



# **The Effectiveness of Using Reciprocal Teaching in Improving Reading Comprehension Skills of Preparatory Stage Pupils**

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**Dr. Rasha Atef Sleem Dorgham**

Lecturer of Curricula and Methods of TEFL  
Institute of Educational Studies, Cairo University

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### **Abstract**

This study explored the effects of a reciprocal teaching as an approach to improve reading comprehension skills of preparatory stage pupils. Sample of the study comprised sixty-seven pupils who were divided to a control group (37) and an experimental group (39). The study tools consists of a Reading Comprehension checklist (RCC), and a Reading Comprehension Test (RCT). The 't' test was used to analyze the study sample's scores and to compare their responses in the pre- and post test. Results showed the effectiveness of the reciprocal teaching technique in improving second preparatory stage pupils' reading comprehension skills.

### **Introduction:**

Reading is a receptive language process which involves an interaction between language and idea. The purpose of reading is to make meaning from the words that are presented. The writer encodes ideas as language and the reader decodes language as an idea. Hence, the main objective of reading instruction is to help students become good readers who can use strategies effectively to construct and extract meaning. Reading is not only considered as a means of information and enjoyment, but also as a means of extending one's knowledge of the language. Thus, reading comprehension is much more than decoding. Reading comprehension happens when the reader himself realizes which skills and strategies are suitable for the type of text, and understands how to apply them to accomplish the reading purpose (Sheir, 2008:143).

Accordingly, the overall aim of teaching reading is to develop in the readers the attitudes, abilities and skills needed for securing information, reinforcing the reaction to ideas developing interests and

tasks and finally devising pleasure by reading through understanding or “comprehension” (Abdel Hack, 2006).

Successful Reading comprehension needs the efficient coordination and integration of a number of significant processes. These processes include not only word decoding and sentences, but also integrating information within a text and with prior world knowledge (Torky, 2002 & McNamara, et al., 2011:230).

Thus, readers have to coordinate multiple strategies to understand or comprehend a text. Consequently, students should demonstrate overall understanding, provide inferential as well as literal information, draw conclusion, draw on background knowledge, judge text critically and give thorough responses that indicate careful thought (Brown, et al., 1995 & Hardin, 2001). Accordingly, reciprocal teaching is considered as an essential method to foster and enhance reading comprehension. Reciprocal teaching method requires students to monitor their own progress in reading comprehension.

### **Problem of the study:**

The research problem can be identified in the pupils’ poor mastery of the reading comprehension skills that should be developed in the preparatory stage. This problem might be due to the methods of teaching used to achieve the required objectives. Therefore, the current study is an attempt to investigate the effectiveness of reciprocal teaching as a means to achieve the target objective. Accordingly, the study attempted to address the following questions:

- 1- What are the reading comprehension skills required to the second preparatory grade pupils?
- 2- To what extent do the second preparatory grade pupils have these skills?
- 3- What is the form of the reciprocal teaching strategy that can be used to develop the second preparatory grade pupils’ reading comprehension skills?
- 4- What is the effectiveness of the reciprocal teaching strategy in developing the second preparatory grade pupils’ reading comprehension skills?

### **Aims of the study:**

The aim of the present study is to develop the second preparatory stage pupils' reading comprehension skills, using reciprocal teaching technique.

### **Review of Literature**

**Todd and Diane (2006)** designed a study to investigate how reciprocal teaching affected vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension in four at-risk students in a fourth grade inclusion classroom. A single subject research study method was used to measure the baseline of each student. Subsequently, students were assessed daily after receiving two interventions that alternated during a six week period: reciprocal teaching and guided learning. The results indicated that three of the participants increased in both vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension skills. Overall, all participants gained the most benefits from the reciprocal teaching method.

**Abdel Hack's study (2006)** provided an overview of reciprocal teaching as an approach to improve strategic reading and reading comprehension skills of College of Education, English majors. The sample of the study comprised sixty-six EFL students. The tools consisted of a strategic reading questionnaire (SRQ), a strategic reading interview (SRI), and a reading comprehension test, (RCT). Results indicated the effectiveness of reciprocal teaching technique in improving College of Education, English majors' strategic reading and reading comprehension skills.

