

"Effectiveness of Emotion Regulation Strategies in Developing Preparatory Stage Students' EFL Oral Reading Fluency Skills"

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Abstract

This research tried to investigate the effectiveness of a suggested program based on emotion regulation strategies in developing EFL oral reading fluency skills. Participants were 30 first year preparatory stage students, enrolled in a school in Egypt, who were equally divided into a control and another experimental groups. The quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design was used, and the groups were pre-tested, and post-tested on the EFL Oral Reading Fluency Test, developed by the researcher. The experimental group received the suggested program, while the control group received no intervention. Statistical analysis revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the mean ranks of the control and experimental groups at level ($\alpha \leq 0.01$) in the overall reading fluency skills in the post administration of the Oral Reading Fluency Test in favor of the experimental group. The effect size for the suggested program was very large ($R_{prb}=1.0$), and Blake's Modified Gain Ratio value (1.31) indicated the effectiveness of the suggested program based on the emotion regulation strategies in developing students' EFL oral reading fluency skills.

Keywords: emotional regulation, oral reading fluency, rate, accuracy, prosody

فاعلية استراتيجيات التنظيم الانفعالي في تنمية مهارات طلاقة القراءة الجهرية في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لدى طلاب المرحلة الإعدادية

المستخلص

حاول هذا البحث التحقق من فاعلية برنامج مقترح قائم على استراتيجيات التنظيم الانفعالي في تنمية مهارات طلاقة القراءة الجهرية في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. شارك في الدراسة 30 طالبا في الصف الأول الإعدادي بإحدى المدارس في مصر، تم تقسيمهم بالتساوي إلى مجموعتين إحداهما ضابطه و الأخرى تجريبية. اعتمد البحث على التصميم شبه التجريبي القبلي البعدي. تم تقديم اختبار طلاقة القراءة الجهرية في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، من إعداد الباحثه، لمجموعتي البحث قبليا و بعديا، بينما تم تقديم البرنامج المقترح لطلاب المجموعه التجريبية فقط. أوضحت نتائج التحليل الإحصائي أنه يوجد فرق دال إحصائيا بين متوسط رتب المجموعه التجريبية و المجموعه الضابطه عند مستوى دلالة $(\alpha \leq 0.01)$ في مهارات طلاقة القراءة الجهرية في التطبيق البعدي لاختبار طلاقة القراءة الجهرية في اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية لصالح المجموعه التجريبية. كما كان حجم الأثر للبرنامج المقترح كبير جدا $(R_{prb}=1.0)$ ، و كانت قيمة معدل الكسب لبلالك (1.31) و هو ما يؤكد فاعلية البرنامج المقترح القائم على استراتيجيات التنظيم الانفعالي في تنمية مهارات طلاقة القراءة الجهرية في اللغة الإنجليزية لدى الطلاب.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التنظيم الانفعالي، طلاقة القراءة الجهرية، سرعة النطق، دقة النطق، الأداء

الشفوى

Effectiveness of Emotion Regulation Strategies in Developing EFL Oral Reading Fluency Skills for Preparatory Stage Students

Foreign language learning is considered an emotional experience affected by students' previous experiences as well as their social contexts. Emotions deserve great attention in language learning as they control students' behavior (MacIntyre, 2002). Emotions are defined as states caused by stimuluses (Al-Nafjan et al.,2015). They are socially constructed acts of communication that mediate students' thinking and behavior (Franks, 2006;Imai,2010). The classroom is an emotional place where students' emotions affect their learning, motivation, and performance (Pekrun, 2014).

Emotions control students' cognition and interpret their needs and possibility of success (Dewaele ,2010; Golombek &Doran, 2014). Different emotions experienced in EFL classes affect students' achievement; thus, teachers should deal with students' emotions as part of their learning (Ismail, 2015). As students grow, they learn how to control their thinking, emotions, and behavior (Riley et al.,2007). Emotion regulation describes how students use certain strategies to affect their emotion response levels. ER strategies are complex thoughts and actions used by students to regulate their cognitive and social aspects during performing different language tasks (Oxford, 2017).

The term emotion regulation (ER) was first introduced by Gross in1998 to refer to a person's emotional flexibility when responding to

different experiences. ER is defined as maintaining the positive mood and controlling the negative one (Süreçleri et al.,2020). They help students promote positive emotions to improve their language performance (Oxford, 2011). Students' selection of the ER strategy depends on their emotion-related goals and may be conscious or unconscious (Gross, 2015; Lawrence et al., 2011).

Though emotions affect students' EFL learning, little attention is attributed to the emotions experienced in the EFL classroom (Pishghadam et al.,2016). ER is neglected in language classrooms regardless of its importance to students' learning outcomes (Bielak &Mystkowska-Wiertelak,2020).ER strategies maintain students' focus on language learning (Eisenberg et al.,2005). The ability to read affects students' academic as well as personal lives (Keyes et al., 2016). Effective reading instruction includes phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (National Reading Panel[NRP],2000).

Oral reading fluency (ORF) is a key component of reading (Powell & Gadke,2018). It is the ability to read quickly, accurately, and with natural intonation. Thus, accuracy, rate, and oral reading prosody enable readers to construct the meaning of the text and facilitate reading comprehension (Veenendaal et al.,2015). Fluency develops as students move toward automatic decoding and word recognition. They read words accurately and rapidly without pausing at unfamiliar words (Jiang et al.,2012). Reading fluency is a prerequisite for reading comprehension at different

stages (Price et al.2016). Reading fluency is considered a bridge between decoding and reading comprehension (Kim & Wagner, 2015).

Many EFL learners do not achieve the expected reading level due to their low levels of reading fluency. They often read one word at a time, ignore punctuation, and neglect the reading expression (Keyes et al.,2016). Middle school students have poor reading fluency (Paige &Magpuri-Lavell, 2014). Fluency is often neglected in language classrooms as the textbooks do not offer attention to the aspects of ORF (Galante & Thomson, 2017), and developing ORF requires efforts with each student individually which consumes time (Chang, 2019). In sum, preparatory stage students in Egypt have poor performance in EFL oral reading fluency skills (Ebrahim,2020; Helwa,2014). Learning different language skills requires emotional regulation (ER) strategies (Wigfield et al.,2016). To the best knowledge of the researcher, there is a paucity of research on using ER strategies to develop EFL oral reading fluency skills.

The researcher developed and administered The Oral Reading Fluency Test to 10 first year preparatory stage students in October 2020. The test measured rate, accuracy, and prosody and students had low levels of them. The problem is as follows: first year preparatory stage students have low levels of EFL oral reading fluency skills.

