

Developing Reading Comprehension Skills Using Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) among EFL Students

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Abstract:

This study aimed at developing reading comprehension skills using Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) among second-year English majors at the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Translation, Misir University for Science and Technology. The English reading comprehension skills were identified through developing a checklist. In light of the skills identified, a pre-post reading comprehension test was constructed and validated by a panel of EFL jurors. The participants, totaling 68, were divided into two equal groups of 34 students in the experimental group and 34 students in the control. The experimental group students received English reading comprehension instruction using SIOP model, while the control group students received regular reading comprehension instruction. The findings of the study showed that the experimental group students outperformed the control group students in reading comprehension skills.

Keywords: *reading comprehension, SIOP Model*

Introduction

The value of using Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol has begun to attract researchers' interest as a model for effective teaching that would meet the academic needs of EFL learners. It has been widely recognized and strongly advocated that the SIOP can help our students gain greater cognitive academic language proficiency in the target language and integrate it with subject-content at the same time. Providing a supportive environment, a comprehensible input, a clear explanation of academic tasks and ensuring that students must acquire language to produce it rather than simply learning it, the model provides frequent opportunities for FL learners for interaction and practice. The massive contribution reading comprehension can make to language learning maximizes its

importance as a key to academic achievement particularly at the university level where specialization is accorded priority. However, research on FL reading indicate that proficient reading is a complicated process that involves a combination of different abilities and strategies at the same time to compensate for each other in processing a text. For example, a reader should have linguistic, cognitive and metacognitive knowledge to be called a proficient reader. Reading comprehension skills are paramount for learners to become effective readers (Grabe &Stoller, 2002).The movement from passive to active reading involves the development of reading comprehension skills (Machado, 2010). Reading comprehension is the ability to understand what we read where words have context and texts have meaning. Reading comprehension skills allow us to read proficiently, learn effectively and to conceptualize. These skills are, basically, based on earlier stages of reading development, including oral reading and reading fluency. Without developing these earlier reading comprehension skills, students must continually focus on decoding letters and words, rather than progressing to meaning and understanding (Grabe &Stoller, 2002).

There are a variety of methods being used in education to teach students who use English as a foreign language. The SIOP model may help EFL students understand and internalize information in a deeper way by ensuring teachers are delivering content in a way that all students, regardless of their level of English, are successful at comprehending (Echevarria, Vogt & Short, 2012). Briefly explained, the SIOP is a tool for teachers to use when planning and delivering lessons. The model is comprised of eight components and thirty features. The SIOP is one way for teachers to intentionally plan lessons that contain sheltered instruction strategies that are effective for helping EFL students learn in a classroom. The SIOP could be a good tool for English learners because it will help them learn English while simultaneously learning content. In order for EFL students to be successful at university, at some point they need to learn the English language. The SIOP may help students do this more effectively because the focus is not just on learning English while

they get behind on content, or conversely, continuing to focus on content that they don't have a chance of understanding. The SIOP model encourages a mix of content focus so students don't get left behind, but with enough language focus that the content is able to be understood and English is being learned in the process.

In addition to helping learners, SIOP instruction could be an effective model for teachers because it will help teachers use sheltered instruction (SI) strategies more consistently and with more fidelity (Echevarria, Vogt & Short, 2012). The SIOP model can help ensure teachers are planning and delivering lessons with SI strategies for their EFL students (Echevarria, Vogt & Short, 2013). In this age of testing and accountability, teachers need to implement these types of strategies because EFL students, as well as teachers themselves, will be held responsible for the mastering of the curriculum. Universities need to make sure all students are truly learning what is being taught and the SIOP model may be one way to ensure that. The researcher conducted a study using instructional methodology proven effective for foreign language acquisition. The researcher followed the tenets outlined in the SIOP model for lesson planning and implementation of instruction. The study aimed to examine the effectiveness of Sheltered Instruction in enhancing reading comprehension.

Background

Sheltered instruction is an approach used to provide language support to English language learners who are learning academic content in English. The term sheltered refers to the refuge the model provides to students with diverse linguistic backgrounds from English-only mainstream instruction. The primary aim of this type of instruction is to make the core curriculum accessible to students who do not have grade appropriate English language skills by integrating the teaching of subject matter, English language development, and study skills. Features of sheltered instruction include language development objectives, adapted content, the use of supplementary materials, explicit connections to student background and experiences, a

focus on key vocabulary, and clarification in the native language (Ovando, Combs & Collier, 2006; Echevarría & Graves, 2011; and Echevarría, Vogt & Short, 2012).