**Spivey &Andreal (2006)** designed a study to explore the effects of a reciprocal teaching intervention to enhance the lecture skills of College students. Participants in the study were 80 college students enrolled in two sections of introductory psychology classes. Data were collected through listening training passages and pre-post test lectures. Six lectures were presented to all subjects in both experimental and control group. The results showed that the low verbal ability subjects receiving the reciprocal teaching method significantly increased their lecture comprehension. These significant increases were maintained over time. Moreover; the reciprocal teaching instructor may have been more enthusiastic than in other conditions. Hence, the instructor's enthusiasm may have positively affected the low verbal ability students and caused them to perform at higher level than they would have with a less enthusiastic teacher.

**Takala (2006)** investigated the effect of reciprocal teaching on reading comprehension in Mainstream and Special Education. The sample of the study comprised the fourth-grade and six-grade science classes in general science and sixth-grade history lessons. The data were collected through interview and pre-post tests. The findings demonstrated that reciprocal teaching had a positive effect on students' reading comprehension. Moreover, children and teachers were pleased to have the opportunity to participate in the interventions and to learn new method of improving comprehension.

**Satasti (2007)** investigated the effects of reciprocal teaching comprehension-monitoring with a group of fifteen 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students in a large urban school district in the South-eastern United States. The tools implemented were curriculum-based measurement maze probes, children's intervention acceptability rating scale, teachers' intervention acceptability rating scale and procedural integrity checklist. The results proved that reciprocal teaching was an effective intervention in increasing students' reading comprehension abilities.

**Ahmed (2007)** aimed at developing the necessary literal, inferential, critical and creative reading comprehension skills for Egyptian EFL first year secondary school students through the use of a proposed program based on reciprocal teaching. The subjects were seventy-two first year secondary school students. The data were collected through reading comprehension skills checklist and pre-post reading comprehension test. The results showed that using a proposed program based on reciprocal teaching had a great effect on developing reading comprehension skills for the first year secondary school students.

**Alatar's study (2008)** aimed at developing some English language listening comprehension skills for Faculty of Education first year students through the use of reciprocal teaching strategies. The sample of the study comprised 30 students from Zagazig University. The tools of the study consisted of a listening comprehension skills list and a pre-post listening comprehension test. The results of the study proved the effectiveness of using reciprocal teaching strategies in developing the experimental group students' listening comprehension skills.

**Yoosabai (2009)** investigated the effect of reciprocal teaching on the English reading comprehension and metacognitive reading strategies of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in a Thai high-school classroom. The sample

comprised 66 students. The data were collected through interviews, reading aloud sheet, audio-taping and dialogues performed during reciprocal teaching. The results indicated that reciprocal teaching had a significantly positive effect on the English reading comprehension and usage of the four metacognitive reading strategies of high-school students. Moreover, the results from the questionnaire showed that the students in the experimental group employed significantly more metacognitive reading strategies after reciprocal teaching at 0.05 level.

**Yang's study (2010)** reported on the design of an online reciprocal teaching and learning system to support teachers and students in college remedial reading instruction. A sample of 129 under-prepared college students voluntarily signed up to participate in a remedial reading program. They were encouraged to use multiple strategies such as predicting, clarifying, questioning and summarizing. Data were collected through peers dialogue, pre-post tests and open-ended questionnaire. The findings explored that students employed the reciprocal teaching strategies to enhance their reading comprehension. Students' reading progress in the remedial instruction incorporating the reciprocal teaching system was clearly identified by the pre-post tests.

**Omari&Hani (2010)** examined the degree to which Jordanian teachers at the public schools use the reciprocal teaching method. The sample consisted of 523 teachers. The instrument used in this study was a thirty-item questionnaire which was developed by the researcher to collect the data of the study. Findings showed that the overall mean ratings of using reciprocal teaching method by Jordanian teachers were moderate. Based on the findings of the study; it was recommended that teachers use the reciprocal teaching as a means of developing students' thinking and reflection skills in order to meet the objectives of the educational reform movements in Jordan such as the education reform for knowledge economy which has started in 2003. It was also recommended that reciprocal teaching strategies be incorporated in the pre-service teacher program at the Jordanian universities and investigate the effect of using this method in improving students' learning skills.