The purpose of this research was to investigate the effectiveness of emotion regulation (ER) strategies in developing preparatory stage students' EFL oral reading fluency (ORF) skills.

The research tries to answer the following questions:

- 1-What are the ORF skills in EFL appropriate to first year preparatory stage students?
- 2-What are the features of a suggested program based on the emotion regulation strategies that aims to develop first year preparatory stage students' ORF skills in EFL?
- 3- What is the effectiveness of the suggested program in developing first year preparatory stage students' ORF skills in EFL?

The significance of the research was stated in the following:

- 1- Preparing students for different challenges by integrating ER strategies in EFL classes.
- 2- Offering EFL teachers some guidelines to help them develop students' ORF skills.
- 3- Paving the way to further research either on the ER strategies or ORF skills according to the recommendations of this research.

Several delimitations were identified in this research:

- 1- Participants were delimited to first year preparatory stage students in a school in Qalyubia Governorate.
- 2- The first term of the academic year 2020/2021.
- 3- The following ORF skills: rate, accuracy, and prosody.
- 4-The following ER strategies: cognitive change and suppression.

The main terms used in this research were defined as follows:

Emotion regulation (ER) strategies

For the purposes of this research, ER strategies referred to integrating the steps of Gross's (2015) The Extended Process Model of Emotion Regulation in the suppression and cognitive change strategies to change students' thoughts and emotions while performing the oral reading fluency tasks.

Oral reading fluency (ORF)

ORF was defined as reading at an appropriate rate with accuracy, expression, pace, and phrasing. It included three main skills:

- Reading rate which referred to the number of words read in a minute.
- Accuracy meant correct word identification and self- correction of reading errors.
- Prosody was reading with expression, phrasing, and pace. Expression meant varying tone throughout the text to match the expression of the text. Phrasing was reading with correct phrase boundaries. Pace referred to conversational pace reading without errors.

Review of Literature and Related Studies

Emotions are judgments on the interactions between students and their learning environment according to their beliefs and goals. Emotions are also social constructs that depend on each student's social-historical context (Schutz et al.,2011). There are four main levels of emotions: emotion recognition, emotion understanding, emotion analysis, and emotion regulation. Emotion recognition means identifying specific emotions associated with the problem experienced. Emotion understanding refers to discovering the ways emotions affect one's

thinking and behavior and how to use emotions to improve relationships with others. Emotion analysis means determining the underlying messages embedded within one's emotions to deal with the reasons of such emotions. Emotion regulation depends on the emotions identified, analyzed, and interpreted in previous stages. Students use strategies to regulate their emotions and influence others (Majors et al.,2020).

Pishghadam et al.(2016) examined the effect of EFL language skills on students' emotions. Participants were 308 intermediate English language learners from eight private EFL institutes in Iran. Their ages ranged between 12 and 37 and they answered the Emotions Questionnaire, developed by the researchers. Findings revealed that EFL learners experienced anger while listening, joy and pride while speaking, shame while integrating listening and speaking, boredom while integrating writing and listening, and anxiety was common among the language skills. Anxiety frustrates students and affects their reading comprehension (Bensoussan, 2012). Students' lack of knowledge and confidence causes anxiety which hinders oral reading fluency. Students may be shy because they are not aware of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Teachers should encourage students to relax, accept their errors, focus on intonation, and read aloud (Rajitha& Alamelu,2020).

According to The Broaden and Build Theory of Language Learning, developed by Fredrickson (2001, 2013), positive emotions broaden students' thoughts, build their psychological resilience, and enhance their capacity to generate various responses to events. EFL teachers should

arrange the learning environment to increase students' motivation, engagement, and learning. They should focus on reducing students' negative emotions, such as language anxiety, as well as enhancing their positive emotions. Positive emotions are closely associated with higher levels of students' engagement (Rahimi&Bigdeli,2014).

Emotional Intelligence (EI), a concept rooted in the theory of social intelligence, is defined as the ability to feel, and regulate emotions (Skourdi et al., 2014). In 1985, Renuven Bar-On defined EI as the emotional and social skills used to understand oneself and others (Esmaeeli et al.2018). Daniel Goleman (1994- 1997) defined EI as a person's ability to manage himself and his relationships effectively (Goleman,2000). The theory of emotional intelligence (EI), proposed by Salovey and Mayer in 1990, suggests that controlling emotions improves students' behavior (Goleman, 2005). Esmaeeli et al.(2018) investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and speaking skills. Participants were 96 advanced EFL learners, randomly selected from different teacher preparation institutes in Tehran, administered the Emotional Quotient questionnaire and the speaking test based on IELTS. Results showed a significant correlation between emotional intelligence and EFL speaking scores. It was concluded that emotional intelligence improved EFL students' speaking skills and oral proficiency.

Students with high EI understand and manage emotions to benefit themselves and others (Salovey et al.,2008). Emotional intelligence helps students detect others' emotions, adopt others' perspectives, enhance

communication, and regulate their behavior (Brackett et al.,2011). EI tackles emotion control, emotion expression, and adaptability (Dewaele et al., 2008). EI makes cognitive processes adaptive as students think rationally about emotions (Brackett et al. 2011). EI also affects students' EFL academic achievement and proficiency as discussed by Pishghadam (2009) who investigated the relationships among emotional intelligence (EI), academic achievement, and EFL proficiency. The participants were 508 sophomore English-major students from four universities in Iran. EI was measured using an emotion quotient inventory that contains a questionnaire that assessed intrapersonal, interpersonal, adaptability, and stress management. The students' average scores in EFL reading, listening, speaking, and writing were used. The results showed that intrapersonal and stress management skills of EI are significant predictors of academic achievement and EFL proficiency.

Emotion regulation (ER) is the process of controlling emotions in response to conscious and unconscious environmental stimuli (Shahbazirad& Azizi, 2018). ER is the process of increasing, maintaining, or decreasing the emotion response (Bosse et al.2007). It is a controlled process used to modify students' feelings (Webb et al.,2012). It is the process of modifying the emotional experiences to produce appropriate responses (Aldao,2013). Therefore, ER is defined as students' ability to manage their emotional responses in different situations (Blair et al.,2016). ER strategies aim to control students' attention and behavior towards positive and negative emotions (Liew et al.,2020).

