INFERENCE-MAKING INSTRUCTIONS IN EFL TEACHERS GUIDES OF GRADES ELEVEN AND TWELVE IN OMAN: A CONTENT ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

This research is part of a larger study exploring the implementation of inference-making skill in reading comprehension in the Omani educational context. This part of the study was designed to investigate the provided instructions related to inference-making as presented in post-basic English language Teachers' Guides (TGs). In order to achieve this aim, a content analysis tool was developed which comprised of three parts. The first part is devoted to exploring the general information about inferences that are provided in TGs. The second part is about inference strategies that are provided by TGs. The third part concerns about the techniques and instructions that are provided by TGs to develop students' inference-making ability. The sample of this study was TGs of grades eleven and twelve in the post-basic education system. The results of the study showed that TGs did not provide an explicit definition of inference-making skill and how it should be implemented. Also, it revealed the absence of explicit inference-making strategies such as Question-answer relationships (QAR), Key Words, Infer, and Support (KIS). On the other hand, as a positive aspect, there are several inference instructions or techniques are included in Teachers' Guides of both grades.

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is a complex process that involves the interplay of visual, auditory, cognitive, contextual, and affective factors. It is a process of constructing meaning from the text through the interaction of prior knowledge, previous experiences, and information in the text (Pardo, 2004). Similarly, Yukselir (2014, p. 66) pointed out that reading comprehension is "the result of complex interactions between text, setting, the reader, the reader's background, her reading strategies, her L1 and the L2, and the reader's decision making". Also, Hogan et al. (2011) indicated that the higher level comprehension skills consists of the skills which are necessary to construct a mental model of a text's meaning. These skills include inference making, comprehension monitoring, and structure knowledge.

Thus, to comprehend texts, readers need to be able to apply a variety of reading strategies. These strategies include: making connections, predicting, asking questions, inferring, summarizing, drawing conclusions, and determining main ideas. According to Roit (2005), comprehension strategies are intentional plans that people use in order to achieve a goal or make sense of texts being read. Therefore, learners need to learn how to use these strategies independently, to recognize and solve problems, and the most important is to make connections and inferences of reading texts. So, to comprehend a text, a learner not only has to be able to read and remember the information in text but also has to make inferences.

Thus, the ability to make an inference is the heart of the comprehension process as seen by many researchers. According to Kintsch & Van Dijk (1978), reading with comprehension involves building a mental model of the text in the reader's memory to make connections between text's elements without explicit links; these connections are known as inferences.

Many studies emphasized the importance of inference skills for reading comprehension. According to Elbro and Buch-Iversen (2013), inference skills are crucial for reading comprehension because they represent the ability to use information from the text with background knowledge or experiences to make a reasonable guess.

However, making inferences can be complex for many students. Therefore, it needs to be taught through explicit instructions. Many studies such as (Hansen and Pearson, 1983 & Raphael and Wonnacott, 1985) asserted that students significantly improve their ability to get meaning from reading when they are taught directly how to draw conclusions and make inferences. Thus, explicit instruction requires the teacher to pay careful attention how to plan a lesson based on the required skills, how to introduce and teach the skills, how to provide guided practice for students, how to measure students' responses during the lesson, and how to encourage students to maintain performance over time.

On the other hand, this task cannot be left to the teachers alone; they need to be provided with clear instructional guidelines for teaching inference-making. This can be achieved through different ways, including the Teacher's Guide. According to Richards (1993), Teacher's Guide can act as a training manual by giving the teacher detailed advice on how to use a particular approach. However, the Teacher's guide can either enhance or inhibit inference instruction and comprehension instructions in general.

Thus, the focus of this study is to investigate to which extent EFL Teachers Guides of grades (11 & 12) provide guidance regarding the inference-making skill. This will help to expand the research base on inference instructions in the Omani EFL context.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Inference and Reading Comprehension

Van den Broek & Husebye-Hartmann (1995, p. 353) stated that the term inference refers to "any information about events, relations, and so on that the reader adds to the information that is explicitly presented". Therefore, when skilled readers infer, they are interacting with the text and making logical assumptions based on text clues and prior knowledge (Keene & Zimmerman, 1997). This means the readers need to make different inferences in order to comprehend any reading text. For instance, they need to figure out the meaning of the unknown word, identify the author's opinion, and recognize the antecedents for pronouns. They also need to develop explanations about particular events or provide conclusions based on information presented in the text.

