



Utilizing the THIEVES Strategy to Develop Reading
Among Faculty of Education Students

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Utilizing The THIEVES Strategy to Develop EFL Reading Comprehension Among Faculty of Education Students.

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Abstract

The current study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of utilizing the THIEVES strategy in developing EFL reading comprehension skills among faculty of education students. The participants of the research were 68 students. They were assigned into two groups: an experimental group (n=34) and a control group (n=34). The instruments and materials of the research consisted of an EFL reading comprehension checklist, an EFL reading test and a teacher's guide. The experimental group students were taught using the THIEVES strategy and control group received regular instruction. The experiment took place during the second semester of the academic year 2022/2023. The data obtained were statistically analyzed, and the findings revealed that utilizing the THIEVES strategy was effective in developing EFL reading comprehension skills among faculty of education students.

Key words: *reading comprehension, the THIEVES strategy*

المستخلص

هدف البحث التالي الي التعرف علي فاعلية استخدام استراتيجية في تنمية مهارات الفهم القرائي للغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية بين طلاب الفرقة الثانية قسم اللغة الانجليزية جامعة السادات. كان المشاركون في الدراسة ٦٨ طالبا. تم توزيعهم علي مجموعتين : مجموعة تجريبية ٣٤ ومجموعة ضابطة ٣٤. تكونت ادوات الدراسة من قائمة مهارات الفهم القرائي للغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية , اختبار الفهم القرائي ودليل المعلم. تم استخدام استراتيجية THIEVES في المجموعة التجريبية بينما تلقت المجموعة الضابطة طريقة التدريس العادية. تمت التجربة والتطبيق خلال الفصل الدراسي الثاني للعام الاكاديمي ٢٠٢٢/٢٠٢٣. تم تحليل البيانات احصائيا واطهرت النتائج ان استخدام استراتيجية THIEVES كان فعالا في تنمية مهارات الفهم القرائي للغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية بين طلاب الفرقة الثانية قسم اللغة الانجليزية جامعة السادات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الفهم القرائي- The THIEVES

Introduction

Language is very important for communicating with people all over the world. It is considered one of the ways to express the messages in spoken and written forms. It is the formal system that includes sounds, signs, and gestures that are used as essential means of communicating thoughts, ideas, and emotions from one individual to another. Further, it is significant for transferring everyday life events and situations in meaningful ways. Without having a good command of the English language skills, EFL learners will not be able to interact with others or understand international contexts that exist due to the importance of the



English language is very important in the globalization and internationalization age. As any language, English has four main skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). These main skills are categorized into receptive and productive skills. Writing and speaking are productive (active skills) while listening and reading are receptive (passive skills).

Reading is an essential skill that enables EFL learners get knowledge and information. It is the process of looking at a series of printed symbols and getting meaning from them. When learners read they use their brain to convert sounds and letters into words, sentences and coherent paragraphs. As a process, reading has various levels that phrases the progress of learners in the reading process.

According to Arifin (2020), there are many levels of reading skill: 1) Elementary reading which is the first level of reading found in elementary school, 2) Inspectional reading that means EFL learners' ability to read and skim a reading materials in a limited time, 3) Analytical reading that goes deeper than inspectional level because EFL learners start reading to improve and understand the meaning of the texts and 4) Comparative reading which is the most complex and systematic level in which EFL learners read many reading materials and place them in relation to another. Reading levels are necessary for EFL learners as they enhance the comprehension and acquisition of English as a foreign language.

Reading is an activity which is processed to acquire new knowledge and information that can help EFL learners understand the problems included in any reading materials (Alnahas, 2019). It is considered a dynamic process of recognizing printed words and understand reading texts. EFL learners need to comprehend the meanings of words to connect them to the whole contexts (Hagan, 2012). Similarly, Iiahi (2020) and Manu (2021) indicate that EFL learners' reading comprehension enables them to read English texts effectively and efficiently, understand their contents, discern the author's intentions, and interact with such reading materials."

Furthermore, it is a key of success and academic achieve because the biggest sources of information are found in written forms and the role of reading comprehension is to help EFL learners understand the meanings of these printed words and symbols (Hjetland, 2019). As indicated by Badawi(2019), there are various levels of reading comprehension as: the following: 1) Literal comprehension (the skill of getting primary direct literal meaning of the



words, sentences, and ideas of the text), 2) Inferential comprehension (refers to the ability of understanding what the writer means by looking for the internal meaning), 3) Critical reading comprehension_(the ability of how to make critical analysis, evaluation, and personal judgments about the ideas, and the information of the text), 4) Creative comprehension (the ability to apply ideas and information from the text to the new situations), 5) Interpretative comprehension the skill of grasping ideas to interpret what they have been read and 6) Applied_comprehension (the learners' ability to apply and into practice what they have learnt).

In this context, Salam, Sullama and Jannah (2017) clarified that reading comprehension has a great importance for EFL learners as it builds their capabilities and skills to be able to make sense of the reading materials, integrating their prior knowledge and background experience and apply prediction skills in various situations.