ER enables students to integrate thinking, emotions, and behavior to achieve better learning outcomes (Jones & Doolittle,2017). ER strategies grow as students mature and they are different among students (McDuff et al.,2015). ER strategies target controlling students' positive and negative emotions through controlling the emotional processes (Shahbazirad& Azizi,2018). The ability to generate and use emotions to enhance thinking includes adjusting emotions to obtain new perspectives (Kenely,2019). ER strategies are the processes used by students to control their emotional experience and expression through intervening in the emotion-generation process (Gross & Thompson,2007).

ER is also related to self-regulated learning which refers to students' use of learning strategies to adjust their behavior and achieve their learning goals through interactions with others in different contexts (Wang et al., 2009). It refers to thoughts, feelings, and actions that are planned to achieve personal goals through three main steps: planning, performance, and self-reflection (Zimmerman,2000). Self- regulation is an active constructive process where learners set goals for their learning and attempt to monitor, regulate, and control their cognition, motivation, and behavior according to their goals (Pintrich,2000). Thus, it means changing inner aspects to deal with external stimuli related to learning through cognitive and emotional engagement (Zheng et al.,2021). Self-regulation includes emotion regulation, such as persistence and mood control (Grenell et al.,2019).

Oral communication in EFL is affected by self-regulation as highlighted by Abbasi and Nosratinia (2018) who examined the relationship among EFL learners' self-regulation, self-efficacy, and their use of oral communication strategies. Participants were 367 undergraduate students, within the age range of 20 to 30, studied TEFL at Islamic Azad University. They were administered the Oral Communication Strategies Inventory, the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire, and the Self -Efficacy Questionnaire. The results revealed that there was a significant correlation between self-regulation and participants' use of oral communication strategies; conversely, the correlation between self -efficacy and the use of oral communication strategies was not significant. It was concluded that self-regulation developed participants' use of oral communication strategies.

ER strategies are reactions to external relevant stimuli causing psychological shifts in emotions. The process moves through three steps: stimulus existence, attention, and evaluation. The stimulus may be misbehavior, sense of need, stress, or lack of control. Attention to the stimuli and identifying the potential problem occur in the second step. The third step focuses on evaluating the situation and selecting the suitable action. The emotional responses improve students' behavioral and physiological responses (Littleton,2021). To conclude, ER strategies can be discussed according to emotional intelligence or self- regulation.

Literature on ER strategies is based on Gross 1998 who defines ER strategies as the processes used to change emotions, such emotions may be automatic, controlled, conscious, or unconscious. Emotion regulation refers to modifying one or more aspects of the emotion: situation, attention, appraisal, and behavior. These aspects are interrelated to each other representing reciprocal feedback processes (Gross & Thompson, 2007; Pekrun et al.,2007). Gross formulated the four-step model of 'The Modal Model of ER' in 2008 which includes situation, attention, appraisal, and response. Each step has its ER strategies: Situation includes situation selection and situation modification, attention is based on attention deployment, appraisal focuses on cognitive change, and response depends on response modulation (Gross,2008).

Gross developed the 'Modal Model' into 'The Extended Process Model of Emotion Regulation' in 2015. The new model keeps the four steps of the previous one: situation, attention, appraisal, and response, besides integrating three emotional processes: perception, valuation, and action. The processes are integrated in each step except the situation. Attention includes detecting an emotion, perception; determining its need for regulation, valuation; and specifying time to start regulation, action. Appraisal includes identifying the available emotion regulation strategies, perception; evaluating each strategy according to contextual factors, valuation; and making the choice to use a particular strategy, action. Finally, response means tailoring the ER strategy for a specific situation, perception; evaluating the possible results of its application, valuation; and implementing the selected ER strategy, action (Matthew et al.,2020).

According to Gross (1998,2015), Bosse et al.(2007), Pekrun (2014), Linehan (2015), Matthew and Whitebread (2019) , Sheppes et al.(2011), and Webb et al.(2012), the following is a brief description of the commonly used ER strategies:

Situation Selection

It is a behavioral ER strategy used to regulate a student's emotional response by approaching or avoiding specific people or situations. Students can either interact or avoid the external stimuli that elicit their internal emotions.

Situation Modification

It means changing the emotions attributed to a specific situation from negative to positive, like solving a problem. Since students should deal with the situation and cannot avoid it, they can focus on its good side.

Attention Deployment

It means shifting attention from the situation using attentional distraction and attentional allocation techniques. Attention distraction means redirecting attention to another situation to reduce the negative effect. Students may focus on other thoughts or activities to overcome a stressful situation. Attention allocation refers to shifting attention to positive or neutral features of the same situation. Thus, this strategy means controlling attention to change the emotional influence of a situation.

Cognitive change

It means changing the meaning of a situation to change its emotional response. It is used at the beginning of the emotion generation process to change the experience as well as the expression of emotion. It includes increasing or decreasing the emotional significance of a situation by finding alternative explanations for it. Thus, a student changes his/her thoughts on a specific situation to regulate its accompanying emotions.

Students control the emotional information of the working memory by replacing negative information with neutral or positive information. It means controlling emotions by changing the way students think about the situation, for instance when facing a stressful situation, the student thinks in a way that helps him stay calm. It is changing how to deal with a situation by switching it from undesirable to desirable, for example interpreting a negative comment into unintentional to reduce its negative emotions. The strategy of cognitive change is also called cognitive reappraisal as students assign a new meaning to the situation to change their emotional responses. It focuses on the interpretation rather than perception of the situation.

Suppression

It happens by the end of the emotion generation process and changes the expression of the emotion while keeping the experience. It is the regulation of the emotion response after being generated. It is the conscious control of the emotional response, so students decrease their behavioral expressions. It means controlling emotions by not expressing

them which may cause psychological side effects. Students hide their rejected experienced emotions and express different emotions; for example, students can hide their anxiety in oral presentation and use expressive enhancement, or they can smile to hide their sadness.

Gross's (2015) ER model divides ER strategies according to their applications: before and after emotional expressions(kim,2020). ER strategies can be classified into antecedent-focused and response-focused strategies. Antecedent-focused strategies occur before a situation as the emotional experience is not fully developed; they are generated to prepare students to specific reactions. They focus on the positive reinterpretation of the situation to limit the negative emotional response before occurring; such as, situation selection, situation modification, attention deployment, and cognitive change. Response-focused strategies are used after the emotion is experienced in the situation to modify the generated emotion, like suppression (Ashkanasy et al.,2017; Kim,2020; Littleton,2021). Most studies focus on cognitive change and suppression as opposite ER strategies representing different ways of regulating emotional responses (Seixas et al.,2021).

