The Impact of Using Learning A-Z Platform on Improving EFL Reading Comprehension Skills of Secondary Stage Students

By

Eman Abdul Rahaman Abdul Wahab Alaswad
Prof. Aly Abdul-Samea Qoura
Dr. Mervat Mohamad El-Hadidy

The Impact of Using Learning A-Z Platform on Improving EFL Reading Comprehension Skills of Secondary Stage Students

Eman Abdul Rahaman Abdul Wahab Alaswad
Prof. Aly Abdul-Samea Qoura
Dr. Mervat Mohamad El-Hadidy

Abstract

This research aimed at investigating the effect of Learning A- Z Platform on enhancing first year secondary stage students' EFL reading comprehension skills. Participants of the research were two groups of 60 first year secondary school students (one experimental and one control). The instrument of the research was an EFL reading comprehension skills test. The experimental group wastaught using the Learning A Z online platform, and the control group received regular instruction. The test was pre and post administered to both groups before and after the treatment was applied. Results showed that the experimental group outperformed the control one in the post administration. This indicated that the Learning A-Z Platform was effective in developing the participants' EFL reading comprehension skills.

Key words: Learning A-Z Platform, EFL reading comprehension skills, Secondary stage.

Introduction

English has emerged as the dominant global language, playing a crucial role in facilitating communication across diverse fields such as science, technology, trade, education, and diplomacy. This widespread adoption can be attributed to its inherent flexibility, demonstrated by its capacity to adapt, evolve, and integrate elements from other languages, consequently gaining global recognition. Like all languages, English comprises four core skills: listening, speaking and reading and writing. Reading is essential for success in both school and life. The ability to read provides opportunities for both professional and personal development. Reading is the ability to comprehend the thoughts and feelings of others through written texts.

Learning English as a foreign language in Egyptian schools is a difficult process for students, particularly with reading comprehension skills (Hassen, 2022). In recent years, the integration of technology in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education has garnered significant attention.

Among the emerging digital platforms, Learning A-Z has shown promise in enhancing advanced-level reading skills among first-grade secondary school students. This platform represents a valuable tool in addressing the complexities associated with developing reading comprehension skills in EFL contexts.

Theoretical background

Recent years have witnessed a surge in the integration of technology into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. This heightened interest is driven by the recognition that today's learners, often referred to as digital natives, possess a high level of proficiency in utilizing Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and exhibit a remarkable capacity to adapt to evolving technological advancements compared to previous generations (Kurudirek and Berdieva, 2024).

This integration has greatly changed the landscape of teaching and learning by opening a wide range of opportunities. Platforms for online learning have become essential components of contemporary education. Online learning environments can successfully integrate a wide variety of digital platforms such as Social Networking Applications, Video Conferencing, and Learning Management Systems (LMS). Learning A-Z is an important LMS Platform.

Reading comprehension

Grabe and Stoller (2020) defined reading as understanding and interpreting the message in a written text. However, it is not a passive process. Reading is dynamic and unique to each student. It requires active engagement and mental interaction with the text to construct meaning. Students do not rely solely on the text itself; they use their existing knowledge to build understanding. This interactive process is key to successful reading comprehension.

Reading is the process of comprehending and analyzing the meaning contained in a written text. It is not a passive process, though. Every student's reading experience is different and dynamic. To create meaning, one must actively engage with the text and engage with it mentally. Students improve understanding by drawing on their prior knowledge rather than just the text itself. The secret to effective reading comprehension is this participatory process (Grabe and Stoller (2020). Reading comprehension is the integration of text with prior knowledge and experiences, a process that enhances both language skills and a love for reading (Villafuerte & Pacheco, 2023).

To enhance reading comprehension, instructors adopt a variety of approaches. Brown and Day (2019) address four key approaches: the Interactive Approach, that involves readers in pre-reading and post-reading activities which promote critical thinking; the Metacognitive Approach, that offers self-monitoring strategies for boosting comprehension; the Cooperative Learning Approach, that employs interaction between peers to increase comprehending; as well as the Content-Based Approach, that combines reading with subject-specific content for deeper understanding.

