



## RECIPROCAL TEACHING AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY FOR IDENTIFYING READING LITERACY PROBLEMS: A CASE STUDY OF AN OMANI EFL CLASSROOM



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### ABSTRACT

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This article presents the results of an action research undertaken by an EFL teacher in a grade nine Omani classroom. This action research investigated the use of reciprocal teaching (RT) as an instructional strategy for the purpose of identifying learners' strengths and weaknesses in comprehending and interpreting reading texts. RT was used as an instructional tool for observing students' thinking processes while they co-constructed meaning out of reading texts. 47 grade nine EFL female students took part in this study. The data was collected through students' artifacts created while applying the strategies of RT, such as summarizing, questioning, clarifying and predicting. When assessed holistically, it was concluded that students succeeded in creating summaries, asking questions and making predictions. However, a closer analysis of the artifacts, showed that students faced difficulties in (i) synthesizing and integrating the key information included in the reading passages assigned to them; (ii) paraphrasing the key information mentioned in the texts; (iii) raising questions that target predicting and inferencing skills; (iv) applying the new information mentioned in the text to new situations. The study claims that the application of RT can inform teachers' future pedagogical practices and assist students in developing their self-regulating skills.

**Contribution/ Originality:** This study is first of its kind that utilizes the teaching strategy of reciprocal teaching (RT) in an Omani EFL classroom. Grounded in Vygotsky's ideas that emphasize the importance of guided social interaction in learning and development, the study demonstrates that RT can be used as an effective instructional strategy for identifying reading literacy problems.

### 1. INTRODUCTION: THE IMPORTANCE OF IMPROVING THE INSTRUCTIONAL QUALITY IN DEVELOPING READING LITERACY SKILLS

UNESCO (UNESCO, 2019) views literacy as an integral part of the human right to education. Literacy is defined as "a means of identification, understanding, interpretation, creation, and communication in an increasingly digital, text-mediated, information-rich and fast-changing world" (UNESCO, 2019, paragraph 3). In this definition, UNESCO goes beyond a more traditional approach to literacy as the ability to read and to write. However, one might argue that without the development of reading literacy, understanding, interpretation and a critical evaluation of a variety of texts, including the digital ones, becomes more challenging, if not impossible. Recognizing

the importance of reading, educational systems worldwide have identified the development of reading literacy as the core area of their educational policies (Leu, 2016). The efforts undertaken by many world countries in developing reading literacy have resulted in positive outcomes. The report of Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) (National Center for Education Statistics, n.d) describes the results of the international comparative assessment of reading literacy among grade four students in 50 participating world countries. According to the report, there are more good readers now than there were 15 years ago when this assessment began.

One of the important highlights of the report is the importance of instruction in teaching reading literacy and in predicting high academic achievement. It has been noted in a number of PIRLS 2016 reports that students show more engagement with reading and high motivation towards reading in learning environments where learners are encouraged to work independently and in collaboration with their peers under the support or guidance of their instructors. Discussion-based instructional approaches, small group work, and peer-mentoring are among the effective strategies that promote students' engagement and are linked to a higher reading achievement (Hooper, S., & Martin, 2016).

The focus of this paper is on the study of one of the instructional approaches to teaching reading literacy by using the methodology of Action Research (AR). Specifically, the focus of the study is on investigating the application of the instructional strategy known as reciprocal teaching (RT) for the purpose of identifying learners' strengths and weaknesses in reading literacy in the context of the Omani EFL classroom. It is claimed that RT can be used as an observation tool of students' thinking while they co-construct meaning out of reading texts. This instructional strategy can potentially inform teachers' pedagogical practices by having a better understanding of the obstacles encountered by their students in the process of reading and interpreting English texts.

## **2. THE LEARNING CONTEXT OF THE STUDY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

The new basic education system implemented in Oman promotes student-centered, active learning pedagogy and formative assessment (Al-Maskari, AlRasbi, AlMawali, Al-Zadjali, & AlSulaimani, 2016). The development of reading literacy in Arabic and in English has also been emphasized in the new system, which is reflected in the new school curriculum. Specifically, it is stated that "the Integrated Curriculum project uses an integrated learning approach to develop students as a whole: cognitively, physically, emotionally, linguistically, and socially. It also aims to develop their literacy skills both in Arabic and in English" (Al-Maskari et al., 2016, p. 7). In addition, there are many different campaigns initiated in Oman in order to promote and develop reading literacy, for example the "I Read and Think" project, the goal of which is to develop the reading skills of students with learning difficulties.