Sheltered instruction is a successful research-based foreign language acquisition method that includes many of the practices identified by Morgan et al. (2006) and focuses on vocabulary, grammar, and syntax development through curricular content (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2012). Additionally, in sheltered instruction classrooms, the content is presented in multiple ways and the strategies are numerous, e.g., hands-on, pictorial representations, performance-based assessments, oral reports, and group or individual projects. The implementation of sheltered instruction demonstrated academic success in all content areas with non-English speaking students (Grigg, Daane, Jin, & Campbell, 2003; Steingberg & Amelida, 2004; Perie, Grigg, & Donahue, 2005; and National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES], 2009). Social interaction with others is a primary tool for learning, and when used skillfully, such interaction can help students achieve new understandings (Christoph & Nystrand, 2001; Billings & Fitzgerald, 2002; and McIntyre, Kyle, & Moore, 2006). Two focal components of sheltered instruction are building background knowledge and vocabulary, which provide students opportunities to gain prior knowledge of the content being taught in preparation for mastering the objectives of the lesson.

Sheltered instruction is an essential component of any program for English learners (Harper & de Jong, 2004; Williams, Hakuta, & Haertel, 2007; Saunders & Goldenberg, 2010; and Wright, 2010). Sheltered instruction delivers language-rich, grade-level content area instruction in English in a manner that is comprehensible to the learners. When partnered with English language development and, when possible, native language instruction, sheltered instruction allows English learners to progress academically while developing proficiency in English (Wright, 2010; and Fritzen, 2011). Also Sheltered instruction incorporates opportunities for learners to develop general

academic competencies, such as study skills, learner strategies, and critical thinking skills (Baker, 2002; and Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2012). The theoretical framework of Sheltered Instruction is that language acquisition occurs through meaningful use and interaction. Essential to this method is the social, collaborative nature of learning as described by Vygotsky (1962), and Krashen's (1982) comprehensible input, the use of scaffolding techniques, and the integration of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; and Levine & McCloskey, 2009). Various studies have proposed that SIOP training has been successful in promoting more effective implementation of sheltered instruction and SIOP components (Crawford et al., 2008; O'Neal et al., 2009; Batt, 2010; Echevarria et al., 2011; and Short, Echevarria, & Richards-Tutor, 2011). Similarly, studies by Gibbons (2003), Crawford et al. (2008), and Friend et al. (2009) found that continued professional development and component checklists promoted an increase in the use of SI.

As part of the instructional strategies, this approach incorporates the use of props, graphic organizers and other visuals. The use of multimedia, demonstrations, and modeling are also important in this method to facilitate foreign language acquisition (Ovando, Combs & Collier, 2006; Echevarría & Graves, 2011; and Echevarría, Vogt & Short, 2012). Ovando, Combs, and Collier (2006) further reference Gonzales (1994) as defining Sheltered Instruction as a combination of quality teaching and foreign language acquisition research. Also indicated is that Sheltered Instruction is beneficial to all students, but particularly to ELLs typically characterized as a) having a strong first language background; and b) having intermediate fluency in the foreign language.

Although the Sheltered Instruction method consisted of techniques and activities that made content comprehensible for ELLs, teachers did not have specific guidelines for consistency of instruction. Therefore, due to inconsistency in implementation some classes were not as effective as they should have been. This

led to the development of the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) in the mid-1990s. This is a research-based, professional development model of Sheltered Instruction developed by Echevarría, Vogt, and Short (2012) which provides a set of guidelines for lesson planning and delivery of effective instruction to learners of English. SIOP incorporates other effective instructional methods for foreign language and mainstream classrooms such as cooperative learning, connections with student experiences, slower speech, visuals and demonstrations, adaptations of text and supplementary materials, and development of key vocabulary. The model is comprised of 30 features organized around eight components which are 1) preparation; 2) building background; 3) comprehensible input; 4) strategies; 5) interaction; 6) practice/application; 7) lesson delivery; and 8) review/assessment and are summarized as follows.