As reported by Dambacher (2010) and Grabe (2014), the reading process has three models (1) Bottom-up: referring to the process of decoding which readers utilize to extract meaning from the interpretation of the text unit from the words understanding, (2) Top-down: It is the readers' interpreting of the whole text's main ideas, and (3) Interactive: Readers do and exchange their interpretations of the text with other readers. These models help with word recognition and global text comprehension.

Regarding the types, Yurko and Protsenko (2021) stated that reading comprehension can be classified into intensive reading, extensive reading, skimming and scanning. Confirming to Muchtar (2019), **intensive focuses** on a short text with the goal of in-depth comprehension. Readers meticulously examine the text to grasp its full meaning. In contrast, **extensive reading** involves reading longer texts, typically for pleasure, emphasizing overall understanding. This approach encourages independent reading, allowing students to choose their own materials and read widely (Alfiani & Astiyandha, 2020). **Skimming** involves quickly reviewing a text to grasp its main idea. Readers rapidly scan the text, identifying key pointers that summarize the content (Marliasari, 2017). The emphasis is on understanding the overall theme rather than focusing on every word or detail. Finally, **scanning** is a rapid reading technique used to locate specific information within a text (Darwin, 2017). Readers do not read the entire text but instead quickly search for and extract the desired information."

As maintained by Sembiring, Raja and Pangaribuan (2020), educators must recognize the four distinct levels of comprehension: literal, inferential, critical, and creative. **Literal comprehension** involves understanding information explicitly stated in the text, such as main ideas, details, cause-and-effect relationships, and chronological sequences. This foundational level is crucial for building higher-order thinking skills. **Inferential comprehension** requires readers to go beyond the literal text, making inferences and understanding underlying relationships between events, characters, and their consequences. **Critical comprehension**

involves evaluating and analyzing the text, drawing conclusions, and comparing ideas presented in the writing. Critical readers actively engage with the text, questioning information and examining the presented facts to fully grasp its meaning. **Creative comprehension**, the highest level, encourages readers to extend their thinking beyond the author's presentation. It fosters imaginative thinking and creativity, allowing students to explore reading skills in novel ways. The teacher plays a vital role in modeling and guiding students through these different levels of comprehension.

As claimed by Paris and Hamilton (2014), reading comprehension is a multifaceted process that encompasses a range of essential skills. These key components include decoding, fluency, vocabulary, reasoning, and background knowledge. In line with Meniado (2016), foundational skills such as phonemic awareness, phonics, and comprehension are critical for developing reading proficiency. Additionally, Effective reading strategies, such as skimming, scanning, inferencing, and predicting, are crucial for identifying main ideas, extracting key details, and anticipating the flow of information (Bechlem & Derouaz, 2017). Furthermore, skills like sequencing, summarizing, and distinguishing facts from opinions are vital for developing critical thinking and deeper comprehension (Amin, 2019).

To conclude, by mastering these skills, readers can effectively analyze text structure, assess the credibility of information, and make informed predictions about the content. This not only enhances reading comprehension but also enriches the overall reading experience, enabling readers to gain valuable insights and knowledge from the texts they encounter.

Learning A–Z Platform

Learning A-Z is a comprehensive online platform offering a wealth of resources to support English language learning for both teachers and students. These resources include interactive lessons, worksheets, engaging audiobooks, and a wide range of materials designed to cater to diverse learning needs and levels. The platform features leveled texts, differentiated materials, and foundational skills resources such as phonics and fluency exercises. Furthermore, Learning A-Z provides a suite of assessment tools and exercises, along with a wealth of instructional resources for teachers, including lesson plans, rubrics, and benchmarks (Learning A-Z, 2019).

Learning A-Z encompasses several dedicated websites, including Raz Kids, Foundation A-Z, Raz Plus, Reading A-Z, Science A-Z, Vocabulary A-Z, and Writing A-Z. The platform is committed to providing high-quality literacy-focused materials that enhance a broad range of macro

and micro skills, such as reading, listening, speaking, pronunciation, vocabulary, and writing (Menggo et al., 2019; Nawe and Amin, 2020).

