



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



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***Exploring Problems of The Reading Comprehension
among 3rd Class Tertiary Level Students***

***(A Case Study of Shendi University, Faculty of Arts,
2024-2025)***

***A thesis Submitted in Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Master Degree in Applied Linguistics (ELT)***

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الآية

قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى :

لَا تَلَيْسَ الْبِرَّ أَنْ تُوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ قِبَلَ الْمَشْرِقِ وَالْمَغْرِبِ وَلَكِنَّ الْبِرَّ مَنْ آمَنَ
بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَالْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالْكِتَابِ وَالنَّبِيِّينَ وَآتَى الْمَالَ عَلَى حُبِّهِ ذَوِي
الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينَ وَابْنَ السَّبِيلِ وَالسَّائِلِينَ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَأَقَامَ
الصَّلَاةَ وَآتَى الزَّكَاةَ وَالْمُوفُونَ بِعَهْدِهِمْ إِذَا عَاهَدُوا^ط وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ
وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ^ق أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا^ط وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُتَّقُونَ

صدق الله العظيم

سورة البقرة الآية : 177

Dedication

This research is dedicated to the soul of my father, to my beloved mother, and the other members of my family, also to my future little own family.

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List of Abbreviations

The Abbreviations	The Full Term	Page
EFL	English as a Foreign Language	X
K-W-L strategy	what do you Know- what do you Want to know- what did you Learned	2
WH question	question words beginning with "wh-" such as "what," "were," "when," and others.	14
DRA	Directed Reading Activity	16
QAR	Question- Answer Relationships	17
DRTA	Directed Reading- Thinking Activity	17
CVC	consonant, vowel, consonant	21
USA	United States of America	33
UIN	Universitas Islam Negeri	34
SMPN	Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri	35
UK	United Kingdom	35
SPSS	Statistical Package of Social Sciences	38
SQ3R	Survey Question Read Recite Review	53
CR	Critical Reading	53
USSR	Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading	53

Abstract

The current study aims to investigate the reading comprehension difficulties that face EFL learners at university level. The main problem underlying this work is that many students are unable to continue to understand what they read using the target language. The main cause behind this problem is the students' lack of practicing reading comprehension inside and outside the lecture room. In addition to that, both test and questionnaire are administered, the questionnaire for English teachers and the test for the 3rd class students, at Shendi University, Department of English language, Faculty of Arts, to identify and recognize their attitudes about reading comprehension. Furthermore, the present study aims to suggest some strategies, techniques, procedures and ideas that may help students improve their reading comprehension skill.

The sample of this study consists of (15) English teachers at Shendi University, as well as (50) students from Faculty of Arts.

This study is based on the main assumption that problems of teaching strategies, and student's attention toward English play a major role in hindering students' comprehension. In addition to that, the researcher suggested many solutions for these problems. The researcher used two methods, the experimental analytical method, and descriptive analytical methods. The researcher deduced that the students of English at Shendi University face a problem in comprehension. The researcher recommends the students to practice the skill of reading comprehension, in addition to indicating their problems and solving them. Moreover, the researcher advises teachers to aid their students and motivate them to practice reading comprehension inside and outside the lecture room. Also, the research recommends that students should be provided with suitable and suitable environment that enables them to practice and reading comprehension very well.

مستخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة للتحقق من بعض مشكلات فهم القراءة التي تواجه دارسي اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية بالجامعات. وتكمن المشكلة الرئيسية وراء هذه الدراسة في أن العديد من الطلاب ليس لديهم القدرة على فهم ما يقرؤونه جيداً والسبب الرئيسي وراء كل هذا هو عدم ممارسة الطلاب للقراءة في بيئة الجامعة سواء كان ذلك من داخل القاعات أو خارجها.

ولأجل هذا قام الباحث بتصميم استبيان وأختبار. الأستبيان وجهه لأساتذة اللغة الانجليزية أما الأختبار فقد كان لطلاب الفصل الدراسي الثالث بكلية الآداب في جامعة شندي. وذلك للتعرف على مستواهم في مهارة الفهم القرائي مع اقتراح طرق وأساليب تساعد الطلاب على تطوير تلك المهارة.

تتكون عينة الدراسة من خمسة عشر أستاذاً بالجامعة بالإضافة إلى خمسين طالباً من كلية الآداب.

