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Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of Letters and English Language



Dissertation

Academic Master

Domain: Letters and Foreign Languages

Field: English Language and Literature and Civilization

Specialty: Applied Linguistics and English for Specific Purposes

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Title:

**Developing EOP Learners' Discourse Competence through Reading
by Making Inferences**

**Case Study of Second Year Professional License Students-Drilling-
KasdiMerbah University-Ouargla**

Publically defended

On: 07/06/2014

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Academic Year: 2013-2014

Dedication

To the memory of my mother

To my lovely father

To each member of my family

To my closest friends

To all my classmates

To all who cares about me

Acknowledgements

I thank ALLAH for the accomplishment of this work. I owe my deepest thanks to my supervisor Mrs. SAADOUNE Farida for being patient, helpful, and most of all encouraging. I am grateful to my teacher Dr. Chaouki whom I consider my spiritual father for setting me straight. My deepest gratitude goes to Mr. ARBAOUI Ali for helping me to find the right sample. I owe a lot of thanks to Mr. KHOUILDI Sliman who teaches me how to analyze the results using the T-test. I would also like to thank the board of examiners for accepting to read this work and for any remarks they would make to refine it. Finally, I must also thank all the students who have taken part in this study. Without their contribution, this project would not see the light.

List of Abbreviations

- EAP:** English for Academic purposes
- EBE:** English for Business and Economics
- EBP:**English for Business Purposes
- EFL:** English Foreign Language
- ELP:** English for Legal Purposes
- EMP:** English for Medical Purposes
- EOP:** English for Occupational Purposes
- EPP:**English for professional Purposes
- ESP:** English for Specific Purposes
- EST:** English for science and Technology
- ESS:** English for Social Sciences
- EVP:** English for Vocational Purposes
- L1:**First language
- L2:**Second language
- SD:**The standard deviation
- SPSS:**Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
- TOFEL:** The test of English as a foreign language
- VESL:**Vocational English as a Second Language

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General Introduction

I. Background

A plethora of books have been written about discourse analysis. Discourse Analysis is a melting pot in which one finds a marriage between form, meaning, and context. (Schiffrin, Tannen, and Hamilton, 2001). Discourse analysis aims, mostly, at developing discourse competence, which is one of the components of communicative competence. In turn, the last aims at the development of the four language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) as a whole and not separately.

Brown and Yule (1983) postulates that “Discourse analysis is, necessarily, the analysis of language in use” (P.1). This definition has a strong basis since language consists of a set of system from which a user makes a choice. Appreciating language involves an understanding of the functions it performs within particular contexts. Not only that but it encompasses, as well, identifying the purposes and the participants that are integral to the understanding of particular communicative processes such as texts.

Discourse analysis is a new approach to the teaching of reading skills. Since reading is one amongst the four skills which has a primordial key for providing students with strong basis for the language development and vocabulary expansion. It is essential to understand the illocutionary meaning of a given text sets in its contexts.

Reading is crucial for English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) learners as they need it in their endeavors in order to read manuals, instructions, and so on. It is central in demystifying professional genres that will determine learners’ career opportunities later. Because of such importance, students need to understand texts in their milieus.

Comprehending a text is not an easy task. Students usually quarrel with difficult words as they want to understand them literally. Since they focus all of their attention on creating meanings from words only, they face problems in understanding words through contextual cues. That is why it is significant to master making inferences.

Making inference is one of the reading techniques that students use to understand the unfamiliar words that they encounter while reading. It is important for them to learn how to make inferences through contextual cues in order to develop all competencies: grammatical, strategic, pragmatic, intercultural and discourse competence in particular.

II. Aim of the study

Developing discourse competence is one of the aims of language teaching. It is essential for learners for several reasons. First, language is much more than isolated sentences, but it is related to the context of production. Therefore, the grammatical and linguistic devices and rules are not sufficient as a guideline to produce a language in context intended for communication. Second, learners should learn how to produce written and oral texts that are coherent in ideas and thoughts, and how to use cohesive devices to link these ideas together. Learners face difficulties in producing cohesive and coherent texts especially in EOP milieus. Moreover, students should learn how to use their schemata to understand different texts. More important, they should learn how to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words through contextual cues. Thus, this paper endeavors to develop discourse competence within EOP learners through making inferences hoping to overcome the hurdles they encounter in their fields.

III. Statement of the Problem

EOP students find difficulties to understand a given text specifically to understand texts in their specialties. They depend, mainly on dictionary translation to understand the meaning of particular key words. However, this is not suitable all the time since the meaning of a word depends on its context. Not alone, dictionary translation takes time and energy and this may cause a danger to them especially when they are in the field because they sometimes need to read some manual instructions in English to operate machines synchronically. Therefore, if they miss the meaning of a key word, this may put their lives in danger. On this basis, it is important for EOP students to learn how to infer the meaning of words through contextual cues in fulfilling the ultimate aim of developing their discourse competence.

IV. Research Questions

The research questions of the present study are to be formulated as follows:

- Does making inferences enhance the development of discourse competence?
- How to develop EOP learners 'Discourse competence through making inferences?
- Is it important to infer the meaning of words through contextual cues?

V. Research Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this study is put forward as follows:

- Making inferences may enhance the development of discourse competence

VI. Research Methods

We opt, in the study, for an experimental design where a pre-test and post-test were conducted to measure the development the students made after the training sessions. Also, it is effective in testing the hypothesis suggested.

VII. Limitations of the Study

During the study, we encountered some hurdles that affect in a way or another the whole work such as:

- It was difficult to find authentic texts that are relevant to students' specialty and also relevant for the study in terms of making inferences through contextual cues.
- The selection of the right sample population took a long time. Since it is difficult to find a sample which is interested in the English language and at the same time ready to contribute in the experiment.
- This study remains only a case study. The promising results that we obtained may be different with another sample population and with different conditions.

VIII. Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation is composed of two parts: the theoretical part and the practical part. The theoretical part contains two chapters: the first one is concerned with developing the discourse competence. The second one focuses on Reading and EOP. The practical part deals with the methodology adopted in this study and with the analysis and interpretations of the results.

Chapter Two: Developing Discourse Competence

Introduction

One must learn more than just the grammar, or vocabulary, one must learn also how to use the appropriate words in its appropriate context. On this premise, "Discourse Analysis examines how stretches of language, considered in their full textual, social, and psychological context; become meaningful and unified for their users" (Cook, 1989, p. xi). One of its aims is developing discourse competence within learners. Therefore, this chapter is an attempt to shed light on the framework of discourse competence, starting with defining communicative competence, discourse, then discourse competence. Next, it defines some important concepts as well for instance cohesion, coherence, genre, and the alike. On the top of that, we define authenticity and its impact on developing discourse competence. Finally, we close with procedures for developing discourse competence.

2.1. Communicative Competence

The revolutionary notion of communicative competence was coined by Hymes (1972), who criticized Chomsky's linguistic competence (1965) as being inadequate and idealized. Hymes (ibid) asserts that learners must acquire not only linguistic rules such as phonology, morphology, syntax, but also they need to know how language is used by members of a speech community to accomplish their purposes. Therefore, it can be justifiably suggested that speakers of a language need to use their language in both linguistically and socially appropriate ways in order to be able to communicate effectively in a language. In this matter, Widdowson (1989) wrote:

"Communicative competence is not a matter of knowing rules for the composition of sentences and being able to employ such rules to assemble expressions from scratch as and when occasion requires. It is much more a matter of knowing a stock of partially pre-assembled patterns, formulaic frameworks, and a kit of rules, so to speak, and being able to apply the rules to make whatever adjustments are necessary according to contextual demands" (p. 135)

2.1.1. Components of Communicative Competence

Communicative competence is comprised of grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and discourse competence, (Canale & Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983 & Savignon, 1997). Hedge (2000) states that "Linguistic or grammatical competence is concerned with knowledge of the language itself, its form and meaning" (p.46). That is to say, it deals with how to use the grammar, syntax and vocabulary of language. Sociolinguistic competence is concerned with knowing how to use and respond to language appropriately, given the setting, the topic and the relationships among the people communicating. As cited in Hedge (ibid), Canale and Swain (1980) define strategic competence as "how to cope in an authentic communicative situation and how to keep the communicative channel open" (p. 52). In other words, it insists on knowing how to compensate when there is a lack in communication and how to keep it fluent.

Uso-Juan and Martinez-Flor (2006) modified the model by adding the intercultural competence and by substituting the pragmatic competence with the sociolinguistic competence. Hedge (2000) noted that "Intercultural competence refers to the knowledge of how to interpret written texts appropriately within their socio-cultural context" (p. 270). That is to say, the interpretation of a text depends on its context. Hedge (2000) claims, in a more contextualized fashion, that "Pragmatic competence involves an understanding of the illocutionary force of an utterance by being aware of situational and participant variables within which the utterance takes place, as well as politeness issues" (p. 269). In analogous words, the reader should understand the intent of the writer by relating the utterance to the situation where it resides.

One of the above components which have not been discussed yet is discourse competence. The question is why it is left to the end, however. Discourse competence is vital in interpreting a certain text since all the aforementioned components are involved when a reader tries to contextualize a given piece of writing. Firstly, we will define discourse, then, discourse competence.

2.2. Discourse

The term 'discourse' was always a subject of controversy. Many definitions were stated by the formalists and were opposed by the functionalists; other linguists perplexed between 'discourse' and 'text'. What follows is a kind of a defining-battle of the term 'discourse'.

Traditionally, the term 'discourse' was defined in two ways. On the one hand, the Formalists (such as Fasold, 1990) defined it as a unit of coherent language consisting of more than one sentence. This is approximately similar to what Nunan (1993) declares in his statement "Discourse can be defined as a stretch of language consisting of several sentences which are perceived as being related in some way" (p.5). On the other hand, the Functionalists (such as Stubbs, 1983) characterize discourse as language in use. However, the two definitions are deficient. The former considers a piece of language as a discourse only if it consists of a more than one sentence but is the word 'stop' not comprehensible? In a matter of fact, it is. One can understand that 'stop' is in the context of driving. So, anyone can understand that the car should stop and allow the other car to pass even if it is a matter of people who are not driving. The latter regards discourse as language in use, yet this notion is so general. Hence, the two views should be combined to form a holistic definition from Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) point of view: "A piece of discourse is **an instance of spoken or written** language that has describable internal relationships of **form and meaning** (e.g., words, structures, cohesion) that relate **coherently** to **an external communicative function or purpose** and **a given audience/ interlocutor**" (emphasis added) (p.4).

Some central keys in bold are mentioned in this quotation and they should be explained separately. The first one is an instance: it means it could be a phrase, expression, a word, a sentence, and so on. The second is spoken or written: this means that the two modes of language are involved. The third indicates that it concerns with the propositional which is the structure and the illocutionary which is the meaning or the communicative function- what the writer/ reader wants to convey. The third one is an external communicative function or purpose: we think that they mean the purpose of a given discourse such as to convey a message, or to deliver a speech, etc. More broadly, it is the context of the discourse. Finally, any discourse should be targeted to a given audience.

The term "discourse" was confused with the term "text". Some make a distinction between them; others use them interchangeably. Nevertheless, the two terms differ. Text refers only to the formal structures which makes it as a unit of language; while discourse is text in context (Nunan, 1993). The quotation, in the next page, is a justification to what is being said earlier. Cook (1989) states that discourse is stretches of language perceived to be meaningful, unified, and purposive' (p.156). Yet, text is a stretch of language interpreted formally without context" (p. 158). According to Nunan (1993) who claims that:

“Text refers to any written record of a communicative event. The event itself may involve oral language (for example, a sermon, a casual conversation, a shopping, transaction) or written language (for example, a poem, a newspaper advertisement, a wall poster, a shopping list, a novel), whereas discourse is reserved to refer to the interpretation of the communicative event in context”. (p.8)

Throughout history, discourse was approached from three perspectives: the formal approach, the functional approach, and the social approach. Some have taken a formal approach to discourse (such as Fasold, 1990), defining it simply as ‘language above the level of the clause or sentence.’ Those working from this definition often try to understand the kinds of rules and conventions that govern the ways one joins clauses and sentences together to make texts. Others take a more functional approach (such as Stubbs, 1983), defining discourse as ‘language in use’. This Definition leads to questions about how people use language to do things like make requests, complaint, and apologize in different kinds of situations and how one interprets what other people are trying to do when they speak or write.