A web-based literacy program, Raz-Plus, developed by Learning A–Z. Raz-Plus comprises a collection of online literacy resources for teachers and individualized content for students at varying levels of literacy development. it provides an extensive collection of virtual reading resources and materials, including leveled books, that are developmentally appropriate and standards-aligned, for teachers to incorporate into their daily instruction. Teachers can also assign online quizzes to students to collect real-time data on student progress and use it to provide individualized support (Learning A- Z, 2014).

Through the provision of literacy resources on a wide array of topics, students can select reading materials of interest to read for pleasure. Individual completion of online resources provides students with a degree of control over their learning experience and allows them to progress through individualized content at a pace that is comfortable (Juárez, 2015).

Related Studies

Some studies have shown that Learning A-Z platform can significantly enhance students' reading comprehension skills:

Acosta (2022) investigated the impact of employing an eBook application (Raz-Plus) rather than standard reading curriculum to engage pupils using interactive activities. The study included 106 lower elementary school pupils from a private Christian school, with 96 of them completing all the evaluations required for the quasi- experimental static-group comparison design of the study. The Elementary Reading Attitude Study and the STAR Reading Enterprise assessment were used in this study to evaluate student development after introducing the Raz-Kids application into their present reading program for a period of six weeks. A MANOVA was utilized for analyzing all the study's data relevant to academic and recreational reading motivation, phoneme awareness, word recognition, and student understanding. These evaluations collected data, which was then analyzed using SPSS statistical software.

Rose (2022) examined the effects of the classroom application of RAZ Plus, a digital English language reading support. A small group of first-year students from the International Communication School at a small private college in Hiroshima, Japan, participated in the study during the 2021–2022 academic year. A mixed-methods analysis of qualitative information obtained in the form of anonymous surveys as well as quantitative data on the participants' time spent within the app and

incentives earned is conducted to determine participants' English reading levels and perceptions of their reading skill growth. The findings imply that using the RAZ -Plus reading application as part of a comprehensive reading curriculum can be a helpful learning tool for bilingual teachers and students.

Ho (2020) explored the effectiveness of a web-based literacy program, Raz-Plus, that serves as a resource for blended learning instruction in K–5 classrooms. Following a 13-week implementation period at three rural elementary schools, comparisons of the treatment (21teachers and 249 students) and control (18 teachers and 198 students) groups revealed greater outcomes in the treatment group for overall literacy achievement, student interest in academic reading, and student interest in recreational reading, as compared to the control group. Core dimensions of implementation fidelity were measured through classroom observations and surveys with participating teachers; analyses revealed no significant associations between fidelity measures and student outcomes. This study provides evidence of the efficacy of Raz-Plus as a tool for supporting literacy development of elementary students.

Juárez (2015) aimed to identify the progress of the students developing their English reading skill using the Learning A-Z platform. The study's tools included interviews and reading evaluations, as well as continuous assessment and observation throughout three months (from October to December of 2014). The participants were second and third grade elementary school pupils from the "Centro de Investigación y Atención al Desarrollo Infantil" (CIADI) Institute. According to the results, RAZ app has increased their ability to read and comprehend large texts and has significantly improved their fluency. On the other side, the learning A-Z platform has given students the confidence and assurance to defend their point of view and, more precisely, what they believe to be accurate while speaking and reading.

Resendez and Azin (2014) investigated the impact of independently utilizing Raz-Plus and Reading A-Z and completing select literacy activities at home on kids' reading levels before and after summer vacation. Subjects were 77 students in grades K-5 from three ethnically diverse schools in Arizona, California, and Washington who had been determined by their instructors as being at risk for reading difficulties. A single-group pre-posttest design was adopted in this investigation. Students who used Raz-Plus read 50 novels on average and took 115 comprehension questions. Students who used Reading A-Z read 25 106 novels and took 20 comprehension quizzes on average. Students, parents, and teacher

coordinators all agreed that the Raz-Plus and Reading A-Z programs helped students improve their reading skills, particularly comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary.

Background of the Problem

      This research's problem is that secondary stage students in Egypt have poor reading comprehension skills. Thus, this research is an attempt to improve EFL reading comprehension skills through Learning A-Z platform.