Language skills broadly includes two areas: reading and writing. Educators often talk about reading in two ways: learning to read (e.g., letter recognition, phonemic awareness, word identification) and reading to learn (e.g., comprehension and analysis of text). One of the main ways to make content comprehensible for English learners is to connect the content to their prior knowledge and experience. Knowing students' backgrounds and first language proficiency is the first step in sheltering reading instruction. Research shows that students' reading abilities in their first language support their acquisition of reading skills in English (August & Hakuta, 1997; Bialystok, 2002; MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Language, 2007; Liaw, 2009; and Grabe, 2010). If an English learner can read in the first language, then these cognitive abilities can be transferred to reading in English (Cummins, 2000). The teacher can shelter instruction by using what a student already knows about reading and by valuing the child's first language abilities as an aid to the acquisition of reading skills in English (Herrera, Perez, & Escamilla, 2010). Reading skills that commonly transfer from one language to the next include phonological awareness, print concepts, the knowledge that text is made up of letters and

words put together in a specific format, and the understanding that language is made up of words and symbols that have meaning (Herrera, Perez, & Escamilla, 2010, p. 33). Hence, once a student has learned to read in one language, that student does not need to be taught the mechanics of learning to read in a foreign language.

Teachers can also shelter instruction by presenting learning in context-embedded ways, such as these 1) using culturally relevant or high-interest words for phonemic awareness instruction; and 2) using words and phrases that students know as the basis for practicing letter formation and for learning print concepts and spelling patterns (Helman, 2004; Ford, 2005; and Herrera, Perez, & Escamilla, 2010). When sheltering instruction to help English learners comprehend text to communicate, it is important to keep in mind two key factors that affect student learning: students' ability to read in the language of instruction; and students' background, culture, and interests. Because language skills involve reading and writing in English, students' proficiency in English is a factor. This factor can be mitigated, to some extent, by integrating students' background experiences, knowledge, and interests into language skills instruction. Familiarity with the content of a text can offset comprehension difficulties stemming from a student's reading ability (Rodgers, 2001; Peregoy & Boyle, 2008; Herrera, Perez, & Escamilla, 2010; and Wright, 2010).

Regardless of students' reading levels, proficient reading skills continue to serve as the foundation for all school-based learning. Comprehending and learning from text are the heart of all reading (Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; and Kim et al., 2006). According to Dieker and Little (2005), students at the upper elementary and secondary levels are expected to utilize reading skills to learn content, and if they lack proficient reading skills, they will struggle in all classes. Moreover, in university level, reading is no longer taught as a content area, but is used as a tool to demonstrate mastery of all other content areas (Dieker & Little, 2005; and Torgesen et al., 2007). According to Morgan,

Moni, and Jobling (2006), efficient and effective instruction for readers should include research-based practices such as instruction in small interactive groups, questioning that requires both literal and inferential responses, and individualized tasks on various levels so that each student is sufficiently challenged. The sheltered instruction model integrates these practices into daily instruction.

A text can be read aloud by the teacher or a student, or the teacher can play an audio recording of the text. Using interactive reading strategies that utilize and build on students' listening and speaking abilities as they make sense of and engage with text. Strategies such as Think-Pair-Share, Directed Listening/Thinking Activity (Peregoy & Boyle, 2008), Critical Questions, and Visualize-Interact-Predict (Herrera, Perez, & Escamilla, 2010) allow students to learn about reading concepts (e.g., predicting, determining the meaning of unknown words, finding the main idea) through listening and speaking. These strategies allow English learners to talk with a peer, a small group, or the teacher as they participate in lessons and demonstrate their understanding of the concepts. The reading comprehension concepts learned through talk then transfer to the skills students will use when they read and engage with texts independently.