Moreover, it has been added by Bedeway, Handayani and Okasha (2020) that reading comprehension skills are significant because they help EFL learners discover new things through exploring and apply self- learning daily life aspects in an imaginative and a creative way.

In addition, reading comprehension skills enable learners to create new information and ideas from different texts, express their own judgment according to various situations and connect new reading materials with previously reading materials. Besides, as has been added by Dasigi (2019) reading comprehension skills can also enable EFL learners to summarize details and draw conclusions from any reading materials.

Developing EFL reading comprehension skills and are essential for English language acquisition Thus, many researchers have tried to develop reading comprehension skills and attitude towards reading through applying various strategies. Hence, the THIEVES strategy is considered one of the most exciting strategy for developing reading comprehension skills and attitude towards reading.

The THIEVES strategy is a pre-reading strategy that uses remembered acronyms to help EFL learners steal information from the title, headings, introduction, every first sentences, visuals /vocabulary, ending and summary. It makes reading comprehension much easier



because after reading EFL learners will identify the main parts of the text and they will be able to know the meaning of the content (Pardede, 2019). It means an acronym that refers to:

1-(T) Title: the students will look at the title of the text, and they try to answer about these questions: what is the title? What do I already know about this topic? Does the title express a point of view?

2-(H) Headings: What do these headings tell me about the topic? What is the topic of the paragraph beneath it? How can I turn this heading into a question to be answered in the text?

3-(I) Introduction: Does the first paragraph introduce the chapter? What does the introduction tell me about the content?

Do I know any background knowledge about this topic?

4-(E) Every first sentence in a paragraph: What can I learn from the first sentence in the paragraph t?

5-(V) Visuals/ Vocabulary: Does the chapter includes photographs, drawings, maps, Charts, or graphs? What can I learn from these visuals in the chapter?

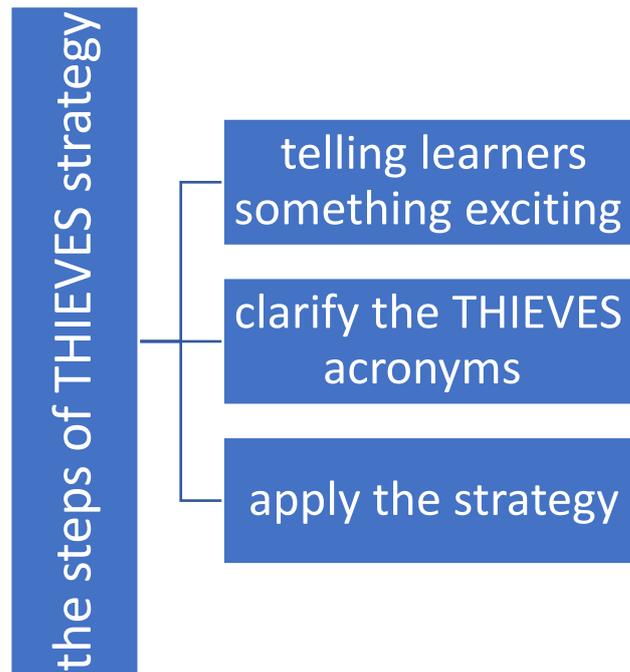
6-(E) End -of- chapter questions: What do the questions about? What information can I extract from these questions? What information do I learn from the questions?

7-(S) Summary: What do I understand about the topics that is covered in the Summary? (Khusna, 2016; Safitri, 2018; Dua 2019).

Moreover, the THIVES strategy depends on three steps: Firstly, telling learners something exciting as "Dear learners, we will act as thieves of information and it is the time to start stealing from the current reading materials" Secondly, clarify the THIEVES acronyms to them as Title, Heading, Introduction, Every first sentence, Visuals/Vocabularies, End of the chapter and Summary. Thirdly, apply the strategy to them. (Ananda, 2016; Sari, 2019; Masharipova, 2021).

These three steps of the THIEVES strategy are illustrated in the following figure:

Figure (1): the steps of the THIEVES strategy



The THIEVES strategy is significant for developing EFL learners' reading comprehension to EFL learners because it allows them 1) organize the text according to accurate steps, 2) dive easily into the meaning of the text, 3) analysis the parts of the texts, 3) improve EFL learners' ability to read English topics and comprehend them effectively, 4) encourage them to read something new and exciting, 5) acquire information from any source, facility reading process as EFL learners will find that after reading the main body of the text they will be able to easily analysis the other parts of the text, 6) activate their background knowledge and 7) determine the author's, opinion. (Inderwati, 2019; Khataee, 2019; Tria, 2019; Iiahi, 2020; Tavera, 2020).

Consequently, the current research is trying to apply the THIEVES strategy to EFL Faculty of education students to develop the EFL reading comprehension skills and attitude towards it.