The school curriculum emphasizes the development of reading literacy in two languages: Arabic, the official language of the country; and English, the official foreign language of the country. English has a unique status in Oman, as it is associated with the country's rapid modernization and development that has taken place since the time of the Omani Renaissance of the seventies in the last century. English is also the medium of instruction in the Omani tertiary system. It is also a lingual franca of a highly diverse workforce in Oman, out of which expats comprise 40.8 percent of the total population of Oman (Times of Oman, 2020). Omani nationals and the expats residing in Oman speak more than 30 languages and dialects (Eberhard, Simons, & Fennig, 2020). Therefore, a high proficiency in English is considered to be an important pre-requisite for academic and professional success.

English has a unique status in Oman, and continuous educational reforms took place in the country to improve the English proficiency of the students enrolled in public schools. However, despite the tremendous efforts undertaken by all stakeholders such as education policy makers, curriculum and learning materials designers, teacher training institutions, teachers and researchers, English proficiency of Omani students in the public educational system remains low. More than 80% of high school graduates are required to take a one-year bridge program known as the Foundation Program when entering the higher education system (Denman & Al-Mahrooqi, 2019). It is also claimed that students who finish secondary education "lack the ability to use language effectively

and appropriately in all four skills throughout the range of social, personal, school and work situations required for daily living in a given society” (Al-Issa & Al-Bulushi, 2012, 142). Denman and Al-Mahrooqi (2019) list reasons of inadequate language proficiency in English and include teachers’ failure to create effective learning environments for their students due to the teacher-centered approach, still prevalent in many Omani public and private schools. Denman and Al-Mahrooqi (2019) note that teachers do little to promote task-based approaches that can be used in developing literacy, e.g., assisting students with text comprehension and interpretation, and to stimulate students’ critical thinking. Memorization and information retrieval are still widely used as some of the teaching methods in schools. Among other reasons of failure to implement educational reforms and improve the quality of education in Oman is the lack of reading and research culture among teachers.

### 3. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

In line with the challenges outlined in the previous section, the objective of this action research is to investigate the effectiveness of RT as a specific type of instruction. This type of instruction was introduced by an Omani teacher of a grade nine EFL classroom as an attempt to understand the challenges of her students with reading literacy, on the one hand, and to promote reading and culture research among public teachers, on the other.

Action research as a methodology for doing research can be defined as a teacher’s developmental tool and a process in which a teacher investigates teaching and learning in order to improve the learning experiences of her students, her teaching knowledge and practice (British Council, n.d). The goal of action research is to question the current practice, identify a solution and propose an intervention that would bring positive change in students’ learning experiences (Burns, 2015; Dosemagen & Schwalbach, 2019).

In addition to improving the learning experiences of students, action research facilitates the development of teachers’ knowledge and practice. It makes teachers less dependent on the decisions of those who may not be aware of the specifics of the local teaching contexts. In conducting action research, teachers may use observations of their teaching practices and students’ performances, students’ and teachers’ reflections and students’ artifacts for the purpose of data collection (Verster, n.d).

### 4. RESEARCH QUESTION

By using the methodology of action research, this paper aims to investigate the use of RT for diagnostic purposes in order to highlight the strengths and identify the weaknesses that grade nine EFL students encounter with reading. Specifically, it investigates the following research questions:

- (1) To what extent can RT be used as an instructional strategy for the purpose of identifying learners’ strengths and weaknesses when comprehending and interpreting reading texts?
- (2) To what extent can RT be used as an effective strategy for observing students’ thinking processes while they read and interpret texts?