Finally, there are those who take what we might call a social approach, defining discourse as a kind of social practice (Schiffrin, Tannen, and Hamilton, 2001). What is meant by this is that the way one uses language is closely related to the way one constructs different social identities and relationships and participates in different kinds of groups and institutions. It is tied up with issues of what one believes to be right and wrong, who has power over whom, and what one has to do and say to ‘fit in’ to one’s societies in different ways. Although these definitions seem separate, it is preferable to see them as interrelated aspects of discourse. The way people use language cannot really be separated from the way it is put together, and the way people use language to show who they are and what they believe cannot be separated from the things people are using language to do in particular situations.

In brief, as stated by Schiffrin, Tannen, and Hamilton (2001) definitions of discourse have in common a focus on specific instances of language. However, many linguists, in their definitions, fall into the three main categories: 1) - anything beyond the sentence 2) - language use 3) - a broader range of social practices that includes non-linguistic and nonspecific instances of language. At the end, we conclude with what Nunan (1993) said and with whom we agree "Understanding a discourse involves more than formal text devices such as

cohesion. It also involves using our background knowledge and our knowledge of context so as to understand the functions of individual sentences and utterances within discourse" (p. 56)

2.3. Discourse Competence

Llurda (2000) defines discourse competence as "it is related to the correct organization of texts following the rules of cohesion and coherence determined by the text itself and by its particular genre" (p. 87). Brown (2000) contends that: "It is the ability we have to connect sentences in stretches of discourse and to form a meaningful whole out of a series of utterances" (p. 247). Uso-Juan & Martinez-Flor (2006) argue that: "Discourse competence implies an understanding of how language operates at a level above the sentence" (p.37). "It involves the knowledge of written discourse features such as markers, cohesion and coherence as well as formal schemata (i.e., knowledge of how different discourse types are organized) with reference to the particular communicative goal and context of the written text (ibid, p.268). Put simply, if students want to comprehend a particular text, they need to know the different discourse features: how they are linked to one another and why. Then, they relate these discourse features to the whole context and the communicative goal of a particular text. *Prima facie*, out of these definitions, we deduce that discourse competence involves more than a mastery of how to combine grammatical forms and meanings to achieve a unified written text in different genres. Yet, it is how to use your schemata in order to interpret a given text through combining the form and the meaning together.

In a nutshell, discourse competence is at the core of Canale and Swain (1980) framework "since it is in and through discourse that all other competencies are realized. And it is in discourse and through discourse that the manifestation of the other competencies can best be observed, researched, and assessed." (Celce- Murcia & Olshtain, 2000, p.16)

2.4. Linguistic Elements in Discourse Analysis

According to De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981), a text is a communicative occurrence which has to meet seven standards of textuality: cohesion, coherence, intentionality, acceptability, informativity, situationality, and intertextuality. The first two are text-centred notions since they designate operations directed at the text materials. The others are user-centered as they are concerned with the activity of textual communication by the producers and receivers of texts.

2.4.1. Cohesion

One of the standards of textuality is cohesion. Halliday (1994) defines cohesion as: "The set of resources for constructing relations in discourse which transcend grammatical structure" (p.309). In similar words, Cohesion is a kind of glue that holds the text together. It is all the grammatical and lexical links that link one part of the text to another such as conjunctions like ' however', ' in addition ', and so on. Tanskanen(2006) holds similar view by stating that: "cohesion refers to the grammatical and lexical elements on the surface of a text which can form connections between parts of the text" (p.7). Earlier, Nunan (1993) declared that cohesion includes text-forming devices that enable the writer/ the speaker to tie the sentences in a text together. Halliday and Hasan (1976), pointed out in Nunan (1993), identified five different types of cohesion: reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion. Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000) holds similar position like above

"Cohesion is an overt feature of the text, providing surface evidence for the text's unity and connectedness. Cohesion is realized linguistically by devices and ties that are elements or units of language used to form a larger text (spoken or written). Since cohesion relies heavily on grammatical and lexical devices, it relates to the reader's linguistic competence "(p.126)

In brief, as stated by Baker and Ellece (2011), "cohesion refers to the way that text makes sense syntactically". (p. 16)

2.4.2. Coherence

The second text-centred notion is coherence. Coherence concerns the ways in which meanings and sequences of ideas relate to each other. According to Baker and Ellece (2011), "coherence refers to the ways that a text is made semantically meaningful". (p.16). Celce-Murcia & Olshtain (2000) argue that: "Coherence is the quality that makes text conform to a consistent world view based on one's experience and culture or convention, and it should be viewed as a feature related to all three participants in the interactive process: the writer, the written text, and the reader" (p. 125).

An important question, nonetheless, should be asked: what makes cohesion different than coherence? To answer this question, one should analyze the definitions mentioned above. Via earlier, it seems highly that cohesion and coherence are not discrete. Yet, it appears that

coherence is when the text makes sense as a whole at an ideas level; whereas cohesion is rather more the mechanical links at a language level. The two terms, hereby, should not be wilding: a text is maybe a cohesive but not a coherent and vice versa. It may contain cohesive devices but lack sense, yet it may include nothing from cohesive devices and still make sense at ideas level. As cited in Celce- Murcia and Olshtain (2000), Carrel (1982) gives an example about a text which seems that it is not cohesive but it makes perfect sense:

The picnic was ruined. No one remember to bring a corkscrew.

"Coherence in this text is created due to the fact that both the writer and the reader share knowledge and schemata that relates corkscrews to wine bottles and wine to picnics. The extra textual knowledge in this case is imperative for the perception of coherence in the text. In fact, non-native speakers of English who do not drink wine often find Carrell's short text to be incoherent". (p. 127)

It seems apparent that background knowledge is necessary in order to understand that text is coherent.

To sum up, from De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) point of view: Cohesion is the way in which linguistic items of which texts are constituted are meaningfully interconnected in sequences, while coherence concerns the ways in which the meanings within a text (concepts, relation among them and their relations to the external world) are established.

2.4.3.Text Typology

According to Nunan (1993), the term ' genre', originally, were applied to literary discourse such as tragedies, comedy, etc. These types of discourse can be recognized by their overall shape or generic structure. Recently, these texts can be identified by their communicative events. Swales and Bhatia (1981, 1985, 1990) and Bhatia (1993) ,as cited in Murcia and Olshtain (2000), state that : "A genre is recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purposes identified and mutually understood by the members of the professional or academic community in which it regularly occurs".(p. 6)

Each communicative event has communicative purposes, that is to say, it fulfills some functions. These functions determine the use of lexis and grammatical structures and in turn it determines the overall shape or generic structures of the discourse. In other words, from the

point of view of Nunan (1993): "Different types of communicative events result in different types of discourse, and each of these will have its own distinctive characteristics" (p. 48). In similar vein, as cited in Paltridge (2006, p. 82), Richards and Schmidt (2002) defines discourse as "A type of discourse that occurs in a particular setting that has distinctive and recognizable patterns and norms of organization and structure and that has particular and distinctive communicative functions"

To illustrate these quotations above, one should mention an example from Paltridge (2006) which explains what was said already. An example of genre is a letter to the editor. These kinds of letter occur in contexts like newspapers and magazines. They are characterized by recognizable patterns of organization and structures such as headings at the top, the body of letter, and so on. Their communicative function is usually to comment or present a particular point of view.

Relating the notion of "genre" to the overall subject of discourse competence, English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) students should be aware of the settings where Engineering texts, Medical texts, and so on occur in order not to be straightjacket in identifying their communicative purposes and also to be able to analyze their structures and illegibly understand them.

2.4.4. Acceptability

It is one of the user-centred notions. From the point of view of De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981), Acceptability concerns the receiver's attitude that the set of occurrences should constitute a cohesive and coherent text instrumental in fulfilling the producer's intentions. Basically, it concerns the reader's expectations that the text should be cohesive and coherent and of some relevance to them. Let us take the case of students of engineering. If they are given a text about medicine, it would not be acceptable to them since they were expecting a text which is relevant to their studies. Besides, they were expecting it to be cohesive and coherent.

2.5. Authenticity

Authenticity is very crucial when it comes to developing discourse competence. Therefore, we will define authenticity and we will examine its impact on developing discourse competence.

2.5.1. Definition of authenticity

What do we mean by authenticity? And what does it mean an authentic text? We start, first, by defining the term 'authenticity'. Throughout the history of English language teaching, according to Tatsuki (2006, p. 1), "Authenticity is taken as being synonymous with genuineness, realness, truthfulness, validity, reliability, undisputed credibility, and legitimacy of materials or practices". However, in Dudley- Evans and St-John (1998), it was mentioned that others argue that the genuineness of text does not guarantee its relevance but the authenticity of purpose. That is to say, the text is considered authentic only if it is exploited in ways that reflect the real world use. Answering the second question, authentic texts have been defined as "... **real-life** texts, not written for **pedagogic** purpose" (Wallace 1992, p. 145) (emphasis added). Two key words are mentioned in this quotation and they should be explained: The first primordial word is real-life texts, it means texts that are written for native speakers; texts that are found in journals, magazines, etc. and they are not designed for teaching purposes and this is what is meant by pedagogic purposes.

Formerly, Morrow (1977) holds similar view by defining authentic text as the language produced by a real speaker or writer for a real audience which is expected to express a real message. Likewise, Harmer (1991) contends that authentic materials are the texts designed for the native speakers which are real and not initially designed for language learners. Also, Wallace (1992, p. 79) emphasizes that "As soon as texts, whatever their original purpose, are brought into the classroom for pedagogic purposes they have; arguably, lost authenticity" so, in his opinion if a text is brought into the classroom for pedagogical purposes, it loses its truthfulness then texts should not be for teaching purposes in order to be authentic. Beside the term 'authentic', other two terms are presented which are 'non-authentic text' and 'simulated-authentic text'. In contrast to authentic texts, a non-authentic text is a text that especially designed for learning purposes. According to Harmer (1991), there is another type of written material which is additional to the other two types which is labeled as 'simulated authentic material'. This material is specially designed for students of English; however, it attempts to reproduce the authentic written or spoken English.

As a closing statement, we prefer to terminate with what Widdowson (1990) declares: "It has been traditionally supposed that the language presented to learners should be simplified in some way for easy access and acquisition. Nowadays, there are recommendations that the

language presented should be authentic". (p. 67) Authenticity, here, in our opinion is coping with students' needs for learning.

2.5.2. The Impact of Authenticity in Developing Discourse Competence

As it was stated implicitly by the linguists above, authentic texts are needed in the classroom because they aid learners to enhance their acquisition of language and development of their discourse competence. Authentic texts help learners to increase their intrinsic motivation and like that they will be encouraged more to read for pleasure since those authentic texts are likely to contain topics of interest to learners. In such way, learners will acquire more the aspects of discourse and they will be able to understand the relationships between sentences and ultimately understand the whole text by relating it to its context.

However, linguists such as Widdowson (1990) claims that the difficulties associated with authentic texts because of the vocabulary used or the cultural knowledge demotivate learners. Yet, in our opinion, authentic texts assist students to more expose to the external world which enable them to understand more different texts. Authentic texts allow students to expose to real discourse. This advantage helps them to know how really language is used. Not only that but also articles, newspapers, and so on contain a variety of text types, language styles which are not easily found in teaching material such as text books and this aids them to depict to diverse genres. By so doing, they will find the characteristics of each genre and its formal properties.

Unstill, we have not been come to the essence of the issue which is how authenticity helps to develop EOP Learners' discourse competence? Answering this question, we should describe first the nature of ESP. Because of ESP courses are based mainly on the Learners' needs and purposes, the students will be directly taught the texts they need in the real world which also includes the learners ' job settings. This will assist them to recognize the different structures of the sentence and how the sentences relate to the whole discourse and how to make inferences in order to understand the whole text. Let us imagine that students of Engineering who are given a text about *The Grapes of Wrath and the Mayor of Casterbridge*. This novel will not be suitable to them not because it is unrepresentative of engineering English but it is judged that it is probably will not engage the interest and activate the learning strategies of such students (an example given from Widdowson ,1981). In this way, this will be as a hurdle to them for faster acquisition of the discourse competence *per se*.

We close the discussion with what Bojovic(2006) postulates. Bojovic (ibid) believes that material should be authentic, up to date, and relevant for the students' specializations. In other words, teachers should present what they judge it as relevant to their students.

