overSEAS 2017

EÖTVÖS LORÁND TUDOMÁNYEGYETEM

Bölcsészettudományi Kar

ALAPSZAKOS SZAKDOLGOZAT

Tömörítési készségfejlesztő módszerek összehasonlító elemzése

A comparative analysis of summary teaching methods

Témavezető:

Dr. Tankó Gyula

Assistant Professor

Készítette:

Stemmer Gergely

anglisztika alapszak

angol szakirány

2017

CERTIFICATE OF RESEARCH

By my signature below, I certify that my ELTE B.A. thesis, entitled
A comparative analysis of summary teaching methods
is entirely the result of my own work, and that no degree has previously been conferred upon me for this work. In my thesis I have cited all the sources (printed, electronic or oral) I have used faithfully and have always indicated their origin. The electronic version of my thesis (in PDF format) is a true representation (identical copy) of this printed version.

   If this pledge is found to be false, I realize that I will be subject to penalties up to and including the forfeiture of the degree earned by my thesis.

Date: 19.04.2017   Signed: ....

Table of contents

Abstract

Summary writing skills are required in every educational environment; however, students often find summary writing tasks demanding. Therefore, instruction in summary writing is needed. Although numerous research studies have been conducted on various summary teaching techniques, there is no synthesis available that compares them. Therefore, the main purpose of this thesis it to examine summary teaching techniques and to investigate the ways in which they enhance students' language proficiency. To achieve this goal, first summarization is discussed in general, and the rules of summarization and the factors that play a role in summary writing are described. This is followed by an overview of summary teaching methods: their effects on students' language skills are compared and contrasted, and the subjects' opinions and the limitations of the methods are addressed. In the last section, the main points of the thesis are summarized.

1. Introduction

As Howard, Serviss, and Rodrigue (2010) state, summarizing is a key element in every educational environment. Outside of high schools and universities, several high-stakes academic English examinations (e.g., TOEFL, IELTS, Pearson Academic) require summarizing skills. However, research studies and experiences from the classroom show that L2 learners often find processing and summarizing source texts demanding (Hirvela & Du, 2013). Furthermore, L1 learners also need help and instruction in writing proper summaries because the summary writing process is the same in their case as in the case of L2 learners. With the help of direct instruction, teachers need to draw attention to the fact that it is the students' task to interpret the source texts (Casazza, 1993) and be assertive learners instead of submissive ones, in other words, to become learners who are able to differentiate between relevant and irrelevant ideas in a text.

Even though numerous research studies have been conducted on the techniques of summary teaching, there is no synthesis available that compares them. My main aim in this thesis is to review the various summary teaching methods and either contrast them or highlight the connections between them by examining their results and by synthesizing their findings. By doing so, I provide an overview of the best summary teaching methods, and I also investigate the extent to which these methods improve students' language proficiency.

In the first part of my thesis, I introduce written summarization, the types of summary, the rules of summarization, and the factors that affect summarization. Following this, in the next section I present and analyze various summary teaching methods. Although reading comprehension, writing or speaking skills, and paraphrasing are intrinsically linked to summarization, due to lengths limitations I do not discuss them in my thesis.

2. Summarization

Most people have some understanding of what summarization is; however, the concept of summarization is often more complicated than it would appear. A substantially high percentage of people have met with summarization during their studies, but only a few of them have knowledge about the processes that constitute summarization. Summarization involves numerous cognitive and metacognitive processes, and it takes learning and exercise to be able to execute and control these effectively. In what follows, written summarization and summary types are defined, the rules of summarization are presented, and global and guided summaries as well as reader- and writer- based summaries are differentiated.

Summarization is a complex and sometimes demanding process in which the writer reduces a source text to its gist. As Tankó (2013) states, "a summary is the condensed version of main ideas borrowed from a source text" (p. 41). Tankó further states that in an academic summary, the original ideas of the source text have to be paraphrased by the summarizer. If a summary is correctly executed, writers can benefit from it greatly. A summary that contains the relevant main ideas of a text can serve as support for the arguer's own ideas, but it has many other benefits in the academic context, such as enhanced comprehension and retention of information or effective mastery of note-taking skills. Students are expected to write various types of summaries

2.1 Summary types

The first distinction that can be made between the types of summaries is that between global and guided summaries (Tankó, 2013). In a global summary, the summarizer includes all the main ideas of the source text; consequently, these summaries are usually longer than guided

summaries. In a guided summary, the writer has to take into consideration the guiding question which sets the scope of the summary that is to be produced. The guiding question thus determines the selection of the source text information that is relevant for the writer.