Oakhill & McCarthy (2015) defined two types of inferences; the first type is local cohesion inference which is needed to establish coherence between different parts of the text that can be triggered by "linguistic signals" such as a definite reference, or other anaphoric links such as pronouns. The second type is global coherence inference, which needs to be achieved in order to make the text as a whole cohere which depends on links between meanings of words or phrases in the text, but the need for them is not usually explicit.

Carrell and Eisterhold (1988) indicated that background knowledge is a major factor that affects comprehension and how a reader interacts with any reading text. Similarly, Anderson (1994) believed that in reading comprehension the

background knowledge enables readers to make inferences and fill in information not embedded explicitly in the text. The readers use text clues and the knowledge stored in their schema to infer implicit meaning from reading text.

Developing Inference-Making

Many studies such as (Raphael and Wonnacott, 1985 & Hansen and Pearson, 1983) asserted that students significantly improve their ability to get meaning from reading when they are taught directly how to draw conclusions and make inferences. Direct or explicit instruction is an effective instructional technique to help learners comprehend meaning from any reading text (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; Kamil et al., 2008). It is an instructional model that includes the explanation and modeling of the strategy, guided practice to apply the strategy, and the transfer of learning through the independent practice of the strategy.

According to Beers (2003) struggling readers need to be shown exactly how skilled readers comprehend when they are reading. Therefore, teachers should reflect on inference-making during reading and provide a context in which students can make inferences in a variety of ways. Also they should help them to practice combining clues from the text with their background knowledge in order to make inferences.

Kopitski (2007) suggested several activities for developing students' inferences ability such as; Question Answer Relationship (QAR), Keywords, Infer, and Support (KIS), It Says I Say, Marking text, and Graphic organizer.

The Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) is one of the most important strategies that contribute significantly to developing inference making ability. This strategy is developed by Taffy Raphael (1986) based on the taxonomy of questions proffered by Pearson and Johnson (1978) is one of the best strategies that can develop inferencing abilities for the tasks of reading texts and answering questions. The QAR is a direct instructional activity designed to help students deal with a reading by answering questions based on a text. In this strategy, students must realize that there are different types of questions, as well as different sources of answers both in the text and outside it (Wilhelm, 2001).

The second activity to develop students' inferences ability is "The KeyWords, Infer, and Support" (KIS). It helps students remember the three steps in making and supporting inferences. The students first need to underline the key words (repeating words, words reflected in the title, words in the questions) in the reading text. Then, they use the keywords to make inferences in order to answer the question. When they finish, they list background knowledge used or with facts from the text to support their answers.

The third activity is the "It Says I Say" strategy which is mainly about combining information from the text with prior knowledge. It is a visual representation students use to organize their thoughts. They need to say what is the information stated in the text, what is the scheme they have in their mind, and what are the conclusions they can make based on that information. It Says-I say strategy provides a structured way for students to draw logical conclusions based on the information provided in the text and their opinions.

Another useful activity to develop students' inferences ability is "Marking Texts with Sticky Notes". Harvey and Goudvis (2000) pointed out that using Marking Texts with Sticky Notes strategy is a way to help students keep track of their thinking while reading. So, this strategy helps students monitor their reading and stay focused on specific goals such as finding inferences.

Factors Influencing the Implementation of Inference-Making

There are several factors that have a major influence on the implementation of inference-making including; Teachers' perceptions about reading instructions, reading materials, assessment methods, and TGs. Being the main focus of the present study, the influence of TG will be discussed more deeply to get a clear idea of the role that the TG plays in developing reading comprehension, and inference-making in particular. Also, we will look at how to evaluate the instructional guidelines that the TG provides to teachers in developing inference-making skill when dealing with reading texts.

