. English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) was defined as “an approach to English Language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner’s reasons for learning” (Hutchinson & Waters, 2002:19).

ESP was also defined as “an approach to language teaching which aims to meet the needs of particular learners. This means in practice that much of the work done by ESP teachers is concerned with designing appropriate courses for various groups of learners” (Hutchinson et al, 2002:21).

English for Specific Purposes was defined in the current study as English taught to student-teachers of Arabic language in order to help them to be well-qualified in their studies, and later on in their future careers.

2. Reading comprehension skills

Reading comprehension was defined as “the process of simultaneously eliciting and creating meaning through interaction with written language” (Doff, 1998: 24).

It was also defined as the ability of students to “understand, analyze and interpret meaning of the English reading texts in an interactive way making use of their background knowledge and linguistic experience in order to build logical connections among the ideas of the text and find suitable solutions for the required reading tasks” (Hasan, 2013: 11).

Reading comprehension skills were defined in the current study as the sub-skills needed by student-teachers of Arabic language in order to be able to comprehend the reading comprehension texts related to their field.

3. Attitudes

The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2001:71) defined them as opinions and feelings that a person usually has about something, especially when this is shown in behavior.

Ibnian (2009: 17) defined them as responses and reactions that students have towards learning EFL.

Attitudes were defined in the current study as the opinions and responses of student-teachers of Arabic language towards learning EFL.

III) Method and Procedures

A. Design

The current study used the quasi-experimental design. It adopted the one group experimental design. It is partially analytical and partially experimental. It contained a theoretical framework, and used a pre-post reading comprehension skills test and a pre-post attitudes scale.

B. Participants

Participants were seventy student-teachers of Arabic Language for non-native speakers who were enrolled in the General Diploma in Education at Faculty of Graduate Studies in Education, Cairo University, during the academic year: 2017 / 2018. They were post graduate students. They graduated in faculties of Arts, Arabic department and Faculty of Dar al-Ulum. It was expected that this General Diploma in Education would qualify them to find better jobs as teachers of Arabic language later on. Students' age ranged from twenty-three to twenty-five years. Their English Language proficiency was at the pre-intermediate level according to their university placement assessment test.

C. Instruments of the study

The present study made use of the following instruments:

1. A reading comprehension sub-skills checklist.
2. A reading comprehension test.
3. An attitudes scale towards learning EFL, adopted with modifications from Ibnian (2009).

D. The Proposed Program

Assumptions of the program

The current proposed program was based on English for Specific Purposes. Consequently, it was based on the following assumptions:

1. Students should learn certain vocabulary that could develop their understanding of the texts written in the target language.
2. Structure and expressions used should be suitable to the level of students.
3. Suitable authentic texts should be selected in order to allow students to read real information in the target language. This would help them develop their reading comprehension skills and attitudes towards learning EFL.
4. Language used should be functional and represent what students actually need in order to understand and use English language appropriately in their studies, and in their future careers.

Objectives

The objectives of the current research were to provide student-teachers of Arabic Language with specialized texts, suitable strategy, instructional aids, activities and evaluation system to help them develop the reading comprehension skills in their professional field. It was also expected that their positive attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language would be developed.

Description of the program

The program consisted of twelve lectures. Each lecture lasted for two hours per week. The treatment lasted for twelve weeks.

Validity of the program

The program was shown to specialized jury members in the field of Curriculum and EFL instruction to evaluate it in terms of content appropriateness, length, level of difficulty, structure, topics and kind of texts selected, teaching aids and activities. Consequently, the program was modified according to their modifications and suggestions.

Pedagogical intervention

To achieve the objectives of the program, the following procedures were carried out during the English lectures:

- The first lecture was an introductory session to clarify to the students the meaning of reading comprehension, its sub-skills, process and introduce the proposed program, its objectives; and teaching procedures.

- **Pre-reading stage**

At this stage, learners began a class wide discussion in which they brainstormed ideas, opinions and predictions about the title -for example- of the selected specialized reading text. Students were given time to answer questions and complete their worksheets. They wrote individually their answers to the initiative questions. Sometimes, the researcher interfered in order to activate the students' interaction.