Secondly, we can differentiate between summaries on the basis of their audience. In this sense, we can make a distinction between writer-based and reader-based summaries (Hidi & Anderson, 1986). In the case of writer-based summaries, the intended audience of the summary is the summary writer. Such summaries can serve as external memory aids for the summarizer (e.g., study notes), and they can be written in informal style. Furthermore, writer-based summaries can improve the writer's understanding of the source texts that they are working with through a more thorough examination of the information in them. The aim of reader-based summaries, on the other hand, is to provide information to the readers of the summary; therefore, it is essential for the writer to understand that the readers may not be familiar with the information that is to be presented. As a result, reader-based academic summaries should always be written in a formal manner, logically structured, and correctly paraphrased.

2.2 Rules of summarization

Being able to differentiate and write different summary types is not enough for the creation of an adequate summary. It is also necessary for the writer to know the rules of summarization (van Dijk, 1980) and to have a comprehensive understanding of the application of these rules. There are four basic rules: deletion, generalization, construction, and the zero rule. Furthermore, van Dijk makes a distinction between weak and strong deletion.

First of all, following Tankó's (2013) suggestion, in the summarization process the rule of construction should be applied first. With the help of background knowledge, this rule allows

the summarizer to group specific instances under a general concept or to construct a superordinate event from subordinate events by processing all the relevant ideas of the source text. With the restatement of a series of subordinate ideas or micropropositions as one main idea, a macroproposition is created. The processing of all the source text is necessary because if micropropositions are mapped incorrectly, the macroproposition formulated might be wrong.

By applying the rule of construction, a general term or idea can be used to replace an (incomplete) list of items or ideas that can be grouped together based on their semantic meaning. Despite the superficial similarity between this rule and the generalization rule, as Tankó (2013) notes, the two rules are different. Namely, in the case of generalization, applying the rule allows the writer of the summary to restate in a concise manner only those ideas that are explicit in the source text, while construction is based on the combination of explicit information in the source text and the writer's own background knowledge.

The last rule that should be applied is the rule of deletion. This means deleting information that is trivial, irrelevant or unnecessary. By irrelevant information, we mean "unrelated information that is basically of no value to the task" (Tankó, 2013, p. 59). According to van Dijk (1980), we can distinguish between two types of deleting macrorules: weak and strong deletion. As Renkema (2004, p. 95) states, "the weak deletion rule eliminates irrelevant propositions; the strong deletion rule only eliminates propositions that are relevant at the microlevel, but not at the macrolevel."

The fourth, and last rule is the zero rule. As van Dijk (1980) argues:

we also need a rule that leaves propositions 'intact' by admitting them directly at the macrolevel. In that case we have the application of a ZERO rule, which yields the same proposition at a macrolevel which occurs in the microlevel. The ZERO rule is especially

important in all kinds of (very) short discourses (e.g., one-sentence discourses) where microstructure and macrostructure simply may coincide: Everything said in that case is equally relevant or important, as in simple orders like "Come home!" (pp. 48–49)

2.3 Factors affecting summarization

Whereas the previous sections discussed the rules and types of summarization, this section investigates why summarization is a demanding task for students. As Anderson and Hidi (1988/1989) argue, it is unequivocal that students' skill to summarize improves pro rata with their age. However, as they point out, even though "good summarizers are invariably older, poor summarizers may be found at any age" (p. 27). Knowing that the root of the problem is only partially connected to age, we must consider other factors that affect summary writing.

Firstly, as Kirkland and Saunders (1991) note, when students write summaries, they concentrate on the source text, the summary they are producing, and the requirements of the writing task at the same time. By doing so, they recursively work with these elements. Furthermore, as Hill (1991) states, summary writing is a multidisciplinary task that requires reading and comprehension, and the emphasis of the summary changes with the type of summary the students are expected to write. If we consider together Hill's description and the fact that recursion is a difficult cognitive process, we can understand Kirkland and Saunders' claim that the insufficient quality of ESL student summaries may be the result of heavy cognitive load.