López-Pérez et al.(2017) conducted two studies to investigate the effect of children's age differences on their use of Gross' ER strategies. Participants of the first study were 180 parents of children aged between 3 and 4 years old. Each parent was asked to report about a situation in which his/her child changed his/her feeling. Participants of the second study were 126 children, aged 5–8 years old, who answered 2 questions about how they regulated their own emotions. Results showed age

differences in children's uses of ER strategies. Children aged 5-8 years old used situation selection, situation modification, and cognitive change frequently; conversely children aged 3-4 years old used attention deployment frequently and no age differences were found for the use of the suppression strategy.

To conclude, ER is the highest level of emotion that culminates the other levels: emotional recognition, emotional understanding, and emotional analysis. It is also a form of self- regulation since students change their inner aspects to deal with external issues. ER is based on the theory of emotional intelligence which suggests that controlling emotions improves students' behavior and learning experiences. This research adopts Gross's (2015) 'The Extended Process Model of Emotion Regulation' as a comprehensive model of applying cognitive change and suppression strategies in the EFL oral reading fluency tasks.

Aragão (2011) investigated the relationship between EFL learners' emotions and their oral performance. The participants were seven female students in a language teacher education course in a university in Brazil. Data were collected during one semester through video recordings, observation notes of classroom sessions, participants' language learning journals, interviews, informal conversations with the participants, visual representation of emotional states drawn by the participants, and a questionnaire to evaluate their experiences. Findings showed that students' emotions affected their EFL oral performance.

EFL oral reading fluency (ORF) is the accurate speed word identification or expressive phrasing of a connected text following sound contours (Grabe, 2009). It is transforming a written text into oral speech through reading with speed, accuracy, and prosody (Speece & Ritchey, 2005). ORF is reading grade-level texts orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression (Common Core Standards Initiative, 2012). Reading fluency is defined by word identification, accuracy, and pacing. Pacing is reading at the right speed for the reader to comprehend the text (Allington, 2014). Fluency is the score of correct words read in a minute (Kim & Wagner, 2015). ORF is the ability to read a text orally, accurately, and with natural speed (DiSalle & Rasinski 2017).

ORF is fast speech without hesitations, pausing, repetition, and repairs (Segalowitz , 2012). ORF is the ability to read quickly and accurately with intonation (Huang,2013). Reading fluency can be defined as reading passages of connected texts accurately and at an adequate rate (Crosson & Lesaux, 2010; Kim & Wagner, 2015). Fluency is a complex process of producing a flow of speech caused by integrating cognitive and linguistic processes. Fluency indicators are speech rate and the flow of syllables and words per minute. The more students acquire language, the more they become fluent readers (Fiorin et al.,2015).

Fluency develops with automatic word perception, less focus on visual decoding, and more attention to semantics. Oral fluency is the integration of speech and reading resulting from automatic phonological representation and decoding (Fiorin et al.,2015). ORF appears through appropriate word recognition, pacing, phrasing, and intonation (Kuhn et

al., 2010). Reading fluency of a word depends on the lexical level, while text reading fluency depends on lexical and semantic levels (Kim & Wagner, 2015). ORF is a prerequisite for comprehension (Aldhanhani & Abu-Ayyash 2020). The major goal of reading is comprehension, and fluency leads to comprehension (Rasinski, 2014). Neglecting ORF is the main reason for comprehension difficulties, and students with low ORF have academic difficulties in different subjects (DiSalle & Rasinski, 2017). Reading fluency improves students' reading comprehension since fluency depends on attention and decoding which affect comprehension (Kim & Piper, 2019). Thus, ORF is reading with appropriate rate and adequate comprehension (Anderson, 2008).

Accuracy, automaticity, and prosody are the main skills of oral reading fluency. Accuracy is the correct word identification that combines the letters to their sounds. Automaticity is the immediate recognition of words; it refers to the reading speed resulting from the easily word decoding. Hence, accuracy leads to automaticity (Hawkins et al. 2011; Padak & Rasinski, 2008; Rasinski 2014; Rasinski et al., 2009; Wise et al., 2010). Automaticity is the ability to read words in texts accurately and effortlessly (Morrow et al., 2014). Oral reading fluency depends on the automaticity model of Laberge and Samuels developed in (1974). According to the model, reading is a complex process that consists of different components. The less attention allocated for such components, the more reading fluency is and vice versa. When readers devote much time to the word recognition processes, they negatively affect their higher cognitive levels, such as comprehension and fluency. ORF requires

focusing on the non -lexical components of the reading text (Wise et al.2010).

When students decode words easily, they focus on higher processes; such as, comprehension and fluency. Fluency is the combination of accurate word decoding and automaticity in word recognition (McGann,2017). Students read a passage at a level appropriate to their reading level several times till achieving a specific reading rate. Reading repetitions enhance speed, comprehension, and expression as students build a repertoire of different words (Lo et al.,2011). Reading the passage three to four times is necessary for oral reading fluency (Hawkins et al., 2011).

Prosody means reading connected texts smoothly with expression and intonation to reflect meaning through pitch, tone, stress, and timing (Hawkins et al.2011; Morrison & Wilcox,2020; Padak & Rasinski, 2008; Rasinski 2014; Rasinski et al.,2009; Wise et al.,2010).Prosody is transforming oral reading to oral speech (Rasinski et al.,2011). It includes intonation, duration of pronunciation, and pausing (Kuhn et al.,2010). Prosody also means reading with expression that reflects the author's purpose of writing (Allington, 2014). Smith and Paige (2019) differentiate between two types of prose in short and long sentences. A short sentence includes a single pitch and ends with low prominence, while a long sentence includes intonations.

Teaching oral reading fluency depends on a series of short stories or passages which students are asked to read aloud for one minute. The

number of words read correctly in one minute is then calculated and compared to established benchmarks to determine the student's performance (Merrill, 2018). Different strategies can be used to develop ORF; such as repeated reading, listening while reading, modelling, and the reader's theatre.

Repeated reading means reading a text more than once to improve oral reading fluency (Chard et al.,2009). Using repeated reading in a classroom means that the teacher offers a copy of the reading text to a student and guides the student while reading twice. The teacher intervenes after five seconds when the student misreads, neglects, or hesitates while reading. The teacher reads the words aloud and the student repeats it correctly then continue reading. The teacher marks the student's errors in the third reading and offers students unlimited opportunities to read the text fluently (Powell & Gadke, 2018).