The Important Role of Teacher's Guide

The Teacher's Guide usually provides statements about the course objectives and outcomes, the course content, methodology, and assessment procedures. It can also play a crucial role in providing background information on cultural issues. According to Cunningsworth and Kusel (1991), the teacher's Guide has several functions, for instance; it conveys the purpose of the associated teaching materials and the methodological rationale, promotes the development of learning skills by assisting the teacher, and provides explicit guidance for effective use of the material. Thus, in case the ongoing professional development is not available, TG could be the most important source for EFL teachers.

In addition, Nunan (1993) indicated that the Teacher's Guide has a very critical role in how it offers guidance. It gives messages to the teachers that reflect a particular stance on language learning which may affect their practice. Thus, TG can either promote or prevent comprehension instructions if there is no careful consideration of the content, structure, and sequence.

In addition, many EFL teachers rely heavily on the teaching approach and the content instructional procedures specified in TG especially the less experienced teachers. In this regard, Cunningsworth & Kusel(1991, p. 131) stated that "the aim of the TG is to provide essential support for teachers whose own knowledge of English is shaky and incomplete, who perhaps only have a basic understanding of some of the rudiments of language teaching". The teachers' reliance on TG occurs because they believe that the content and the provided instructional procedures are based upon scientific proof (Shannon, 1983). Also, the dependence on the TG increases due to the lack of confidence among EFL teachers about planning. Even the experienced and proficient EFL teachers might face some challenges to deal with certain aspects or activities of the textbook. Thus, they still need some cues and guidance to deal with such activities.

In relation to the purposes of this study, it is very important to investigate to what extent the TG provides the support teachers need in teaching reading comprehension in general and inference-making in particular.

THE PRESENT STUDY

The Context of the Study

The present study takes place in the educational context of post-basic education in Oman. The Basic Education system was introduced in 1998 to replace the General Education system. The new Basic Education system runs from grades 1 to 10 and is divided into two cycles: Cycle One (grades 1-4) and Cycle Two (grades 5-10). Then, students move to Post-Basic Education (grades 11 – 12) which is similar to high school in other countries. At the end of grade 12, students sit for a national test to determine their access to higher education colleges and institutions.

In Oman, English is taught as a foreign language. The English language curricula are developed based on the English Curriculum Framework which defines the main outcomes of each educational stage and the specific objectives for

each grade level. The curricula for all grades are developed by the Omani Ministry of Education and taught across the country. The EFL package of material comprising of 'Students book', 'Workbook', and 'Teacher's Guide' which provides the EFL teachers the detailed guidelines. Also, they are supplemented with supporting materials (CDs, cards, readers, etc.). The EFL textbooks contain different types of reading texts accompanied by different tasks. These textbooks are constantly being developed to raise students' level in English with a lot of support for English language teachers. The textbooks expose students to foreign culture through many reading texts.

The Omani EFL students have difficulties learning English in general and reading in particular. As shown by many studies, Omani EFL students' results remain unsatisfactory, especially in reading. For instance, Al-Mahrooqi & Asante (2010), Mourtaga (2005), Shannon (2003), Mustafa (2002), found that EFL students struggle with both bottom-up and top-down reading processes. This means that students are slow and weak readers due to poor automaticity and higher-order comprehension skills. Al Ajmi (2006) found that the first reading difficulty encountered by Omani students relates to 'content/world background knowledge'. In her view, these could be attributed to the type of reading texts or teachers' instructional strategies. Another study conducted by Al Brashdi (2002) also found that 'background knowledge' is among the three most serious problems facing Omani students when constructing meaning from written texts. Al-Jahwari (2015) investigated three aspects related to prior knowledge in EFL reading comprehension in Oman: teachers' view of the role of prior knowledge, the instructional strategies they use for activating students' prior knowledge, and the difficulties they face when activating students' prior knowledge. Results show that Omani EFL teachers are aware of the importance of the role of prior knowledge in reading comprehension, but they have limited awareness of its instructional implications. This was attributed to the lack of training teachers receive on a variety of techniques for activating students' prior knowledge.