Secondly, besides the previously presented types of summaries, other characteristics of the task also greatly contribute to the hardships involved in summary writing. In the previous section of my thesis, I already mentioned the importance of audience. In a study conducted by

Taylor (1986), the concept of the audience was confusing to the participants who were fourth- and fifth-grade students, and this made it difficult for them to determine which ideas and details should be included in their summaries. Therefore, knowing the audience is essential to produce a proper summary.

In terms of text characteristics, length, genre, and complexity are also influencing factors. As Hidi and Anderson (1986) state, the source text's length has a great impact on the quality of the summary. Working with short paragraphs, students need to process only a few sentences that contain the main ideas of the source text. However, in longer texts, not all the ideas are necessary for the summary. Additionally, the genre of the source texts is also a key factor that affects the quality of a summary, especially if the summarizers are children. For instance, it is easier for children to summarize narratives than expository texts. One of the main reasons behind this is that children are more familiar with narratives, and it is easier for them to select the relevant ideas from a text type that they know better. Furthermore, expository texts usually deal with more complicated ideas. Finally, the complexity of the source material is also a major influencing factor. A complex source text includes advanced vocabulary and syntactic structures, it is more abstract, the ideas it contains are less familiar, its organization can be less straightforward, and it may contain ideas that are implicit.

Another interesting question arises if we want to investigate the impact of the availability of the source text after reading it. Do those students perform better in writing tasks who can look at the text while they are writing a summary or those who cannot? On the one hand, Hill (1991) argues that the absence of source material makes students paraphrase the original ideas better because they have to recall these from their memory. On the other hand, as

Hidi and Anderson (1986) state, the presence of the source text enhances students' ability to identify main ideas because their memory is less overwhelmed.

3. Summary teaching methods

We can see from the previous sections that there are numerous summary types, rules, and factors of which students need to be aware if they want to summarize effectively. Consequently, instruction in these areas is needed. As Kirkland and Saunders (1991) observe, textbooks usually assume that students have already acquired the necessary knowledge to produce a good summary, but in most situations, this is not the case. Furthermore, Hill (1991) points out that substantially more time is spent on teaching the production of full texts than on summary writing instruction in spite of the fact that students would benefit from this skill in content classes.

Given that summarization is a useful skill and that it requires explicit instruction, numerous research studies have been conducted on summary teaching methods. However, there is no comparative synthesis available on the various methods. In this section, I present an overview of these methods.

3.1 Instruction based on the rules of summarization

As I have mentioned in Section 2.2, knowing the rules of summarization is vital for producing good summaries. In this section, I present various summary teaching techniques that rely on teaching the rules of summarization. In some of the research articles, the rules of summarization constitute only one part of the instructional procedure; however, these rules can still be considered as a central element of these studies.

Bean and Steenwyk (1984) investigated the effects of two types of summary teaching techniques. One of the two treatment groups received instruction in rule-governed summarization. The other treatment group approached summarization in an intuitive way. The subjects of the rule-governed treatment group were 21 sixth-grade students who had twelve instructional periods over five weeks during which they were introduced to the rules of summarization (van Dijk, 1980). After that, they had to summarize a five sentence paragraph in fifteen or fewer words. The researchers used the Nelson Reading Test (Nelson, 1962) to measure the students' reading comprehension.

In another study conducted by Hare and Borchardt (1984), the researchers used inductive and deductive summary teaching methods that were based on the summarization rules of Brown and Day (1983), which were also based on van Dijk (1980)'s macrorules. Besides the control group consisting of ten students, 22 students participated in each treatment group. In the deductive teaching classes, the teacher gave students a direct definition of summarization. They were also given a rule sheet, and the rules were explained with the help of a training text. In the inductive classes, the teachers' aim was the same; however, they used direct questioning to explain the rules.

In Day's (1986) research, the importance of teaching the rules of summarization was contrasted with self-management. The participants in this research were 93 junior college students who worked with eight expositions. These students were divided into four groups. The first group used self-management alone; in the second group, students only received instruction in the rules of summarization; in the third group, students received instruction both in the rules of summarization and self-management; and in the fourth group, the procedures of self-management were integrated into the rules of summarization.

Lastly, in a recent study by McDonough, Crawford, and Vleeschauwer (2014), students were provided with a textbook designed to improve their summarization skills. Besides information about plagiarism and a collection of written texts, the textbook contained information on summary writing, including some of the basic rules of summarization. The subjects of the research were 46 undergraduate Thai EFL students who took three tests after the instructional period, including a pretest and two posttests, to measure the efficiency of instruction.