Context of the problem

In spite of the importance of EFL reading comprehension skills, students in the Faculty of Education, English section, lack these skills. The researcher has observed that there is a weakness in EFL reading comprehension skills among faculty of education, English section students. Thus some related studies were reviewed to find out the current situation of EFL



reading comprehension skills among faculty of education, English section students in particular and the Egyptian students in general such as the studies of (Abdel Salam (2006); Haboush (2010); Abdel Halim (2011); Abdel Moety (2013); Al- Sagaby (2014); Ahmed (2016); Helwa (2017); Ahmed (2019); Mostafa (2019); Susanti (2020). These studies have indicated that EFL students lack reading comprehension skills as they were found to be unable to:

Realize the meaning of words and sentences.

Attach the ideas of the texts.

Differentiate significant information from minor details

Recall what is read.

Connect the texts to prior knowledge.

Apply the content of the texts to personal experience.

Summarize what is read.

To document the research problem, a pilot study was conducted on EFL faculty of education, English section students at university of Sadat city. The pilot study consisted of an EFL reading comprehension test. The test was administered, and the results and data were analyzed. The test revealed that the majority of English section students (87%) lack EFL reading comprehension skills

Statement of the problem

The problem of the current research is the weakness of faculty of education, English section students in EFL reading comprehension skills .Thus, the present research is trying to apply the THIEVES strategy to develop reading comprehension skills among faculty of education, English section students.

Questions

The present study attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1) What are the EFL reading comprehension skills required for second year faculty of education, English section students?
- 2) What is the level of second year students in EFL reading comprehension skills?
- 3) How can the THIEVES strategy be used for developing EFL reading comprehension skills?



4) What is the effectiveness of utilizing THIEVES strategy in developing EFL Reading comprehension skills among faculty of education, English section students?

Hypotheses

1-There will be astatistically significant difference at (0.05) level of significant between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups on the post- administration of the overall EFL reading comprehension test in favor of the experimental group.

2- There will be astatistically significant difference at (0.05) level of significant between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups on the post- administration of the over attitude towards reading in favor of the experimental group.

Delimitations

The present research will be delimited to the following:

- 1) A sample of second year faculty of education, English section students (N=68).
- 2) Some EFL reading comprehension skills required for second year faculty of education, English section students.
- 3) Second academic semesters.

Instruments and materials

The researcher will prepare and use the following instruments and materials:

- 1) An EFL reading comprehension checklist
- 2) An EFL reading comprehension test.
- 4) A Teacher's guide

Participants

The participants of the research will be 68 Faculty of Education, English Section students enrolled in the second year. They will be divided into two groups: an experimental group and a control group, 34 participants in each group.

Significance

The significance of the present research lies in what it will offer to the following groups:

1) For EFL second year faculty of education, English section students:

- Improving EFL reading comprehension skills.



- Developing their attitude towards reading.
- Moving them to read in variety fields.
- Connecting the sentences of the content.
- Comprehending the entire texts.

2) For EFL instructors:

- Providing them with a teacher's guide exemplifying the THIEVES strategy, its steps, procedures, assessment and technique.
- Paying their attention to the problems that the students encounter in reading comprehension skills and how to overcome them.

3) For curriculum designers:

Drawing their attention to the THIEVES strategy to develop reading comprehension skills and attitude towards reading.

Terminology

EFL reading comprehension skills:

EL-Komy (2006) suggested that reading comprehension skills mean the students' abilities to determine the writer's purpose, intent and a point of view about the writer. Helwa (2017) stated that reading comprehension skills are the students' abilities to read and comprehend the texts and understand its meaning. Drani (2018) defined reading comprehension skills as being able to decode the symbols of the texts words and sentences, make a sense of these symbols , remember the exact words and phrase we read to use them in different situations. In the same context, Lutifika (2020) defined reading comprehension skills as the students' abilities to comprehend the meaning of the texts and integrate with what the reader already know. Reading comprehension skills means ability to follow organization of the passages. Dolean, Hazil and Ilahi (2021) stated that reading comprehension skills are the students' abilities to draw inferences from passages about the contents and identify the main ideas and thoughts of texts.

In the present research, EFL reading comprehension skills were defined operationally as, the students' performance in reading comprehension skills, read and comprehend the texts and understand its meaning and apply prior knowledge to connect the information of the texts with different situations.



The THIEVES strategy:

Gusuvianti (2012) stated that the THIEVES strategy is considered one of the most exciting strategy for developing reading comprehension skills and attitude towards reading. Sullama (2017) suggested that the THIEVES, is a pre-reading strategy using remembered acronyms. The students learn how to steal information from the title, headings, introduction, every first sentences, visuals/vocabulary, ending, and summary. The Students will find that after reading the main body of the text they will find out the most important information that they need about the texts. Susilowati (2018) defined the THIEVES strategy as a strategy to activate the background knowledge. In this Strategy students learn to preview the texts or a section of the texts in order to organize the content and predict what ideas might be contained in the texts. Novia (2019) stated that the THIEVES strategy provides the students with information about the content of texts. This strategy helps the students to improve their enthusiasm and attention in the process of teaching and learning English, especially reading comprehension. Inderwati, Sarifuddin and Zarei (2019) defined the THIEVES strategy as the students' abilities to extract meaning from the contents and express the writers' point of view towards the content.