      The researcher administered an EFL pilot reading comprehension test to thirty first-year secondary stage students to determine students' level in these skills. Table 1 reports the pilot study results as follows:

Table 1

Reading Comprehension Skills' Test Results (Pilot Study)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Reading comprehension skills	35	1.00	17.00	7.69	4.24

      The results of the reading comprehension skills test indicated the poor level of students' reading skills as 74% of the participants could not achieve 50% or more on the test. The mean score was (7.68 Marks) from total score (20 Marks).

Statement of the Problem

      Based on the review of literature, results of the pilot studies, and experience of the researcher as an EFL teacher, the problem of this research is that students' level in reading comprehension is low. Students' scores in the reading comprehension skills test revealed the difficulties they face with some reading comprehension skills especially, guessing the meaning of words through context, skimming (reading for overall understanding), inferring the meaning from context, scanning (reading for specific information), differentiating between facts and opinions, and summarizing a reading text. As a result, the researcher recommends using Learning A-Z platform to assist students improve their reading comprehension skills.

Purpose

      This research was conducted to enhance EFL reading comprehension skills of first year secondary stage students using Learning A-Z Platform.

Questions

      This research seeks to answer the following main question that was derived in view of the literature review and the digital learning platforms:

- What is the effectiveness of using Learning A Z platform in improving the EFL secondary stage students' reading comprehension skills?

  This main question elicits the answer to the following sub-questions:

- What are the reading comprehension skills necessary for EFL secondary stage students?
- What are the features of a proposed treatment based on Learning A-Z platform to improve reading comprehension skills?

Significance

The goal of this research is to create an online learning environment that includes collaborative activities as well as differentiated instruction. Given the preceding considerations, it is intended that the current investigation will help the following parties:

For students: The research underlines the value of taking an approach for teaching reading comprehension skills. Students will be exposed to a variety of resources, which they must evaluate and use.

For instructors: The suggested platform and activities can be used to help instructors enhance the language performance of their students. In addition, it will help them improve their strategies and activities.

For Curriculum Developers: When creating activities or assignments for students, they can consider the findings of the research. They should consider enriching their reading comprehension teaching skills.

Researchers: This research motivates researchers to seek out, create, and use cutting-edge learning methodologies, processes with online resources and platforms. ICT age and its significant impact on the learning process.

Delimitations

Since it is beyond the limits of a single research to consider a wide range of factors, the research will be restricted to:

Participants and Place: Two intact first year secondary classes (N=60) in a governmental Egyptian school in El-Qalubia Governorate.

Time: A limited duration for implementing the proposed program (a school term, i.e., nearly three months).

Skills: The research deals only with the reading comprehension sub-skills that are suitable for EFL first year secondary students which included guessing the meaning of words through context, skimming (reading for overall understanding), inferring the meaning from the context, scanning (reading for specific information), differentiating between facts and opinions, and summarizing a reading text.

Definitions of Terms
Reading Comprehension Skill

According to Grabe (2009:14) Reading is the process of receiving interpreting information in language from via the medium of print.

Consequently, the researcher defined reading **operationally** as" the first-year secondary school students' ability to receive, interpret, and comprehend ideas, data, and impressions via a meaningful written context using reading comprehension skills.

Learning A-Z platform

Learning A-Z is an online platform with vast resources such as lessons, worksheets, interactive audio books, and other materials designed to help teachers and students to reach their English level (Learning A- Z, 2019).

As for this research, Learning A-Z can be **operationally** defined as a digital platform through which learners can be active participants in their learning process rather than being only recipients through being involved in collaborative environments and being able to access information whenever and wherever they are.

Hypotheses

Based on both context of the problem and the previous reviewing of literature, the current research tried to verify the following hypothesis:

- There is a statistically significant difference at the 0.05 level between the mean score of the experimental group and the control group on the EFL reading comprehension skills posttest in favor of the experimental group.
- There is a statistically significant difference at the 0.05 level between the mean score of the experimental group in the pre- and post-administration of the reading comprehension pre/posttest in favor of the post administration.