- **While-reading stage**

A) First Reading: students worked individually to read silently the assigned text, recognizing key words, guessing the meaning of new vocabulary, judging, predicting and interacting with the specialized reading text.

B) Second Reading: students worked in groups following four steps: oral reading, discussing specific sentences in the text that interested or puzzled them, answering questions and summarizing. Students worked in groups of five or six, each group chose its own leader and the leader changed each lecture.

C) Shared Interactive Discussion: The researcher generated a discussion with all the groups using data show. She allowed students to answer questions and read their summary. Then, they wrote their answers individually in their worksheets.

- **After-reading stage**

The researcher asked students questions related to the specialized text, requiring them to clarify their viewpoints and defend them. They should write their answers individually in their worksheets (see figure A).

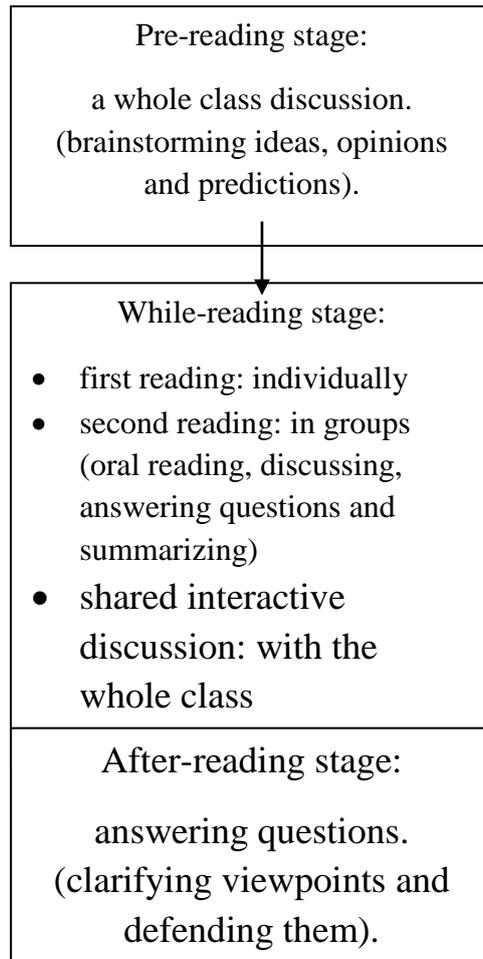


Figure A: The teaching procedures of the used strategy

The topics that generated brainstorming, analysis and discussion among the students included: 1. the first days of an Arabic class tuition, 2. the roles of the Arabic Language teacher, 3. the difficulties that students face in developing their proficiency in Arabic, 4. the essential elements of knowledge that Arabic Language teachers must have, 5. effective Arabic Language teachers, 6. the Arabic Language teacher as an example for his students, 7. language assessment, 8. the Arabic Language teacher as a guide, 9. familiarity with Arabic language, 10. experience of success in language learning and 11. the learner-centered approaches.

The researcher selected the content in the form of reading texts, about teaching foreign languages in general and Arabic Language in particular, from a number of specialized English-language books and handbooks:

- *The teaching of Arabic as a foreign language (issues & directions)* by Al-Batal (2008).
- *Teaching and learning Arabic as a foreign language: a guide for teachers* by Ryding (2013).
- *Key issues in language teaching* by Richards (2015).
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Instructional aids

The following aids were used during the implementation of the proposed program:

1. The whiteboard.
2. Data show.
3. The worksheets including the texts and the relevant activities.

Evaluation

The evaluation system in this study was composed of both formative and summative evaluation. Formative evaluation was conducted for assessing students' gradual progress in the reading comprehension skills and providing necessary feedback on their performance at the end of each lecture. Students were asked to submit their answers in paper so as they could be checked by the researcher and given grades highlighting students' performance and progress.

On the other hand, summative evaluation was conducted at the end of the implementation of the proposed program in the form of a pre-post test, including two specialized texts followed by questions to measure the eight identified reading comprehension skills suitable for the students. It also included a pre-post attitudes scale, consisting of 25 items, revealing students' attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language.