2.6. Developing Discourse Competence

To develop discourse competence, there are some procedures to be followed:

2.6.1. Procedures for Developing Discourse Competence

In order to develop discourse competence, two procedures, bottom-up and top-down, are adopted. The former as its name indicates, it starts from the smallest units into the biggest ones. As Nunan (1993) declares, the smallest units of language are identified first, and these are 'chained together' to form the next highest unit; these units are then chained together to form the next highest unit and so on. (p. 78). Applying this definition to the context of reading, students will try to work out meanings of the words to construct the meaning of the sentence and proceed upward until they reach the meaning of the whole discourse. In a pre-reading activity, students will be given a set of questions concerning the topic of the text. This aims at activating student's past knowledge and giving them clues about the nature of the text. In a while-reading activity, students will be asked to read the text twice or three times then, they will try to look up the meanings of words in dictionaries. After that, they will try to see if the words are connected grammatically to increase their grammatical awareness. Further, they will be asked to see if the words go together in terms of their semantic meaning. Moreover, they will see how the sentences are combined together by cohesive devices. So, they will figure out the meaning of the sentences through cohesive devices. Later, how paragraphs are linked together until they come to the meaning of the whole discourse. In post-reading activities, students could be given a task in which they are asked to summarize the text or construct sentences similar to structures of sentences within the text. Like that, teachers will be able to test whether students understand the text or not.

Operating in the opposite direction from the bottom-up processing, top-down processing, as its name indicates, moves from the highest level to the lowest level. So, students rely heavily on contextual features in order to understand the meaning of the whole discourse and then they proceed downwards until they reach the meaning of words. There are some strategies that student use in order to comprehend a particular text:

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- They Use background knowledge to assist them in comprehending a particular text;
 - They scan the text for headings, sub-headings. They look for pictures, graphs and diagrams in order to acquire a broad understanding before they go in deep in reading;
 - They skim the text in order to look for specific information, they write down some questions they want to find an answer to;
 - They try to identify the genre of the text: what is it exactly? Is it a procedural, instructive, allegorical text etc? This identification facilitates reading comprehension;
 - They try to differentiate between what is important and what is less important, viz, they discriminate between key information and supporting details (Nunan, 1993)

Criticism has been made for the two processing (bottom-up and top-down), as cited in Nunan (1993), Stanovich (1980) proposes a third model, which he called the interactive-compensatory model, “deficiencies at one level can be compensated for by any other level, regardless of whether it is lower or higher in the hierarchy” (p.84). That is to say, if a reader encounters a problem in comprehending sentences, he could either deduce their meanings from the context (higher level) or interpret the meaning of words (lower level).

In whatever the procedure one chooses to develop discourse competence, students aim to use the language not understand its internal working.

Conclusion

In short, students should be aware of the different cohesive devices and their uses. Notwithstanding, this is not the whole part of the story. The remaining part of it is that they should be aware of coherence. As such, they should look beyond cohesive devices to the realm of coherence. These two concepts are very important in developing discourse competence and in interpreting a given piece of text. The next chapter provides us with some insights on how to develop discourse competence through making inferences.

Chapter Three: EOP and Reading

Introduction

Reading plays an important role in the ESP. Therefore, the present chapter will focus on defining ESP, its types and specifically EOP since it is our main concern. Then, we will move to define Reading skills as macro-skill of ESP. After that, we will examine its relationship with discourse analysis and discourse competence. Finally, we will deal with reading techniques especially making inferences.

3.1. Definition of ESP

English for special purposes (ESP) arose as a term in the 1960's as it became increasingly aware that general English courses frequently did not meet learners and employers' needs (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). According to Dudley-Evans (1991) who provides a broader definition of ESP, quoted in Master (2005), as "the **careful research and design of pedagogical materials and activities** for an **identifiable** group of **adult learners** within a **specific learning context**" (p.99) (emphasis added)

Key elements are mentioned and that should be deeply scrutinized. What does Dudley-Evans mean exactly by the careful research and design of pedagogical materials? Does he mean that the materials are not ready made? In a matter of fact, this is what he means exactly. Materials and activities should be either designed by the ESP teacher collaborating with subject specialists so as to meet learners' needs by selecting what will make them autonomous after the course finishes. Again, we come to another speculation which is the word ' pedagogical'. Does Dudley-Evans see that materials should not be authentic especially if we go back to the definition of authenticity in the second chapter? As we have seen, authentic texts have been defined as "... real-life texts, not written for pedagogic purpose" (Wallace 1992, p. 145) and we should not forget that text is a kind of material used. Here, we raise another inquiry: should ESP materials be authentic? However, this is not our concern at the moment. Another issue was hoisted is: should ESP be taught to an identifiable group of adult learners? As a matter of fact, we agree with what Dudley-Evans suggests; these learners should not be chosen at random but they should be selected on the basis of their background knowledge, their academic level, their culture, their age, their sex, their preferences and learning styles,... etc. Yet, should learners be adult is still questionable. This issue will be discussed later. ESP learners should be taught in a specific learning context. This means that ESP teacher should create milieus which are restricted to what really learners need.

Dating back to the emergence of English for Specific purposes (ESP), ESP's definition did not stabilize. Therefore, it is rather difficult to offer an accurate definition of ESP. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) theorize that "ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reasons for learning" (p.19). They insist that ESP is an approach not product since it is in principle no difference in terms of language, methodology, and materials used.

Strevens (1988) defines ESP in terms of absolute and variable characteristics. This division helps in resolving arguments about what is and is not ESP. He distinguishes between four absolute and two variables characteristics. Ten years later, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) modified Strevens' original definition to form their own. They have increased the number of variable characteristics and removed the absolute characteristic that ESP is in contrast with general English. In this manner, they have improved the definition substantially. The revised definition is as follow:

I. Absolute characteristics:

- ESP is defined to meet specific needs of the learner;
- ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves;
- ESP is centred on the language (grammar, lexis, register), skills, discourse and genres appropriate to these activities.

II. Variable characteristics:

- ESP maybe related to or designed for specific disciplines;
- ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of general English ;
- ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be for learners at secondary school level;
- ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students;
- Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language system , but it can be used with beginners (1998, pp.4-5)

Dudley-Evans and St. John's definition stresses that ESP is not necessarily related to specific disciplines. Moreover, they affirm that ESP is likely to be used with adult learners although it could be used with young adults in a secondary school setting. Further, they spotlight on both language and the tasks done. They hold that the way the language is used

and the tasks that are carried out are critical to an ESP course. However, they admit that the language need not be specific, but the practices in relation do.

In short, English for specific purposes has grown to become one of the most prominent areas of English Foreign Language (EFL) teaching today. In our opinion, what is significant most in ESP is the way language is used by means of activities the students engage in. Adopting Widdowson (2003)'s statement: "You do not acquire the conceptual significance of things when you learn their names" (p.67). This asserts our opinion that language is not of that importance but the way it is used.

3.2. Types of ESP

As we have seen, ESP addresses the communicative needs and practices of particular academic or occupational groups. Through such commencing, we figure out that there are two main types of ESP: which are English for Academic purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). The former is tailored to the needs of learners at various, usually higher educational levels. The latter is housed in occupational settings.

These two above types were identified by Carter (1983) as one type. He divides ESP into three: English as a restricted language, English for Academic and Occupational Purposes, and English with specific topics. The first is limited to some special languages, that is to say, the language, for instance, used by a waitress at a restaurant or air traffic controllers who give instruction to the plane's captain on the way s/he lands. Following Mackay and Mountford (1978)'s idea of special language who explained it as follows: "The only practical way in which we can understand the notion of special language is as a restricted repertoire of words and expressions selected from the whole language because that restricted repertoire covers every requirement within a well-defined context, task, or vocation" (p. 4).

Because of such limited code, this kind of language does not permit the learner to communicate effectively as it is constrained to specific situations such as vocational contexts. Espoused to Mackay and Mountford (ibid)'s view that: "... knowing a restricted 'language' would not allow the speaker to communicate effectively in novel situation, or in contexts outside the vocational environment" (pp. 4-5). In our view, we contend that specificity in ESP ought to be on the purpose for which learners learn and not on the specific jargon or registers they learn.

For the second, the co-authors Hutchinson & Waters (1987) split ESP into three branches: English for science and Technology (EST), English for Business and Economics (EBE), and

English for Social Sciences (ESS). In turn, these branches are divided into two major categories based on learners' reason of learning: either does s/he need it for academic study (EAP: English for Academic Purposes) or does s/he require it for work training and (EOP/EVP/VESL: English for Occupational Purposes, English for Vocational Purposes, Vocational English as a Second Language)? An example of EAP is English for Economics, whereas an illustration of EOP is English for Secretaries. Akin to what Carter (1983) presumes when they make EAP and EOP share the same status, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) deem that people can work and study concurrently. Also, they assume that the language learnt in academic environments can be used later for work.

As mentioned in Dudley-Evans & St. John (1998), ESP has traditionally classified by experience, now; however, it has been classified by professional area or discipline. This division is as follows: EAP involves English for (Academic) Science and Technology; English for (Academic) Medical Purposes (EMP); English for (Academic) Legal Purposes (ELP); and English for Management, Finance, and Economics. EOP embraces English for professional Purposes (EPP) and English for Vocational Purposes (EVP). The first is concerned with the language of training for specific trades or occupations whereas the second is concerned with finding a job and interview skills. English for Professional Purposes is further divided into English for Medical Purposes (EMP) and English for Business Purposes (EBP), While English for Vocational Purposes is broken down into Pre-Vocational English and Vocational English. One can notice that English for Medical Purposes (EMP) is in both EAP and EOP. However, one concerns medical students; the other concerns practicing doctors.

For the last type English with Specific topics, pointed out, by Carter (1983). This type is related to future requirements. To show what we mean, we provide an example of a learner who wants to present or attend a conference, or a student who needs English for postgraduate studies, or an employer who wants to work in a foreign company, and so on. ESP picture, still, did not fully shape because of the numerous hybrid permutations of EAP and EOP.

On the whole, different taxonomies were proposed by different educationalists where in each the emphasis is on opting for a learner-centred approach. Its value is shown in providing opportunities for students to practice critical and creative thinking, problem solving, and decision making.

3.3. Definition of EOP

Leaping across different sessions, we notice the increasing demands of EOP courses. Because of their lack of English for occupational environments, learners are motivated to learn the English they need to enable them to sophisticate their skills in their future fields. Therefore, it is important to understand what EOP is. EOP refers to the type of English taught for students to use in their professions (Kennedy and Bolitho, 1984; Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998). Anthony (1997,p.129) declares that EOP is “The portion of the curriculum which prepares students for gainful employment in occupations ranging from **low-skilled** to **sophisticated** jobs in **technical fields** “(emphasis added).

What Anthony (ibid) states is of a very significance; he assures that the courses are designed to develop the skills needed by EOP’s learners in an erudite way in order to locate themselves in their work places. Put simply, students come to the classroom having some skills which are usually low, from his point of view. On the basis of the jobs, mostly technical fields, they need, they come with the desire to acquire some requisite skills. To illustrate, A Drilling learner demands reading skills for the sake of reading instructions manual to operate some machines such as the rig, the pump mud, etc. While a business (marketing) learner petition for communication skills in order to present his/her product to customers or to his/her colleagues to convince them to buy or to be displayed in-store. In conclusion, students should be aware of the English for occupational settings in order to function effectively and efficiency in their fields and this is what we settle down our subject. What Anthony (ibid) claims, in our opinion, is a value judgment since we cannot pretend that those who come to the classroom have low skills.

3.4. Reading Skills

Reading plays a primordial role in extending learners’ command of language. Therefore, it is vital in classroom where language learning is the central purpose (Nuttall, 1996). It is one of the macro-skills of ESP. On this basis, it is crucial to understand what is meant by reading? What are the techniques involved in reading? And what is its relationship with discourse analysis as a new field and discourse competence?

3.4.1. Definition of Reading

“Reading is a **conscious** and **unconscious** thinking **process**. The reader applies many strategies to **reconstruct the meaning** that the author is assumed to have intended. The reader

does this by **comparing information in the text to his or her background knowledge and prior experience**". (S. Mikulecky, 2008, p.1) (emphasis added).

What does the author mean by a conscious and unconscious thinking process? First of all, reading is a process as there is a dynamic interaction between the reader and the writer via the text. According to Alderson (2000), the readers, during the reading process, do not only decode print words to decide what they mean or how they are related, but also they are thinking of the meaning of words to them: are they related to anything they have read before? What will be next? Is the text interesting, boring, etc.? And this is what Mickulecky (2008) means by a thinking process. Further, Alderson (2000) continues that the reader, maybe, is unconsciously aware of how s/he is reading and what happens around him/her. Also, s/he, while reading, maybe consciously reflecting the difficulties or the ease s/he encounters and on ways to overcome these difficulties or of continuing the pleasure. He carries on that readers may consciously decide to skip a page or read just the headlines of a newspaper, they may also consciously choose to look up the meaning of a word in a dictionary or they may choose to figure out the meaning of a word through the context. That is why; reading is a conscious and unconscious thinking process.