Method
Research Design

To achieve the aim of the present research, the researcher adopted the analytical descriptive method for reviewing literature and related studies concerning the variables of the research. The researcher also adopted the quasi-experimental design, where two EFL first year secondary stage students' intact classes participated in the study. They were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. Pre-posttest in reading comprehension test was administered to both groups before and after

treatment. Homogeneity of both groups was confirmed before treatment. The following figure shows the design of the research:

Figure 1

The design of the research
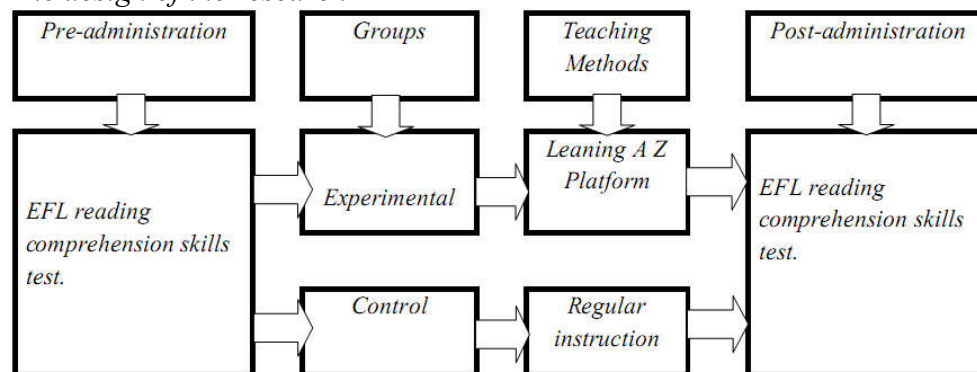
Participants

The participants were 60 first year secondary stage EFL students. Two intact classes were selected. The participants were assigned into two groups: one is experimental which was taught via the Learning A-Z platform (Raz App) and the other one is control which was taught via the regular method. Each group consisted of 30 first year secondary stage students. The students' ages in each group ranged from 16-17 years old. All students have started learning English since KG level. Therefore, the participants of the research were mostly homogenous as they come from almost the same socio-economic background. Follow up observation was conducted during the research for recording students' several trails in answering the exercises and their changing degrees to the best.

Instrument

For achieving the purpose of the research, the following instrument was designed and used by the researcher:

- An EFL reading comprehension skills test (pre-post), designed by the researcher to evaluate the students' reading comprehension skills.

Statistical Analysis and Results

Testing the first hypothesis of the research

The first hypothesis stated, "There is a statistically significant difference at the 0.05 level between the mean score of the experimental group and that of the control group on the post administration of the EFL reading comprehension skills test in favor of the experimental group".

To verify this hypothesis, the t-test was used to compare the mean score of the two groups. Results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Comparing the Performance of the Control and Experimental Groups onthe Post-Administration of the EFL Reading Comprehension Skills Test

Group	Skills	N	Mean	SD	t-value	DF	Sig.
Experimental	Distinguishing the main idea from details	30	1.93	0.253	5.224	58	0.000
Control		30	1.40	0.498			
Experimental	Identifying word meaning	30	1.96	0.182	5.849	58	0.000
Control		30	1.40	0.498			
Experimental	Reading for specific information	30	1.96	0.182	6.761	58	0.000
Control		30	1.33	0.479			
Experimental	Inferring sequences	30	1.90	0.305	7.539	58	0.000
Control		30	1.20	0.406			
Experimental	Inferring cause and effect	30	1.73	0.449	5.277	58	0.000
Control		30	1.16	0.379			
Experimental	Comparing and contrasting	30	1.66	0.479	5.461	58	0.000
Control		30	1.10	0.305			
Experimental	Identifying the writer's attitudes	30	1.63	0.490	5.060	58	0.000
Control		30	1.10	0.305			
Experimental	Drawing conclusions	30	1.56	0.504	4.894	58	0.000
Control		30	1.03	0.319			
Experimental	Total	30	14.36	0.668	17.522	58	0.000
Control		30	9.73	1.284			

Table 2 reports that the t-values were (5.224, 5.849, 6.761, 7.539, 5.277, 5.461, 5.060, 4.894, 17.522 respectively) and that was statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This means that there were significant differences between the experimental and the control groups in the post-administration of the EFL reading comprehension skills test. These differences could be ascribed to the implementation of the Learning A-Z platform program. Therefore, the First hypothesis of the research was verified and accepted.