During shared reading experiences or close reading, teachers can prompt students to select words that might be essential to the understanding of a short passage. Teachers can also utilize instructional techniques such as List Group Label and Concept Definition Maps to provide students with multiple opportunities to interact with the words at a semantic level. Building on ideas and stories dictated by students to promote reading comprehension while at the same time showing students that through reading we communicate. The Language Experience Approach (Dixon & Nessel, 1983) is a method wherein students dictate the text to be studied. It could be a personal story a student wants to share or a dictation about an experience the class shared. A student dictates the ideas to a writer (usually the

teacher, but the writer could also be a more capable peer), who writes the ideas verbatim. The written texts are then used to support students' comprehension and analysis of text (Peregoy & Boyle, 2008; and Wright, 2010). Sheltering through oral language allows English learners to understand and participate in language skills content, and research shows that this kind of sheltering is key to helping students move beyond word-level comprehension to text-level analysis (August & Shanahan, 2006). Hence a teacher's understanding of students' language background and proficiency and familiarity with instructional techniques are essential in effectively sheltering reading comprehension skills instruction. Consequently, the purpose of the current study was to determine the effect on the reading comprehension skills when the SIOP instructional model is implemented. However there is a lack of research-based evidence about the effectiveness of using this model on reading comprehension at the university level. Consequently, the present study is an attempt to meet this need.

Statement of the problem

Second year students at the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Translation, Misr University for Science and Technology lack the reading comprehension skills required for learning English, which has a negative effect on their language performance overall. To overcome this difficulty, the following questions are raised:

- What are the EFL reading comprehension skills required for the target group?
- How could SIOP Model be used for developing reading comprehension skills of the target group?
- How far is the SIOP Model effective in developing the identified reading comprehension skills of the target group?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present study is twofold:

- To identify the reading comprehension skills required for Second Year Faculty of Foreign Languages and

Translation, Misr University for Science and Technology.

- To probe the effectiveness of using SIOP model in enhancing reading comprehension among the target group.

Hypotheses of the Study

The following two hypotheses were formulated:

- There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group exposed to the intervention based on SIOP and the control group receiving regular instruction on the post-test in reading comprehension in favour of the experimental group.
- There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group on the pre-test and the post-test in reading comprehension in favour of the post-test.

Definition of terms

- **Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model**

It is defined as a research-based model of instruction used by mainstream teachers to improve instruction of ELLs. It is a system of lesson planning and instruction that emphasizes both academic content and language acquisition objectives in the grade level curriculum (Hill & Flynn, 2006). Siop refers to a training and observation instrument adopted by the district to provide instruction for English language learners (Echevarria et al., 2012). Siop is defined operationally, in this study, as an instructional approach that incorporates eight components; lesson preparation, building background, comprehensible input, strategies, interaction, practice and application, lesson delivery, review and assessment, to provide a way for teachers to systematically implement instructional features for improving academic achievement of second year English department students at the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Translation and making content comprehensible while at the same time,

developing reading comprehension skills of second year English department students.

- **Reading Comprehension**

Reading can facilitate foreign language acquisition; particularly by building conversational proficiency and writing ability if learners read topics of interest that promote repetition of vocabulary (Burt, Peyton & Adams, 2003). According to Snow (2002) reading comprehension refers to the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. Comprehension is the process of eliciting and making meaning through interaction and involvement with written language (RAND Reading Study Group, 2002). McNamara and Magliano (2009) emphasized that this process is a task of both reader and text factors that happen within a larger social context. Duke (2003) stated that reading comprehension is a process in which reader makes meaning by interacting with text through the combination of prior knowledge and previous experience, information in the text, and the views of reader related to the text. Keenan, Betjemann, and Olson (2008) expressed that reading comprehension needs the successful expansion and arrangement of a lot of lower-and higher-level processes and skills. Reading comprehension is defined operationally in this study as second year English department students' ability to interact with a text in a way that enables them to successfully make predictions, identify cause and effect relationship, make inferences, make comparisons, identify the main idea, important facts, and supporting details, and draw conclusions.

- **Significance of the Study**

Goal of the study was to add to the existing literature on instruction of English as a foreign language at the university level using SIOP for planning and implementation of instruction. The researcher intends to provide educators with a better understanding of Sheltered Instruction as a useful approach for reading comprehension development. The researcher believed that implementation of the same methodology used for

instruction of English as a foreign language (Short & Echevarría, 1999) could be useful in teaching English language learners at the university level.

Method

- **Participants**

The participants of this study were 68 second-year English major students chosen from the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Translation – Misr University for Science and Technology during the 2017 – 2018 academic year, whose age ranged from 20 to 22. The students were divided into two equal groups of 34 students in the experimental group and 34 students in the control group.