3.1.1 Discussion of the findings

In the study, conducted by Bean and Steenwyk (1984), the students in the treatment group who were instructed in rule-governed summarization significantly outperformed students in the control group on the tests that measured their summary writing skills and their reading comprehension. Students in the second treatment group who were instructed in the intuitive approach to summarization also scored significantly higher than the students in the control group; however, the two treatment groups did not differ significantly from each other. Furthermore, the length of the produced summaries did not vary between the treatment and the control groups.

The results were similar in the study conducted by Hare and Borchardt (1984), in which the authors hypothesized that both inductive and deductive approaches to teaching the rules of summarization would enhance students' ability to summarize. The findings support their hypothesis because both treatment groups performed significantly better than the control group in the application of the rules of summarization; however, in terms of delayed instructional effects, the treatment groups did not exceed the control group on the measure of the application

of the rule of using topic sentences. Nevertheless, both teachers and students were satisfied with the effects of the instruction.

Similarly to these two research articles, in the study conducted by Day (1986), in which he contrasted instruction in the rules of summarization with self-management, instruction proved to be beneficial for students. Self-management alone was not enough to improve students' summarization skills. Although the combination of self-management and instruction in the rules of summarization proved to be effective to a certain degree, instruction, in which self-management was integrated into the application of the rules of summarization, was the most beneficial for students. Both poor and average students benefited from this type of instruction.

The article by McDonough, Crawford, and Vleeschauwer (2014) also supports the hypothesis that instruction in the rules of summarization enhances students' summarization skills. On the one hand, the textbook that contained the rules of summarization helped students to refer to the source text in their topic sentences. On the other hand, students copied more word strings in the second posttest than in the other two tests; however, after a further analysis, the results showed that students only copied shorter word strings. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of this study is proved only to a limited extent by the results because of two main reasons: the absence of a control group because of ethical reasons and the features (e.g., complexity and length) of the source texts.

3.2 Genre- or structure-based instruction

As discussed in Section 2.3, knowing the rules and being familiar with the concept of summarization is often not enough for effective summary writing. It is also essential for the

summarizer to consider the characteristics of the source text. In this section, I present various summary teaching techniques with genre- or structure-based approaches to summarization.

Taylor (1986) divided his study into two parts and investigated the differences between summarizing an expository and a narrative text. In the first phase of the study, the participants who were seventeen fourth- and fifth-grade students were interviewed. They were provided with the definition of a good summary, which was followed by an oral model of a summary. After that, the participants had to summarize a narrative, and later an exposition. In the second phase, 52 middle-class subjects were divided into two groups. Half of a group had to produce a summary on a narrative, the other half on an expository text, and then the roles were switched. After the procedure, they were given a questionnaire to reflect on the usefulness of the instruction.

Secondly, Armbruster, Anderson, and Ostertag (1989) aimed in their study to teach fifth-graders a structure-based approach to summarization. The training, which was focused on problem-solution texts, had three basic parts: recognizing the structure; taking notes on the structure; and creating a visual representation of it, that is, a frame. Then they had to write a summary using the information in the frame. Workbooks were created which served as instructional material. The workbooks contained a definition of the given text structure, a description of the summary writing rules that can be applied to problem-solution texts, and numerous example passages from various texts.

Thirdly, Osman-Jouchoux (1997) hypothesized that with the use of concept mapping, reading can be connected with summary writing. The author claimed that summarization is substantially different from other writing tasks, and knowledge about text structures can be beneficial for students. Concepts maps allow students to examine the main ideas of a text and

the connections between them through a visual representation of their structural organization. In the study, fifteen students had to complete three concept maps, and they had to produce a summary of a shorter and another one of a longer text.

Lastly, in a recent study conducted by Chen and Su (2012), students were provided instruction by means of a genre-based approach. The subjects of this research were 41 EFL students who were assigned to read two narrative books. After reading "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" in the first week, students wrote a summary of the book. In the following weeks, students were introduced to the structure of narrative genre, and they were provided instruction in writing summaries of narrative texts, including examples. After collaboratively writing a summary of "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone", the participants of this study had to summarize "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" independently for a second time.