As we have mentioned already that reading is a process. This process requires the reader to negotiate meaning with the writer via the text in order to arrive to the writer's intended meaning since the text has what Halliday (1979) and Widdowson (1979) called meaning potential, that is to say, the text has many interpretations and what the reader understands from the text varies not only between different readers with different purposes but also by the same person if s/he approaches the text in different times or for a different purpose (Alderson, 2000). Hence, the reader is reconstructing meaning through gathering the different pieces of a given a text. This is a similar to a builder who tries to gather the different bricks to build the wall. Readers reconstruct meaning by comparing information in the text to their background knowledge and prior experience: the reader does not come to the text empty handed; he has background knowledge on the topic or previous experience in dealing with similar texts.

An important theory in the late of 1970's and the early of 1980's, which appeared on the scene to handle the relationship between the reader's background knowledge and text comprehension is the Schema Theory (Rumelhart 1977, 1980; Anderson and Pearson 1984). To Nunan (1995), Schema theory suggests that reading involves more than decoding the linguistic cues to succeed in comprehending a given text; what is more is the interest , the

motivation , and the background knowledge that the reader brings to the text where the reader integrates the new information with the pre-existing schemata. Although criticism of this theory has been made (as Carver 1992 a, in Alderson, 2000), it is pointed out that this theory does not explain completely how new information is handled (Alderson, 2000).

We conclude that if the reader wants to reconstruct the meaning of a given text or to explain text's connectivity, he/she has to explore multifold directions starting with the propositional (locutionary) meaning of the text, then the functional (illocutionary) meaning of the text. These two provide the textual connectivity of a given text (Widdowson, 1979). However, the latter depends on the readers' interpretative ability to make a network that does not exist in the text itself but through the use of schematic knowledge of the subject at hand and the purpose (s) that the text is/ are fulfilling (Nunan, 1995).

What is discussed above is very crucial, yet the reading process is affected by two sides of one coin which are the reader and the text (Alderson, 2000). The reader's understanding of a text is determined by many factors. The first factor is reader's schemata: the nature of the knowledge the reader possesses will influence his/ her interpretation. There are two types of schemata: formal schema which is concerned with the knowledge of the language the reader has, the text's genre, and so on since if readers do not understand the text's language, this will create difficulty in processing it. Mirroring it to an ESP context, early (1970's) approaches to the teaching of English for Specific Purposes assume that what learners requisite to deal with texts concerned with their subject discipline is initiating with lexis, syntactic, the rhetorical features though we partially disagree because the importance is seen in how learners learn to use the language not the language *per se*. In addition, the knowledge of the way text is organized and what kind of information to expect and the way information is signaled facilitates the reading process. Content schema deals with the subject at hand: The reader may or may not have relevant knowledge to the content of a particular text for instance if a reader does not know anything about the topic at hand; s/he will face some difficulties while reading though this is not certain. Further, readers will find it easier to read texts in familiar areas to them.

The second factor is knowledge of the world. Without such knowledge, it would be difficult to process any language. Illustrating an example by Rumelhart (1985), stated in Alderson (2000, p.45), "The policeman help up his hand and the car stopped". Here, all language users could infer that the car has a driver, and when the policeman holds up his hand

as a signal for the driver to stop the car and he does. Although none of these is stated, the reader could understand as a part of his/her knowledge of how world works. The third factor is the reader's purpose of reading. All readers when approaching a text have a definable purpose even if it is for a pleasure. This encourages them to reach faster to a comprehensible understanding of a given text.

Finally, there are other factors which affect the reader's comprehending of a given text is his/ her personality, age, and sex (Alderson, 2000). Also, the reader's motivation to read which interrelates with his/her reason of reading, and the strategies he/ she uses when processing a text. The text itself is the other coin of reader- text interaction. The text content will affect how readers process a text; not only that but also what makes the text difficult is not the content yet the way it is written: its style, and its features which distinguish it from other text types. What is more, there is a difference between literary and non- literary texts. It is assumed that the former is harder to process because of the language contained such as metaphors, simile, etc. Nevertheless, we are not concerned with such types especially that we have EOP learners as a sample and the focus is on scientific texts. At the end, each text should be at least readable. (Alderson, *ibid*)

In a nutshell, as stated in Uso-Juan and Martinez-Flor (2006),Usó-Juan (2006) contends that: "Reading is now seen as an **interactive, constructive** and **contextualized** process through which individuals make meaning "(p.271). Its definable key terms are understandable. Reading cannot be separate from context, without which meaning cannot be constructed and in turn this construction is through a dynamic interaction between the writer and the reader in which the reader creates meaning from the text by activating his/her stored knowledge and extending it with the new information supplied by the text (Grabe, 1988).

3.5. Reading and Discourse Analysis

Discourse Analysis has contributed to the paradigm shift in teaching English for Foreign Language (EFL) reading from a pure linguistics study of text to the study of language in use, from bottom-up via top-down to interactive approach. Brown and Yule (1983) state that: "the analysis of discourse is, necessarily, the analysis of language in use" (p.1). This concept of 'discourse analysis ' is crucial in language teaching and learning as it provides a solid ground for 'process- oriented' approach rather than a 'goal- oriented' approach to language teaching, adoptingwiddowson's terms (1981).

The term ‘discourse analysis’ appeared first in the work of Zellig Harris (1952). Although he did not provide the implications of discourse analysis in language teaching context, his work was influential. He hinted that language and culture are connected and teaching language should not be restricted to linguistics forms; however, he did not explain how. *Inter alia*, his most footprints on language teaching are the shift from the sentence and its parts to longer segments. Not only that but also his emphasis on the role of discourse analysis in identifying cohesive aids and the genre in which the text is written resulted that both become a class content in teaching EFL reading.

Cook (1989)’s work was impetus in language teaching. He was able to explain how discourse analysis could be applied in various teaching situations. Cook (*ibid*) points out that learners are ‘social outsiders’ because they lack the social knowledge that is essential to making text into discourse and because the reader is tied to his/her own discourse community and, thus, the interpretation can be quite distant from that within the original discourse community. In addition, he highlights that in order to be members of discourse community, learners need more than the formal approach. He argues that doing discourse analysis helps students to adopt top- down approach in reading because in his opinion that this is natural for first language (L₁) speakers: Second language (L₂) students who are able to set discourse into its textual, and social context may neglect dealing with the meaning of a difficult word if they could figure out the meaning of the whole text.

McCarthy and Carter (1991; 1994) hold opposite view by calling for an interactive approach to EFL reading akin to Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000). They stress the interdependence of higher order operations of language and lower order forms of language that contribute to the patterning of meaning. In other words, if a learner does not understand the meaning of a word, s/he could look it up in a dictionary to arrive to the meaning of a whole or s/he could construct the meaning of a word through the whole.

In conclusion, things we have dealt with are only parts of the whole story, what is left is under portrayal. Discourse analysis is a prominent field in the teaching of English language, particularly EFL reading. Thus, a discourse- oriented approach is recommended for the teaching and developing of reading skills.

3.6 .Reading and Discourse Competence

One can wonder about the relationship between reading and discourse competence, yet reading has a central role in the development of discourse competence. In chapter two, it was pointed out that if a reader wants to interpret a given text at the discourse level, s/he should master the grammatical, pragmatic, strategic, and intercultural competencies. However, the question should be raised: how can discourse competence develop through reading? Through a bottom- up approach to reading, one can notice how the different elements are connected to one another phonologically, morphologically, syntactically, and semantically and how lexical items are combined. In such way, a reader can acquire the rules related to them unconsciously through dealing with different texts. Like that, s/he will be able to develop his/ her linguistic competence. Besides, when readers depend on the different syntactic and linguistic devices in order to discover the writer's intended meaning. Here, they are developing the pragmatic competence. In addition, if readers face interpretation problems, they compensate them by using reading strategies. Therefore, the more they use these strategies effectively, the more they will be able to develop strategic competence. At last, when readers try to relate a given text to its sociocultural context in order to construct meaning, they are developing the intercultural competence. The failure in one the four competencies mentioned above may result in the failure of the acquisition of discourse competence as a whole because the four are intrinsically related to discourse competence.

3.7. Reading Techniques

Every macro- skill (including reading) builds on several micro- skills discerning main ideas (skimming), noticing specific details (scanning), making inferences (noticing contextual clues), and making predictions (reading critically) (Richards and Schmidt , 2002). Students, while reading, face some difficulties in interpreting a given text. To ensure that students will not stumble on every difficulty, some techniques of reading are provided. Some of them are: sensitizing which includes making inference, understanding relations within the sentence, and linking sentence and ideas; improving reading speed by giving students passages to read and to ask them to time themselves; from skimming to scanning: where students start first with predicting, previewing, then anticipation, moving finally to skimming and scanning in which they should decide whether they are looking for the gist or want a specific details about a point or some points in the text (Grellet ,1981). Our concern in this subject is making inferences (for more details about reading techniques,see Grellet, 1981)

3.7.1 Making Inferences

Adopting a process- oriented approach to the teaching of language in general and to the teaching or developing of reading in specific requires, from our point of view, to put meaning to the fore rather than form. This approach accords with the principle of learner-centredness, encouraging individuals to take more responsibility for their own learning. Therefore, for an independent learning, teachers should aid students learn to recognize clues in order to guess word meaning from context (Decarrico, 2001).

According to Scollon&Scollon (1995, 2001), language is ambiguous by nature not only at the word level, but at the sentence, and discourse level as well. To unlock this ambiguity, the reader needs to know how to make inferences. So, what do we mean by inferring? To Grellet (1981), “Inferring means make use of syntactic, logical, and cultural clues to discover the meaning of unknown elements “(p. 14). However, this is not a simple task for learners. That is why; teachers should encourage learners to develop strategies for inferring the meaning of new words from the context in which they occur by using the available cues (verbal cues) or pictures and diagrams in the text (non-verbal cues) (Nunan, 1995) .

Kruse (1979), as cited in Nunan (1995), mentions some of the contextual cues that can be taught to learners to help them infer word meanings which are the following:

1)- Word elements such as prefixes, suffixes and roots. The ability to recognize component parts of words as such will reduce the number of newly completely introduced words to them;
2)- Pictures, diagrams and charts. These clues must often be pointed out to the EFL student. He may not connect the illustration with the item that is giving him/ her difficulty. He may also be unable to read charts and graphs in English;

3)- Clues of definition. The Student must be taught to notice the many types of highly useful definition clues. Among these are:

(a) Parentheses or footnotes, which are the most obvious definition clues. The student can be taught to recognize the physical characteristics of the clue.

(b) Synonyms and antonyms usually occur along with other clues: that is, is clauses, explanation in parentheses, and so on

(1) is and that is (X is Y; X, that is Y) are easily recognizable signal words giving definition clues.

(2) appositive clause constructions set off by commas, which, or, or dashes (X,Y-:X-Y-;X, which is Y,;X, or Y) are also physically recognizable clues;

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- 4)- Inference clues from discourse, which are usually not confined to one sentence:
- (a) Example clues, where the meaning of the word can be inferred from an example often use physical clues such as i.e., e.g., and for example,
 - (b) Summary clues, from the sum of the information in a sentence or a paragraph, the student can understand the word;
 - (c) Experience clues. The reader can get a meaning from a word by recalling a similar situation he/she has experienced and making the appropriate inference.
- 5) General aids, which usually do not help the student with specific meaning, narrow the possibilities. These include the function of the word in question, i.e. noun, adj, etc. and the subject being discussed (p. 209)

Examining these inferring skills, one can notice that the contextual clues are distributed along the whole text not only in the sentence containing the unfamiliar word. Also, Kruse (1979), as quoted in Nunan (1995) stressed out the importance of the physical representation in providing an enormous help to figure out the meaning of the unknown word. Simply, each clue in the text either it is verbal or non-verbal aid us to communicate the meaning of unknown word since the text is one unit as we have seen before.

For Decarrico (2001), some contexts are not rich enough in order to allow students to guess the full word meaning. He points out that background knowledge of the topic and culture aid inferencing by relating the new word with information already known. Nevertheless, in his opinion, even without such background knowledge, learners can become skilled in guessing by learning what clues to look for and where to find them.