**Lui (2010)** explored the effects of reciprocal teaching on reading comprehension and word recognition of second-grade students. The sample of the study consisted of 56 second-grade students from elementary school in Pingtung County. The data were collected through reading comprehension test and Chinese character recognition test. The

results of the study indicated the effectiveness of using reciprocal teaching on reading comprehension and word recognition of second-grade students.

**Choo and et al. (2011)** investigated the effect of reciprocal teaching strategies on developing reading comprehension of 68 sixth-form students in Malaysia. Tools for data collection were pre-post-tests, and five open-ended questions given after the treatment. The findings showed a significant difference, revealing the effectiveness of the reciprocal teaching strategies and also the respondents from the experimental group gave a positive feedback regarding the use and effect of the reciprocal teaching strategies.

**Al- Makhzoomi (2012)** investigated the effect of the reciprocal teaching procedures on enhancing 50 first year EFL students reading comprehension behaviour in Jordan university. The tools consisted of Denny reading test, pre and post questionnaires and comments about the reading teaching sessions along with the subjects reading comprehension behaviours. The results showed a marked improvement in the students' reading comprehension behaviour throughout the use of reciprocal teaching procedure.

The previous studies are selected according to the objectives of the current study. The present study was directed to use reciprocal teaching as a successful teaching technique to develop reading comprehension skills for the first year preparatory school pupils. All the previous studies supported the effectiveness of using reciprocal teaching strategies, especially, in developing reading comprehension skills. Hence, the objectives of the previous studies were functioned the bases of the current study. But all these previous studies only focused on investigating the effect of reciprocal teaching strategies in developing reading comprehension skills for primary and secondary stage pupils and faculty students. So, to bridge this gap, the present study attempts to focus on using reciprocal teaching technique to develop reading comprehension skills for the preparatory grade school pupils.

To carry out the procedures of the present study, the researcher revised the key concepts in the area of English language teaching related to the present research.

**Reading comprehension:**

Reading comprehension is one of the most essential EFL/ESL skills. For most of learners it is the most important skill to master in order to confirm success in learning (**Anderson, 2003 & Takala, 2006 & Al-Nifayee, 2010 and Haboush, 2010**). Reading comprehension can be described as a function of decoding skills. It is considered as an interactive compensatory process in which readers actively adjust their processing in response to the particular demands of the text and the context (**Chial, 2001 & Almas, 2001, Yee, 2010 & and Li, 2010**).

Reading comprehension is a very complicated process where the brain is activated through noting a word, decoding it and identifying the related meaning. The reader constructs meaning by interacting with the text using his or her previous knowledge and experience that can be found in the texts. It means a students' ability to understand information that is presented through the written words (**Storm, 2007& Petersen and Diego 2008**).

Reading comprehension is extracting the meaning of the text read, thinking about it and making inferences (**Mckown and Cynthia, 2007 & Avcı and Arzu, 2011**). Accordingly, **King (2001)** states that there are four elements to be considered when learning how to read more successfully: the reader, the text, the strategies and the goal. Reading comprehension is a multidimensional process covering different aspects such as communication, perception, cognitive, affective and kinaesthetic process (**Bolukbas and et. al, 2011**).

**Nasr (2007)** asserts that reading comprehension is a process of negotiating understanding between the reader and the writer. It is a more complex psychological process and includes linguistic factors; such as phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic elements. It also includes cognitive and emotional factors. The reader receives information from the author through words, sentences, paragraphs..... etc and tries to recognize the attitude and feeling of writer.

**Baier (2005)** asserts that reading comprehension is a skill that is critical in the educational success of all individuals. Without a adequate reading comprehension skill, students can suffer in many subject areas. Reading comprehension is a significant skill needed for all areas of school. Hence, **Zwiers (2010)** says that the first procedure in recognizing the nature of reading comprehension is to appreciate its complexity.