استندت هذه الدراسة على الفرضية الرئيسة القائلة أن مشكلات إستراتيجيات التدريس وأهتمام الطلاب باللغة لها دور كبير في إعاقه فهم الطلاب جيداً. إضافة لذلك اقترح الباحث عدة حلول لتلك المشاكل وإستخدم الباحث منهجين هما المنهج التحليلي التجريبي والمنهج التحليلي الوصفي. توصل الباحث إلى أن طلاب اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة شندي يواجهون مشكلة في فهم القراءة جيداً. ويوصي الدارس الطلاب بممارسة مهارة الفهم القرائي بالإضافة إلى تحديد مشاكلها ومعالجتها. كما يوصي الأساتذة بمساعدة طلابهم وتحفيزهم وحثهم بممارسة فهم القراءة داخل وخارج القاعة. ويوصي أيضاً بتوفير بيئة مريحة ومناسبة للطلاب.

Chapter One

Introduction

Chapter one

Overview

1.1 Study Background

Reading comprehension plays an important role in human life. Its role is realized as very substantial because it opens new knowledge for individual. The goal is to gain information from what the writer conveys through a text and uses this information to enrich his/her experiences and to improve his/her intellectual ability.

Reading comprehension is the process of constructing meaning by coordinating several complex processes that include word reading, word and world knowledge, and fluency (Harris and Graham, 2007). Readers comprehend a text when they can communicate with a text. They can draw the information from written text and interpret this information appropriately. In other words, reading comprehension is a kind of interaction between the readers and the text through written symbols in order to grasp the information from written texts.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

There are number of crucial issues concerning the teaching and learning of reading comprehension. First, some students always feel bored when they are studying reading because they do not know the technique to understand the reading material easily and they lack vocabulary. Secondly, students' poor knowledge becomes one problem that makes them difficult to comprehend the reading text. Thirdly, the teachers do not use background knowledge to activate their students' schemata about what they are going to learn; the teachers do not let their students to ask questions due to the use of traditional methods in which the teachers take the major role to explain everything; do what the student is supposed to do; while the student's role is restricted to only listening to what is inculcated to them by their teachers. In

this situation, the students are just listeners to what the teacher explains; they do not have a chance to articulate what they know about the topic, what they want to know about the topic or what they have learned about the topic. That situation makes the students misunderstand and fail to construct the meaning.

1.3 Significance of the Study

First, it is expected to be useful for development of theory and practice. Theoretically, it can give positive contribution for teaching in overcoming problem in reading comprehension through value finding in the area of teaching reading. Moreover, the students also use this feedback to another subject. Even, they probably also apply this strategy when reading whatever books in order to collect information and understand texts through reading comprehension.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

It is necessary to state clearly what the objectives of the study in relation to the problems posed. The objectives of the study are:

1. to find out whether the students' achievement in reading comprehension taught by using K-W-L strategy (what do you Know- what do you Want to know- what did you Learned) is significantly higher than that taught by using reciprocal teaching strategy.

2. to find out whether the students' achievement in reading comprehension with high self-efficacy is significantly higher than that low self-efficacy.

3. to find out whether there is significant interaction between teaching strategies and self-efficacy on the students' achievement in reading comprehension.

1.5 Questions of the Study

The suitable questions to be raised here are:

1. To what degree do 3rd class 2024-2025 have problems in reading comprehension?
2. What kind of difficulties do 3rd class students have in fully understanding what they are reading?
3. To what extent do the 3rd class are able to express verbally or in written communication what they have read?

1.6 Hypotheses of the Study

1. There is a huge problem in reading comprehension for 3rd class, that reflect in their examination degrees.
2. The 3rd class students face many challenging aspects in fully understanding what they read, for example, teaching strategies, teaching methods, and teachers' personality, and this is reflected on their linguistic and academic achievement and sometimes in their psychological problems.
3. Poor grammar, lack of vocabulary, and lack of self-confidence are factors facing the 3rd class students, that make it difficult to express what they have read verbally or in writing.

1.7 Methodology of the Study

The researcher will adopt two methods, the experimental analytical method, and descriptive analytical methods. The method of analysis is in terms of frequencies and percentages. The instrument is a diagnostic reading comprehension test and questionnaire. The sample of the study consists of 15 English teachers at Shendi University, and 50 students drawn from the population which represents 3rd class EFL learners in Faculty of Arts, in University of Shendi. This is with the academic year 2024-2025.