In the current research, the THIEVES strategy is operationally defined as the student's abilities to steal information from the texts, identify the main ideas of the texts, and understand the full meaning of the texts.

Literature Review

Reading comprehension is the skill of understanding the readable symbols, identifying what the writer wants to say, recognizing the meanings and transforming it into behaviours (Muhid & Damanik, 2020, p.3). It is the process that entails three elements: the reader who is doing the comprehending the text that is to be comprehended, and the activities in which comprehension is a part. Further, it is a mental process in which the interaction between symbols and their connotation is done in order to pronounce what is written, understand the meaning of the text and apply these meanings and ideas in life situations (Zainal, p.18).

Teaching reading in EFL classes is necessary for the instructor to know the goal beyond teaching these skills. Reading comprehension is considered one of the most central cognitive skills that is significant to acquire knowledge in various subjects. It is an essential prerequisite for prolong learning in adulthood (Pourhosein, 2016, p.24). Generally, reading



comprehension is the process of extracting meaning from the reading materials. The goal of this process is targeted at helping EFL learners comprehend the reading source. According to Febrina (2019), there are five levels of EFL reading comprehension which are as follows:

1. **Literal comprehension**

Literal meaning of reading comprehension skills is what the text says. It is a very important level of the comprehension process because it provides EFL readers with the materials and they could not go farther, e.g. Ahmed is playing football.

The answer of the question based on the literal meaning which will always be found in the text such as who is playing football? The answer is Ahmed. There are many examples of literal meaning such as: characters in the story, stated facts, the main ideas and the events of the story. This level of reading comprehension requires EFL readers to easily extract information that has been stated in the texts (Basaraba, 2013, p.107). It depends on reader's ability to identify individual words and comprehend the meaning created by the combination of words and sentences (Oakhill, 2014). Literal comprehension is composed of two strategies: 1) recalling, or the ability to provide an idea that was a part of the text; and 2) recognition or recognizing information stated in the passage (Swanm, 2012).

Reorganization

The second level of EFL reading comprehension is reorganization. It depends on the literal understanding of the reading materials.

The EFL readers use information from different parts of the text and combine them for additional comprehending. For example, at the beginning of the text there is a woman named Sofia Jorge that was born in 1945 and then at the end of the same text she died in 1990. So, in order to answer this question, how old was Sofia when she died? Hence, the readers put these two pieces of information together and answer the question. Questions that deal with this level of reading comprehension are significant for the EFL learners because they examine the reading materials in its entirety, move through a sentence-by-sentence.

1. **Inferential**

Inferential meaning is the ability to practice written information and understand the underlying meaning of the text. Initially, students may have a difficult time answering inferences questions because the answers are based on materials in the text but not explicitly stated. It requires EFL readers to combine ideas, draw conclusions, and interpret information.



An example of a question that requires the reader to make an inference is: Why could you assume that Billy is good at building towers? You assume this is true because the story says that Billy's tower got higher and higher, and the design became more intricate with each block. These types of questions and comprehension lead to more engagement with the text as Students who infer habitually and accurately are more engaged in the text. Not only do they understand better, they enjoy reading more because they are able to easily draw on information from their own lives and prior knowledge. This helps them better identify with characters and relate to literature. Furthermore, when students make inferences such as predictions or theories, they are eager to read more, to see if their intuition will be established.

2. Evaluation

This level requires the EFL readers to give a comprehensive judgment about some aspect of the reading materials. Also, the EFL readers go beyond the text and think about the relationships between the components of the reading materials.

For example, how will material in the article be useful to you? In order to answer this type of question, EFL learners should use both a literal understanding of the reading materials, prior knowledge and experiences and related issues (Knoepke, 2014).

3. Appreciation

In this level EFL learners are expected to be emotionally sensitive to the reading materials. They can express their thoughts and feelings on what the passage discussed. After reading, teachers ask students, Did you like this story or not? Why? Also, they ask them to draw a picture of one scene from the story. (Since students spend a great time trying to make their pictures perfect). Then they explain the pictures, ending with the sentence "I liked/ did not like the story

because " it includes emotional responses to content, identification with characters or events, reactions to the author's use of language and imageries.

Significance of EFL reading comprehension skills

Reading comprehension is an important language skill for EFL learners in order to be able to make sense of what they read. Accordingly, EFL learners need to be competent readers to acquire the English language appropriately.



As indicated by Senturk (2015), the acquisition of EFL reading comprehension skills is a priority for many language learners for EFL students rarely experience a situation when they have to speak English daily, but they might need to read in English quite often in order to benefit from various pieces of information.