Effective reading comprehension is based upon many factors related to the reader, the text and the behaviour of comprehension. **(Rupp&Leasux, 2006)** The ingredients of reading comprehension consist of accurately decoding words, understanding the language to monitor reading, memory skills, vocabulary acquisition, previous knowledge and complicated reasoning skills **(Whitaker, 2009)**.

Good readers use reading comprehension strategies to support the construction of meaning. The good reader should have some reading strategies to successfully comprehend texts. **Carrillo, (2010)** defines reading strategies as the mental process included in accomplishing reading tasks. Moreover, students must be given chances to enhance reading strategies effectively so that they can process different types of texts.

**Also, Aziz& et al. (2011)** confirms that these reading strategies are essential as they can actually assist the EFL learners' reading process and give them an obvious sense of direction on what they already digesting while reading. **ZAbrucky (2011)** asserts that reading comprehension is considered as a very important skill needed to be developed. **Rasinski (2012)** shows that reading comprehension strategies are the critical ones that successful readers use before, during and after reading. These strategies are; making connections, predicting questions, monitoring and clarifying, summarizing and synthesizing and evaluating. Such strategies are used by the reader to develop reading comprehension and overcome comprehension failure.

All these strategies are actually implemented and applied when using the reciprocal teaching method. Hence, reciprocal teaching is considered as one of the reading comprehension strategies **(Magnuson, 2009)**. Accordingly, there are various ways, reciprocal teaching and reading comprehension relate to one another. Summarizing, clarifying, predicting and questioning are all strategies that enhanced and supported comprehension.

### **Reciprocal teaching:**

The reciprocal teaching is an instructional technique first described by Palincsar (1982) and by Palincsar and Brown (1984), and then developed and continued in their later papers **(Greenway, 2002&Osana and R. Jennifer, 2003)**. Reciprocal teaching is described as an effective instructional routine that can develop and enhance

reading comprehension through the use of four comprehension strategies known as predicting, questioning, clarifying and summarizing (**Palincsar and Brown, 1984 & Oczkus, 2003 & Oczkus, 2005 & Myers, 2005 & Pilonieta and Medina, 2009 & Meyer, 2010 and Lee, 2011**).

Reciprocal teaching takes the form of dialogue between teachers and students. The teacher and students take turns assuming the role of the participant who leads the dialogue. Also, this dialogue is structured by the use of four strategies; questioning, summarizing, clarifying and predicting.

Reciprocal teaching helps students to think about their own thoughts during reading and to monitor their comprehension as they read. It also involves a high degree of social interaction. With reciprocal teaching students predict before reading and then check their predictions during reading. They stop to clarify unknown words or sentences during reading process. Moreover, they ask questions to check for understanding the comprehension text. And they summarize a part or the overall text after reading.

**Stricklin(2011)** assured that teachers should have three primary responsibilities during using a reciprocal teaching. Before reading, teachers activate their students' prior knowledge of words and ideas. During reading, they guide and encourage students to use reciprocal teaching strategies. And after reading, they encourage students to reflect upon their own performance. Hence, reciprocal teaching is a method designed to teach students cognitive strategies that will help them to develop and enhance their reading comprehension skills.

To demonstrate the meaning of reciprocal teaching, **Cooper (2003) and Abita (2004)** presented the following illustration about the four strategies of reciprocal teaching, their meaning, and how to be applied and when they are used:

**Table (1): The four strategies of reciprocal teaching,**

<b>Reading Strategy: Clarifying</b>	
<b>Definition</b>	Make the meaning of text clear to the reader.
<b>Application</b>	Ask questions, reread, restate and visualize making text more comprehensible.
<b>Occurs</b>	During Reading.
<b>Reading Strategy: Predicting</b>	
<b>Definition</b>	Use text to decide what will happen next-confirm as they read.
<b>Application</b>	Using the Think, Pair, Share technique, have students form predictions, share with a partner, and participate in a class discussion.
<b>Occurs</b>	Before Reading, During Reading.
<b>Reading Strategy: Questioning</b>	
<b>Definition</b>	Use Question Answer Relationship to identify whether an answer will be found in the text.
<b>Application</b>	Have students label questions related to the text as “right there”, “think and search”, or “on my own”. They should write a brief explanation of why each fits the category.
<b>Occurs</b>	Before Reading, During Reading, After reading.
<b>Reading Strategy: Summarizing</b>	
<b>Definition</b>	Guide the reader to organize and restate info, usually in written form.
<b>Application</b>	Have students create smiles about summarizing to understand what it looks like, such as “Summarizes are like condensed milk.” Have students complete graphic organizers or write summaries focusing on the beginning, middle, or end of text.
<b>Occurs</b>	During Reading, After Reading.