Guided repeated oral reading means oral reading of passages repeatedly with explicit feedback till achieving the baseline (NRP,2000). Repeated reading means asking students to reread texts with error correction until achieving the desired level of fluency. The teacher offers the student a reading passage to be read three times under his guidance. The teacher intervenes to correct errors before recording the student's reading (Hawkins et al.,2011). The repetitive practice reinforces fluency; thus, EFL teachers should offer repetitive practice to students to develop the smooth automatic rapid oral reading skills (Gatbonton & Segalowitz,2005). Repetitive practice enables students to identify words

and comprehend texts as they become familiar with the visual information. After enough practice, oral reading fluency should be generalized to different texts (Rayner et. al.,2016).

Powell and Gadke (2018) investigated the effect of repeated reading and listening passage preview on students' oral fluency. Participants were three struggling readers, one in the sixth grade and two in the seventh grade in a school in the Southeast United States. They were administered 30 nonfictional storyline passages. Each student was repeatedly exposed at least three times to each of these conditions: repeated reading, listening passage, and a non-intervention. Sessions were conducted for approximately 25 minutes per week for four weeks. Results indicated that both repeated reading intervention and the listening passage intervention were more effective than the non-intervention. Besides, the repeated reading intervention was more effective than the listening passage intervention in developing oral reading fluency.

Listening-while-reading is also called assisted reading, as another strategy used to develop reading fluency, means that students read a text aloud while listening to a fluent speaker reading the text. Students repeat reading and listening for three times and the teacher intervenes to correct any errors, then the teacher can record students' reading to measure their reading fluency (Hawkins et al.,2011). The fluent reader may be the teacher, or an audio file, and the strategy can be applied individually or with the class (Aldhanhani & Abu-Ayyash 2020). Listening-while-reading enables students to decode words easily and improves their

reading speed, automaticity, and prosody as they practice reading fluency (Meeks & Austin, 2003).

Choral reading involves modeling, practice, and repeated reading. The teacher as a fluent reader reads the text and the class repeat as a whole or in groups. Then, students read in groups without the teacher till each student can read independently. Students feel confident and enjoy the reading as they overcome their shyness and anxiety (Rowen et al. 2015). Teachers can offer modelling through reading the text fluently and expressively to improve students' fluency and comprehension (Aldhanhani & Abu-Ayyash 2020).

Montgomerie et al. (2014) examined the effect of Video Self-Modeling in developing students' oral reading. Participants were four third year students from a primary school in New Zealand. Students' readings were video-recorded, and mistakes were edited. Oral reading fluency was measured by the number of correct words read per minute. It was measured in each session before and after recording the videos of students reading a passage from the textbook. Results indicated that video self-modeling improved students' oral reading fluency.

Ceyhan and Yıldız (2021) examined the effect of interactive reading aloud lessons on students' reading comprehension levels, reading motivation, and reading fluency skills. Participants were 62 second-grade students from a public school in Turkey who received 11 weeks of intervention in the academic year 2017–2018. Data were collected

through Reading Comprehension Rubric, Motivation to Read Profile Scale, and Rubric for Reading Prosody. Data analysis revealed that interactive reading aloud practices improved students' levels of reading comprehension, reading motivation, and reading fluency skills.

Barber et al. (2018) offer the following sequence for developing oral reading fluency using a computer software program: cold read, practice words, read to me, read along, and listen to me. The cold read means reading a story without intervention. When achieving the goal, the reader can move to a higher level or do more practices till achieving it. The practice word depends on the voice-recognition component of the Software. The computer selects a word, pronounces it, asks the reader to repeat, and offers feedback. The read to me session means that the computer plays a prerecorded human voice model for the assigned story at the participant's goal speed and the student was prompted to follow along. Read along means that the student reads the story along with the computer human voice recording. The student clicks on the unknown words and the computer reads it. The listen to me means that the student offers his/her best reading of the story and if he does not achieve his goal, the session ends, and the student repeats it the following day.

The reader's theatre involves repeated reading, modeling, and practice. It depends on group performance of a script or scenario adapted from a play or poem. The teacher models the reading to students until they can perform fluently and expressively. Students offer guided reading then independent reading (Black,2016).

Alghorbany and Hamzah (2020) developed a program based on the Readers Theatre to develop Primary Stage Pupils' EFL Reading prosody. Participants were 30 sixth grade students from a primary school in Egypt who were administered the pre - post oral reading prosody test. The test was scored according to a Multidimensional Fluency Scale. Statistical analysis revealed that the Reader's Theatre is effective in developing EFL Reading prosody skills among 6th year Primary Stage pupils.

Measuring oral reading fluency includes identifying correct words, incorrect words, pauses, repetition of words or phrases, and the length of utterance per minute (Rasinski, 2014). Measuring oral reading fluency often targets accuracy and automaticity. They can be measured using timed tasks through which students read connected texts aloud according to their levels (Wise et al.,2010). Assessing ORF often focuses on rate and accuracy and neglects prosody (Tindal et al. 2016). Oral reading fluency is measured by words-correct-per-minute (WCPM). Students read a passage for one minute, then the total number of errors is subtracted from the total number of words read, resulting in the WCPM (Wu et al., 2018).

The ORF can be determined by assessing reading rate then reading accuracy. The student reads orally a grade-level text for one minute. The teacher counts the number of words read in a minute, reading rate, and identifies any errors. The ORF score is calculated by the total words read minus the total errors to determine the correct words read per minute, accuracy (Mansfield, 2018; McGann,2017). Measuring fluency from first

through eighth grades using Curriculum-Based Measurements depends on students aloud reading of a passage for one minute, and the number of correct words is used as the ORF score (Thornblad & Christ, 2014).

The ORF test includes a reading passage (Getz, 2021; Morrison & Wilcox, 2020; Zaza, 2014). A more comprehensive method of measuring ORF is through calculating rate, accuracy, and prosody. Students are asked to read a grade level text in a minute and the teacher observes to calculate accuracy and rate. Prosody is determined according to a rubric that measures pace and expression. It includes evaluation of a reader's voice, expression, and phrasing of words in the text (Aldhanhani & Abu-Ayyash 2020).

The Multidimensional Fluency Scale (MFS), developed by Rasinski in 2004, measures oral reading fluency through these dimensions: expression and volume, phrasing, smoothness, and pace. The teacher selects a grade level text and asks students to read it aloud and the teacher assesses fluency using a four-point scale rubric. Expression and volume mean using clear voice and reflecting the meaning of the text. Phrasing means reflecting the punctuation by varying stress and intonation. Smoothness means reading without hesitation and self-correction of any errors. Finally, pace is assessed according to a student's ability to read at a conversational pace (Aldhanhani & Abu-Ayyash 2020; Young et al., 2016).