Testing the second hypothesis of the research

The second hypothesis stated, "There is a statistically significant difference at the 0.05 level between the mean score of the experimental group on the pre and post administration of the EFL reading comprehension skills test in favor of the post administration."

Table 3

Comparing the Performance of the Experimental Group on the Pre-Post Administration of the EFL Reading Comprehension Skills Test

Group	Skills	N	Mean	SD	t-value	DF	Sig.
Post	Distinguishing the main idea from details	30	1.93	0.253	16.155	29	0.000
Pre			1.03	0.182			
Post	Identifying word meaning	30	1.96	0.182	9.761	29	0.000
Pre			1.20	0.406			
Post	Reading for specific information	30	1.96	0.182	17.696	29	0.000
Pre			0.93	0.253			
Post	Inferring sequences	30	1.90	0.305	14.000	29	0.000
Pre			0.96	0.182			
Post	Inferring cause and effect	30	1.73	0.449	8.332	29	0.000
Pre			0.96	0.182			
Post	Comparing and contrasting	30	1.66	0.479	7.449	29	0.000
Pre			0.76	0.430			
Post	Identifying the writer's attitudes	30	1.63	0.490	6.952	29	0.000
Pre			0.63	0.490			
Post	Drawing conclusions	30	1.56	0.504	5.767	29	0.000
Pre			0.73	0.449			
Post	Total	30	14.36	0.668	27.755	29	0.000
Pre			7.23	1.135			

The t-test for dependent samples was used to compare the difference between the mean score of the experimental group students in the EFL reading skills test before and after implementing the Learning A-Z Platform program. Results in Table 3 reveal that the mean score in the post-administration of the reading comprehension skills test was greater than that of the pre-administration in all EFL reading comprehension skills. The t-test value was significant at the 0.05 level for all the reading comprehension skills and the total score of reading comprehension skills were (16.155, 9.761, 17.696, 14.000, 8.332, 7.449, 6.952, 5.767, and 27.755 respectively). In addition, all differences were in favor of the post-administration of the EFL reading comprehension skills test.

The effect size of the program on reading comprehension skills was calculated and the results are shown in Table 4

Table 4

Effect Size of the Learning A-Z Platform Program on Improving the Experimental Group Students' EFL Reading Comprehension Skills

Dependent Variable	Effect size
Distinguishing the main idea from details	0.319
Identifying word meaning	0.371
Reading for specific information	0.440
Inferring sequences	0.494
Inferring cause and effect	0.324
Comparing and contrasting	0.339
Identifying the writer's attitudes	0.306
Drawing conclusions	0.292
Overall Reading Skills	0.841

As shown in Table 4, The value of $\eta2$ were greater than 0.15 so the effect size was high. The effect size was (0.841) which means that (84.1%) of the variance in the total dependent variable could be ascribed to the effectiveness of the Learning A-Z Platform program (among other variables not included in the current research such as institute environment and private tutoring).

Therefore, it is evident that the Learning A-Z Platform program made a significant difference in the use of the EFL reading comprehension skills of the experimental group. Consequently, both hypotheses were verified and accepted.

Discussion

Based on the statistical analysis of the EFL reading comprehension skills hypotheses, it was clear that the experimental group students outperformed the control group students in all the EFL reading comprehension skills, and the t-values were highly significant at 0.05 level. Besides, the experimental group's posttest results were much better than the pretest results, and the effect size was great (84.1%). These findings indicate that the Learning A- Z Platform proved to be more effective in enhancing the participants' ability to read better and enhance their EFL reading comprehension skills.

The t-test results of the posttest revealed that " Distinguishing the main idea from details" was the most improved skill. The Learning A-Z Platform helped students through: The Digital Preview of the Book, having audio books and listening to, which helps with vocabulary development and easier to understand. Having the amazing reading options such as Hearing Word, Highlighting, View Vocabulary Word, Add to Word Journal, My

Reflection, and some Tools which encouraged them to continue as question mark, star, happy face, and marker, to use these options while reading. Students work in groups, participate in class discussions through using the discussion cards which examine their comprehension, and interact with each other and the researcher via the platform, to understand what they read about. Some of the reading projects, which they enjoyed, included Everything About Kites, Ships of Discovery, Sources of Energy, and Charles's New Year Revolution.