Clarke and Nation (1980), as mentioned in Decarrico (2001), propose a system for students to check if their guesses are the best ones. First, they should decide the part of speech of the unknown word: is it a noun, a verb, adjective, adverb, etc.? Then, they should examine the context of the clause or sentence containing the word (the co text, the immediate context): what verb goes with it? What adjective modifies it? And so on. Second, they should identify the relationship of this sentence or clause with other sentences or paragraphs by using coordinators, or subordinating conjunctions such as however, because, but ...etc. In case students do not find any kind of explicit signal, students should be aware of types of rhetorical relationship which include cause and effect, inclusion, and so on. Even punctuation and reference words provide a help to students as a clue. Punctuation such as a semicolon often indicates a list or an inclusion relationship, and dashes may signal restatement or clarification. Reference words like: this, that, which refer to the previous information mentioned.

Finally, through the assist gained from the clues, students guess the meaning of the word after that they check if their guesses are correct or not. They see, first, if the part of the speech of the unknown word is similar to that of the guess. If it is the case, they substitute the unknown word with the guessed one. If the sentence makes sense, then the guessed word is a good paraphrase for the unknown word. For double check, students analyze the parts of unknown words into its prefix, root, and suffix to see if there is correspondence. In the case of wrong or partially correct guess, it is important for learners to reanalyze how the ‘correct’ word is more appropriate in the context. It is assumed that once this strategy is mastered, students can begin to skip some of the steps and the dictionary may be consulted to confirm the guess.

Dunmore (1989), as cited in Jordan (1997), proposes a similar contextual cues to that of Grellet (1981) and he “highlights the needs for exercise types which teach rather than test the use of the strategies needed for readers to be successful in discovering the meaning of unknown words” (p.158). These contextual cues are:

- 1- Equivalence: where the meaning of a word can be inferred through a synonym mentioned in the text ;
- 2- Contrast: where the meaning of a word can be inferred through the contrary of another word or expression given in the text;
- 3- Cause: where the meaning of a word can be guessed because it is the cause of something described in the text;
- 4- Consequence: where the meaning of a word can be arrived at because it appears in the description of the consequence of something;
- 5- Purpose: where the meaning of a word can be inferred because it is related to an object whose purpose is described in the text;
- 6- Explanation/ illustration: where the meaning of a word can be reached through an explanation or an example given;
- 7- Generalization/ Specification: where the meaning of a word can be guessed because it serves as either one specific instance of a more general thing or idea mentioned in the text, or as a generalization made on a number of specific examples have been given. (p. 159)

Conclusion

One can compare making inferences with solving a puzzle; we have to gather the different pieces in order to figure out the meaning. Making inferences is very important to EOP students and students in general. A discourse-approach to teaching inferences is needed.

Chapter Four: The Experimental Study

Introduction

This study aims at developing EOP's learners discourse competence through making inference. To this end, we adopted an experimental design where we conducted two tests: a pre-test and a post-test. Prior to this, we administer need analysis sheet in order to gain insights into students' needs. For the analysis of the results, we use the manual calculations and electronic calculations, such as the T-test. Hence, this chapter spotlights on the most important steps we follow.

4.1. Method

The method adopted in the analysis is experimental design which involves comparing two groups on one outcome that is the effects of making inferences in developing EOP learners' discourse competence. The first group is the controlled group and the second is the experimental one which receives the treatment. In our case, we have only one group which we consider both as controlled and experimental. This is due to time constraints and minimizing the energy. Prior to this, a need analysis is conducted through which we base our design of tests and training. The results obtained in the pre-test and the post-test are analyzed through a system which is called SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), version 18. It is widely used program for statistical analysis in social science.

4.2. Sample Population

The experiment took place in the Drilling Department- KasdiMerbah University, Ouargla. The sample consists of second-year Professional License students, during the academic year 2013-2014. They were chosen at random. The sample includes 26 male students who are highly interested in the English Language because of the recent increasing demands in the work place. Their age is between 20 and 23. Students are judged to be intermediate as they have studied English about 6 year pre-university Education. They have been selected on the basis that they did not study English as a module in the university. This, of course, enables us to measure the effectiveness of our treatment.

4.3. The Procedures

We proceed by starting first with analyzing the need analysis sheet, the pre-test, training sessions, then the post –test.

4.3.1. Needs Analysis

Since students did not study English as a course before in the university, we have prepared a random- selected text related to their studies to see their needs in coping with the unfamiliar words. Most of them agree that they need English to be able to read manual instructions to operate the Drilling machines effectively. Also, they need it to communicate with workers in foreign companies. In dealing with the text, we tried not to explain each word for them to see if they are able to infer the meaning of words. However, it was a very hard task for them. They were not able to infer the meaning of words because they were accustomed in translating every word and they were not supplied with the ways to deal with unfamiliar words in context. Therefore, we decide to administer a questionnaire entitled ‘Needs Analysis Sheet’ (see Appendix A) comprises the following eight questions in order to design a course tailored to their needs.

Question 1. How many years have you been studying English?

- a- 4 years
- b- 7 years
- c- More than 7 years

This question has been devised in order to know the level of their expertise in the English Language. Responses were as follow:

Level of Expertise	N	%
4 years	3	11.54
7 years	17	65.38
More than 7 years	6	23.08

Table 4.1.Level of Expertise

Table 4.1 indicates that 65.38 % of the respondents answered 7 years, while 23.08% answered more than 7 years, whereas 11.54% answered 4 years. This shows that most of them are accustomed with English. So, they are able to read texts alone.

Question 2.What do you need English for?

- a- For further studies
- b- For work
- c- For communication

This question seeks to check their needs in English. Answers were as follow:

English Needs	N	%
For further studies	0	0
For work	20	76.92
For communication	6	23.08

Table 4.2. English Needs

Table 4.2 shows that 76.92% of the respondents need English for work, while 23.08% need it for communication. This assures us that need English, mostly, for occupational purposes.

Question 3.What kinds of texts do you prefer to read in the classroom?

- a- Related to your specialty
- b- Not related to your specialty
- c- No preferences

Kind of texts	N	%
Related to your specialty	14	53.85
Not related to your specialty	2	7.69
No preferences	10	38.46

Table 4.3. Kind of Texts

For this question, 53, 85% of the respondents answered that they prefer to read text in their specialty, 7.69% of the sample answered that they do not prefer to read texts in their specialty, and 38.46 % answered that they do not to prefer to read any kind of texts. As one see, the majority of them prefer texts reflect their studies and this is for the purpose in engaging interest within learners.

Question 4. Do you think that learning English words like ‘ mud’ or ‘ drilling fluid’ related to your specialty is of importance to you ?

- a- Yes
- b- No
- c- Cannot tell

Importance of Learning Vocabulary	N	%
Yes	26	100
No	0	0
Cannot tell	0	0

Table 4.4. Importance of Learning Vocabulary

Table 4.4 indicates that 100 % of the respondents they need to learn words related to their specialty. This means that learning vocabulary is vital for them.

Question 5. If yes, how do you understand a difficult word you meet in the text? (one option)

- a- Look it up in a dictionary
- b- Understand it through the context
- c- Understand it through the surroundings

Using Context	N	%
Look it up in a dictionary	15	57.69
Understand it through the context	8	30.76
Understand it through the surroundings	3	11.54

Table 4.5. Techniques of Getting the Meaning

This question concerns only those who have answered yes. 57.69% of the respondents answered that they understand the difficult words in the text through using a dictionary. However, looking a word up in a dictionary does not provide the necessary aid since the entries in a dictionary may not be suitable to the context of the text. 30.76 % of the sample answered that they understand them through the context, the last 11,54 % answered that they understand them through the surroundings (co text). This shows that the majority of them are not using the context but they are limited to the literal translation despite the fact that a word in a dictionary has many entries. In order to guess what is the accurate one, one need to dive into the context.

Question 6. Does your teacher encourage you to guess the meaning of the word alone?

a- Yes

b- No

Teacher's Methodology	N	%
Yes	2	7.69
No	24	92.31

Table 4.6. Teacher's Methodology

Table 4.6 indicates that 92.31 % of the sample is not encouraged to guess the meaning of words alone. This is due may be to the lack of time or the unmotivated students. The remaining portion (7.69 %) is encouraged to guess the meaning. That means that the majority is dependent on the teacher's translation.

Question 7. How do you guess the meaning of a word in the text?

a- Through prefixes, suffixes, and roots.

b- Through synonyms and antonyms.

c- Through definition clues.

Strategies of Inferring	N	%
Through prefixes, suffixes, and roots	5	19.23
Through synonyms and antonyms	15	57.69
Through definition clues	6	23.08

Table 4.7. Strategies of Inferring

For this question, 57.69 % of the participants answered that they understand the meaning of a word through using synonyms and antonyms. 23.08 % of the sample answered they understand it through synonyms and antonyms. The remaining 19.23 % of the subjects answered that they understand it through break the word down into prefixes, roots, and suffixes.

Question 8. Do you think that guessing the meaning of a word help you to develop your comprehension ?

- a- Yes
- b- No

Guessing for Comprehension	N	%
Yes	26	100
No	0	0

Table 4.8. Guessing for Comprehension

Table 4.8 shows that the entire sample think that a guessing a word help them to develop their comprehension. This means that most of them think that inferring the meaning of words through context is essential in developing their understanding of texts.

Question 9. If yes, does it help you to develop: (one option)

- a- Your Grammar, vocabulary, and so on.
- b- Your Use of language in jobs
- c- Your compensation strategies
- d- Your interpretation of a given text by relating to its context
- e- Your knowledge of text typology
- f- All the above

Developing Competencies	N	%
Your Grammar, vocabulary, and so on	2	7.69
Your Use of language in jobs	12	46.15
Your compensation strategies	4	15.38
Your interpretation of a given text by relating to its context	0	0
Your knowledge of text typology	0	0
All the above	8	30.77

Table 4.9. Developing Competencies

This question is addressed only to those who answered ‘yes’ in the previous questions. It aims to discover what kind of competencies making inference is developing: is it grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence or the discourse competence, etc.? The results obtained from this question is as follow: 46.15 % of the participants answered that guessing a words helps to develop their use of language in jobs (pragmatic competence), 30.77 % answered that it helps them to develop their discourse competence. 15.38 of the respondents answered that it helps them to develop their compensation strategies (strategic competence). The remaining (7.69%) answered that it helps them to develop their grammar, vocabulary, and so on (i.e., their grammatical competence). So in students’ opinion, inferring the meaning of words helps mostly in developing pragmatic competence.

The analysis of the students’ questionnaire enable us to understand learners’ needs. It shows that students are not engaged in readings where they have to infer the meaning of words. Also, they are interested only in texts which are relevant to their studies to enable them as an ultimate goal to cope with the real- world which is in Drilling fields.

4.3.2 .Assessment Procedures of the Tests

Designing the pre-test and the post- test were not an easy task; however, our work was based on a rationale and not randomly done. Our questions were based on logical order starting by asking, first, about the title of the text. Since readers, first, start with longer units by considering the layout of the text: title, length, pictures, diagrams, and so on. Then, they make hypotheses about the content and the function of the text. This is central in developing their inference skills, anticipation, and deduction (Grellet, 1981). After that, they start to skim to look for the main idea. Second, they were questioned about the meaning of the words to assess their ability to infer meaning from context. To this purpose, the test of English as a foreign language (TOFEL) was found as the most convenient (Read, 2000). The 1995 version of the test encouraged students to use contextual information to infer the meaning of a word by setting vocabulary items as an integral part of the reading comprehension section (ibid) through the use of a multiple-choice item , with the generic stem: the word “[]” in line [] is closest in meaning to ”, followed by four single-word options such as:

E.g. the word ‘tardy’ in line 3 is closest in meaning to

(A) historical

(B) basic

(C) unusual

(D) late

(Read, 2000, p. 145).

Later, the other questions were asked to assess if the students are able to recognize the relations within sentences or between sentences through reference, lexical cohesion, link-words, and so on. Last not least, students through the different guesses they made about the meaning of words, and the relationship of the sentences, they check if their guesses were right. At the end, students are asked to summarize the whole text to see if they were able to comprehend the whole discourse. In such way, we aim in an attempt to develop the discourse competence within the EOP students through making inferences.

4.3.3. The Pre-Test

We have conducted a pre-test (see Appendix B) in the aim of measuring students’ abilities in making inferences through reading specialized texts. In turn, how these inferences help in developing the discourse competence.

Following the rationale mentioned in the element of assessment procedure, we design our pre-test which is composed of a text¹ with known topic to the participants. Participants are asked to read the text silently and infer the meaning of (20) items. Before assigning the task to the students, some explanations are given. The task is to read the text carefully and then infer the meaning of italicized words with mentioning the number of line in each group by selecting from four-option words. The time allocated to this test is an hour. The Marking scheme is one point to each item. If the inference is wrong, the student is given 0.