- **Instruments**

A reading comprehension skills checklist was developed to determine the most important reading comprehension skills required at the university level. The reading comprehension sub-skills used in the study were as follows: 1) making predictions, 2) Identifying cause and effect relationship, 3) Making inferences, 4) Making comparisons, 5) Identifying the main idea, important facts, and supporting details, and 6) Drawing conclusions (Appendix B).

A pre-post reading comprehension test was constructed by the researcher and validated by a panel of EFL jurors. It was used prior to the SIOP intervention implementation to make sure that students of both groups were at the same reading comprehension level before starting the program; hence, the progress achieved by the experimental group could be attributed to the program they have been exposed to. As a post-test, it was used to investigate the effectiveness of the proposed intervention based on SIOP in developing reading comprehension skills. The total number of items in the test was 35 items that assess the reading comprehension skills. The test items included multiple choice questions (Appendix C). Selection of question type was based on the nature of the reading text and the skills to be measured. The test total score was seventy.

- **Procedure**

One day prior to the experiment, the pre-test was administered to the control and experimental groups on the 30th of September 2018. The experimentation of the program started in October 2017 till December 2017. A 12-session treatment was administered to the experimental group students, whereas the control group received the reading course using the regular method. Finishing the treatment, the post-test was administered one day after the experiment ended on the 23rd of December 2018 to both the experimental and the control groups. Post-test conditions were relatively the same as those of the pre-test in terms of place and time.

The data was collected and tabulated through SPSS and analyzed using t-test to compare the means of pre-test and post-test of reading comprehension and to probe the effectiveness using SIOP Model.

- **Results and Discussion**

In order to test the research hypotheses, the Statistical Package (SPSS/PC+) was used to calculate the t-value for testing the difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and the control group on the pre-post reading comprehension test. In the following section, a discussion of the hypotheses is provided in order to investigate the final results of the treatment.

- **The first hypothesis**

The results for the first research hypothesis of the study (There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group exposed to the intervention based on SIOP and the control group receiving regular instruction on the post-test in reading comprehension in favour of the experimental group) are presented in Table (1).

Table (1): t-test results of the post-test comparing the experimental and the control groups in reading comprehension

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	D.F.	t	Significance Level	Effect Size
Control	34	13.85	1.61	66	27.13	(Significant at 0.01 Level)	7.2
Experimental	34	24.34	1.45				Very Large

Results in table (1) indicated that the control group students' mean score in the reading comprehension skills of the post test was (13.85) whereas, the experimental group students' mean score was (24.34). These results indicate that the higher mean is in favour of the experimental group's post administration of the test. Therefore, students' reading comprehension skills have been improved after exposure to the SIOP model.

To sum up, the t-test of the paired sample results about the difference between the students' mean scores of the reading comprehension skills of the post- administration of the test was statistically significant at 0.01 levels in favor of the experimental group indicating the effectiveness of the proposed SIOP intervention on students' reading comprehension skills. As shown in table (1), the calculated effect size value of the SIOP intervention on the experimental group students' reading comprehension was (7.2). Therefore it can be said that the SIOP model had a large effect on the experimental group students' reading comprehension on the post-test as compared to that of the control group students receiving regular instruction. So, the first hypothesis is accepted.

• The second hypothesis

The results for the second research hypothesis of the study (There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group on the pre-test and the post-test in reading comprehension in favour of the post-test) are presented in Table (2).

Results in table (2) indicate that the students' mean score in the reading comprehension skills in the pre-test was (11.82). On the other hand, their mean score in the reading

comprehension skills of the post test was (24.34). These results indicate that the higher mean is for the post administration of the test. Therefore, students' reading comprehension skills have been improved after exposure to the proposed program.

Table (2): t-test results comparing the Mean of the pre- and post-test scores for the experimental group in the reading comprehension skills

Group	Test	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	D.F.	t	Significance Level	Effect Size
Experimental	pre	34	11.82	1.37	66	38.77	(Significant at 0.01 Level)	13.6
	post	34	24.34	1.45				Very Large

The t-test of the paired sample results about the difference between the students' mean scores of the reading comprehension skills of the pre- and post- administration of the test was statistically significant at 0.001 levels in favor of the post administration since the estimated t- value was (38.77). In addition, the estimated effect size value (13.6) indicate that the SIOP intervention had a large effect on the experimental group students' reading comprehension skills on the post-test as compared to their reading comprehension skills on the pre-test, so the second hypothesis is accepted.