*(Taken from Cooper, 2003 and Abita, 2004)*

These strategies help students become more involved in the meaning during reading and better able to monitor their comprehension

processes. Students can monitor their understanding and success at regular intervals to ask questions, summarize, predict and clarify.

Accordingly, **Oczuks (2003) & Ahmadi and Pourhossein (2012) illustrated the main goals of reciprocal teaching as follows:**

- 1-** Using four strategies to develop and enhance comprehension.
- 2-** Help students to become reflective and meta-cognitive.
- 3-** Help students to monitor and evaluate their reading comprehension.
- 4-** Support the social nature of learning to develop reading comprehension.
- 5-** Instruction is provided through a variety of classroom setting- whole- group, guided reading groups and literature circles.

### **Terminology of the Study**

#### **Reading Comprehension:**

Reading comprehension is defined as a students' ability to understand information that is presented via the written words.

**Petersen& Diego (2008)**

It is also defined as the ability to understand the texts the students read and what the writers try to convey to them. **Yoosbai (2009)**

#### **Reciprocal Teaching:**

**Hashy&D. Connors (2003)** defined reciprocal teaching as a dialogue between the students and the teacher. It is based on four comprehensions supporting strategies, such as; predicting, questioning, summarizing and clarifying which all are required for communication performance.

**Magnuson (2009)** defined reciprocal teaching as a conversation between students and teachers before, during and after reading.

Reciprocal Teaching is an instructional activity that utilizes four comprehension strategies (predicting, questioning, summarizing and clarifying) in the form of dialogue between teachers and students of a text **Choo, et al. (2011)**.

#### **Method of the Study:**

The present study aims at exploring the effects of strategy instruction using reciprocal teaching strategy on reading comprehension skills

**Participants of the study:**

A group of 67 second preparatory pupils were randomly selected from a governmental preparatory school in North of Sinai; Esha Om Almoomneen preparatory school for girls. (39 pupils in the experimental group and 37 pupils in the control group. The second year pupils usually have two periods per week for two months in the second term of the scholastic year 2012/2013.

**Tools of the study:**

- 1- A Reading Comprehension Checklist.
- 2- A pre-post Reading Comprehension Test.

**The Reading Comprehension Checklist:**

**Purpose of the checklist:** The checklist was designed by the researcher to determine the most significant reading comprehension skills for the second year preparatory pupils.

**Content of the Checklist:**

The Reading Comprehension Checklist consisted of three columns. The first included five literal comprehension skills. The second column included five inferential comprehension skills. The third one included two evaluative comprehension skills.

**Validity of the Checklist:**

The checklist was submitted to a panel of jury specialized in the field of TEFL to determine the degree of significance of each sub-skill, and the appropriateness of these suggested sub-skills to second year preparatory pupils as well as the relationship of each sub-skill to its main skill.

**Reliability of the Checklist:**

The co-observer in the reliability of observation checklist is considered the most accurate and used technique.

Therefore, the researcher and a colleague of her observed 15 second year pupils while reading a given text using RCC. Then, the agreement percentage was estimated. The average of the agreement percentage is (0.872), which is considered high. So, the RCC is proved to be valid.