Rashidi and Khosravi (2010) as well as Kilinic and Yenen (2016) stated that reading comprehension skills enable the EFL learners to understand what is included in any written materials in suitable environments. They reflect an opinion exchange between the EFL reader who is trying to make sense of the letters that symbolize sounds in the brain and the author who produces certain works to maintain his/her existence. In the same token, Sullama (2017) highlighted that reading comprehension skills assist EFL learners to make informed predictions based on what they acquire from the reading materials. Reading comprehension requires asking the students to make guesses about what might happen, make connections to their prior knowledge and link the new ideas with knowledge and experiences already known to make sense of the reading materials.

Accordingly, reading comprehension skills encourage EFL learners to create a mental image of the reading materials as they can mentally envision what they are reading. This helps them understand and recall details, remember and draw conclusions from information they encountered while reading.

Prayogo (2019) added that reading comprehension skills allow the EFL learners to interact with the reading materials, comprehend the hidden meanings, generate unfamiliar ideas related to the topic, analysis the problems involved in the reading materials and find suitable solutions. Equally, Wijayanti (2018) clarified that reading comprehension skills develop EFL learners' critical thinking skills. For example, reading a mystery novel sharpens learners' mind. What elements are in a story to make this or that conclusion? Or if a book is non-fiction the learners sometimes ask themselves if the author is right. Critical thinking skills are crucial when it comes to making important day to day decisions. In addition, reading comprehension skills improve concentration through exciting activities that enable EFL learners to improve their ability to pay attention and focus for longer periods of time.



The THIEVES strategy

Manz (2002) has developed the THIEVES strategy. She stated in an article named a strategy for previewing textbooks, Teaching readers to become THIEVES in The Reading Teacher (volume 55, no 5) that one should introduce this particular pre-reading strategy as soon as possible. When she used the pre-reading strategy herself in her own teaching she introduced it at the beginning of the school year. She started by introducing the pre-reading strategy through warm up exercises where she evaluated the individual students' ability and the group as a whole. After the evaluation, the class runs through the textbook as a group and this is when she introduced elements of the pre-reading strategy and showed the students how to use every step of the strategy. She taught the students how to steal information from the text before they read it in its entirety; hence they become thieves. She found the strategy highly effective as even after leaving school she had former students tell her about using the strategy on college level studies.

Moreover, Richards (2014) pointed out in his book Approaches and methods in language teaching that when students are reading, there are several questions they should take into consideration. Some of these questions are, why am I reading this text? Will I need this information later? What is my opinion towards the text? Richards argued that the teacher may model strategies directly and show students how particular aspects of the text were approached and how difficulties encountered were resolved. The teacher should help the students understand by applying certain stages when presenting the reading strategy.

- The first stage is centred on the teacher selecting a passage and reading it out loud. The teacher should select a part of the text where the comprehension breaks down.
- In stage two, the students go through the thinking of pre, while and post reading. They start by making predictions followed by describing what they see with their imagination when reading, making an analysis while reading (linking to their own experiences), finding the confusing points in the text and at last correcting lagging comprehension (fix-up).
- Stage three and four is built around summarizing.
- Stage five and six is built around discussions.



He added that pre-reading is the most important part of the reading procedure because it helps trigger students' attitude and helps them prepare for the kind of text they are going to read. Here, we conclude that the THIEVES strategy is affective in developing reading comprehension skills.

According to Manz (2002) THIEVES is a pre-reading strategy that set the purpose for reading using easily remembered acronyms. EFL learners learn how steal information from the title, headings, introduction, every first sentence, visual / vocabulary, ending and summary. It is a way to get the EFL learners build extensive knowledge of the text even before they read the first words of reading materials. It means that this strategy can help them find the specific information and comprehend the reading materials. In addition, Gear (2008: 91) stated that THIEVES strategy is helpful for trying to determine what is important in a place of information text. This definition emphasizes that THIEVES makes reading much easier as students will find that after reading the main body of the text, they will be easy to find the most important information that they need about text. Using a pre-reading strategy such as THIEVES enhances comprehension and retention of the information and ideas encountered during reading. Previewing helps the EFL learners to create a mental map that can be used as the reader moves through the reading materials. This mental map is based on the general structure of the text and helps guide the student during the reading process. Having mentally linked the textual clues, the reader is better able to follow the flow of ideas in the text and to detect the relationships among pieces of information.

Manz (2002) added that the THIEVES assists students go through all of the necessary pre reading procedures before plunging into a text book chapter. It's a strategy for getting EFL learners to gain a thorough understanding of the content even before they've read the entire chapter. This method, which may be utilized by teachers in the classroom to teach reading, is not only straightforward in terms of procedures, but it can also help students activate their prior knowledge in different ways to better understand the reading texts they are reading. THIEVES is one of the ways for activating students' background knowledge.