3.2.1 Discussion of the findings

In Taylor's (1986) study, in contrast with the results of the methods that were based on instruction in the rules of summarization, the difference between the two groups was insignificant. By analyzing the results, the researcher found that the source of the problems was that children were confused about their audience, and it was hard for them to decide how detailed or general their summaries should be. Their scores in generalization were also low. The participants said that summarizing the narrative text was easier; however, finding the moral in the text was still demanding for them. In terms of the expository text, the participants experienced hardships in deciding which ideas were important. Thus Taylor's genre-based technique failed to significantly improve children's summary writing skills.

Despite the fact that Taylor's (1986) genre-based approach did not enhance the children's summarization skills significantly, the structure-based approach employed by Armbruster, Anderson, and Ostertag (1986) successfully improved the subjects' summary writing abilities. By teaching fifth-graders the structure of problem-solution passages, the researchers managed to enhance students' reading comprehension of expository texts, and the instruction also helped students to write expository texts. Furthermore, as the authors of the article state, "since problem-solution is probably one of the more difficult structures, there is a good reason to believe that students could readily learn other text structures" (p. 135), which offers additional opportunities for teachers to improve students' language skills.

Similarly, Osman-Jouchoux's (1997) structure-based approach also enhanced students' summary writing skills. By making the students complete three concept maps, the instructors allowed the participants to examine the structure of the source text more closely. The success of this methods is probably due to the fact that by creating concept maps, students engaged more comprehensively in the reading and understanding processes. Although the instructional unit, which consisted of three parts, functioned successfully, the instructional period took a noteworthy amount of class time.

In contrast with Taylor's (1986) method, the method used by Chen and Su (2012), which was based on instruction in a particular genre, significantly improved students' summary writing skills. After providing students with information about narrative texts, there was a significant improvement between the results of the pre- and the posttest on each of the four components (i.e., content, organization, vocabulary, and language use); however, significance levels varied from component to component. The students' abilities improved more in the areas of content and organization than in vocabulary and language use.

3.3 Instruction based on feedback or peer review

In this section, I present the methods that besides instructing students about the rules of summarization and text characteristics, also emphasize the importance of feedback and peer review. Feedback and peer review are key elements in the learning process because they point out the strengths and weaknesses in the students' knowledge (e.g., summary writing in this case); therefore, including these educational tools can be advantageous for summary writers.

Firstly, Demaree (2007) conducted a research study that investigated the effects of written feedback on students' writing. The participants of the study were students of a Physics course who had to watch eight videos during the instructional period, and then they had to produce at least two-paragraph-long summaries of these videos. The students were divided into three groups. The students in the first group did not receive any feedback from their instructor; the instructor of the second group provided only minimal but always positive feedback; the third group's instructor also provided only minimal feedback; however, the instructor's satisfaction was indicated to a certain extent. The researcher collected all of the summaries with the teachers' comments on them and provided her own additional feedback on the third group's summaries. At the end of the quarter, the researcher graded the summaries on a scale from 0 to 3. Furthermore, the groups who received additional feedback were also provided with a voluntary feedback survey about the additional feedback.

Secondly, Vang (2013) taught Master's students summarization in her study, and one of the main elements in her research besides teacher feedback was the importance of peer review. Two language modules were developed: one for students writing their theses in the upcoming semester and another one for first year Master's students. About 220 students participated in the

first trial, and the goal was to write two or three summaries. The first of these was planned to be written in pairs, followed by in-class peer reviews. The final assignment consisted of a short report, which had to be produced on a topic from the student's own field. Each assignment was followed by peer revision: students were encouraged to discuss each other's works in terms of structure, content, and language errors. The peer reviews started with positive feedback, then students moved on to parts of their peers' works where improvement was necessary, and it was followed by feedback from the teacher. In the second trial, about 90 students took two introductory lectures, and then they were expected to write a summary of an article on their own on a topic from their field, "and in pairs, a critical reflection built upon that article and two papers that they themselves had found in their library class" (Vang, p. 173). A subject teacher gave feedback on their critical reflection paper in the final session. In addition, further feedback sessions were provided for students whose summaries were inadequate. After completing this module, students were given a questionnaire which included questions about the use of English and the usefulness of the instruction.