### 5. RECIPROCAL TEACHING AS INTERVENTION: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Palincsar (2017), “Reciprocal Teaching is a form of strategy instruction designed to promote self-regulation while reading and learning with text; ... it engages the teacher and learners in lots of use of language as the group co-constructs the meaning of the text they are reading and discussing.” The rationale behind RT is to equip the students with strategies of self-regulating the process of making meaning while reading. Put simply, RT is introduced to ensure that students understand what they read. RT is also a dialogue in which the meaning of a text is co-constructed between students and their teachers. To assist the students in better meaning making abilities, they are introduced to the following four strategies: *summarizing*, *questioning*, *clarifying* and *predicting*. The strategy of *summarizing* takes place at many different levels of the text (i.e. sentence, paragraph, discourse) and

draws learners' attention to the important information in the text by way of identifying, paraphrasing and integrating the key information in the reading text. *Questioning* strategy is used as a self-check that the students can generate questions about different aspects of a reading text and that they can answer questions. *Clarifying* strategy teaches learners to be alert and draws their attention to many aspects of the text that might make it difficult to understand. This strategy signals students the need to undertake necessary steps such as rereading, reading ahead, asking for help in order to overcome difficulties and to restore meaning. *Prediction* strategy activates students' background information on the topic and helps to connect the information that they possess on the topic with the new information. This strategy makes reading purposeful for students and it also teaches them to pay attention to the text structure (e.g., headings and subheadings within the text).

The inspiration for RT was the sociocultural theory of mind that emphasizes the importance of guided learning and dialogue, as a type of socially mediated interaction, in the development of learners' cognition (Lantolf, Poehner, & Swain, 2018; Vygotsky, 1978). Specifically, it is claimed that the dialogue that includes student-student and student-teacher interaction when they are engaged in solving a cognitively demanding task, can bring qualitative change in the cognitive development of a learner. With regards to guided learning, it is claimed that when instruction targets the higher levels of performance that a learner is capable of with the guidance of a more knowledgeable other, it expands his/her Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and leads to development of his knowledge and skills. In this action research, RT is seen as guided learning where a more knowledgeable other (e.g., a teacher) guides the process of text comprehension and interpretation by utilizing the four strategies mentioned above. Text comprehension and interpretation are mediated by the dialogue that the students have with their peers and their teacher while working with texts.

## 6. THE STUDY

The action research discussed in this paper took place in an EFL classroom of one public school located in the Dhofar region of the Sultanate of Oman. Two sections of 47 female students, who were enrolled in Cycle One of grade nine, participated in the study.<sup>1 2</sup>

The prescribed textbook for grade nine is titled *English for me: Basic education 9B Class book*. The philosophy of the textbook and its accompanying material such as the skills book is based on the communicative approach to language teaching (Ministry of Education, 2018). This means that the focus of the activities and tasks included in the textbook is on the development of students' communicative competence in English, i.e. their ability to communicate meaning and perform communicative tasks. The activities of the textbook include real world tasks that students encounter outside of the language classroom i.e. interviewing a person for a job, developing a resume, to name just a few. In addition, the textbook and the skills book include form-focused activities, i.e. activities that draw students' attention to language forms e.g., grammar, spelling and sounds. The activities included in the textbook encourage students to work independently, in groups with their peers, and to keep a learning portfolio, the purpose of which is to capture their progress, and the development of their language skills and knowledge during the academic year. The textbook and the skills book are skill-based in that they integrate all the four language skills i.e. reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Throughout the school year, teachers are expected to continually assess students' reading abilities with quizzes, projects (e.g., independent reading projects), class participation, and presentations.

The instructional strategy of RT was introduced to the students in the unit titled *World of Work*. The reading passages included in this unit were structured around the following themes: (i) the importance of summer jobs for

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<sup>1</sup> The structure of basic and post-basic education in Oman includes the following cycles: Basic: Cycle One (Grades 1-4), (ii) Basic: Cycle Two (Grades 4-10), (iii) Post-Basic (Secondary) (Grades 11-12) (Al-Maskari et al., 2016).

<sup>2</sup> In Oman's Cycle 2 public education system, female students are educated separately from male students.

teens in Germany, (ii) the job of a chimney sweep in the 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain as one of the worst jobs in history, (iii) jobs for young people in Oman in private and public sectors, (iv) children's labor rights, (v) the job of a human crash test dummy, and (vi) jobs for female taxi drivers in Thailand (Ministry of Education, 2018, pp. 32-33).