Instruments for Data Collection

In addition to making use of language samples analysis of students' answers to the questions of three specialized reading comprehension texts - before constructing the proposed program in order to prove students' need of the program - the following instruments were used:

A. The reading comprehension sub-skills checklist

Based on the related literature, the researcher designed the checklist. It contained eight reading comprehension skills classified into: literal comprehension, inferential comprehension and critical comprehension. The checklist aimed at identifying the reading comprehension skills suitable for student-teachers of Arabic Language. It was submitted – in its preliminary form – to jury members specialized in the field of Curriculum and EFL instruction, and modified according to their recommendations and suggestions.

B. The reading comprehension test

The reading comprehension test aimed at measuring the reading comprehension skills of student-teachers of Arabic Language. The test contained two texts (each 130 – 150 words in length), that have the same level of difficulty as the texts included in the students' proposed program, followed by a completion, eight multiple choice and a summarizing question. So, the test contained three different questions measuring the relevant reading comprehension skills at least twice for each skill.

• *Test validity and reliability*

In order to confirm the content validity of the test, the initial version of the test was shown to specialized jury members in the field of Curriculum and EFL instruction to evaluate it in terms of content appropriateness, number of items and suitability of the test items and instructions to the students' level. In order to confirm the test reliability, the test-retest method was applied with an interval of two weeks on another group of thirty General Diploma students. The reliability coefficient was 0.85, which is considered relatively high.

• *Test scoring*

To ensure the objectivity of scoring, the researcher needed another specialized rater for the first and the third question, whereas the items of the second question were objective, so they did not require another rater. For the completion question, (3) scores were given for the correct answer, (1-2) scores for the partially correct answer, and (0) score for the incorrect one. For the summary question, the same correction procedure was followed. The inter-rater relationship between the two sets of scores scored by the two raters was 94%, and thus was highly reliable. For the multiple choices, (3) scores were assigned to each correct answer; (0) for unanswered questions or incorrect answers. The number of items and scores given for each sub-skill are shown in table (A).

• *Test duration*

Test duration was estimated by averaging the times of the fastest and the slowest students in answering the test. Thus, the time allotted for the test was $\frac{65+115}{2} = 90$ minutes.

TABLE (A)
THE READING COMPREHENSION TEST TABLE OF SPECIFICATIONS

TABLE 1 THE READING COMPREHENSION TEST TABLE OF SPECIFICATIONS							
Category	Reading Comprehension Skills	Text	Question Type			Number of items for each skill	Scores assigned to each skill
			Completion	Multiple Choice Questions (M.C.Q)	Summary		
Literal Comprehension	1. Identifying the main idea.	Text 1	1			2	6
		Text 2	1				
	2. Identifying supporting details.	Text 1		6,7		4	12
		Text 2		4,5			
Inferential Comprehension	3. Guessing the meaning of new vocabulary	Text 1		1,2		4	12
		Text 2		2,3			
	4. Recognizing cause and effect.	Text 1		4		2	6
		Text 2		6			
Critical Comprehension	5. Comparing and contrasting.	Text 1		3		2	6
		Text 2		7			
	6. Drawing conclusions.	Text 1		5		2	6
		Text 2		1			
7. Distinguishing facts from opinions.	Text 1		8		2	6	
	Text 2		8				
8. Summarizing	Text 1			10	2	6	
	Text 2			10			
Total			2	16	2	20	60

C. *The attitudes scale*

The scale aimed at revealing Arabic Language student-teachers' attitudes towards learning EFL before and after the implementation of the proposed program. The scale was designed by Ibnian (2009). It was modified in order to suit the participants, and the edited

version was adopted by the researcher of the current research. It contained 25 items, taking into account: covering the four language skills, using positive and negative items to ensure objectivity, and using clear, simple and direct items.