4.3.3.1. Analysis of the Pre-test Results

On the basis of our assessment procedures, we divide the pre-test into questions. Each a question or group of questions has/have certain aims.

1-The text is adapted from Growcock and Harvey (2005, p.15)

The first question aims at guessing about the topic. 10 participants out of 26 were able to guess what the topic is about through using the title of the text. That is to say, the results are 38.46 % out of 100 %. This means that students are unaware yet of how to explore the text through using the layout: the title in our case. In other cases, it is the title, graphics, diagrams, and so on. The scores are tabulated below:

	N	%
Guessing about the topic	10	100

Table 4.10. Guessing about the Topic

Question two is addressed to the form of the text. 96.15 % of the participants were able to identify how many paragraphs are in the text. This means that they have background knowledge that indentation indicates the number of paragraphs. Results are as follows:

	N	%
Form of the Text	25	96.15

Table 4.11. Form of the Text

The questions from three until five are tailored for looking for the gist. 61.53 % of the subjects were able to skim for the main idea in each paragraph. Results are shown below:

	N	%
Looking for the Gist	78	61.53

Table 4.12. Looking for the Gist

The questions from six to thirteen aim at inferring vocabulary. 50 % of the participants were able to infer the meaning of words. That means that students found difficulty to guess the meaning of a word through the context. This is due to the fact they were not taught how to infer meanings. Results are tabulated as follows:

	N	%
Inferring Vocabulary	104	50

Table 4.13. Inferring Vocabulary

Questions from fourteen to eighteen are addressed to cohesion with reference to lexical cohesion. 63.84 % of the subjects answered correctly. That is to say, they have knowledge about linking words and references. The scores are below:

	N	%
Knowledge about cohesion	83	63.84

Table 4.14. Knowledge about Cohesion

The aim of the question nineteen is checking students' hypotheses about the text. 88.46 % of the participants confirmed their guesses. So, students could understand what the text is about. Results are tabulated below:

	N	%
Confirmation of the hypothesis	23	88.46

Table 4.15. Confirmation of the hypothesis

The last question tackles the goal of summarizing the text. 11.54 % of the participants were able to summarise the text. They were able to understand that if they related topic sentences together, they would summarise the text in this manner. However, the remaining 88.46 % had no idea about summarizing. Results are as follows:

	N	%
Summarization	3	11.53

Table 4.16. Summarization

4.3.3.2. Interpretation

The results obtained is due to the fact that students are unaware yet of the different strategies that one can use to infer meaning of words from the ample of contextual clues available in the text. Also, they do not know how to look for the gist or summarize. Further, the individuals 'scores are approximate to one another in terms of scores. As an explanation, learners' ages are near to each other. Most of them are 21 years old. That is to say, their exposal to English is approximately the same.

4.3.4. The Training Sessions

After the pre-test was administered, the results were analyzed. There was no big difference among the group in terms of marks. Their marks were from 10 to14. Therefore, we devise the treatment training sessions into two especially because of the limited time. These sessions were given as extra-sessions in the time table. Each session took an hour and half and the classroom was very interactive because of the extremely motivation.

In the first session, because of the difficulties we encountered in finding a relevant text in their subject area (Drilling) containing unfamiliar words cued by the context. We kept the same pre- text as a model for the training course. Due to the same reason, we dealt only with some of the inferring strategies: definition by means of footnotes, synonyms, example clues, generalization. We start first by giving explicit instructions of how to deal with text. We start by giving them some questions such as: what is the title of the text? What do you think the text is about? Could you give some words related to the subject? Imagine yourself in the field, how does it function? After that, they were asked to read the text quickly (skimming) and they were asked to give the general idea of each paragraph. Most of them seem to know that indentation means the beginning of a paragraph. So, we could say that they activate their background knowledge. Finally,they have been given the inferring strategies and how they could figure it out the meaning of words from the context. Also, they were asked about the relationship between sentences and how they are related to each other and how each sentence functions. This session aimed mainly to teach them how to activate their background knowledge and to teach them the different strategies of inferring, looking for the gist, relationship between sentences, etc.

In the second session, we devote three exercises (see Appendix C) where students practice what they have learnt from the explicit instructions in the first session. The first exercise

concerns the different inferring strategies. This activity aims at training the students of using the different inferring strategies. The second one involves taking out a few words from the text and proposing a choice between four possibilities to train the students to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words through contextual clues. This activity will make students realize how much the context can help them to find out the meaning of difficult or unfamiliar words. The third exercise aims at training the student to recognize and understand reference, linking words, substitution, lexical cohesion, and relationship between sentences. As a final step, they were asked to summarize the text by giving them some instructions about summarizing in order to see whether they arrive at the interpretation of the whole discourse. This session strongly aims at teaching students to use the available clues to infer meaning and also to summarize the text.

4.3.5. The Post-Test

The post-test (see Appendix D) is set after the training period is ended. It aims at checking the progress the students made after the training period. The post-test comprised a text² which is relevant to their subject area. The text contains (27) items with giving (0.75) point to each item. The questions were organized in similar manner to the pre-test. The time allocated to this text is an hour with no explanation is provided since they are judged, now, that they know what they are doing.

4.3.5.1. The Analysis of the Post-test Results

The first question aims at guessing about the topic. 19 participants out of 26 were able to guess what the topic is about through using the title of the text. That is to say, the results are 73.08 % out of 100 %. There is an increasing change in the results. This means that students become aware of how to explore the text through using the layout: the title in our case. In other cases, it is the title, graphics, diagrams, and so on. The scores are tabulated below:

	N	%
Guessing about the Topic	19	73.08

Table 4.17. Guessing about the Topic

²The text is adapted from http://www.metu.edu.tr/~kok/pete321/PETE321_CHAPTER2.pdf

Question two is addressed to the form of the text. The whole (100 %) of the participants were able to identify how many paragraphs are in the text. This means that they develop their awareness that indentation indicates the number of paragraphs. Results are as follows:

	N	%
Form of the Text	26	100

Table 4.18. Form of the Text

The questions from three until five are tailored for looking for the gist. 91.03 % of the subjects were able to develop skimming for the main idea in each paragraph. Results are shown below:

	N	%
Looking for the Gist	78	91.03

Table 4.19. Looking for the Gist

The questions from six to sixteen aim at inferring vocabulary. 65.03% of the participants in comparison to the pre-test were able to infer more the meaning of words. That means that students develop guessing the meaning of a word through the context. This is due to the fact they learnt how to infer meanings. Results are tabulated as follows:

	N	%
Inferring Vocabulary	186	65.03

Table 4.20. Inferring Vocabulary

Questions from seventeen to twenty-five are addressed to cohesion with reference to lexical cohesion. 85.74 % of the subjects answered correctly. That is to say, they have developed knowledge about linking words and references. The scores are below:

	N	%
Knowledge about cohesion	200	85.47

Table 4.21. Knowledge about cohesion

The aim of the question twenty-six is checking students' hypotheses about the text. 92.30 % of the participants confirmed their guesses. So, students could understand now more what the text is about. Results are tabulated below:

	N	%
Confirmation of the hypothesis	24	92.30

Table 4.22. Confirmation of the hypothesis

The last question tackles the goal of summarizing the text. 53.85 % of the participants were able to develop their ability of summarizing the text. They were able now to understand how they related topic sentences together. However, the remaining 46.15 % had no idea about summarizing. Results are as follows:

	N	%
Summarization	14	53.85

Table 4.23. Summarization

4.3.5.2. Interpretation

The data gathered showed a great improvement from guessing the topic of the text, understanding the form of the text, skimming for the gist, inferring the vocabulary, knowledge of cohesion with a reference to lexical cohesion, confirming about the guesses, to summarizing the whole text. The results revealed that the subjects were not aware of most of the suggested strategies before the treatment. In fact, the training sessions have had a great effect on the subjects' performance. The interactive activities made the students more aware of the way of figure out the meaning of words out of contextual cues.

4.3.6. Comparison of the Pre-test and the Post-tests' Results

The table below shows the difference between the results of the pre-test and the results of the post-test :

	Pre-Test(%)	Post-test(%)
Guessing about the topic	38.46	73
Form of the text	96.15	100
Looking for the gist	61.53	91.03
Inferring vocabulary	50	65.03
Knowledge about cohesion	63.84	65.03
Confirmation of the hypothesis	88.46	92.30
Summarization	11.53	53.85

Table 4.24. Comparison of the Pre-test and the Post-tests' Results

The figure below shows the scores distribution of the pre-test and the post-test and the difference is seen clearly.

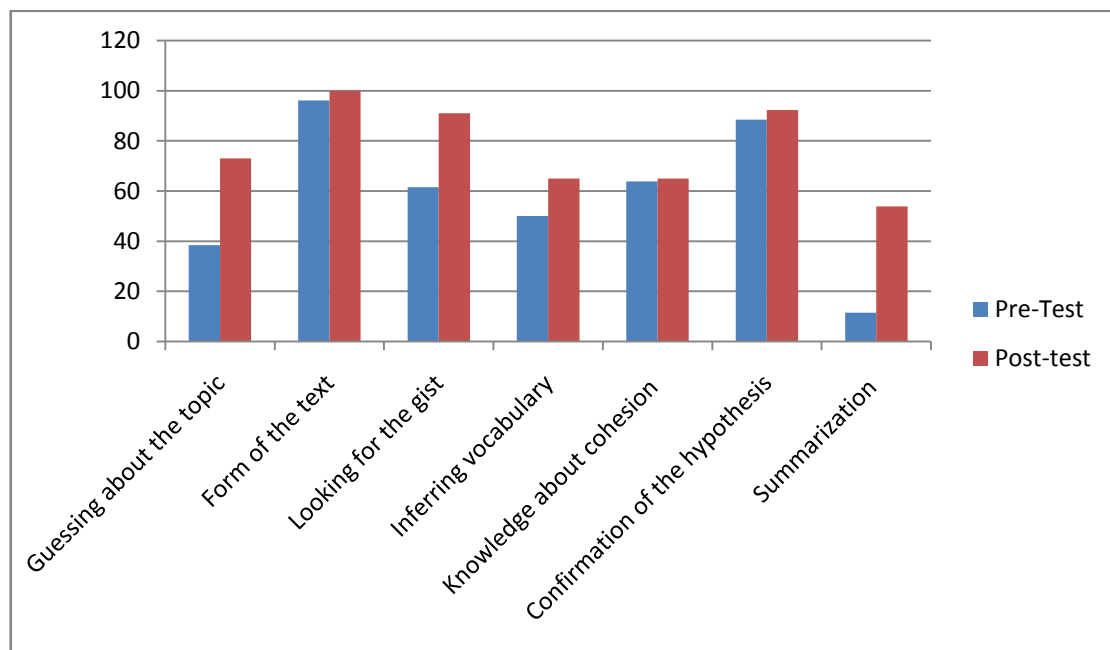


Figure 4.1. Pre-test and Post-test Scores Distribution

4.3.7. Comparison of the Pre-test and the Post-test's Results by means of the T-test

For further confirmation, we opt for a program called the SPSS, version 18. This program is used in the analysis of the results of the pre-test and the post-test through paired-sample t-test, which is used to determine whether there is a significant difference between the average values of the same measurement made under two different conditions. Both measurements are made on each unit in a sample, and the test is based on the paired differences between these two values. It is also used to confirm the significance or non-significance of the findings. Its computational formula is as follows: The results obtained are as follows:

		Mean	N	SD	SD.Error mean
Pair1	Pre-test	10.46	26	1.86	0.36
	Post-test	13.32	26	2.60	0.51

Table 4.25. Paired Samples Statistics

Before analyzing the results of the table, some terms should be clarified in order to fully comprehend them. 'Mean' means the average. It is calculated by adding up all the values and dividing them by the number of participants. It is calculated through using this general formula:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

N: the number of participants

$\sum X$:the total score of the test

\bar{x}_1 : The mean of the pre-test

\bar{x}_2 : The mean of the post-test

$$\bar{x}_1 = \frac{\sum X_1}{N}$$

$\sum X_1$: The total score of the pre-test

$$\bar{x}_2 = \frac{\sum x_2}{N}$$

ΣX_2 : The total score of the pre-test

After the substitutions, we get: $\bar{x}_1 = 10.46 / \bar{x}_2 = 13.32$.