A total of 47 students of two sections of grade nine were divided into 12 groups, where 11 groups comprised 4 members and one group comprised 3 members. Since this is an action research, the teacher who acted as a researcher, conducted this action research in the two sections of grade nine classes that she taught, and the sampling of the study participants was random. Each group was assigned a reading passage. Since there were 12 groups and 6 reading passages, two groups were assigned identical reading passages. One member of each group was responsible for creating a summary of the assigned reading passage; two members were responsible for developing questions and clarifications, and one member was responsible for making inferences and predictions about the assigned reading passage.<sup>3</sup> Since the teacher was working with a big class of 47 students, it was not possible for her to simultaneously capture the discussion and the results of the performance of all members of each group. Therefore, she asked group members to discuss and write results of their discussion in the following categories: (i) summarizing (*What is the text about?*), questioning and clarifying (*What would you like to ask after reading the text?*), and predicting (*What can be predicted from the text?*). The teacher encouraged the students to write freely. She explained to them that their grammar, spelling and punctuation would not be assessed and that writing was used in this lesson only for the purpose of capturing the results of their discussion of the assigned reading passages.

## 7. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' DATA

This section discusses results and analysis of students' data. Samples of students' work are presented according to the tasks assigned to students in each group, namely (i) summarizing, (ii) questioning and clarifying, and (iii) predicting.

### 7.1. The Analysis of Students' Summaries

Table 1 presents samples of the summaries developed by groups in response to the first task. The goal of the task was to identify the main ideas in the assigned reading text and present them as a summary.

The analysis of the summaries presented in Table 1 shows active engagement of group members who were assigned the task of summarizing. This conclusion is also supported by the teacher's observations during the lesson. The group members stayed on the task and when examined holistically, their summaries captured the main ideas of the assigned reading passages, albeit with different degrees of success. The data show that the students responsible for creating summaries in groups B, D, F, H, and J are better at identifying, selecting and integrating the key information in their summaries than their peers from groups A, C, E, G, I, K and L. To illustrate, consider the two summaries from Table 1 of the reading passage *Jobs in Oman* developed by group E and group F. The summary of group E captures a very general idea expressed in the reading passage, i.e. the development of jobs in Oman. In contrast, the summary created by group F shows the ability of students to be actively engaged with the text and to have a better skill at identifying and selecting the key information from the reading passage, which is the development of jobs for Omani youth in different sectors (i.e. public and private) of the Sultanate.

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<sup>3</sup> For the purpose of this research, two strategies, questioning and clarifying, are united under one category.

Table-1. Samples of the students' summaries.

Text	Summary
Text 1: Students' summer jobs	Group A: The text about what's the best holiday job did German university students had ever done. <sup>4</sup> Group B: About the best holiday jobs [the students] had ever done and study and work did mix.
Text 2: Jobs in Time	Group C: The worst jobs in history...the look at jobs in the 19 <sup>th</sup> century Britain (chimney sweeps) Group D: It is about the worst jobs in the history as the people used to that [their] houses by burning wood or coal. But many children died because they got stuck, couldn't breathe, developed lung or eye diseases, or got burned alive.
Text 3: Jobs in Oman	Group E: The jobs that Omanis work in Oman and the development of work in the Sultanate. Group F: It talks about what are the jobs in Oman...that will be able [available] for the young [people] and which are the sectors that introducing more good jobs.
Text 4: Walk together and send the message	Group G: The text talk about the [rights] of children. Group H: It is talk about what <i>did the</i> international convention on the rights of the child do for the child labor and specially in India because India still employs around 30,000 children and force them to work.
Text 5: Rusty Haight	Group I: Rusty Haight is human; how accident cars; he still crashes his car [to] know about crashes. Group J: Talk about human crash test dummy in America. He had survived 718 crashes. He collect some information to help police offices and engineers understand more about ...
Text 6: Thai Taxis	Group K: Driven by women Group L: About the first taxis

One of the strengths of the instructional strategy of RT is that a teacher can observe students' thinking processes online, i.e. at the time of doing a reading task. This observation helps the teacher to identify the problems the students might have while reading and interpreting a reading passage. The students' summaries show that they lack the ability to synthesize and paraphrase the key information mentioned in the text. The data also shows that while creating their summaries, students in all groups copied words, phrases and sentences from the original text.

Despite the fact that the students could select the important information from the text, they were still unable to identify and integrate all the key components included in their reading passages, thus failing to identify the purpose of a reading text. For example, Group A's summary of the reading passage *Students' Summer Jobs* (Table 1) shows that students are able to identify the important key information mentioned in the text. However, the students fail to mention why this key information about summer jobs is mentioned in the first place, which is to support the idea that work and school responsibilities can be mixed successfully. By doing so, the students fail to identify the purpose of the assigned text, which constitutes one of the important skills of reading literacy.