The instrument was a three-point Likert – scale. Participants were asked to state how much they agree with each item ranging from Agree = 2 to Uncertain = 1 to Disagree = Zero for positive items; and from Disagree = 2 to Uncertain = 1 to Agree = Zero for negative items. Added to that, the scale was written in both languages: English and Arabic to overcome the language barrier.

Scale validity and reliability

To ensure scale validity, it was submitted to jury members specialized in the fields of curriculum and EFL instruction, and educational psychology. They were asked to comment on the suitability of the scale's items, clarity of the scale items and instructions. To ensure scale reliability, it was administered to another group of twenty-five students, other than the sample of the study. The reliability coefficient was estimated using Cronbach Alpha Formula. The estimated value was (0.89) which is considered relatively high.

IV) Statistical Analysis of Data

It was the purpose of the current study to investigate the effectiveness of a proposed program based on English for Specific Purposes in developing reading comprehension skills and attitudes towards learning EFL among student-teachers of Arabic language. The proposed program was developed and experimented with seventy student-teachers enrolled in the General Diploma of Education at Cairo University. The sample was submitted to pre-post applications of a reading comprehension skills test and an attitudes scale. The statistical analysis of the data and the results were interpreted in terms of the study hypotheses. To test the first hypothesis which stated: "There is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 between the mean score of the experimental group students' performance on the pre-administration and post-administration of the reading comprehension skills test as a whole in favor of the post-administration of the test", a t-test was conducted to compare the overall performance of the students on the pre-administration versus the post-administration of the reading comprehension skills test as a whole. Paired sample t-test was used. The results of t-test indicated that there was a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level in the overall reading comprehension. The overall effect size was (0.811), with a t-value of (17.203). Thus, the estimated effect size value indicated that the implemented program had a large effect on students' mastery of the overall reading comprehension. So, the first hypothesis was supported. T-test results were shown in table (B), figure (B).

To test the second hypothesis which stated: "There are statistically significant differences at 0.01 between the mean scores of the experimental group students' performance on the pre-administration and post-administration of the reading comprehension skills test in each sub-skill in favor of the post-administration of the test", a t-test was conducted to compare the performance of the students on the pre-administration versus the post-administration of the reading comprehension skills test in each sub-skill. Paired sample t-test was used. The results of t-test indicated that there were statistically significant differences at

0.01 level in each reading comprehension sub-skill. The largest effect size was for identifying supporting details (0.778), with a t-value of (15.546). It was followed by guessing the meaning of new vocabulary (0.745), with a t-value of (14.204). Then, drawing conclusions (0.690), with a t-value of (12.387). After that came recognizing cause and effect (0.676), with a t-value of (11.987). Subsequently came identifying the main idea (0.604), with a t-value of (10.269). Then, summarizing (0.600) with a t-value of (10.180), and distinguishing facts from opinions (0.553) with a t-value of (9.242). The lowest effect size was for comparing and contrasting (0.233), with a t-value of (4.583). Thus, the estimated effect size values indicated that the implemented program had a large effect on students' mastery of each reading comprehension sub-skill. So, the second hypothesis was supported. T-test results were shown in table (B), figure (C).

To test the third hypothesis which stated: "There is a statistically significant difference at 0.01 between the mean scores of the experimental group students' performance on the pre-administration and post-administration of the attitudes scale towards learning EFL as a whole in favor of the post-administration of the scale", a t-test was conducted to compare the performance of the students on the pre-administration versus the post-administration of the attitudes scale towards learning EFL as a whole. Paired sample t-test was used. The results of t-test indicated that there was a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level in the overall attitudes. The overall effect size was (0.910), whereas t-value equaled (26.062). Thus, the estimated effect size value indicated that the implemented program had a large effect on students' attitudes as a whole towards learning EFL. So, the third hypothesis was supported. T-test results were shown in table (C), figure (D).