The components and procedures of the THIEVES strategy

Manz (2002) illustrated the procedures and components for using the THIEVES strategy in the classroom to teach reading comprehension: students will read the text individually



rather than in groups; the teacher will select the type of text that is appropriate for the students. Then, the teacher writes component of THIEVES strategy on board and begin explaining the THIEVES Acronym, those are:

- 1. Title:** in this activity, teacher will guide the student to look at the title and think or predict about the topic what will they read in the text
- 2.Heading:** Then, student will look at the heading and think how to turn the heading into a question and try to find the answer for that question later.
- 3.Introduction:** student will read the introductory paragraph in the beginning and think of what is important information because in the introductory paragraph student find what is the text going to talk.
- 4. Every First Sentence:** student will read every first sentence for each paragraph because the topic sentence of the paragraph usually in the first sentence of the paragraph, in the topic sentence student will get the information about that paragraph before they read all sentences in the paragraph.
- 5. Visual and Vocabulary:** in this activity, the teacher provide the text that include some picture or photograph, vocabularies of difficult word, and many others that can help student to get the information about the text they going to read. Then, student look at photograph, maps, and other graphics provided. Student guided directly to think what do they illustrate and look for important vocabulary words, and define them in the context of the chapter content in the text.
- 6. Ending:** Read the last paragraph and think of what is most important because in this sentence usually will conclude the content of the previous paragraphs in the text.
- 7. Summary:** after doing all those components and procedures, in the end of this activity student will try to make summary from them in their note. Finally, to know about student comprehension, the teacher gives students THIEVES worksheet and ask them to do the worksheet based on text. The teacher guides students to complete the components of THIEVES individually. With this strategy students complete the worksheet given without read all of body of the text.

In the same context, Gear (2012) mentioned some steps of the THIEVES strategy as following:

- 1) Tell students to preview the chapter prior to reading it.



2) The teacher writes component of THIEVES on whiteboard and explained the THIEVES acronym.

a) Title:

Look at the title, and think about what will be included in the text. Think about what is already known about the topic.

b) Heading:

Look at the heading. Think of ways to turn the heading into a question.

c) Introduction

Read the introductory paragraph and think of what is most important.

d) Every first Sentence:

Read every first sentence for each paragraph

e) Visual and Vocabulary:

Look at photograph, maps, and other graphics. What do they illustrate? Look for important vocabulary words, and define them in the content.

f) Ending:

Read the last paragraph and think of what is most important.

g) Summary:

Collaborate the all of previous component of THIEVES and make summary from them.

The advantages and functions of the THIEVES strategy

Asmarni (2022) showed that the advantages of THIEVES strategy Based on the concept of THIEVES as following:

a) The THIEVES strategy allows the EFL learners to organize what they are reading; b) Make more efficient use of their reading time; c) Empower students to deepen their reading comprehension; d) Associate what students read; e) Provide them with a scaffold for active reading, whether they are reading independently or which coaching; f) Make the EFL learners get easy to understand what a mean from the text based on components of THIEVES; g) Help students to identify important concept, establish a context for reading, and predict what ideas of the text.

Arzaqoh (2020) pointed out that the THIEVES strategy includes some functions such as:

a) The THIEVES strategy activates the prior knowledge of the EFL learners because it allows them and helps make connections to the new information. By using what the EFL learners already know, it helps the instructors assist them with the learning process because it give



him/her an idea of what the EFL learners know and what they still need to learn; **b)** Establishing a purpose for reading ;**c)** Predicting ;**d)** Identifying main ideas; **e)** Summarizing

Table (1): procedures of the THIEVES strategy

T	What is the Title of the Chapter? What do you think you will be learning about?
H	List three Headings: 1. 2. 3.
I	Read the first (Introductory) paragraph. Write down anything you already know about this topic.
E	Read Each of the key ideas listed at the beginning of the chapter. What have you learned?
V	Describe two Visuals. How do you think they will help you understand the context?
E	Write one of the End of the chapter questions below:
S	Read the Summary section at the end of the chapter



Method

Participants of the research

The sample of the present research comprised 68 male and female students. They were chosen randomly from second year students, enrolled in the English section, faculty of education, Sadat City University, during the second semester of the academic year 2022-2023. The sample represented two groups, 34 each. The control group that received regular instruction and the experimental group that was taught using the THIEVES strategy. The following table provides data about the participants:

Design and variables of the research

The current research is a quasi-experimental research. Two groups were used. Both of them were tested before the implementation of the experiment. The independent variable of the present research is the THIEVES strategy whereas the dependent variables include students' EFL reading comprehension skills.

Instruments and materials of the research

Four main instruments were used in order to fulfil the purpose of the present research:

- 1- An EFL reading comprehension test.
- 2- An EFL reading comprehension checklist.
- 3- Teachers' Guide.

Validity of the reading comprehension test

To measure the test content validity, the first version of the test was submitted to eight EFL professors to evaluate each items of content appropriateness and reading comprehension skills measured

Table (2) correlation between the sub- skills and total sum of the test score

skills	No. of test items	Person Correlation Coefficient	Sig
Literal skills	10	0.729	0.01**
Inferential skills	10	0.728	0.01**
Evaluative skills	10	0.726	0.01**
Total correlation coefficient for testing	30	0.727	0.01**

Reliability of the reading comprehension test

Reliability means that the test can produce the same results when applied more than once under the same conditions. Reliability was calculated using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for all 30 test subjects. The results were that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.88. This indicates that the test achieves high stability, which reassure the researcher that the test construction procedures are correct. The table below shows the stability of each test skill. For the reliability of reading comprehension test, the following procedures were applied. The test was administered at the beginning of the second term of the academic year 2023 on a randomly selected group of second year students, enrolled in the English section, faculty of education, Sadat City University (N= 24 male and female students). Then the test was re-administered to the same group two weeks later. The reliability of the test showed that the reliability coefficient is = 0.88 which is relatively high. So, the test could be considered a reliable one for the current research.