‘SD’ is “the standard deviation shows how much variation or dispersion from the average exists. A low standard deviation indicates that the data points tend to be very close to the mean (also called expected value); a high standard deviation indicates that the data points are spread out over a large range of values”. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Standard_deviation). It is found by taking the square root of the average of the squared differences of the values from their average value. Its general formula is as follows:

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2}{N} - (\bar{x})^2}$$

$\sum x^2$ refers to the total score of the post-test

$$SD_1 = \sqrt{\frac{\sum x_1^2}{N} - (\bar{x}_1)^2} / SD_2 = \sqrt{\frac{\sum x_2^2}{N} - (\bar{x}_2)^2}$$

SD1: the standard deviation of the pre-test /SD2: the standard deviation of the post-test

$\sum x_1^2$ refers to the sum of squared score of the pre-test

$\sum x_2^2$ refers to the sum of squared score of the post-test.

After the substitutions, we find:

$$SD_1 = 1.86 / SD_2 = 2.60$$

	Mean	SD	SD.Error Mean
Pair 1 “Pre-test” – “Post-test”	-2.87	2.48	0.49

Table 4.26. Paired Sample Tests

The differences between the two mean is calculated in this way:

$$d = \frac{\sum d}{N}$$

d :the mean difference between the pairs of scores ($x_1 - x_2$)

Σd : the sum of differences between the pairs of scores (x_1-x_2). After the substitution, we get:

$$d = -2.87$$

We calculate the standard deviation of the differences using the following formula:

$$Sd = \frac{\sum d^2}{N} - d^2$$

$\sum d^2$: the sum of squared differences between the pairs of scores (x_1-x_2)

d^2 : the mean squared difference between the pairs of scores (x_1-x_2)

$$Sd = 2.48$$

Std. Error means how far the individuals from the mean and the standard deviation are. Its results are shown on the two tables above.

4.3.7.1. Interpretation

The results obtained from both table 4.25 and table 4.26 show that the results have witnessed an increasing improvement from 10.46 to 13.32. The subtraction of the pre-test and the post-test is 2.87. It was negative because the mean of the post-test is bigger than the pre-test. The SD and the SD.error mean of the pre-test and the post-test is small. This explains that the individuals within the group were approximate in levels. This assures that the test is valid.

4.3.8. Confirmation of the Hypothesis

Other terms which are not mentioned in the two tables above are: the observed t which is used to confirm the significance or non-significance of the findings. It is calculated as follows:

$$t_{n-1} = \frac{d}{sd/\sqrt{N-1}}$$

After the substitution, we find:

$$t_{n-1} = -5.89$$

The negative value of t is of no particular significance. It is treated as positive. So, we have

the following data about the experiment.

-Observedvalue of T (t_o) = 5.89

-Degree of freedom (df) = N-1 = 25

- Two tailed

-Critical value of T(t_c)= 2.43 when df= 25

Note: the critical value is 2.43 according to the table of David M Lane(http://psych.csufresno.edu/psy144/Content/Statistics/t-tests_rev.html).

$t_o = 5.89 > t_c 5.89 > 2.43$

4.3.8.1. Interpretation

As seen above, t_o is greater than 2.43 which means that our results could not have arisen by chance. So, our hypothesis that making inference through reading will develop discourse competence was correct.

4.3.9. Validity

Graziano&Raulin(2004) ,as quoted in Marczyk,DeMatteo, and Festinger (2005), states that: “Validity is an important term in research that refers to the conceptual and scientific soundness of a research study “ (p. 158). Validity is calculated through using “The Edge Comparison Method”. This method insists on comparing 33% from the subjects who have the highest scores and 33% from the participants who have the lowest scores. The following table indicates the results:

Results	Mean	Significance
The highest 33 %	12.87	0.05
The lowest 33%	8.62	

Table 4.27. Table of Validity

As we notice, there is no big difference between the students who have the highest scores and the students who have the lowest score. The difference is 4, 25 between their means. The significance is 0.05. This shows that the probability of being correct in the tests is 99.95 %

and the chance of being wrong is 0.05%. This assures the validity of both the pre-test and the post-test and confirms our hypothesis that guessing the meaning through the context will develop EOP learners' discourse competence.

4.3.10. Reliability

Marczyk, DeMatteo, and Festinger (2005) declare that "reliability refers to whether the measurement is consistent" (p.10). Therefore, we replicate the pre-test and the post-test for the second time to the same participants and we get the same results.

4.3.11. Pedagogical Implications

On the basis of the results obtained from the pre-test and the post-test, there are some recommendations that we strongly suggest to be taken into account. First of all, in our opinion, English module should be included in the syllabus of Drilling students from the first year in order to be accustomed with the English language. In that way, they could develop gradually and function effectively not only in the work fields but also during their study years especially that they use many English words in other Drilling modules.

Second, we suggest specific reading courses beyond their timetable. These reading courses will help them more to make inferences through context. Also, it will aid them to expose to different genres that reflect the real world. Like that, they will develop a kind of register that will allow them later to operate in the work place.

Third, we suggest a discourse approach to the teaching of English course since it focuses on the form, meaning, the context, different genres, and so on. Texts will not be understood through using mainly the grammatical structures but also through the meaning of lexical items and through putting the words into their contexts to fully comprehend them. Henceforth, teachers will portray the context in which students will learn to use the grammar, the vocabulary and have an idea to the different genres in which meaning will be understood.

Fourth, we recommend that teachers should address the students' needs in terms of course design, materials selection, skills involved, tasks involved, evaluation. Any activity will be done should be based on the learner's reason for learning. If students are not interested, they will not be encouraged to learn alone after the session ends. Therefore, designing the course is preferable to be on the basis of students' needs.

Fifth, we propose that the classroom should be interactive. The activities should be done in pairs then groups then the pairs should substitute and compare their results. In that manner, students will learn to work within team and they will gain more independence and more acquisition of vocabulary.

Sixth, reading texts should be authentic, up to date, and original through which they could imitate the real-life. Through using authentic texts, teachers will make it easier for students to understand other texts in the fields especially the machines' operating instructions are in English. Thus, students could cope with the real-life.

Finally, teachers should provide activities based on equivalence especially that we notice through our contact with drilling students that they focus a lot in equivalence to understand the meaning of a word. Also, they should select texts that activate the schemata such as close procedures (gap information for instance).

Conclusion

In short, this chapter has focused on developing discourse competence through making inferences. We have tried our best to target EOP learners' needs. On this premise, we design our course and activities, and our tests. We have noticed a gradual increasing in the students' results and interactions through the different sessions. They improved at all levels from guessing the topic of the text, finding the form of the text, to making inferences, and so on. The results could be better if we have added more session with them but unfortunately the time is a big obstacle we have encountered. Despite that, students at the Drilling Department especially our sample population show a great interest in the English language and they have attended all the sessions to learn more how to understand the texts since they find that the texts are useful to them in the sense that, they learn different words in their domain and their uses.

General Conclusion

In this study, we attempt to demonstrate that inferring the meaning of words through using contextual cues enhances the development of the discourse competence within EOP learners. To accomplish this aim, we pave the ground through literature review which encompasses two chapters. The first is entitled developing discourse competence and the second is labeled reading skills and EOP.

The former tackles some important concepts and notions starting with defining the communicative competence and its components, moving to defining discourse then discourse competence. Later, we shifted to defining cohesion, coherence, genre, and acceptability. These elements are vital when it comes to developing discourse competence. Then, we delineated authenticity and authentic texts since they are central in enriching the students' exposures to different discourses and they have a positive impact in the development of the discourse competence in general. Finally, we closed the chapter with some procedures, we suggested, for its development.

The latter is concerned with Reading skills and EOP. In this chapter, we introduced what ESP is, its types, and most specifically what EOP is. Then, we dealt with reading skills as a macro-skill of ESP. We started by defining reading skills. After that, we explored the relationship of reading with discourse analysis and discourse competence. After that, we tackle most of the important reading techniques focused on making inferences through contextual cues.

We finish our study by an experimental study to test the hypothesis stated in our research. We designed a pre-test and post-test. Between the two, we had some training sessions based on the students' needs. On the basis of students' developments at all levels, we concluded that making inferences enhances, as such, the development of the discourse competence. Later, we suggested for the teachers some recommendations to be included in their course design hoping that they will be as a reference for the new teaching of EOP.

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Appendix A

Needs Analysis Sheet

Background Information

Name:

Age:years old

Sex:

Male

Female

Dear students, would you please answer the following questions by putting a cross (×) next to the appropriate answer

1- How many years have you been studying English?

a- 4 years

b- 7 years

c- More than 7 years

2- What do you need English for?

a- For further studies

b- For work

c- For communication

3- What kind of texts do you prefer to read in the classroom?

a- Related to your specialty

b- Not related to your specialty

c- No preferences

4- Do you think that learning English words like ' mud ' or ' drilling fluid' related to your specialty is of importance to you?

a- Yes

b- No

c- Cannot tell

5- If yes, how do you understand a difficult word you meet in the text?

- a- Look it up in a dictionary
- b- Understand it through the context
- c- Understand through its surroundings

6- Does your teacher encourage you to guess the meaning of the word alone?

- a- yes
- b- No

7- How do you guess the meaning of a word in the text?

- a- Through prefixes, suffixes, and roots
- b- Through synonyms and antonyms
- c- Through definition clues.

8- Do you think that guessing the meaning of a word help you to develop your comprehension?

- a- yes
- b- No

9- If yes, does it help you to develop:

- a- Your Grammar, vocabulary...
- b- Your Use of language
- c- Your compensation strategies
- d- Your interpretation of a given text by relating to its context
- e- Your knowledge of text typology
- f- All the above

At the end , we would like to affirm that your answers will remain anonymous, thank you for your collaboration .

Appendix B

The Pre-Test

Dear students, would you read please the text then answer what follows it from questions by putting a cross (×) next to the appropriate answer ?

Background Information

Full name:.....Age:..... years old

Sex:

Male

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

Female

Drilling Fluids

A drilling fluid, or mud¹, is any fluid that is used in a drilling operation in which that fluid is circulated or *pumped* from the surface, down the drill string², through the bit³, and back to the surface *via* the annulus, which is the space between the outside of the drill string and wall of the hole.

Drilling fluids are classified according to the type of base fluid and other primary ingredients into: gaseous such as: air and *nitrogen*; Aqueous like Gasified- foam, energized (including aphrons), Clay, polymer, emulsion; and Non-aqueous such as Oil or synthetic—all oil, invert emulsion. True foams contain at least 70% gas (usually N₂, CO₂, or air) at the surface of the hole, *while* energized fluids, including aphrons, contain lesser amounts of gas. Aqueous drilling fluids are generally dubbed water-based muds (WBMs), *while* non-aqueous drilling fluids (NAFs) are often referred to as oil-based muds (OBMs) or synthetic-based muds (SBMs).

There are many functions of drilling fluid; however, the most *critical* function that a drilling fluid performs is to *minimize* the concentration of cuttings around the drill bit and throughout the wellbore⁴. Of course, *in so doing*, the fluid itself assumes this cuttings

1 - Drilling fluid is known as the mud.

2- A drill string on a drilling rig, which is a machine which creates holes in the ground, a column, or string, of drill pipe that transmits drilling fluid.

3- Drill bits are cutting tools used to create cylindrical holes, almost always of circular cross-section.

4 - A wellbore, drill hole or borehole is a hole drilled for the purpose of exploration or extraction of natural resources such as water, gas or oil.

burden, and if the cuttings are not *removed* from the fluid, it very quickly loses its ability to clean the hole and creates thick filter cakes. To enable on-site *recycling* and reuse of the drilling fluid, cuttings must be continually and efficiently removed.

Adapted from: Growcock and Harvey (2005, p.15)

Questions:

1- Based on the title of the text, what do you think that the text is about?

- (A) Description of what drilling fluid is
 - (B) Explanation of what drilling fluid is
 - (C) Depiction of what drilling fluid is
- | |
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2- How many paragraphs are there in the text?