TABLE (B)

T-TEST RESULTS TABLE COMPARING MEAN SCORES OF THE PRE-AND POST-ADMINISTRATION OF THE READING COMPREHENSION TEST FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP IN OVERALL READING COMPREHENSION AND IN EACH

Skills	Administration	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-Value	Sig. Level	Effect Size (n2)
1. Identifying the main idea.	Pre	3.5143	1.49145	0.17826	10.269**	0.000	0.604
	Post	5.1714	1.21550	0.14528			
2. Identifying supporting details.	Pre	6.3429	2.68050	0.32038	15.546**	0.000	0.778
	Post	10.0714	2.22842	0.26635			
3. Guessing the meaning of new vocabulary.	Pre	7.1143	2.29393	0.27418	14.204**	0.000	0.745
	Post	9.9000	1.79492	0.21453			
4. Recognizing cause and effect.	Pre	3.2143	1.47337	0.17610	11.987**	0.000	0.676
	Post	5.4000	1.20866	0.14446			
5. Comparing and contrasting.	Pre	4.7571	1.57366	0.18809	4.583**	0.000	0.233
	Post	5.6571	0.96137	0.11491			
6. Drawing conclusions.	Pre	3.1714	1.34025	0.16019	12.387**	0.000	0.690
	Post	5.4000	1.31215	0.15683			
7. Distinguishing facts from opinion.	Pre	3.5571	1.47083	0.17580	9.242**	0.000	0.553
	Post	5.4429	1.17505	0.14045			
8. Summarizing.	Pre	3.1143	1.61104	0.19256	10.180**	0.000	0.600
	Post	4.8143	1.45754	0.17421			
Total	Pre	34.7857	9.24684	1.10521	17.203**	0.000	0.811
	Post	51.8571	8.17080	0.97660			

(**) Significant at 0.01

READING COMPREHENSION SUB-SKILL (N=70, DF=69)

t-value = 17.203.