The present study focuses on inference-making instructional guidelines provided by two Teachers' Guides in post-basic level, grades (11 & 12). It should be noted that the term "Teacher's Guide", "teacher's Manual", and "Teacher's Book" are interchangeably used in the literature to refer to the same educational product. The term used in Oman for this product is 'Teacher's Book', but in the present study, the term 'Teacher's Guide' will be used because it is more common and widely used.

Cunningsworth & Kusel (1991) mentioned that evaluation of TGs still a neglected area in the literature. In Oman, although, there are several evaluation studies conducted by 'Curriculum Evaluation Department' in the Ministry of Education on EFL Curricula in general, less is known about the quality of Teacher's guide. The studies of 'Curriculum Evaluation Department', from the part devoted to the TGs, revealed many positive aspects. For instance, the TGs;

- Provide a comprehensive introduction about the general purpose of the teaching material.

- Provide clear development of English language skills.

- Provide very detailed procedures for each lesson.

- Provide key answers, suggestions, and additional activities.

- Suggest assessment methods.

- Specify timing for achieving learning tasks.

However, with all mentioned positive aspects of Omani EFL TGs, still there is a need for the analytical study of the presence of specific instructional guidelines related to reading since it's the most challenging skill as mentioned earlier. In particular, identifying instructional guidelines related to inference-making skill.

The Purpose of the Study

This study aims to provide insight into what kinds of inferences guidelines are provided by English Language Teachers' Guides of post-basic grades (11 & 12). The main research question of the study is what are the instructions provided in the Teachers' Guides regarding inference-making skill?

Research Questions

This study focuses on inferences instructions provided by two English Language Teachers' Guides of grades (11 & 12). The aim of the study is to investigate the provided instructions related to inference-making as presented in Teachers' Guides. Thus, the study will attempt to answer the following questions:

- How was inference-making skill defined by the Teachers' Guides?

- Are there any common inference-making strategies encompassed explicitly in Teachers' Guides?

- What inference-making techniques are emphasized in Teachers' Guides?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of the study lies in being the first attempt conducted to analyse the Teachers' Guides in the Omani educational context in order to provide a clear input of the provided instructions regarding the inference-making skill.

The importance of this study stems from the results of previous studies that showed that Omani students face several problems related to reading comprehension. So, this study could make useful contributions by findings out to what extent does TG provide clear instructions that help teachers develop students' inference abilities and, as a result, the students' overall comprehension ability.

The study might have a further practical impact by helping course designers, trainers, and supervisors to empower teachers with efficient instructional reading strategies to develop students' inference-making abilities.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study is limited by the following factors:

- The sample of the content analysis included only EFL TGs of only two grades (11 & 12)in post basic level.

- The focus was on analyzing only the provided reading instructions related to inference-making to help teachers develop students' inference abilities. Thus, it doesn't cover other English Language skills or any other aspects.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is considered as a descriptive study based upon content analysis to find out to what extent TGs of grades (11 & 12) encompass inference-making instructions. According to Ary, et.al. (2010) that descriptive research is designed to obtain information related to the current situation of phenomena. The obtained information through the analysis will be

described and interpreted. Therefore, the content analysis method is seen as the most appropriate to answer the research questions of the present study. Berelson (1952, p.18) defined content analysis as a "research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication". Similarly, Rose & Canhoto (2015) thought that it is a simple and flexible research technique that can be used to analyse documents, books, and many other communication contents. It can be used with either qualitative or quantitative data.

The Population and the Sample of the Study

The population of the present study is the EFL Teacher's Guides of grades One to Twelve that are developed and published by the Ministry of Education in Sultanate of Oman. The main data source and a selected sample of this study were TGs of grades (11 & 12) in post-basic education system. This choice is motivated by the fact that Post basic education is considered as the final stage before the university stage, so the students are supposed they have developed a higher level of reading skills. Also, reading becomes even more crucial in upper grades as it is connected with knowledge transmission and expansion.