Table 3: reliability of the EFL Reading Test

skills	NO. Of test items	Alpha Cronbach
Literal skills	10	0.90
Inferential skills	10	0.88
Evaluative skills	10	0.86
Overall reading	30	0.88

Administrating the test

The EFL reading test was applied to the participants at the beginning of the second semester of the academic year 2023. Then this test was re-applied to the study participants two days after the implementation of the THIEVES strategy. The researcher of the present research has clarified the purpose and parts of the test to the study participants. Also, the researcher has explained that the students' responses would not affect their academic assessment in any way or another. The conditions of the post-test were the same as those of the pre-test in terms of place and time.

Hypotheses of the research

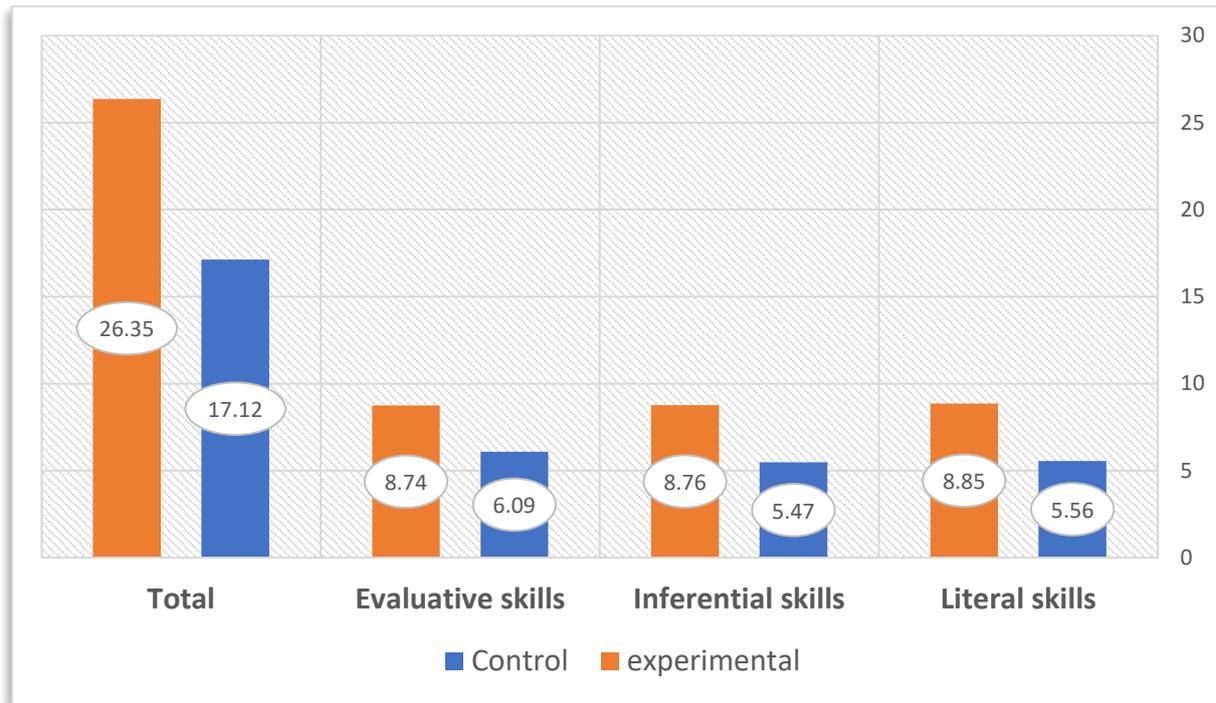
There is astatistically significant difference at (0.05) level of significant between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups on the post- administration of the overall EFL reading comprehension test in favour of the experimental groups.

Table (4): *participants' mean scores, standard deviations, t- value and level of significance in the post administration of the EFL reading test.*

skills	Groups	N	Mean	St.d	T test	sig
Literal skills	Control	34	5.56	0.89	16.08	0.01*
	experimental	34	8.85	0.85		
Inferential skills	Control	34	5.47	0.70	15.14	0.01*
	experimental	34	8.76	1.04		
Evaluative skills	Control	34	6.09	0.96	10.61	0.01*
	experimental	34	8.74	0.95		
Overall reading test	Control	34	17.12	1.51	27.99	0.01*
	experimental	34	26.35	1.39		