The problems that the students experienced while creating the summaries signaled to the teacher the need for a pedagogic intervention that targets the development of paraphrasing and synthesizing skills.

### 7.2. Analysis of Students' Questioning and Clarifying Strategies

This subsection presents students' samples of the second task of questioning and clarifying assigned to them. The samples are given in Table 2.

<sup>4</sup>The samples of students' answers included in Tables 1, 2 and 3 are presented without any major editing of spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors for the purpose of preserving students' original writing.



Table-2. The samples of students' questions

Text	Questions & clarifications
Text: Students' summer jobs	Group A: Why did the German university students choose the waiter jobs? Group B: How different a holiday job? How helping citizens in save the money?
Text: Jobs in Time	Group C: Why they do that for children? Who spread this idea? Group D: Why [they] send the children to work in this age? What is the result of this work for children?
Text: Jobs in Oman	Group E: How much does the private sector reaches in Omanization? Who is the first woman who worked as a firefighter and when? Group F: What are the jobs that are in the government sector? How the Omanis quickly find a job at the private sector? Who is the first Omani who became a firefighter and when? How can we help our country as students?
Text: Walk together and send the message	Group H: Why we have to avoid the child to work? Why the children forced to work? Group J: Did [this] text include the refuges children? What that will do for the [society]?
Text: Rusty Haight	Group I: What [develops from] his ...crashes if people interviewed him? Group J: What the meaning of the Rusty Haight? Why this man do this?
Text: Thai Taxis	Group K: application needs good English? Group L: why the women driver the taxis? What is a applicant need for work this job? What is the date for close applications?

As noted by the proponents of RT (Palincsar, 2017, p. 46), the goal of questioning as a strategy in RT is to reinforce summarizing and ultimately, assist students in improving their meaning making abilities. In order to generate questions, students need to identify the key information and supporting details in reading texts. In a way, questions raised by students to themselves and then discussed with their peers are used for self-regulation purposes. If a student cannot formulate a question or fails to find an answer to it, this inability should be used as a signal for the application of one of the strategies of good readers when they encounter a problem with reading comprehension, such as rereading, checking unknown words in a dictionary, and asking for help. By questioning, students develop their meaning-making abilities at different levels of discourse. For example, some questions can be asked to target the supporting details, whereas others would require the ability to make inferences and apply the information to new situations. The data presented in Table 2 show that the students produced a variety of questions. The data also show that in every group, there are questions that target the supporting details provided in the text (i.e. simple information retrieval) as well as questions that cannot be directly answered from the text. For example, questions generated by group E and group F about the reading text *Jobs in Oman* target factual information presented in the text, which is the percentage of Omani citizens in the private sector and the name of the first female firefighter mentioned in the reading passage. At the same time, the answer to the question of how quickly an Omani citizen can find a job in a private sector would require from students the ability to predict by applying the information mentioned in the text to the new situation. The last question asked by group F about the possible contribution of the young Omanis to the development of their country would require a critical evaluation of students' responsibilities in relation to the future economic development of their country.

The data from Table 2 also show that the students lack grammatical accuracy while raising questions. Despite the fact that they are capable of conveying meaning in their questions, the questions formulated by them are judged as ungrammatical. Thus, question formation was diagnosed by the teacher as a grammatical structure that can be incorporated and addressed in future lessons.

### 7.3. The Analysis of Predicting and Making Inferences

This subsection presents students' samples of the third task of predicting and making inferences assigned to them. Students' samples of the information that can be predicted or inferred from the texts are listed in Table 3.

Table-3. Samples of students' predictions

Text	Predicting
Text: Students' summer jobs	Group A: Help Omani teenagers to made them more responsible and help them develop respect for money Group B: [Summer jobs] help them [the students] develop respect for money and helped them develop personal communication skills
Text: Jobs in Time	Group C: Protect children and do not giving heavy work or job Group D: They should give the children their rights in the society to live in safe and educate and keep their health because they are the basic and backbone in the country to build it in the future. if they did this hard job, they will die and the nation will destroy.
Text: Jobs in Oman	Group E: We should work as young students and help our country and build our own [job] Group F: If the Omani women and men share their efforts at work they will be able to continue building an economically country in the future. The private sector quickly starting to accept more young people in different jobs.
Text: Walk together and send the message	Group H: To avoid child labor. And stop make them slaves for the money. And we should give the children [their] rights. Group I: That text make us think about the children's future and who to keep them slaves.
Text: Rusty Haight	Group I: He still victim his life for people's life and their safety; to take information about their safety. Group J: There is people protected the human and they did not know.
Text: Thai Taxis	Group K: Women can [be driving]. Group L: Women working in variety of jobs such as taxi driving by women in Thailand but in Oman the women didn't driving.