To summarize, the oral reading fluency test measures reading rate, accuracy, and prosody. A rubric is used for assessing prosody

(Zaza,2014). The reading rate is the number of words that the student reads per minute on grade level passages (Chang & Wu,2010,2012; Hasbrouck & Tindal, 2006; Huffman, 2021; Kim et al., 2015; Lianes, 2018; Morrison & Wilcox,2020; Zaza,2013). Accuracy is the correct number of words read per minute (Huffman,2021). Accuracy is measured by dividing the number of words read correctly in a minute by the total number of words read and then multiplying by 100 (Getz,2021; Helwa,2014; Zaza,2014).

Prosody can be scored according to a rubric that offers criteria for judgements (Miller & Schwanenflugel,2006). Rubrics offer evaluation criteria, indicators, and a scoring mechanism (Reddy & Andrade, 2010). Prosody includes three main components: expression, phrasing, and pace. Expression means varying tone throughout the text to match the expression of the text. Phrasing means reading with correct phrase boundaries. Pace means conversational pace reading without errors (Aldhanhani & Abu-Ayyash 2020; Young et al.,2016).

As stated above, oral reading fluency improves students' reading comprehension since students focus on the non-lexical processing skills. Rate, accuracy, and prosody are the common skills of ORF. Repeated reading, modeling, reader's theatre, and other strategies are used to develop students' ORF. They depend on students' reading of texts appropriate to their levels several times till reaching fluency. Measuring oral reading fluency may focus on accuracy, correct words read per

minute, or may depend on rate, accuracy, and prosody. The ORF test includes a grade level appropriate passage and lasts for a minute.

Stress and anxiety negatively affect students' reading and speaking performance (Mahmoudzadeh, 2012; Peyman& Sedighi,2011). Students' negative emotions affect their EFL oral performance (Aragão, 2011).ER strategies enable students to control their thoughts, decrease anxiety, and increase concentration (García-Fernández et al., 2015). Controlling emotions improves students' oral reading fluency (Esmaeeli et al.,2018). ER strategies affect students' engagement in the reading activities and enhance their reading fluency (Liew et al.2020).

Materials and Method

Research Design

The research design used in this research was the quasi-experimental pretest- posttest design. There were two equivalent experimental and control groups.

Participants

Participants were 30 first year preparatory stage students randomly selected from two classes in the New Future Private School in Qalubya Governorate. The experimental group included 15 students from a class and the control group included 15 students from the other class.

Instrumentation

Oral Reading Fluency Skill Checklist

The items of the checklist were suggested by related studies and literature previously discussed, such as Crosson & Lesaux (2010); DiSalle & Rasinski (2017); Hawkins et al.(2011); Huang(2013); Kim & Wagner(2015); Morrow et al.(2014); Padak & Rasinski(2008); Rasinski (2014); Segalowitz(2012); Wise et al.,2010; and Zaza (2014).

Purpose of the Checklist

The purpose of the checklist was to identify the EFL oral reading fluency skills appropriate to first year preparatory stage students in Egypt.

Construction of the Checklist

The initial form of the checklist consisted of six skills covering accuracy, smoothness, expression, automaticity, pacing, and phrasing. According to the jury members' recommendations, the skills were rearranged into three main aspects: Accuracy, automaticity, and prosody (see Appendix 1).

Validity of the Checklist

To examine content validity of the checklist, it was introduced to experts who were gently asked to:

- Determine the oral reading fluency skills of EFL suitable for first year preparatory stage students.
- Suggest any additional skills that need to be included in the checklist.

Experts' recommendations and suggestions were followed, and the checklist was modified in its final version in Appendix (A).

Oral Reading Fluency Test

Test Aim

This test aimed to measure EFL oral reading fluency skills suitable for first year preparatory stage students.

Test Description

The test included a reading passage adopted from the last pages of The New Hello English, the English textbook, to ensure that the reading text is within students' reading levels. Students were asked to read the test instructions before reading the passage. There were two versions of the test: a student's version and a teacher's version (Appendix B).

Test Piloting

The test was piloted on 10 first year preparatory stage students from the New Future Private School on October 18, 2020 to ensure the clarity of instructions in addition to determining its statistical features.

Test Timing

The Oral Reading Fluency Test was a one-minute test (Chang & Wu, 2010; Getz, 2021, Helwa 2014; Montgomerie et al., 2014).

Test Scoring

The test reflected the scores of the three main oral reading fluency skills: rate, accuracy, and prosody. The reading rate was measured by the number of words read in a minute. Accuracy was measured by dividing the number of words read correctly by the total number of words read in

one minute and multiplying the result by 100 (Chang & Wu,2010 ; Chang & Wu,2012; Hasbrouck & Tindal, 2006;Huffman2021, Lianes, 2018; Morrison & Wilcox,2020;Zaza,2013). Finally, prosody was scored according to the scoring rubric (Appendix C). The total score of prosody was 12 divided on three main criteria: expression, phrasing, and pace. The performance rate of each criterion ranged between (1-4). The test was scored by two raters to avoid bias and the mean scores were statistically analyzed.

Test Reliability

The test was piloted on 10 first year preparatory stage students on October 18,2020. The teacher of the control group and his colleague of the experimental group scored the test for every student. The interrater reliability was proven through using the Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC= 0.9) which was indicative of excellent reliability.

Test Validity

The validity of the test was proven through using content validity. It was established by the jury members who were asked to express their opinions regarding:

- Appropriateness of the reading passage
- Clarity of instructions
- Accuracy of the scoring rubric

Following the jury members' recommendations, the test was modified into its final form (Appendix B).

Pre-testing

The experimental and control groups were assessed by the same test before the administration of the suggested program based on the emotion regulation strategies. It was administered on October 21, 2020 to determine students' levels concerning the targeted EFL oral reading fluency skills.

Post-testing

The same test was administered to the participants on December 16, 2020 to examine the effectiveness of the suggested program based on the emotional regulation strategies in developing the participants' EFL oral reading fluency skills.

The Suggested Program based on Emotion Regulation Strategies

Based on the review of literature and related studies, the program was designed. The objectives of the program were as follow:

- Develop preparatory stage students' EFL oral reading fluency skills.
- Encourage preparatory stage students to integrate the emotion regulation strategies in their EFL learning.
- Decrease students' anxiety through applying different emotion regulation strategies in the ORF tasks.
- Encourage teachers to offer attention to the ORF skills and ER strategies in EFL classes.