- (A) One paragraph
 - (B) Two paragraphs
 - (C) Three paragraphs
- | |
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3- Paragraph n°: 1 speaks about :

- (A) Definition of mud
 - (B) Functions of mud
 - (C) Characteristics of mud
- | |
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4- Paragraph n°: 2 deals with:

- (A) Types of drilling fluid
 - (B) Selection of drilling fluid
 - (C) Tasks of drilling fluid
- | |
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5- Paragraph n°:3 tackles:

- (A) Purpose of a drilling fluid
- (B) Mission of a drilling fluid
- (C) Task of a drilling fluid

6- The word ' pump' in line 2 is closest in meaning to :

- (A) circulate
- (B) drill
- (C) thrust
- (D) force

7- The word ' via ' in line 3 is closest in meaning to:

- (A) by means of
- (B) through
- (C) by way of
- (D) by

8- The word ' critical ' in line 13 is closest in meaning to :

- (A) necessary
- (B) decisive
- (C) important
- (D) fundamental

9- The word ' burden ' in line 15 is closest in meaning to :

- (A) bother
- (B) load
- (C) Trouble
- (D) encumber

10- The word ' remove' in line 15 is closest in meaning to:

- (A) Get rid of
- (B) Eliminate

(C) Take out

(D) Eradicate

11- The word 'recycle' in line 17 is closest in meaning to:

(A) reprocess

(B) reuse

(C) reduce

(D) recover

12- The word 'minimize' in line 13 is opposite in meaning to :

(A) optimise

(B) increase

(C) diminish

(D) enhance

13- The word 'Nitrogen' in line 6 is a kind of

(A) liquid

(B) solid

(C) gaz

14- The word 'while' in line 9 expresses:

(A) comparison

(B) contrast

(C) addition

(D) time and sequence

15- 'while' in line 10 expresses:

(A) comparison

(B) contrast

(C) addition

(D) time and sequence

16- The expression ' In so doing ' in line 14 expresses:

- (A) Enumeration
- (B) addition
- (C) Result
- (D) Inference

17- The word ' it' in line 16 refers to

- (A) The fluid
- (B) The drill
- (C) The cuttings

18- What is the most repeated word in the text? Is it:

- (A) Well bore
- (B) Cuttings
- (C) Drilling fluid

19- Has your guess about the text been confirmed?

- (A) Yes
- (B) No

20- Would you summarise what have you understood from the text in three lines?

.....
.....
.....

At the end, we would like to affirm that your answers will remain anonymous, Thank you for your collaboration

Appendix C

Activity one:

Look at the following extracts on the left. Match the underlined word in each with its meaning from the list of words in the middle. Then tell which of the strategies listed on the right you used in understanding these words

<p>1- Muds that generate waste fluid and cuttings, which must be hauled off (and perhaps treated) rather than discharged directly into the environment, generally incur higher costs (Growcock and Harvey, 2005 , p.20)</p>	<p>a- Drilling fluid</p>	<p>Antonyms</p>
<p>2- In many cases, the cost ascribed to the fluid also includes costs associated with solids control/management and waste disposal (ibid,p.17)</p>	<p>b- rocks</p>	<p>Definition by means of footnotes</p>
<p>3- Mud pump is a large reciprocating pump used to circulate the mud (drilling fluid) on a drilling rig. It is an important part of the oil well drilling equipment. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mud_pump)</p>	<p>c- discharged</p>	<p>Synonyms</p>
<p>4- The dryer shaker, or dryer, is a linear motion shaker used to minimize the volume of liquid associated with drilled cuttings¹ discharged from the main rig shakers and hydro cyclones (Merril& Robinson,2005, p.153)</p>	<p>d- management</p>	<p>Definition by mean of parentheses</p>

¹Cuttings are small pieces of rock that break away due to the action of the bit teeth.

Activity two: select from the words given the appropriate word

Drilling fluids serve many functions: controlling, formation pressures, ...1.....cuttings from the wellbore, sealing permeable formations encountered.....2.....drilling, cooling and lubricating the bit,.....3.....hydraulic energy to down hole tools and the bit and, perhaps most important, maintaining well bore4.....and well control. (Williamson, 2013, p.63)

- | | | | |
|-----------------|----------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1- Substituting | 2- while | 3- Transmitting | 4- Consistency |
| Shifting | when | Transferring | Steadiness |
| Removing | during | conducting | Uniformity |
| Lifting | in | sending | Stability |

Activity Three: what do the underlined words function?

- 1- The type of solid and its concentration influences mud and well costs, including factors such as drilling rate, hydraulics, dilution rate, torque and drag, surge and swab pressures, differential sticking, lost circulation, hole stability, and balling of the bit and the bottom-hole assembly (Growcock and Harvey, 2005, p.20).
- 2- Just as the nature of drilling-fluid solids affects the efficiency of solidscontrolequipment, the nature of the solids also plays an integral rolein the properties of drilling fluids, which in turn affect the properties ofthe solids and the performance of the equipment(ibid , p.31)
- 3- Cuttings hydrate, become soft, and disperse in aqueous fluids and evenin invert-emulsion NAFs with excessively low salinity. On the otherhand, cuttings may become more brittle than the formation in highwater-phase-salinity NAFs and can be mechanically degraded by theaction of the rotating drill string inside the well bore, particularly indeviated, slim-hole, and extended-reach wells.(ibid, p.25)

Appendix D

The post-Test

Dear students read the text then answer what follows it from questions by putting a cross (×) next to the appropriate answer

Background Information

Full Name:

Age: years old

Sex:

Male

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

Female

Drilling Fluids

Drilling fluid -mud - is usually a mixture of water, clay, weighing material and a few chemicals. Sometimes oil may be used instead of water, or oil added to the water to give the mud certain desirable *properties*. Drilling fluid is used to *raise* the cuttings¹ made by the bit² and lift *them* to the surface for *disposal*. *But equally important, it also provides* a means of keeping underground pressures in check. The heavier or *denser* the mud, is the more pressure it exerts. *So*, weighing materials -*barite* - are added to the mud to make it exert as much pressure as needed to contain formation pressures.

The equipment in the circulating system consists of a large number of items. The mud pump³ takes in mud from the mud pits⁴ and sends it out a discharge line to a standpipe. The standpipe is a steel pipe *mounted vertically* on one leg of the mast⁵ or derrick. The mud is pumped up the standpipe and into a flexible, very strong, reinforced rubber hose called the rotary hose or Kelly hose. The rotary hose is connected to the swivel. The mud enters the swivel the swivel goes down the Kelly, drill pipe and drill collars and exits at the bit. It *then*

1 - Cuttings are small pieces of rock that break away due to the action of the bit teeth.

2- Drill bits are cutting tools used to create cylindrical holes, almost always of circular cross-section

3 - Mud pump is a large reciprocating pump used to circulate the mud (drilling fluid) on a drilling rig.

4 - Mud pit: a large tank (a metal or plastic vessel used to store or measure a liquid) that holds drilling fluid on the rig or at a mud-mixing plant.

5 - A derrick is a lifting device composed of one tower.

does a sharp U-turn and heads back up the hole in the annulus. The annulus is the space between the outside of the drill string and wall of the hole.

Finally, the mud leaves the hole through a steel pipe called the mud return line and falls over a vibrating, screen like device called the shale shaker. Agitators¹ installed on the mud pits help maintain a uniform mixture of liquids and solids in the mud. If any fine silt or sand is being drilled, then devices called desilters or desanders may be added. Another auxiliary in the mud system is a device called degasser.

Adapted from: http://www.metu.edu.tr/~kok/pete321/PETE321_CHAPTER2.pdf

Questions:

1- On the basis of the text's title, what do you think that the text is about?

- (A) circulation of what drilling fluid is
- (B) function of drilling fluid is
- (C) Depiction of what drilling fluid is

2- How many paragraphs are there in the text?

- (A) Two paragraphs
- (B) One paragraph
- (C) Three paragraphs

3- The first paragraph deals with:

- (A) Function of mud
- (B) Definition of mud
- (C) Selection of mud

4- The second paragraph is concerned with:

- (A) Components of mud
- (B) Circulation of mud
- (C) characteristics of mud

5- The third paragraph tackles:

- (A) Introduction
- (B) Body

1 - An agitator is a device or mechanism to put something into motion by shaking or stirring

(C) Conclusion

6- The word 'raise' in line 3 is closest in meaning to:

- (A) Move up
- (B) Hoist
- (C) lift
- (D) elevate

7- The word 'properties' in line 3 is closest in meaning to :

- (A) characteristics
- (B) features
- (C) components
- (D) types

8- The word 'disposal' in line 4 is closest in meaning to:

- (A) removal
- (B) retention
- (C) showing
- (D) discarding

9- The word 'provide' in the same line is closest to meaning to:

- (A) Supply
- (B) Offer
- (C) give
- (D) grant

10- The word 'denser' in line 5 is closest in meaning to:

- (A) heavier
- (B) weightier
- (C) thicker
- (D) Grant

11- The word 'barite' in line 6 is closest in meaning to :

- (A) mud
- (B) weighing materials
- (C) cuttings

(D) bit

12- The word 'mounted' in line 10 is closest to meaning to:

- (A) rise
- (B) Accumulate
- (C) Increase
- (D) Escalate

13- The word 'maintain' in line 18 is closest to meaning to:

- (A) Keep
- (B) Sustain
- (C) Retain
- (D) Destroy

14- The word 'auxiliary' in line 19 is closest to meaning to:

- (A) Assisting
- (B) Support
- (C) Supplementary
- (D) Secondary

15- The word 'vertically' in line 10 is an antonym of the word :

- (A) Straight
- (B) Perpendicular
- (C) Horizontally
- (D) Parallel

16- Mud pump, stand pipe, and Kelly are:

- (A) Equipments
- (B) Items
- (C) Tools
- (D) Apparatus

17- The word 'them' in line 4 refers to :

- (A) Drilling fluids
 - (B) Weighing materials
 - (C) Cuttings
- | |
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| |

18- The word 'it' in the same line refers to:

- (A) oil
 - (B) drilling fluid
 - (C) Cutting
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19- The word 'also' in the same line expresses:

- (A) Enumeration
 - (B) Addition
 - (C) Exemplification
 - (D) Sequence
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| |

20- The word 'so' in line 6 expresses:

- (A) Comparison
 - (B) Result
 - (C) Exemplification
 - (D) Addition
- | |
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21- The expression 'But equally important' in line 4 expresses:

- (A) Comparison
 - (B) Contrast
 - (C) Similarity
 - (D) Addition
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22- The word 'then' in line 13 expresses:

- (A) consequence
 - (B) Sequence
 - (C) inference
 - (D) Addition
- | |
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23- The word 'finally' in line 16 expresses:

- (A) Enumeration
 - (B) Addition
- | |
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| |
| |

(C) Conclusion

(D) Addition

24- Sentences are linked together by means of:

(A) Connectors

(B) Repetition

(C) Synonym

(D) Antonym

25- What is the most repeated word?

(A) Stand pipe

(B) Steel pipe

(C) Mud

(D) Mud pump

26- Has your guess about the text been confirmed?

Yes

No

27- Would you summarize what have you understood from the text in three lines?

.....

.....

.....

At the end,we would like to affirm that your answers will remain anonymous, thank you for your collaboration

Abstract

Developing discourse competence is one of the main goals of English language teaching. Reading is a key skill for the acquisition and the expansion of vocabulary. However, students find difficulties in dealing with texts especially when it comes to meaning. EOP Students, in specific, face some problems when dealing with texts in their milieus .They depend heavily on the literal translation though the context plays an essential role. Making inferences through contextual cues is one of the reading techniques that is not so used by the students. Therefore, this study is an attempt to see to what extent making inferences through contextual cues helps the students to develop their discourse competence. To make this aim comes true; we conducted an experimental study. The surprising results show a great improvement in comparison with the pre-test. For this reason, we confirm that making inferences through contextual cues enhances the development of discourse competence

Key words: discourse competence, EOP, reading, making inferences.

ملخص

يعد تطوير كفاءة الخطاب أحد الأهداف الرئيسية لتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية. تعتبر القراءة من المهارات الأساسية لاكتساب وإثراء الرصيد المفرداتي. بالرغم من ذلك يواجه بعض الطلبة صعوبات في التعامل مع النصوص و تتمثل تلك الصعوبات في إيجاد المعنى و خاصة عند الطلبة الذين يتوجهون إلى الحياة العملية بحيث أنهم يعتمدون بشكل كبير على الترجمة الحرفية على الرغم من أن السياق يلعب دورا أساسيا بحيث يمكن الطالب من استدلال معنى الكلمة دون الرجوع إلى المعاجم إلا أن الطلبة يغفلون هذا الجانب و من كل هذا كانت دراستنا تهدف إلى تبين مدى استعمال السياق في استدلال المعنى للكلمة و أثره في تطوير الكفاءة الخطابية و للبرهنة على صحة هذه الفرضية قمنا بإجراء هذه الدراسة التجريبية و التي تبين لنا من خلالها وجود تحسن كبير بالمقارنة مع الاختبار الأول و انطلاقا من هذه النتيجة نقول أن استدلال المعنى من خلال السياق يساهم في تطوير كفاءة الخطاب

الكلمات المفتاحية : كفاءة الخطاب ، الإنجليزية للأهداف العملية ، القراءة ، استدلال المعنى