### **Reading Comprehension Test:**

The RCT includes three reading passages each of which was followed by 10 questions. The questions given to the participants were of three kinds as follows:

- 1- Literal comprehension questions: This kind includes: a-Extracting the main idea of a text, b- Finding out a specific stated details ,c- Recognizing a stated series of events in their correct sequence, d- Noting cause – effect relationships, and e- Finding support for an idea.
- 2- Referential comprehension questions: This kind requires pupils to: a- note significant inferred details, b- draw conclusion, c- determine pronoun referent, d- Use contextual clues effectively to determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word, and e- Predict the end of the story.
- 3- Evaluation comprehension questions: This kind assesses pupils' ability to: a- Judge the worth and extract the included moral lessons, and b- express their own ideas or opinions.

### **The Reciprocal Teaching Strategy (RTS):**

The RTS was to help 2<sup>nd</sup> year preparatory stage pupils at North of Sinai, develop their reading comprehension skills. The experimental group pupils were given 8 weeks (2 hours a week) reading comprehension lessons. These lessons aimed at helping the experimental group pupils to: (1) become aware of the reading comprehension skills; (2) using reciprocal teaching technique, and (4) improve their reading comprehension skills using reciprocal teaching technique.

### **Principles for reciprocal reading groups:**

- 1- Everyone helps.
- 2- Give reasons for your suggestions.
- 3- No one is finished until everyone is finished.
- 4- You have the right to ask for help.
- 5- You have the duty to offer help.
- 6- You have the duty to play your role.

**Procedures of applying the RTS:**

**To answer the questions of the study, the researcher carried out the following steps:**

- 1- Put pupils in groups of four.
- 2- Distributed one note card to each member of the group identifying each person's unique role.
  - a. predictor
  - b. questioner
  - c. clarifier
  - d. summarizer
- 3- Had pupils read a few paragraphs of the assigned text selection. Encourage them to use note-taking strategies such as selective underlining or sticky-notes to help them better prepare for their role in the discussion.
- 4- At the given stopping point, the Summarizer highlighted the key ideas up to this point in the reading.
- 5- The Questioner then posed questions about the selection:
  - unclear parts
  - puzzling information
  - connections to other concepts already learned
  - motivations of the agents or actors or characters
  - etc.
- 6- The Clarifier addressed confusing parts and attempted to answer the questions that were just posed.
- 7- The Predictor offered guesses about what the author would tell the group next or, if it's a literary selection, the predictor might suggest what the next events in the story would be.
- 8- The roles in the group then switched one person to the right, and the next selection was read. Pupils repeated the process using their new roles. This continued until the entire selection was read.

**The steps followed in Reciprocal Teaching Strategy:**

**I- Setting the scene:** in that stage the researcher:

- 1- Identified the strategy to be taught (i.e. predicting, clarifying, questioning, summarizing).
- 2- Discussed the reasons why it is taught, its importance and how it might be used.
- 3- Explained the steps of applying the strategy in the reading process.
- 4- Displayed the steps of the strategy.

**II- Modeling and direct instruction:** in that stage the researcher:

- 1- Taught the strategy in an appropriate context using some reading comprehension passage suitable for the study sample.
- 2- Provided opportunities for whole- group work, cooperative group work, and individual work.
- 3- Reflected with the study sample on what was done, how it was done and why.

**III- Guiding practice: in this stage,** the researcher:

- 1- Reviewed the steps of the strategy with the study sample.
- 2- Established criteria of effective use of the strategy.
- 3- Used the strategy in different contexts.

**IV- Encouraging independent application:**

- 1- Provided opportunities for the study sample to use the strategy independently in different contexts given to them or selected by them.
- 2- Monitored the study samples expertise and independent application of the strategy.
- 3- Required and enabled the study sample to evaluate their performance and assess their growth in strategic behavior.

While carrying out the previous steps, students are taught each of the following strategies which are embedded in reciprocal teaching to promote interaction and improve their understanding of the text:

**Questioning:** Pupils identify key information in the text, frame that information in the form of a question, and self-test of understanding and recall.

**Clarifying:** Pupils note when they have experienced a failure in comprehension- identify the source of that breakdown, and take appropriate steps to restore meaning (strategies, asking for help). For example, what does a word mean?

**Predicting** Pupils make a prediction about what they think will happen in the text. This strategy provides the opportunity for them to activate relevant background knowledge.

**Summarizing:** Pupils will summarize the text that was read. This strategy provides the opportunity for them to learn how to get the main point(s) of what they read.