Thirdly, Wade-Stein and Kintsch (2004) used a different approach to provide feedback to students. In their study, they used Summary Street, an Internet-based system with which students can draft their summaries. The application analyzes the adequacy of the student summaries. The feedback it provides is based on latent semantic analysis, "which offers a method of machine analysis of text content that in many ways mirrors human semantics" (p. 337). The participants in the study were 52 students from two sixth-grade classes who had to write two summaries. One of the source texts was on renewable and the other one on unrenewable energy sources. In the first week of the instruction, students had to read the first text and write a 150-to-250-word summary of it. Revision took place in the third class period,

where half of the students received a brief instruction in the use of Summary Street. The other students used a similar system to revise their first drafts; however, this interface did not provide feedback on content; it only showed the length of their summaries. During the second week of instruction, students had to write their summaries on the second text; however, the revision methods were counterbalanced.

3.3.1 Discussion of the findings

The results of the summaries in Demaree's (2007) study showed that additional feedback had helped students to produce better summaries during the instructional period. Furthermore, the fact that students' writing improved without motivation, that is the quality of their summaries did not count towards their course grade, further supports the effectiveness of feedback. However, the results also showed that positive feedback alone is not enough; further instruction and explanations are also needed.

Besides the effects of written feedback, Vang (2013) also investigated the effect of peer review. As Vang states, "the results of the questionnaire and the reports and observations from the different classes in both language modules are carefully optimistic, and indicate that students could appreciate and benefit from language instruction organized around summary writing and peer review" (p. 177). Nonetheless, in contrast with Demaree's (2007) study, in this case, the fact that students' additional work was not rewarded resulted in a decrease in their motivation, and thus their attitude towards the task changed as if it had been a burden for them. Although students found the instruction helpful, they thought that the course should not be obligatory to take.

Wade-Stein and Kintsch (2004) used a different approach to give feedback to students. The results of their study showed that Summary Street, an online system which provides content feedback to students, successfully improved students' summary writing skills. The results also showed that students who received content feedback worked with their summaries for twice as long as the other group who did not receive feedback on the content of their summaries. Furthermore, the results also revealed that those students who received content feedback continued to produce better summaries when the same type of feedback was not available to them. However, this should be interpreted with caution because the study's design does not make it possible to evaluate the transfer effects.

3.4 Instruction based on collaborative summary writing with the teacher

The research articles that present in this section are based on collaborative summary writing with the teacher. After students have learned the theory of summarization, they start to apply this knowledge based on their own learning strategies. However, as Friend (2000/2001) stated, students often use ineffective strategies. According to her, after leaning the rules, students can exercise them in groups which helps them to develop strategies to apply these rules. Nevertheless, it is easier for students to understand summarization if teachers provide guided instruction rather than leave it up to them to understand the cognitive processes behind summary writing.

Firstly, Casazza (1993) hypothesized that by providing direct instruction in summarization based on Irwin's (1986) EMQA model, and by modeling the rules of summarization, teachers can improve students' language skills. The four parts of Irwin's model are Explanation, Modeling, Questioning, and Application. In two of them, namely Explanation

and Modeling, the involvement of the teacher is the main element. In the first section, teachers explain the rules of summarization. In the modeling section, teachers have to present the previously introduced rules both in writing and verbally for the students to understand them fully. In the article, Casazza also describes the "think-aloud" modeling method, in which teachers explain the thought process loudly while they are reading the source text.

Secondly, Friend (2001) conducted a research study, in which the participants, 147 college freshmen, were instructed in summary writing strategies. Two experimental strategies were designed: argument repetition and generalization. The study also included a control group to contrast the findings of the treatment groups. In the argument repetition group, students were encouraged to find the main idea in the source text by finding the idea that the author of the source text returned to multiple times. In the generalization group, the experimenter asked the students to find a general term for the listed items in the text. In both experimental groups, students had to work with three texts. After writing either "repeated references" or "generalization" on the board, the experimenter verbally modeled these concepts for the first text with the help of "Guidelines for Writing a Summary", which served as instructional material. This was followed by a collaborative summary writing exercise led by the experimenter in which the experimenter wrote the summary on the board, following the "Guidelines". The summary of the third text was constructed individually by the students, but if assistance was needed, the experimenter gave individual help. The individually constructed summaries were collected and scored based on their thesis statement, content inclusion, content exclusion, and sentence transformation.