Generally, all the reading comprehension skills were significantly improved due to the use of the Learning A-Z Platform Program. The results of this research, concerning improving the EFL reading comprehension skills, were in line with the studies of Resendez and Azin (2014); Juárez (2015); Ho and Smrekar (2018); Rose (2022).

Conclusion

The results of the present research revealed that using Learning A-Z Platform had played a major role in enhancing the participants' reading comprehension skills. Accordingly, the hypotheses of the present research were accepted. As a result, it was found that Raz Plus proved to be effective in developing students' EFL reading comprehension skills. Considering that both the experimental and control groups were homogeneous in their level of reading comprehension skills in the pre-tests results. Therefore, any differences that occurred between two groups in the post tests after the implementation of Raz app could be attributed to this treatment. The researcher found that Raz app had a large effect size on enhancing EFL secondary stage students' reading comprehension skills.

Pedagogical Implications

Current research tried to deepen the knowledge required to create positive social change through enhancing reading comprehension skills. Given the current research findings, the following instructional implications are proposed:

1. Learning A-Z encouraged students to participate and communicate because My Vocabulary Journal - for example - enabled them to understand the text, deduce the meaning of new words, and engage in constructive interaction.

2. Learning A-Z with its various tools assisted learners who lack reading skills to achieve noticeable enhancement by breaking down complex texts into manageable chunks, pre-teaching vocabulary to activate prior knowledge before reading, and using graphic organizers to help students organize information while reading.

3. Using the internet, in general, and the educational networking sites, in particular, differently. The students learnt how to surf the internet to find useful resources and relevant information. In addition, the students started chatting for educational purposes.

4. Learning through Learning A-Z platform helps students to boost their reading skills and become independent readers.

Recommendations

In accordance with the results and conclusions of the current research, the following recommendations were presented:

For EFL Teachers:

- EFL teachers should give more attention to technological innovations to cope with the recent technological revolution.

- They should increase the students' role in reading classes and minimize their own role.

- Training students on working collaboratively to achieve a common goal.

For EFL Students:

- Students should focus on cooperative learning, especially group work, and should be activated inside and outside the classroom.

- Students should prepare themselves to play different roles inside the classroom, other than being just a listener.

- Students should use the internet and platforms in learning useful skills.

For EFL Course Designers:

- Incorporating online learning in teaching EFL skills.

- They should provide more chances to learn the English language through platforms; and promote a positive attitude toward English learning and higher achievement.

For EFL Researchers:

- Researchers should build on the insights of this study to apply Learning A-Z Platform in other areas of English language teaching and to improve various student attitudes.

- Investigating different trends in technology and innovative teaching methods to enhance reading comprehension skills is recommended.

Suggestions for Further Research

In the light of the results of the present research, Further research may be taken into consideration as follows:

1. Using the Learning A-Z Platform in teaching other EFL skills; listening and writing.
2. Using the Learning A-Z Platform program at different school levels and on larger samples.
3. in-depth case studies of specific classrooms or schools implementing Learning A-Z platform should be conducted.
4. Examining the impact of Learning A-Z Platform on enhancing other psychological aspects (e.g., motivation).
5. The effectiveness of using Learning A-Z Platform in students with special needs or disabilities should be investigated.

References

Alfiani, R., & Astiyandha, T. (2020). Analysing the Effectiveness of Extensive Reading on Grade Eleven Students' Reading Comprehension. Lingua Journal Pendidikan Bahasa, 72–79.

Amin, M. (2019). Developing reading skills through effective reading approaches. International Journal of Social Science and Humanities, 4(1), 35-40.

Bechlem, Z., & Derouaz, L. (2017). The Role (s) of Skimming and Scanning in Enhancing Students' Written Retelling: The Case of Intermediate and Upper Intermediate Learners of English at the Centre d'Enseignement Intensif des Langues, Jijel (Doctoral dissertation).

Brown, H. D., & Day, R. (2019). Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy. Pearson.