**Implementation of Reciprocal Teaching Lessons:**

Each lesson of applying the RTS included the following stages:

- 1- The pupils and the researcher looked at the title of the selected text and made predictions about the likely content of the passage, based on the title. The researcher encouraged the pupils to activate their background knowledge related to the content of the text.
- 2- The subjects were divided into groups of three or four. Before they started reading the passage, the researcher read the first paragraph and demonstrated how to (a) summarize and find the main ideas in that paragraph, (b) predict what will come next, and c) seek clarification of any comprehension difficulties. At this stage, some repair strategies were introduced to the pupils such as re-reading problematic parts, reading on until the meaning becomes clear, using the context to guess the meaning of unknown words, visualizing the event in the text, and asking the researcher or friends for help. Then one of the pupils in each group volunteered or was asked to become group leader and followed the procedure described.
- 3- The researcher observed each group and provided further explanations about the procedures and/or use of strategies and encouraged pupils to take part in the activity.
- 4- The pupils were also given a worksheet requiring them to write down (a) their predictions, (b) the questions they asked to locate the main ideas, (c) their summaries, and (d) their comprehension problems and possible ways of solving the problems they faced while they were reading the passage. In a way, these worksheets provided a written record of the progress of each pupil during the strategy instruction.
- 5- After the text was finished; pupils discussed the main ideas together. The researcher especially encouraged them to relate the content of the text to their personal experiences in line with the aims of the strategy.

**Results of the Study:**

The results of the present study confirmed that there are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group in each of the pre- and the post administration of the reading comprehension test in favor of the post administration. Thus, t-test analysis of data from reciprocal teaching test indicated that:

1. There are statistically significant differences between the pre- and post mean scores of the experimental group pupils in overall EFL reading skills in favor of the post-assessment. Table (2) presents the students' mean scores, standard deviation, T-value and level of significance.

**Table (2)**

**T-test results comparing the pre- with the post test administrations mean scores for the experimental group in test reading comprehension Skills**

Skill	Experimental group	N	Mean	S.D.	T-value	D.F.	Sig.
Reading comprehension	Pre-test	39	4.717	1.89	55.391	76	.01
	Post-test	39	27.205	1.68			

2. There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the experimental group pupils and the control group students in overall EFL reading skills in favor of the experimental group. Table (3) presents the students' mean scores, standard deviation, T-value and level of significance.

**Table (3)**

**T-test results of the pre- administration of the reading comprehension test comparing the control with the experimental groups mean scores in the reading comprehension skills**

Skill	group	N	Mean	S.D.	T-value	D.F.	Sig.
Reading comprehension	Experimental	39	27.205	1.68	39.865	74	.01
	Control	37	8.054	2.448			

The results indicate the effectiveness of the RTS in improving the reading comprehension skills of the study sample. In other words, pupils learned through the RTS how to read, how to use effective reading strategies that deepen their understanding of the text. They learned how to be aware of how and why to read and how gain an overview of the text and make predictions about they are supposed to read. They learned also how to clarify, ask questions and relate ideas together while reading and how to revise and summarize what they have read after reading. Hence, reciprocal teaching is considered as an interactive style of learning in which teachers and students exchange their roles while learning.

These results are consistent with many previous studies which proved positive relationship between reciprocal teaching and reading comprehension skills. Examples of these studies are: **Krashen (2004) &**

**Abdel Hack (2006) & Al-Atar (2008) & Schunemann and et al. (2013) & Salehi and Vafakhah (2013) & Oczkus (2013) & Ahmadi and et al. (2013) and Ghorbani and et al. (2013).**

Reciprocal teaching is a student-centered educational strategy in which both pupils and teachers switch roles in a lesson. Pupils feel comfortable expressing their ideas and opinions in open discussion. Also, reciprocal teaching increases pupils' confidence and success in their understanding. (**Agoro and Akinsole: 2013**)

These results may be also attributed to the feedback cooperation and student- teacher interaction involved in the reciprocal teaching technique. Therefore, reciprocal teaching technique is mainly designed to develop and enhance pupils' reading comprehension through a dialogue between the teacher and students.