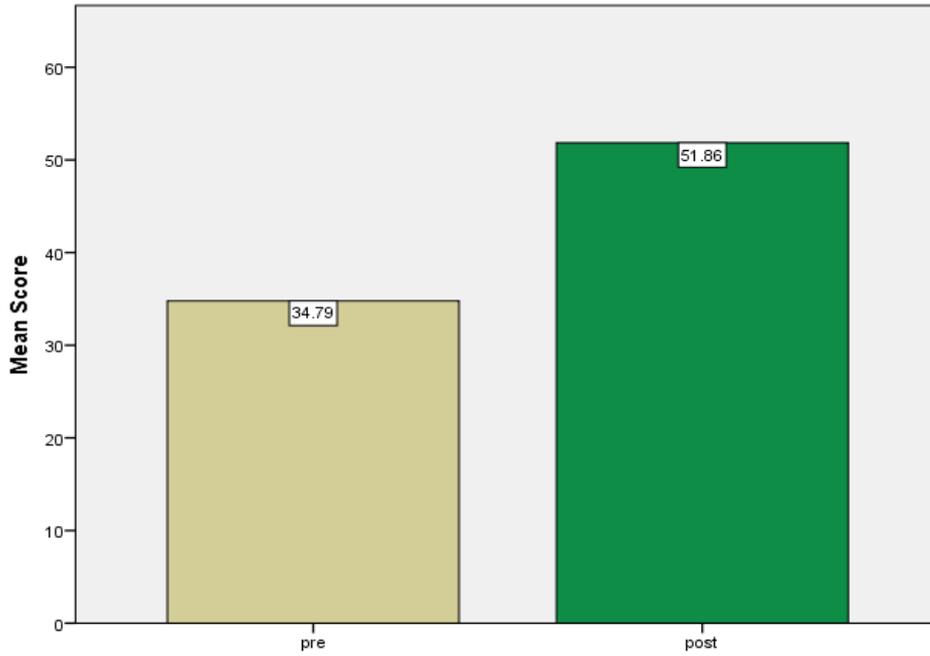


Figure B: Results of the overall reading comprehension test

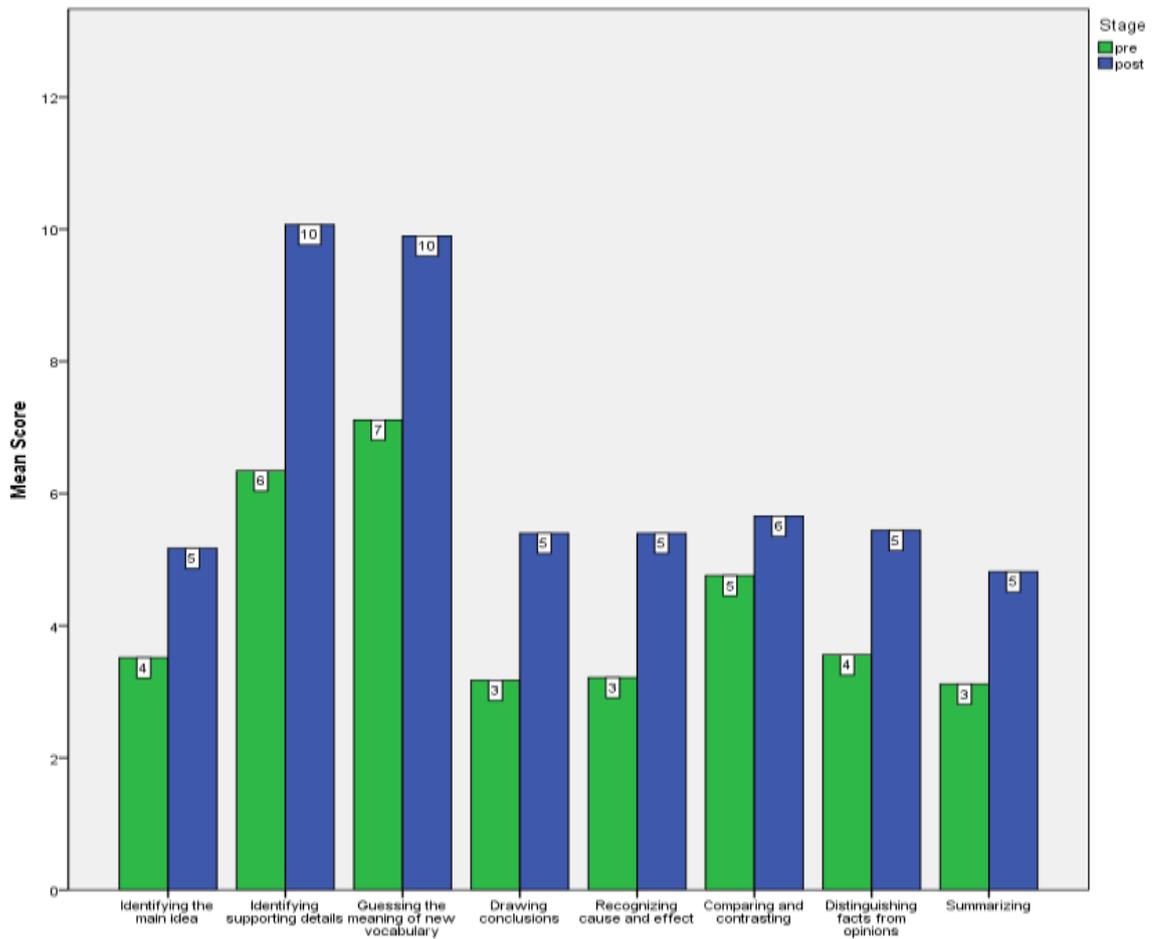


Figure C: The reading comprehension skills test results

TABLE (C)

T-TEST RESULTS TABLE COMPARING MEAN SCORES OF THE PRE-AND-POST ADMINISTRATIONS OF THE ATTITUDES SCALE FOR THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP IN OVERALL ATTITUDES TOWARDS LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (N=70, DF=69)

t-value = 26.062

Administration	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-value	Sig. Level	Effect Size (n2)
Pre	24.7857	4.31678	0.51595	26.062**	0.000	0.910
Post	38.6714	4.56426	0.54553			

(**) Significant at 0.01.