Results showed that the SIOP Model proved to be effective in developing the experimental group students' reading comprehension skills. The authors of SIOP maintain that sheltered instruction is good teaching for all students (Echevarria, Vogt, and Short, 2012). As SIOP is a teaching method specifically for EFL students, this matches other studies conducted on SIOP that show students improving with SIOP instruction (Echevarria, Short, Powers, 2006; and McIntyre, etc. 2010). While there are studies showing SIOP improving achievement scores, there have not been many SIOP studies conducted at the university level. This study seems to indicate that SIOP instruction was effective at the university level. The experimental group students demonstrated tangible progress in reading comprehension skills. This progress might be attributed

to several factors such as, the proposed teaching strategies adopted throughout the implementation of the SIOP Model that gave students the opportunity to think before, during and after reading, co-operate with each other, and read purposefully.

Activating and building schema through encouraging brainstorming about the topic of the reading texts increased students' motivation and fostered their reading comprehension skills. This is consistent with the results reached by (Janssen, 2002) maintaining that a warm and friendly atmosphere in the classroom enhanced learner performance. The researcher was friendly and energetic to lower the affective barrier for the learners, which, in turn, made students feel at ease and more likely volunteer to participate. Students' work in small cooperative groups throughout the SIOP lessons was one of the essential features of the current program that eased the difficulty of the tasks practiced pre-, during and post-reading as reading was no longer seen as solitary activities. In addition, it encouraged students with better reading abilities to help their less able classmates and increased students' motivation, thus facilitating their reading.

The incorporation of cooperative learning activities by giving students a job in a group and monitor that EFL are participating to provide comprehensible input (Ardisana, 2007). Every time students were engaged in SIOP intervention, each had the opportunity to participate in scaffolded instruction because modeling and support are integral steps of the SIOP model. Think-alouds showed students what a good reader is thinking of while reading, which again provided scaffolding toward developing good reading comprehension. Another important factor was the prediction strategy practiced throughout the SIOP intervention based on the reading texts titles. They helped students practice thinking before and during reading in a way that emphasized the active nature of meaning-making processes among students. This is consistent with the results of (Kraft, 2005; and Tsai and Shang, 2010). The results of the study concluded that the effect of the SIOP Model was

reflected in the high scores the students obtained after exposure to the SIOP intervention. The large-size effect derived from the t-test provides confirmation that using the SIOP Model resulted in improved performance in reading comprehension.

Conclusion

Given the analyses of the data presented herein, the findings indicate the SIOP model is a useful tool for planning and implementation of instruction in the FL classroom at the university level. Furthermore, the SIOP model can successfully be adapted to accommodate the needs of English language learners in higher education. There is also evidence that the SIOP model provides the necessary scaffolding strategies that make the content more comprehensible to the English learner and enhances learners' reading comprehension skills. Results provided evidence that using think-aloud technique to model strategies is beneficial in improving students' reading comprehension skills. Results provided evidence that the environment of cooperative learning, peer support and students' interactive group work and engagement during different reading strategies proved to be influential in enhancing their motivation and involvement in reading activities, thus fostering their reading comprehension skills.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn from the results reached, the following recommendations seem pertinent:

- Getting to know the students background knowledge and skill of the target language should be considered. That can be accomplished through administration of a pre-test measure for all language skills. This provides a snapshot of what the student already knows and serves as a guide for planning of instruction.
- EFL teachers are recommended to make use of the SIOP model to foster EFL learners' reading comprehension skills.
- Implementing teaching methodology that encourages a cooperative learning environment which would allow the

students to practice the target language in a relaxed atmosphere is more conducive to language development.

- Supportive feedback should be offered throughout the learning process, not only to help students identify their weaknesses in reading and ways of overcoming them but also to encourage their strengths and consequently increase their motivation and involvement in reading.
- Planning and implementation of lessons that encourage student interaction in the target language create a less threatening and more effective learning environment.
- SIOP training should be part of in-service training sessions. Modeling of the use of SIOP strategies during training is essential.
- Making a concerted effort to utilize various teaching techniques such as scaffolding, repetition, and visuals is highly recommended so as to meet students' different learning preferences.

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