### **Conclusion:**

**Based on the significant results of the study, the following conclusions can be made:**

- The reciprocal teaching strategies which the participants were exposed to with its four strategies of prediction, clarifying, questioning and summarizing enhanced pupils' reading comprehension skills.

-Reciprocal teaching strategies encouraged pupils to be engaged in the reading process and responsible for their learning.

-Reciprocal teaching strategies helped pupils learn ways of developing reading strategies that they can use independently to improve their comprehension. Through the RTS, pupils also learnt how to use strategies to solve comprehension problems and deal with difficult words. They are expected to choose an appropriate strategy to meet their immediate needs.

- Reciprocal teaching strategies provided pupils with a variety of resources that may help them understand form, content, and process of reading texts (**Abdel Hack, 2006**).

- Reciprocal teaching strategies changed the traditional role of teacher to a new positive one. The role of teacher changed from an authority figure to a facilitator who helps pupils to overcome the difficulties faced them and this is an effective way to give pupils more responsibility during the learning process.

- Reciprocal teaching strategies helped the involved pupils check their own understanding of the material they have encountered. They do this by generating questions, predicting, clarifying, and summarizing.

- Reciprocal teaching supported social interaction in which pupils gradually learn to assume the role of the teacher in helping other students comprehend the text (**Coiro, 2000**).

-Reciprocal teaching can easily be used by teachers into their classrooms to develop reading comprehension. The process allows for greater differentiation of instruction to take place. The teaching strategies to be effective must be based on strong knowledge of the pupils as well as of the content. To be successful readers, EFL pupils need to see predicting; questioning, clarifying and summarizing modeled and be allowed to practice them often (**Oczkus, 2003**).

- Reciprocal teaching strategies encouraged pupils to enjoy discussing the texts in group interaction and learning from each other's experiences. These four strategies also resulted in a less stressful classroom atmosphere and make students feel motivated and enthusiastic.

- Reciprocal teaching strategies dealt with pupils' different abilities through using different techniques of teaching implemented in various reciprocal teaching strategies.

- Reciprocal teaching strategies created a friendly atmosphere which encouraged pupils to become relaxed and more motivated to speak freely.

**In the light of the findings of the present study, the researcher presents the following recommendations:**

**Recommendations:**

**Teachers:**

- 1- Teachers should pay more attention to the development of second year preparatory stage pupils' reading comprehension skills in EFL classes.
- 2- They should concentrate on the real-life situations tasks which encourage learners to understand English texts inside the classroom freely.
- 3- They also should give more focus on pair-work and group work activities that allow learners to interact and communicate with each other naturally and freely.
- 4- Teachers' role should be shifted from being the main source of knowledge to be guide, organizer, counselor and social worker.

- 5- They should care for pupils' individual differences by diversifying their teaching methods in such a way that involve the different intelligences they possess.
- 6- They should be aware of the reading comprehension skills necessary for each stage so that they can stress within the regular instruction.
- 7- They should convey the same content of instruction in different ways that cope with their pupils' different learning styles.
- 8- Finally, they should develop a friendly classroom atmosphere so as to help pupils to interact and communicate effectively.

**-EFL Pupils:**

- 1- Pupils should be encouraged to be more responsible for their learning through informing them about the benefits of reciprocal teaching strategies. Hence, they will be more motivated and enthusiastic to master these skills.
- 2- They should be encouraged and motivated to freely communicate and interact with their peers to practice reciprocal teaching strategies.

**-EFL Curricula Designers:**

- 1- Reciprocal teaching strategies should be incorporated in teaching reading comprehension in different educational stages.
- 2- Providing teachers of English with appropriate resources that enable them to use reciprocal teaching strategies in their teaching effectively.
- 3- Developing reading comprehension skills should be given special attention in our education. More time and effort should be exerted to develop these essential skills.

Further research studies can be conducted to investigate the effect of reciprocal teaching on other students with primary and advanced level of proficiency. Moreover, the effect of reciprocal teaching on developing and enhancing other English language skills; listening, speaking and writing, can also be done for further research studies.

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