Program Rationale

The suggested program was based on the emotion regulation strategies to develop first year preparatory stage students' EFL oral reading fluency skills. The ER strategies depended on the theory of emotional intelligence, proposed by Salovey and Mayer (1990) which suggested that controlling emotions improved students' behavior. Introducing the selected ER strategies were according to Gross's 'The Extended Process Model of Emotion Regulation' developed in 2015. In each session, students used the cognitive change and suppression emotion regulation strategies to tackle different oral reading fluency tasks. Cognitive change and suppression strategies were opposite strategies: the cognitive change affected the experiences and expressions of students' behavior, while the suppression focused on hiding the negative experiences by positive expressions.

Program Framework

The experimental group received 15 sessions on using ER strategies to develop their ORF skills. The sessions were held twice a week for eight weeks. The teacher of the experimental group encouraged students to do their best reading, not the fastest reading in each oral reading fluency task. According to Rasinski et al. (2006) and Sidek et al.(2016), seventh grade students should achieve the reading rate of 190 words per minute. Draper (2013) and Fraser (2007) highlighted that EFL reading rate was 50% slower than the L1 reading rate, thus 95 word per minute was the reading rate adopted in this research. Hudson et al. (2005) and Zaza (2014) maintained that the accuracy levels ranged between (95%-

98%) and the research adopted 98% accuracy as the max score to which students' scores were compared. Prosody was measured according to the scoring rubric which included three dimensions: expression, pacing, and phrasing. The highest score in each dimension was four and the highest score of the rubric was 12.

Program Content

In each session, students read at least one reading passage adopted from the English textbook, *The New Hello English*. Different types of reading texts were introduced: emails, articles, stories, conversations, advertisements, etc. Each student was allowed to read up to three or four times till improving his/her baseline score in reading rate, accuracy, and prosody. In every session, each student recorded his/her scores in the ORF table that included three columns for the three ORF skills previously mentioned and a column for the date of the ORF session. The scores of the pre administration of the Oral Reading Fluency Test were used as baseline scores for the first session. By the end of each session, the final scores recorded by students in the ORF tables were considered baseline scores for the next session. Based on previous studies, the desired baseline for rate was 95, the baseline for accuracy was 98%, and the baseline for prosody was 12. These baselines were the benchmarks to which students' scores in the post administered ORF test were compared.

Procedures

The teachers of the experimental and control groups received training on how to assess oral reading fluency, while the teacher of the experimental group received additional training on how to teach ORF

skills using the ER strategies according to Gross's (2015) 'The Extended Process Model of Emotion Regulation' before the pre administration of the Oral Reading Fluency Test. Both the experimental and control groups were administered the Oral Reading Fluency Test on October 21, 2020.

To reduce subjectivity, every student's ORF test was scored by the two teachers. The teachers' scores of rate and accuracy were the same and when a difference appeared in the score of prosody, the mean score was calculated. The experimental group received 15 sessions on oral reading fluency using the emotion regulation strategies, while the control group received no intervention. The sessions were held every Monday and Wednesday for two months. Both groups were re-administered the ORF test on December 16, 2020.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Both descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and inferential statistics (The Mann-Whitney test) were used in data analysis. The Mann-Whitney test was used to calculate the differences between the mean ranks of the control and experimental groups in the Oral Reading Test and its subskills.

Results

In this section, results are presented in terms of the research hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1:

There was a statistically significant difference between the mean ranks of the control and experimental groups at level ($\alpha \leq 0.01$) in the rate skill in the post administration of the Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) test in favor of the experimental group.

The results of The Mann-Whitney test were presented in the following table:

Table 1

z Value for Reading Rate in the Post ORF Test

Group	N	Mean	Ranks		Z Value	Significance (2-tailed)
			Mean	Sum		
Control	15	70.60	10.17	152.50	-3.33	Significant at the 0.01
Experimental	15	94.93	20.83	312.50		

As shown in the previous table, the mean ranks of the control group (10.17) were less than the mean of ranks of the experimental group (20.83). Also, the z value (-3.33) was less than the significance level(0.01), thus the hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis 2:

There was a statistically significant difference between the mean ranks of the control and experimental groups at level ($\alpha \leq 0.01$) in the accuracy skill in the post administration of the Oral Reading Fluency test in favor of the experimental group.

The results of The Mann-Whitney test were presented in the following table:

Table 2

z Value for Reading Accuracy in the Post ORF Test

Group	N	Mean	Ranks		Z Value	Significance (2-tailed)
			Mean	Sum		
Control	15	90.80	10.57	158.50	-3.07	Significant at the 0.01
Experimental	15	95.55	20.43	306.50		

Based on the above table, the mean ranks of the control group (10.57) were less than the mean of ranks of the experimental group (20.43). Also, the z value (-3.07) was less than the significance level (0.01), therefore the hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis 3:

There was a statistically significant difference between the mean ranks of the control and experimental groups at level ($\alpha \leq 0.01$) in the prosody skill in the post administration of the Oral Reading Fluency test in favor of the experimental group.

The results of The Mann-Whitney test were presented in the following table:

Table 3

z Value for Prosody in the Post ORF Test

Group	N	Mean	Ranks		Z Value	Significance (2-tailed)
			Mean	Sum		
Control	15	7.60	8.13	122.00	-4.68	Significant at the 0.01
Experimental	15	10.33	22.87	343.00		

As shown in this table, the mean ranks of the control group (8.13) were less than the mean ranks of the experimental group (22.87). The z value (-4.68) was less than the significance level (0.01), thus the hypothesis was accepted.

Hypothesis 4:

There was a statistically significant difference between the mean ranks of the control and experimental groups at level ($\alpha \leq 0.01$) in the overall reading fluency skills in the post administration of the Oral Reading Fluency test in favor of the experimental group.