The TG for each grade is divided into two parts, one for the first semester and another part for one for the second semester. The TG provides an introduction to the curriculum with the learning objectives for each Theme, the outline of the course components, and detailed suggestions about how to use the course materials. Regarding the instructions provided by the TGs for both grades, they are divided according to the Textbook into four Themes and each Theme includes five Units. Each unit is specified to tackling a specific skill as following; Unit 1 (Reading), Unit 2 (Grammar), Unit 3 (Vocabulary), Unit 4 (Listening and Speaking), and Unit 5 (Writing).

Therefore, it should be noted that only the reading sections, as specified by TGs, were involved in analyzing process. While the short texts which were in other sections and focused on teaching listening or other language aspects were excluded from the analysis. This helped to have a fixed and objective framework for the analysis. Thus, what the analysis will include in this study can be summarized as follows:

Table 1

Grades	Semesters	Number of Themes	Number of Units
Eleven	Teacher's Guide A (semester One)	4	1 Unit from each Theme - (Reading)
	Teacher's Guide B (semester Two)	4	1 Unit from each Theme - (Reading)
Twelve	Teacher's Guide A (semester One)	4	1 Unit from each Theme - (Reading)
	Teacher's Guide B (semester Two)	4	1 Unit from each Theme - (Reading)
2	**4 Books**	**16 Themes**	**16 Unites**

INSTRUMENT AND PROCEDURES

In order to answer the research questions of the present study, a content analysis was used. The researcher's survey of the literature revealed that there is no content analysis instrument used in previous studies that have dealt with inference-making skill and directly applicable to the present study. Therefore, the researcher developed the content analysis to suit the purpose of the present study based on his reading, his experience, and based on experts' advice. The construction of this instrument required a thorough review of the literature to identify the essential concepts, strategies, and techniques related to the inference-making skill. Then, a review of the related studies in textbooks evaluation to develop units, categories, and coding system for content analysis.

Fairclough (1995) pointed out that textual analysis can provide clear insights about what is in a text and what is missing. Therefore, "presence and absences" technique is applied to analyse EFL Teacher's Guide of grades (11 & 12)to identify the presences (or) absences of instructions that help teachers develop students' inference abilities. The developed content analysis tool is comprised of three parts. The first part is devoted to exploring the general information about inferences that are provided in TGs. The second part is about common inference strategies provided in TGs which were identified from the literature to frame the analysis process. The identified strategies are Question-Answer Relationships (QAR), Key Words, Infer, and Support (KIS), It Says I Say, Marking texts with sticky notes, and Graphic Organizer. The third part concerns about the techniques and instruction that are provided by TGs to develop students' inference-making ability.

As mentioned before that only the reading sections, as specified by TGs which is (Unit 1) in each theme were involved in analyzing process. Thus, the procedure of data analysis was as follows: (1) over viewing the introduction and learning objectives to find out the included information about inference-making skill. (2) analysing the content to find out if the TGs provide an explicit explanation, practice, and modeling regarding the inference-making skill. (3) analysing the content to find out if the TGs explicitly include the inference-making strategies. (4) analysing the content to find out what inference-making techniques or instructions are provided explicitly or implicitly. The explicit instructions that are stated directly in the TGs regarding the inference-making skill. While the implicit instructions are not stated explicitly in the text, but rather expressed in a different language.

THE MAIN FINDINGS

The findings obtained after doing a content analysis of the TGs of grades (11 & 12) are presented according to the research questions and discussed in the light of the relevant literature.

Question 1-How was Inference-Making Skill Defined by the Teachers' Guides?

The introduction of the TGs of both grades included a brief reference to the inference-making skill, as it was emphasized in the introduction in a section entitled "Reading" that;

"The focus of Unit 1 in each theme is reading. Students read a variety of reading texts using a range of strategies and reading skills. The materials in this unit focus on different reading micro-skills, such as 'recognising topic sentences' or 'inferring information". (Teacher's Book, Grade 11A, p. xiv).