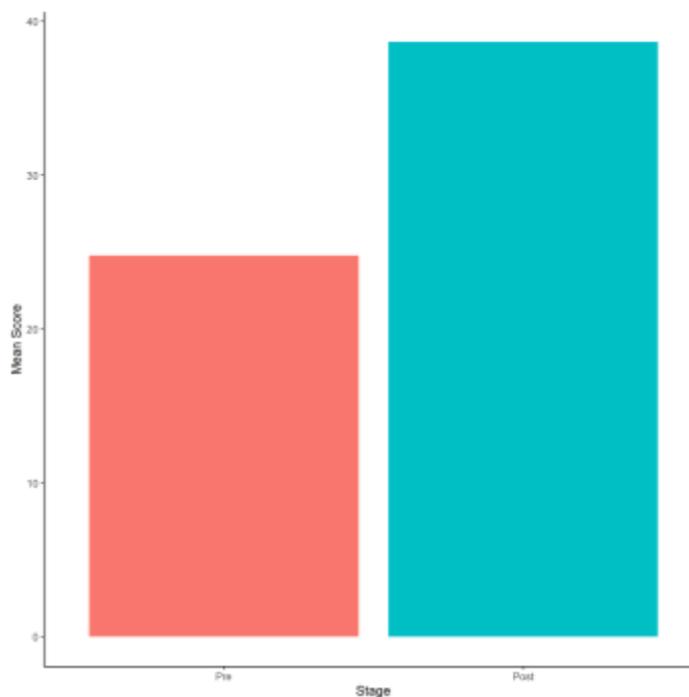


Figure D: The attitudes scale results

V) Discussion of Results

It has to be mentioned that the researcher of the current study has answered all the research questions which stated:

1. What are the reading comprehension skills needed for student-teachers of Arabic language?
2. What are the assumptions upon which the proposed program is constructed?
3. What are the components of the proposed program?

4. What is the effectiveness of the proposed program in developing student-teachers of Arabic language reading comprehension skills?
5. What is the effectiveness of the proposed program in developing student-teachers' attitudes towards learning EFL?

Based on the previous studies and the recommendations of the specialized jury members in the field of Curriculum and EFL instruction, she could identify:

1. The reading comprehension skills needed for student-teachers of Arabic Language.
2. The assumptions upon which the proposed program was constructed.
3. The components of the proposed program.

Moreover, based on the recommendations of the specialized jury members and the results of the administration of the current study instruments, she could reach:

1. The effectiveness of the proposed program in developing Arabic language student-teachers' reading comprehension skills.
2. The effectiveness of the proposed program in developing student-teachers' attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language.

Results of the study proved that the experimental group's post-performance significantly exceeded their own pre-performance on the post-administration of the reading comprehension test in total reading comprehension as well as in each sub-skill. Results of the study also proved that the experimental group's post-performance significantly exceeded their own pre-performance on the attitudes scale. The proposed program with its objectives, specialized texts, strategy, instructional aids, activities, and evaluation system succeeded in developing students' reading comprehension skills as well as their attitudes towards learning EFL.

This result is consistent with the results of Yasin's (2009), Baron's (2013), Rodriguez's (2014) and Hoa's (2016) studies which proved that reading for specific purposes encourages students to increase their achievement and knowledge about their field of study. It also encourages them and arouses their interest to use English for active participation in the learning process and in using English in everyday situations. The findings are also consistent with the findings of Amin's (2016) study which highlighted the impact of using technical areas of study for developing the students' reading skills.

In addition, the introductory session which prepared the students from the beginning of the program was highly effective. It acquainted them with the program's components including its objectives, the identified reading comprehension skills, the specialized texts, strategy, instructional aids, activities, and evaluation system.

Selecting authentic specialized reading texts, students' brainstormed ideas, opinions and predictions about the selected specialized reading text, students' first and second reading, individually and in groups, sharing in interactive discussions with their colleagues and with the researcher, and clarifying their viewpoints and defending them helped the students to develop their literal, inferential and critical reading skills.

As for the literal comprehension skills, students have achieved well-observed progress in all the identified skills. Throughout the first and second reading, students were encouraged to identify the main idea of the specialized text, and were enhanced to look for further supporting details related to the main idea.