It is clear from the previous table that there are statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups in each skill of the test, where the arithmetic average of the experimental group in the literal skills skill was (8.85) and for the control group its value was (5.56), and the value of t (16.08), which is a function at the level of significance 0.01, and the value of the arithmetic mean of the experimental group in the skill of Inferential skills (8.76) and for the control group its value was (5.47), and the value of t (15.14), which is a function at the level of 0.01, The value of the arithmetic mean of the experimental group in the Evaluative skills skill was (8.74) and for the control group its value was (6.09), and the value of t was (10.09), which is a function at the level of 0.01, as can be seen from the table that the value of the arithmetic mean of the experimental group after applying the test as a whole amounted to (26.35), and the value of the standard deviation was (1.39), while in the control group the value of the arithmetic mean was (17.12), and the value of the standard deviation was (1.51), while the value of "T" was (27.99) and after comparing The value of "T" tabulation with the calculated value of "T" is statistically significant at the level of significance (0.01), which indicates the superiority of the experimental group students in the post-application of the test as a whole and in each of its skills.

Figure (1) a statistical representation of the study participants' mean scores on the post application of the EFL reading test.



Discussion

The findings of first hypothesis shown that there was a statistically significant difference at (0.05) level of significant between the mean scores of the experimental and control groups on the post- administration of the overall EFL reading comprehension test in favour of the experimental groups. As previously designated, the participants of the experimental group showed more progress in their EFL reading comprehension skills with its three levels (literal, inferential and evaluative level) in the post measurement of the EFL reading test than the control group. The findings of the research explained that the t-value was significant at 0.05 level. Such growth supported the first hypothesis. This development was related as showed to the utilizing of the THIEVES strategy.

An introductory lesson was conducted at the beginning of the THIEVES strategy to insure that the participants of the experimental group have understood the main aim of the strategy and their roles during the implementation the session of the strategy. Sunday, was selected to be a day for the sessions of the THIEVES strategy. The researcher offered some pre, during and post reading activities that might help the participants in the implementation of the THIEVES strategy. From the beginning of the implementation of the THIEVES



strategy, the participants' development in EFL reading comprehension skills and attitude towards reading was observed. The sample of the experimental group liked the availability and flexibility of the THIEVES strategy. They also the different sections of the THIEVES strategy such as open ended questions. The researcher suggested that they can read more topics at WWW.TheReadinggate.com.

In the middle of the THIEVES strategy, the participants of the experimental group became more organized and efficient. They became aware that they have achieved some progress regarding their EFL reading skills .they liked the groups and pair work strategies, which encouraged the researcher to add more reading passages depending on the THIEVES strategy. They feel excited when I told them now it is your turn to be a thief, and quickly they follow the instructions of the THIEVES strategy.

By the end of the THIEVES strategy, the participants of the experimental group almost grasped the EFL reading skills and showed great attention and attitude towards reading. As well as, their language skills were developed and their attitude towards reading was increased. They became familiar to positive sharing and paid attention to other groups. The researcher observed some behaviours such as:

- The participants began to read many different reading topics.
- Their attitude towards reading was effectively increased.
- They began to help each other during the pair work and groups.

The researcher determined the challenges that were faced in the THIEVES strategy as following:

During the implementation of the THIEVES strategy some students:

- Did not want to share and work at pair work or groups.
- Did not pay attention to the THIEVES strategy instructions.
- They were shy to participate in the THIEVES strategy.
- They repeat the same answers of their peers.
- They did not have the EFL reading skills.



- They did not believe their ability.

Despite the previous challenges and by the end of the implementation of the THIEVES strategy, the participants have confirmed that they have benefited a lot as they have learnt to apply the THIEVES strategy during reading different reading passages. They valued the THIEVES strategy that enabled them to develop their literal, inferential and evaluative skills. They revealed more interest to cooperate together. They appreciated the sessions that helped them observed their gradually development in the EFL reading skills and the progress in their attitude towards reading.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the research, the following recommendations are suggested:

- The THIEVES strategy should be utilized in teaching EFL reading skills for faculty of education students.
- More care should be paid for the new strategies that develop the EFL reading skills among faculty of education students.
- More attention should be paid to the students' attitude towards reading as it has great role in developing reading skills.
- EFL students should be engaged in exciting learning environment that enables them to be effective readers.
- EFL students should be encouraged to use the THIEVES strategy to improve their EFL reading skills.
- EFL instructors should apply various activities in reading classes to help students gain different reading skills.
- The instructors should use the THIEVES strategy to enhance the literal, inferential and evaluative skills.
- Instructors should apply many learning strategies during reading classes.
- Instructors should encourage the student to develop their literal, inferential and evaluative skills.

Curriculum developers should apply the THIEVES strategy in the reading materials in the Egyptian faculties.



Suggestions for the further researcher

- 1) Further researcher is needed to improve speaking.
- 2) Further researcher is needed to investigate the effect of utilizing the THIEVES strategy on developing listening.
- 3) Further researcher is needed to investigate the effect of utilizing the THIEVES strategy on developing writing.
- 4) Further researcher is needed to investigate the effect of utilizing the THIEVES strategy on developing other levels of language.

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