This short paragraph presents the TGs approach in dealing with reading in general. As noted, there is a mention of reading strategies and reading skills, but it is not followed by any further explanation. Also, it can be noted that 'inferring information" classified by TGs of Grades (11 & 12) as a micro-skill that does not match Brown's classification ((2007). According to him, that inference skill falls under macro-skills as it requires a higher level of understanding.

However, the analysis of the TGs of both grades revealed that they do not provide an explicit definition of inference-making skill and how it should be implemented. The only two reading strategies which have been reinforced and explained clearly are skimming and scanning. This is a pattern that could be noticed throughout the TGs of both grades. For example, the following is mentioned in (Teacher's Guide, Grade 12B, p. 3);

"Remind students of the importance of skimming. We use skimming to get the gist (the overall idea) of a text, and to recognise the organisation of ideas within a text. Ask students when skimming can be useful".

The lack of a definition or an explanation of what the inference-making skill is and how it can be implemented may imply to the teachers that inference-making skill is not important or not strongly recommended in this stage. Also, it may allow the teachers to anticipate how this skill can be implemented depending only on their own experience.

The lack of explicit definition of inference-making skill may be due to the author's assumption that the teachers are familiar with this skill and how it should be implemented. In fact, the inference-making skill is a very complex process not only for students, but also for teachers. It requires the teachers to make the process as explicit as possible for students using specific strategies and techniques. Thus, it is not easy for teachers with less experience and confidence or those who didn't receive enough training to interpret how they can best teach the inference-making skill.

Question2-Are there any common inference-making strategies encompassed explicitly in Teachers' Guides?

The analysis process was conducted to explore the common inference-making strategies that are encompassed in TGs. The following table presents the findings;

Surprisingly, as the Table 1 illustrates, the analysis of TGs for both grades reveals the absence of inference-making strategies. The relevant literature on reading comprehension instructions emphasis the importance of providing the teachers with specific strategies to enhance the inference-making skill, which may not be well-known to many teachers. Chitravelu (I980) indicated that the role of the Teacher's Guide is to assist the teacher to obtain the best possible results from the lessons by providing clear procedures and strategies. Similarly, Cunningsworth and Kusel (1991) asserted that the Teacher's Guide should provide guidance in practical use especially for those teachers who rely extremely on the Teacher's Guide.

It seems to be that there are three reasons to be at least three reasons for the absence of the explicit mentioning of the inference-making strategies in the TGs. The first reason may be because the TGs assumed that teachers' experience will enable them to choose the appropriate inference strategies according to each reading lesson. The second reason might be the difficulty of including all reading strategies and sub-strategies in the TG, such as the strategies of prior knowledge activation, the problem-solving strategies, the inference-making strategies, etc. The third reason might be to give more freedom for teachers to choose appropriate strategies when teaching reading as required and not to restrict them to certain strategies that may not be applicable in all situations. There are some examples of international series which are following this approach, for instance, it is stated in Long *et al.* (1980: xiii):

"We offer no recommendations on how to use these materials. It would be presumptuous of us to do so given the appalling ignorance about the necessity, sufficiency or efficiency of classroom teaching and learning behaviors in general, and those related to reading skills in particular".

The differences in perspectives will remain regarding the amount of explanation that the TGs should include. However, it must take into consideration the importance of providing sufficient assistance for teachers to deal with complex concepts and skills such as inference-making.

Table 2

N	Strategy	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total
1	Question answer relationships (QAR)	0	0	0
2	Key Words, Infer, and Support (KIS)	0	0	0
3	It Says I Say	0	0	0
4	Marking texts with sticky notes	0	0	0
5	Graphic Organizer	0	0	0

Question3-What Inference-Making Techniques or Instructions are Emphasized in Teachers' Guides?