In order to make predictions and inferences, readers are required to synthesize and critically examine the information presented in the text by establishing connections between the new information discussed in a reading passage and readers' previous knowledge. The data show that students vary in their ability to predict the ideas that might follow from the information discussed in their reading passages. The data in Table 3 show that their predicting abilities depend on the topic discussed in the reading passage. For example, Group A members failed to make any predictions, as they simply reiterated the ideas expressed in the reading passage, such as the idea that summer jobs can make teens more responsible, develop appreciation for money or develop their communication skills. The Group A students could not make any predictions from the text because they lacked experiences of seeking part-time employment during summer holidays. It is impossible for Omani young female students to imagine themselves in a situation where they seek part-time summer jobs since their movements in the family and in the community are restricted by social, cultural and religious rules and conventions.

In contrast, the data show that when students have knowledge and experience about the topic, they are much more likely to make correct predictions. Students in group F connected the ideas expressed in their reading passage about youth employment with the idea that young men and women are responsible for the future economic development of the country. The reading passages assigned to Group D and Group I encouraged the students to think about the importance of children's rights and the violators of those rights. Students who discussed the text *Thai Taxis* correctly predicted that women can be taxi drivers and students made an observation that women in Thailand can drive taxis, whereas women in Oman cannot. This prediction is based on their knowledge of the socio-cultural differences between what women in Thailand can and cannot do and what women in Oman can and cannot do.

## 8. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In this action research, RT is used as an instructional strategy by a grade nine EFL teacher to observe her students' thinking processes when they make meaning out of reading texts. The strategies of summarizing, questioning, clarifying and predicting are used as scaffolds in facilitating the students' meaning making abilities



while comprehending and interpreting texts. One of the problems identified by the teacher in this action research is students' inability to synthesize and integrate key information in reading texts. This inability prevented some of the students from understanding the purpose of the text, which is one of the essential components of reading literacy. In addition, while presenting the key information in their short summaries, almost all students were unable to paraphrase, as they copied words, phrases and sentences verbatim from the reading passages. The data show that most of the questions asked by the students target the retrieval of factual information since only some questions target the information that can be predicted or inferred from the text. The students who participated in the study experienced difficulties with the grammatical structure of English questions. In relation to the ability of the students to connect the information mentioned in the reading passages to their previous knowledge or experience, the data show that the best predictions were made in relation to the issues that are familiar to the students and can be observed in their local community.

## 9. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Acquiring reading literacy is a challenging task. As a result of many educational reforms, Oman has achieved success in the development of reading literacy. According to the results of PIRLS 2011 and PIRLS 2016, the improvement in reading has risen from an average scale score of 391 (2011) to an average scale score of 418 (TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center, 2019). However, despite such improvement, the country's average is still significantly lower than the center point of PIRLS scale. Oman occupies *the fifth last place* followed by Kuwait, Morocco, Egypt and South Africa. That is why action research on reading literacy in Oman is important, as it presents an opportunity for practicing EFL teachers to be active in research, identify problems that Omani students face in reading and interpreting texts, and help practicing teachers guide their local pedagogical practices. Framed within the theory that emphasizes the importance of guided learning and socially mediated interaction in the construction of knowledge, this research takes into consideration the micro climate of the EFL classroom by observing students' meaning making abilities while they read. The advantages of RT as an instructional strategy is that it allows the teacher to observe students' thinking processes while they work on the development of their reading literacy skills, enabling the teachers to provide immediate help if needed and tailor their pedagogical practices accordingly. Most importantly, RT also teaches students to self-regulate their reading by introducing them to the strategies of summarizing, questioning, clarifying and predicting that are used for the purpose of scaffolding students' meaning making abilities when they develop their literacy skills in reading.

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