Thirdly, Zafarani and Kabgani (2014) examined the efficiency of strategy instruction on the reading comprehension of Iranian ESP learners. The subjects of the study were 70 students

from two architecture classes. Half of the students were assigned to the control group, the other half received strategy instruction. Before the training, students in the treatment group had a discussion with the teacher about the purpose of the study and about strategic learning. Strategy training was constituted by four parts: Review the Passage, Evaluate the Paragraph in order to find the key points, Answer with a Paraphrase, and Determine a Passage Summary. The instructor modeled all these steps with the help of various activities, including asking and answering several questions. Students worked with seven texts from an engineering textbook, and the tasks used in this study to measure the efficiency of strategy instruction were taken from TOEFL tests. On the other hand, the control group had to work with the same texts; however, they were asked to carry out various linguistic exercises in connection with them. Furthermore, they were expected to translate an English article to Farsi, and they had to orally present the translation process.

Lastly, Ahangari, Hejazi, and Razmjou (2014) tested the hypothesis in their study that performance improves with assistance. To prove this, they used the scaffolding technique, in which the instructor provided a temporary framework for students in the classroom. When students' own skills were completely developed, the framework was removed. Forty female EFL learners were involved in this study, and they were randomly assigned to the experimental and the control group. The students in both groups had to write a summary of a story from their textbook. After collecting data, the students in the treatment group assessed their own writing assignments, assisted by the teacher. The teacher also provided students with further templates and tasks, such as picture matching tasks, a story map, an explicit framework, and a task on jumbled sentences.

3.4.1 Discussion of the findings

Casazza's (1993) model of direct instruction, which includes Explanation, Modeling, Questioning, and Application, affected students' language skills positively. The results serve as evidence that Casazza's model, in which one of the main elements is modeling summary writing by the teacher, improves students' reading comprehension.

Friend's (2001) hypothesis that instruction in strategies based on argument repetition and generalization improve students' language skills also proved to be true. By analyzing the results, we can notice that both techniques helped students to determine which ideas are important. However, as Friend states "generalization was even stronger than argument repetition for facilitating generation of a thesis statement" (p. 23). The results also serve to prove that students need direct reading and writing instruction in order to be able to construct thesis statements (i.e., macropropositions).

In the study by Zafarani and Kabgani (2014) on EFL students' reading comprehension, the researchers investigated the possible effects of instruction in summarization, in which the teacher had the main role. The results showed that there was a significant difference between the treatment and the control group. The treatment group's reading comprehension significantly improved by the end of the instructional period; thus, it can be stated that besides enhancing students' writing skills, a modeled instruction in summarization also affects students' reading comprehension. The findings of this study, however, should be interpreted with caution because a more random assignment of the participants to the two groups would have resulted in a more generalizable conclusion.

Similarly to the previously analyzed summary teaching methods, the scaffolding technique used by Ahangari, Hejazi, and Razmjou (2014) proved to be an effective method to

improve students' writing skills. After an analysis of the data of the pre- and the posttest, the results indicated that the students in the experimental group, for whom the instructor provided a temporary in-class framework to aid summary writing, significantly outperformed the students in the control group with regard to content retention. Given the fact that instruction successfully improved students' writing skills by helping them to retain important ideas and become self-regulated learners, the findings also support the findings of several previously conducted studies.

4. Conclusion

Skills in summarization are essential in educational environments. However, summarization is a complex task that requires thorough knowledge not only of summary types, summarization rules, but also of various factors such as source text characteristics, intended audience, or generic features. Students often do not understand clearly the processes of summarization, or they lack the necessary skills to produce appropriate summaries. Therefore, it is important for teachers to provide direct instruction in summarization. The summary teaching techniques discussed in this thesis enhanced students' language skills to a certain extent; however, in several studies, there were also some limitations.

By teaching students how to summarize based on the rules of summarization, teachers significantly improved students' summary writing skills. Nonetheless, it is worth mentioning that by integrating the processes of self-management into the process of applying the rules of summarization, teachers can further enhance students' language skills. Methods that are based on genre or text structure also proved to be helpful in terms of improving students' writing skills and reading comprehension; however, Taylor's (1986) technique failed to improve students'

language skills significantly. By analyzing the results of teaching techniques that are based on feedback and peer review, we can conclude that feedback, even it is provided via an online system, it positively affects students' summary writing skills.

Similarly to feedback and peer review, collaborative summary writing with the teacher also enhanced students' summary writing abilities. Although in most of the studies both students and teachers were satisfied with the effects of instruction, in several cases, instruction took a noteworthy amount of class time. Furthermore, in the case of one method based on feedback, students argued that instruction should not be mandatory. Despite the successful effects of these techniques, several aspects of the studies should only be interpreted with caution because in various cases, the environment was not optimal for measuring the effects unambiguously.