This part of the analysis is concerned about how inference skill was emphasized in the instructions of the TGs. In another word, how the TGs provide guidance implicitly or explicitly for teachers to develop inference-making skill in reading lessons. Although no specific inference-making strategies are included, it is likely that the TGs included a set of related instructions or techniques which leads, in one way or another, to developing students' inference ability. Therefore, to analyse the reading instructions, a list of the most common inference-making techniques or instructions have been used. The following table summarizes the findings;

As the Table 2 shows, all inference instructions or techniques were included to some extent in TGs of both grades regardless of whether they are explicit or implicit. The highest number is obtained by prediction, summarizing, and prior knowledge activation with about 22.3% of the total techniques that are included in the TGs. The lowest number is obtained by "Go beyond the text's literal meaning" with only 3.7% of the total techniques. The rest of the instructions were also low and did not exceed 7.4 %.

It is noticeable that the most dominant techniques found in all Themes are prediction, summarizing, and prior knowledge activation. The TGs follow the same method at the beginning of all reading units in all Themes which begin first by encouraging students to use the general information of the text such as; titles, pictures, and headings to anticipate what they are about to read. This technique will lead students to make connections between their prior knowledge and the text to make a logical prediction. The TGs also continue to provide more instructions to develop the activation of students' prior knowledge during the three reading phases; pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading.

In regards to the summarizing technique, there is an emphasis on scanning and skimming strategies in all units to enable students to focus on keywords and phrases of the reading text. Thus, sufficient instructions are provided explicitly for the teachers under the "*Top Tip*" box which is devoted to drawing students' attention to some important learning strategies. On the other hand, the Teachers' Guides of both grades did not offer enough instruction regarding how students can "go beyond the text's literal meaning', 'Generate questions', 'Draw conclusions', and 'Make reasons'.

Table 3

N	Items	TG (G11)		TG (G12)		Total		Total
		Explicit	Implicit	Explicit	Implicit	Exp	Imp	
**In Reading Lessons, The TG Instructs The Teacher To Encourages Students To:**							
1	Predict text content through title and pictures	9	4	10	7	19	11	30
2	Use their prior knowledge	6	11	3	9	9	20	29
3	Make reasonable guesses about what they do not know or what will happen in the future	3	0	6	0	9	0	9
4	Generate questions about the topic	3	1	1	2	4	3	7
5	Make reason and judgments based on prior knowledge and textual information	4	0	3	0	7	0	7
6	Summarize the key concepts	6	11	10	3	16	14	30

Table 3 (Contd.,)								
7	Go beyond the text's literal meaning	0	3	1	1	1	4	5
8	Construct meaning from the text	1	3	0	6	1	9	10
9	Draw conclusions	0	3	1	3	1	6	7
	Total	**32**	**36**	**35**	**31**	**67**	**67**	**134**

GENERAL DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study focused on inferences instructions provided by two English Language TGS of grades (11 & 12) in reading lessons. The findings of the study indicated that TGs did not provide an explicit definition of the inference-making skill and how it should be implemented. Such definition is needed in the introduction of the TGs to develop the teachers' general awareness and understanding of the inference-making skill. Although in the introduction of the TGs there is an explicit statement about reading strategies and reading skills, specific clarification about different reading strategies is required.

Also, the findings of the study revealed the absence of explicit inference-making strategies. It is very important in upper grades to provide a more explicit explanation of the Meta cognitive processes and a variety of instructional strategies that enhance students' inference-making skill. Thus, strategies such as Question-answer relationships (QAR), Key Words, Infer, Support (KIS), etc. should receive more attention and be included systematically.

A positive aspect found is that several inference instructions or techniques are included in TGs of both grades. The only thing is that these instructions need to be provided equitably and in a systematic way.

Based on the findings of this study and in order to increase the contribution of TGs in developing students' inference-making skill, the following recommendations should be considered in the future development of TGs:

- The TGs should provide clear and explicit background information related to the reading process including definitions, examples, and strategies to implement.

- The TGs should raise the teachers' awareness of the importance of Meta cognitive strategies that enhance students' reading comprehension through direct teaching.

- The TGs should provide sufficient support for teachers who may struggle to select the appropriate reading strategies by including a detailed explanation, especially about inference-making strategies.

- The TGs should provide enough support for teachers on how to assess and test students' inference-making ability.

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