The results of The Mann-Whitney test were presented in the following table:

Table 4

z Value for the overall reading fluency skills in the Post ORF Test

Group	N	Mean	Ranks		Z Value	Significance (2—tailed)
			Mean	Sum		
Control	15	169.00	9.73	146.00	-3.59	Significant at the 0.01
Experimental	15	200.81	21.27	319.00		

The mean ranks of the control group (9.73) were less than the mean ranks of the experimental group (21.27). Also, the z value (-3.59) was less than the significance level (0.01), and the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

The effect size was calculated by the Matched-Pairs Rank Biserial Correlation (R_{prb}). The (R_{prb}) was calculated using “z” value for the differences between the mean ranks of the pre administration and post administration of the Oral Reading Fluency Test. The (R_{prb}) was interpreted according to the following reference table:

Table 5

Matched-Pairs Rank Biserial Correlation (R_{prb}) Effect Size Reference Table

Effect Size			
Small	Medium	Large	Very Large
Less than 0.40	0.40 - 0.69	0.70 - 0.89	0.90 or more

The effect size for the Emotion regulation Strategies on EFL Oral Reading Fluency Skills was displayed in the following table:

Table 6

Effect Size for the Suggested Program

Test	N	Mean	Positive Ranks		Z Value	Significance (2-tailed)	R_{prb} Value	Effect Size
			Mean	Sum				
Pre	15	153.08	8.00	120.00	-3.41	Significant at the 0.01	1.00	Very Large
Post	15	200.81						

The value of Matched-Pairs Rank Biserial Correlation (R_{prb}) was very large according to the reference table, hence the emotion regulation strategies had very large effect size on EFL oral reading fluency skills.

The modified Blake's gain ratio was calculated on the pre-post means of the experimental group scores to examine the effectiveness of the suggested program as shown in this table:

Table 7

The Modified Blake's Gain Ratio for the Suggested Program

Skills	Pre-Mean	Post-Mean	Max-Score	Blake's gain ratio	Effectiveness
Rate	63.47	94.93	95	1.33	Exist
Accuracy	83.48	95.55	98	1.35	Exist
Prosody	6.13	10.33	12	1.27	Exist
The suggested program	153.08	200.81	205	1.31	Exist

The value of Blake's modified gain ratio for the suggested program showed its effectiveness as it was (1.31) and existed in Blake's range of effectiveness (1-2). Hence, the suggested program based on the ER strategies were effective in developing first year preparatory stage students' EFL oral reading fluency skills.

Discussion of Results

Statistical analysis of the data obtained revealed the effectiveness of the suggested program based on emotion regulation strategies in developing first year preparatory stage students' EFL oral reading fluency

skills. The values of both Matched-Pairs Rank Biserial Correlation ($R_{prb}=1.0$) and Blake's modified gain ratio (1.31) revealed the effectiveness of the suggested program. Also, the "z" value for every oral reading fluency skill was less than the significance level (0.1), and the research alternative hypotheses were accepted. According to the number scale, ($z= -3.07$) was greater than ($z=-3.33$) and ($z=-3.33$) was greater than ($z=-4.68$). Thus, the most developed skill was accuracy followed by rate, and the least developed skill was prosody. The overall reading fluency skills were developed by the suggested program based on the emotion regulation strategies.

The high scores of reading accuracy were caused by the repeated use of emotion regulation strategies. Students changed their thoughts, emotions, and behavior to maintain positive moods in the oral reading fluency tasks. Students were able to modify the different aspects of the emotion: situation, attention, appraisals, and behavior through applying the steps of perception, valuation, and action suggested by Gross (2015). They read fast without hesitations, pausing, repetition, and repairs. Besides they corrected most of their miscues by themselves to reach the baseline of accuracy:98%.

The high scores of reading rate were attributed to the use of emotion regulation strategies, the appropriateness of the reading texts to the students' levels, as well as the repeated reading practices. The texts were adopted from the English textbook, and students were allowed to read each text for three or four times. Students recognized words immediately and increased the number of words read in a minute, reading rate, in

every session. They compared their reading rate in every oral reading fluency task to their previous practices recorded in the ORF table, Appendix E, till reaching the baseline of 95 words read per minute. Students were encouraged to read as fast as they can since their readings were timed to one minute in every trial.

The prosody skills were developed due to the integration of ER strategies to different types of reading texts, such as emails, stories, articles, conversations, and advertisements. These types enabled students to practice expression, phrasing, and pacing. The scoring rubric offered thorough descriptions of the three subskills of prosody and students did their best reading to convey the best performance of these skills. Students' voices reflected the purposes and meanings of the text. They showed correct intonation and phrase boundaries in their reading. To conclude, students' oral reading was like oral speech.

The use of cognitive change and suppression as ER strategies helped students decrease the different emotional impacts of the oral reading fluency tasks. Students faced different challenging situations in the oral reading fluency tasks, such as reading aloud an unknown passage without model reading, reading aloud to a colleague to mark his/her ORF skills, cooperating with a naughty student, being video recorded by a new partner, reading and acting an unknown story, pairing with a different gender, and being assessed by a new teacher.

Students applied the cognitive change as well as the suppression strategies through the steps of Gross's(2015) 'The Extended Process Model of Emotion Regulation'. Students were able to tackle different oral reading situations through changing their thoughts and regulating their emotions. They used to switch undesirable reading situations to desirable ones by assigning different meanings to them. Students either changed their perceptions of the oral reading situations using the cognitive change strategy or changed their reactions towards the situations using the suppression strategy. The cognitive change strategy and the suppression strategy were opposite, the first was used before reading to change perception and the other was applied to change the expression of the emotion while keeping the experience. Both ER strategies enabled students to change their actions, enjoy the process of reading, and develop their oral reading fluency.

Conclusions

Results of this research revealed that the suggested program based on emotion regulation strategies developed first year preparatory stage students' EFL oral reading fluency skills. Applying ER strategies to oral reading fluency tasks enabled students to control how to react to different reading situations. They controlled their emotions while reading different passages orally. Students overcame their shyness, lack of confidence, and imperfection to reach the baselines of rate, accuracy, and prosody. Although there was a paucity of research examining ER and ORF in the EFL context, the results reported in this research coincided with those of

Pishghadam (2009) who revealed that emotions were predictors of academic achievement and EFL proficiency.

The results were also like those of Oxford (2011) who emphasized that promoting positive emotions improved students' language performance. Further, the results were in line with those of Aragão (2011) who showed that students' emotions affected their EFL oral performance. The research results were like those of Esmaeeli et al. (2018) who concluded that controlling students' emotions improved their EFL speaking skills and oral proficiency. Finally, the research results were in line with those of Liew et al. (2020) who asserted that ER strategies affected students' engagement in the reading activities and enhanced their reading fluency.

Recommendations and suggestions for further research

In light of the results of the research, the following recommendations and suggestions for further research were drawn:

- Examining the effect of ER strategies on students' EFL achievement.
- Examining the effectiveness of ER strategies on students' EFL reading comprehension.
- Investigating the impact of teachers' use of ER strategies on students' EFL learning motivation.
- Investigating the impact of ER strategies on students' creative thinking skills.
- Examining the emotions experienced in the EFL classroom.

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