References

Ahangari, S., Hejazi, M., & Razmjou, L. (2014). The impact of scaffolding on content retention of Iranian post-elementary EFL learners' summary writing. *Procedia–Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *98*, 83–89.

Anderson, V., & Hidi, S. (1988/1989). Teaching students to summarize. *Educational Leadership*, *46*(4), 26–28.

Armbruster, B. B., Anderson, T. H., & Ostertag, J. (1989). Teaching text structure to improve reading and writing. *The Reading Teacher*, *43*(2), 130–137.

Bean, T. W., & Steenwyk, F. L. (1984). The effect of three forms of summarization instruction on sixth graders' summary writing and comprehension. *Journal of Reading Behavior*, *16*(4), 297–306.

Brown, A. L., & Day, J. D. (1983). Macrorules for summarizing texts: The development of expertise. *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior*, *22*, 1–14.

Casazza, M. E. (1993). Using a model of direct instruction to teach summary writing in a college reading class. *Journal of Reading*, *37*(3), 202–208.

Chen, Y., & Su, S. (2012). A genre-based approach to teaching EFL summary writing. *ELT Journal*, *66*(2), 184–192.

Day, J. D. (1986). Teaching summarization skills: Influences of student ability level and strategy difficulty. *Cognition and Instruction*, *3*(3), 193–210.

Demaree, D. (2007). Measuring the effect of written feedback on writing. In L. Hsu, C. Henderson, & L. McCullough (Eds.), *AIP Conference Proceedings* (*951*/1, pp. 81–84). College Park, MD: AIP.

Friend, R. (2000/2001). Teaching summarization as a content area reading strategy. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *44*(4), 320–329.

Friend, R. (2001). Effects of strategy instruction on summary writing of college students. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *26*, 3–24.

Hare, V. C., & Borchardt, K. M. (1984). Direct instruction of summarization skills. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *20*(1), 62–78.

Hidi, S., & Anderson, V. (1986). Producing written summaries: Task demands, cognitive operations, and implications for instruction. *Review of Educational Research*, *56*(4), 473–493.

Hill, M. (1991). Writing summaries promotes thinking and learning across the curriculum: But why are they so difficult to write? *Journal of Reading*, *34*(7), 536–539.

Hirvela, A., & Du, Q. (2013). "Why am I paraphrasing?": Undergraduate ESL writers' engagement with source-based academic writing and reading. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *12*(2), 87–98.

Howard, R. M., Serviss, T., & Rodrigue, T. K. (2010). Writing from sources, writing from sentences. *Writing & Pedagogy*, *2*(2), 177–192.

Irwin, J. (1986). *Teaching reading comprehension processes*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Kirkland, M. R., & Saunders, M. A. P. (1991). Maximizing student performance in summary writing: Managing cognitive load. *TESOL Quarterly*, *25*(1), 105–121.

McDonough, K., Crawford, W. J., & Vleeschauwer, J. D. (2014). Summary writing in a Thai EFL university context. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *24*, 20–32.

Nelson, M. J. (1962). *The Nelson reading test*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Co.

Osman-Jouchoux, R. (1997). Linking reading and writing: Concept mapping as an organizing tactic. In R. E. Griffin, J. M. Hunter, C.B. Schifiman, & W. J. Gibbs (Eds.), *Vision quest: Journeys toward visual literacy* (1996 conference, pp. 109–117). Corsicana, TX: International Visual Literacy Association.

Renkema, J. (2004). *Introduction to discourse studies*. Amsterdam & Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

Tankó, Gy. (2013). *Paraphrasing, summarising and synthesising skills for academic writers: Theory and practice.* Budapest: Eötvös University Press.

Taylor, K. K. (1986). Summary writing by young children. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *21*(2), 193–208.

van Dijk, T. (1980). *Macrostructures*. Hillside, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Vang, P. (2013). Motivating English language study among Master's students: The case for summary writing. *Nordic Journal of English Studies*, *13*(1), 163–186.

Wade-Stein, D., & Kintsch, E. (2004). Summary Street: Interactive computer support for writing. *Cognition and Instruction*. *22*(3), 333–362.

Zafarani, P., & Kabgani, S. (2014). Summarization strategy training and reading comprehension of Iranian ESP learners. *Procedia–Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *98*, 1959–1965.