As for the inferential and critical comprehension skills, students have also achieved well-observed progress in all the identified skills. Discussions, working individually and in groups helped students to guess the meaning of new vocabulary, recognize cause and effect, as well as draw conclusions, distinguish facts from opinions, summarize the text, and compare and contrast. However, the reading sub-skill of “comparing and contrasting” got the least effect size. This can be attributed to the students’ previous knowledge and practice to this sub-skill in all school stages and levels.

Qualitative findings

Positive changes in the participants’ attitudes towards learning EFL was noticeably reflected through their responses on the post-administration of the attitudes scale. This proved that the implementation of the proposed program had led to the development of the experimental group students’ attitudes towards learning EFL. This can be attributed to the creation of a motivating and an encouraging environment during the lectures. Consequently, the program helped in providing the students with good opportunities to express themselves freely, reflect their personalities and practice English Language.

VI) Recommendations and Suggestions

In the light of the previous discussion about the positive impact of the proposed program on English as a Foreign Language learners’ reading comprehension skills, as well as their attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. EFL teachers need to provide their students with texts, activities and strategies related to their own field of study and intended career path.
2. EFL teachers should facilitate their students’ acquisition of specialized vocabulary, structure and expressions which are relevant tools for understanding, inferring and criticizing.
3. EFL teachers need to encourage their students to cooperate in accomplishing their activities, and to make students feel confident to use English Language as their means of interaction and communication.

Based on the current research results, the following studies can be suggested:

1. More research is needed to investigate the effectiveness of other treatments based on ESP in developing listening, speaking and writing skills, as well as other scales to measure students’ attitudes towards learning English as a foreign language.
2. Other studies are necessary with different student population to investigate the effectiveness of other treatments based on ESP in other fields of study and other stages and levels.

3. More studies are needed to look into the effectiveness of similar treatments in developing the reading comprehension skills and the attitudes of students with special needs towards learning English as a foreign language.

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فعالية برنامج مقترح قائم على الإنجليزية من أجل أغراض خاصة في تنمية مهارات الفهم القرائي واتجاهات الطلبة -المعلمين لمادة اللغة العربية نحو تعلم مادة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية

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الملخص

استهدفت الدراسة الحالية التعرف على فعالية برنامج مقترح قائم على الإنجليزية من أجل أغراض خاصة في تنمية مهارات الفهم القرائي واتجاهات الطلبة -المعلمين لمادة اللغة العربية نحو تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

وقد أجريت الدراسة على ٧٠ طالبًا وطالبة يمثلون هذه الفئة من الطلبة، ولقد قامت الدراسة باستخدام ثلاث أدوات هي: قائمة مهارات الفهم القرائي المناسبة لهذه الفئة من الطلبة، وامتحان مهارات الفهم القرائي، ومقياس للاتجاهات نحو تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

وقد قامت الباحثة بتطبيق البرنامج المقترح لتنمية مهارات الفهم القرائي القائم على الإنجليزية من أجل أغراض خاصة على عينة الدراسة، وكانت مدة التطبيق إثني عشر أسبوعاً.

وقد عولجت البيانات التي تم جمعها عن مهارات الفهم القرائي: الحرفية والاستدلالية والناقدة، وكذلك عن اتجاهات الطلاب نحو تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية باستخدام اختبارات - ت.

وقد أشارت النتائج -بعد تطبيق البرنامج المقترح - بتحقيق مجموعة الدراسة التجريبية مستويات أعلى في التطبيق البعدي لامتحان مهارات الفهم القرائي، وكذلك في التطبيق البعدي لمقياس الاتجاهات نحو تعلم المادة عن التطبيق القبلي لكل منهما؛ فقد أكدت النتائج - بعد معالجتها إحصائياً -فعالية البرنامج المقترح القائم على الإنجليزية من أجل أغراض خاصة في تنمية مهارات الفهم القرائي وكذلك اتجاهات الطلبة-المعلمين لمادة اللغة العربية نحو تعلم مادة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الإنجليزية من أجل أغراض خاصة / مهارات الفهم القرائي / اتجاهات.