Celik, B., Kara, S., 2024. Perceptions of Parents on Raz-Kid's Role in Enhancing Students' Micro and Macro-Skills Holistically: A Study on Ishik Brayaty International Primary School in Erbil. Forum for Linguistic Studies. 6(3): 558–573. DOI: https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v6i3.6822

Dambacher, M. (2010). Bottom-up and top-down processes in reading. Postsdam: Universitatsuerlag Postsdam. Capture in https://publish-up.uni-potsdam.de/opus4-ubp/frontdoor/deliver/index/docId/4105/file/pcss01.pdf (Jun, 11/2022)

Grabe, W. (2009). *Reading in a second language: Moving from theory to practice.* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom.

Grabe, W. (2014). Key issues in L2 reading development. Centre for English Language Communication, 8-18. Retrieved from https:// www. academia.

edu/24734384/Key_Issues_in_L2_Reading_Development

Darwin. (2017). The Use of Scanning Technique to Improve Reading Comprehension in Narrative Text of Grade VIII Students at SMPN 3 Tolitoli. *Journal Madako Education,* 179–185.

Grabe, W. and Stoller, F. (2020). Teaching and researching reading (3rded.). NewYork: Routledge.

Hassen R. (2022). Using Infographics in Developing EFL Reading Comprehension Skills Among Al-Azhar Secondary Institute Students. (Master's thesis), Faculty of Education. Banha university, Egypt

Ho, H., & Smrekar, M. (2020). *Implementation and efficacy study of Raz-Plus for students from kindergarten to fifth grade.* Denver, CO: McREL International.

Juárez, M. (2015). *Improving Reading Skill on Students of Starter Level Using the Learning A-Z Platform,* Licenciatura en Lenguas Modernas, Faculty of Languages.

Kurudirek, A., Berdieva, O., (2024). The more empowered schools, the more fruitful students. Educenter: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan. 3(1), 1–9.

Learning A-Z. (2014). *The Story Behind. Learning A-Z.* [s.d.] [Cited on December 5,] Available on: http://www.learninga-z.com/about-learninga-z-history.html.

Learning A-Z. (2019). *The effectiveness of Reading A-Z and Raz-Kids: Educators share their stories about how these websites made a difference for their students.* Retrieved from https://www.learningaz.com/ special/ shared/ pdf/ EfficacyBrochure.pdf

Marliasari, S. (2017). Teaching Reading Comprehension by Using Skimming and

Scanning Techniques to The Tenth Grade Students Of SMAN 1 Gelumbang. English Community Journal, 109–122.

Menggo, S., Suastra, I., Budiarsa, M., (2019). Needs analysis of academic-English speaking material in promoting 21st century skills. International Journal of Instruction. 12(2), 739–754. DOI: https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2019.12247a.

Meniado, J. C. (2016). Metacognitive Reading Strategies, Motivation, and Reading Comprehension Performance of Saudi EFL Students. English Language Teaching, 9(3), 117-129.

Muchtar, N. (2019). Intensive and Extensive Reading in Improving Teaching Reading Comprehension. Lingua Pedagogia (Journal of English Teaching Studies), 1–13.

Nawe, P.A.M., Amin, W.O., (2020). The impact of integrating technology in teaching listening skills to Kurdish students at preparatory schools. Qalaai Zanist Journal. 5(3), 811–838

Paris, S. G., & Hamilton, E. E. (2014). The development of children's reading comprehension. In Handbook of research on reading comprehension (pp. 56-77). Routledge.

Resendez, M., & Azin, M. (2014). *Raz-Kids and Reading A-Z: A report on the 2013 summer reading field studies.* PRES Associates, Inc.

Rose, K. (2022). *RAZ for All! Exploring the Effects of a Digital Reading App in an EFL Class.* London.

Sembiring, F., Raja, V. L., & Pangaribuan, J. J. (2020). Teaching Reading Comprehension Through Peer Tutoring Technique to The Tenth Grade Students of SMA Santa Maria Kabanjahe in The Academic Year of 2020/2021. Kairos ELT Journal, 175–186

Villafuerte, J. & Pacheco, E. (2023). Reading-Comprehension-and-Academic-Writing.

Yurko, N., Protsenko, U., (2021). Reading Comprehension: The Significance, Features and Strategies. Collective Monographs, 106–114.