1.8 Limits of the Study

There are many strategies which are probably used by the teacher for improving the students' achievement in teaching reading comprehension but in this case, the scope of the study is limited on the effect of K-W-L strategy and reciprocal teaching strategy on the students' achievement in reading comprehension based on self-efficacy. It means that by knowing the level of the students' self-efficacy whether high or low self-efficacy, it is expected that this research will give the clear description on the effect of both teaching strategies and self-efficacy on the students' achievement in reading comprehension. The 3rd class in faculty of art at Shendi University students in the academic year 2024-2025.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Overview

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the general principles of Reading comprehension English which deals with courses and vocabulary. It deals with these terms in general to know if they are easy, enough or appropriate for students to comprehend.

2.2 Reading

Reading is the process of receiving interpreting information in language from via the medium of print (Urquhart and weirt, in William Grabe, 2009, :14).

Reading is practice of using text to create meaning (Johnson, 2008, :3).

Based on the definitions, the researcher concludes that reading must develop, so the reader can understand the meaning of passage and also catch the meaning of the text.

"Reading" is the process of looking at a series of written symbols and getting meaning from them. When we read, we use our eyes to receive written symbols (letters, punctuation marks and spaces) and we use our brain to convert them into words, sentences and paragraphs that communicate something to us.

Reading can be silent (in our head) or aloud (so that other people can hear).

Reading is a receptive skill - through it we receive information. But the complex process of reading also requires the skill of speaking, so that we can pronounce the words that we read. In this sense, reading is also a productive skill in that we are both receiving information and transmitting it (even if only to ourselves).

Do we need to read in order to speak English? The short answer is no. Some native speakers cannot read or write but they speak English fluently. On the other hand, reading is something that you can do on your own and that greatly broadens your vocabulary, thus helping you in speaking (and in listening and writing). Reading is therefore a highly valuable skill and activity, and it is recommended that English learners try to read as much as possible in English.

2.3 Types of Reading

There are some types of reading such as Intensive reading, Extensive Reading, Aloud Reading and Silent Reading.

a. Intensive reading is type of reading that focus on idiom and vocabulary that taught by the teacher in the classroom and that idiom and vocabulary is exist in poem, poetry, novel or other source. For example: The students focus on linguistic or semantic details of a reading and focus on structure details such as grammar.

b. Extensive Reading is types of reading involves learners reading texts for enjoyment and to develop general reading skills.

For example: The students read as many different kinds of books such as journals, newspapers and magazine as you can, especially for pleasure, and only needing a general understanding of the contents.

c. Aloud reading are reading by using loud voice and clearly. For example: Reading poetry, dialogue, and other type of text.

d. Silent reading activity is meant to train the students to read without voice in order that the students can concentrate their attention or thought to comprehend the texts. For example: The students reading a text by heart (Patel and Praveen, 2008).

2.4 The Purpose of Reading

Reading is an activity with a purpose. A person may read in order to gain information or verify existing knowledge. A person may also read for enjoyment, or to enhance knowledge of the language being read. Reading also plays an important role in civic life. Through reading, the individual keeps informed on the political, social, and economic and cultural problems of his country. Reading affects our attitudes, beliefs, standards, morals, judgments, and general behavior; it shapes our thinking and our actions. The purpose of reading is to correlate the ideas on the text to what you have already known. The reader must understand about the subject that he/she read to connect the ideas.

The category of purpose for reading includes are reading to search for simple information, reading to skim quickly, reading to learn from text, reading to integrate information, reading to write, reading to critique texts and reading for general comprehension (Grabe William and L. Fredrika, 2002).

It was stated by the teachers that the students with reading habits read the books with love and scrutiny, and they enjoyed talking about the book they read, whereas the students who did not have the habit of reading did it only as a duty. In addition, it was stated that the students who consider reading a book as a duty focus on finishing the book as soon as possible instead of understanding what they read.

"I think the readings of my students who enjoy reading are qualified. They examine what they read, think about what they want to be told in the book, and get excited about it. Students who do not have the habit of reading or do not like to read do not read to understand the book, but to finish the book as soon as possible."(Yasemin).

2.4.1 Reading to Search for Simple Information

Reading to search for simple information is a common reading ability, though some researchers see it as a relatively independent cognitive process.

It is used so often in reading tasks that is probably best seen as type of reading ability.

2.4.2. Reading to Skim Quickly

Reading to skim quickly is a common part of many readings task and a useful skill. It involves, in essence, a combination of strategies for guessing where important might be in the text, and then using basic reading comprehension skills on those segments of the text until a general idea is formed.

2.4.3 Reading to Learn from Text

Reading to learn typically occurs in academic and professional contexts in which a person needs to learn a considerable amount of information from a text, it requires abilities to remember main ideas, recognize and build rhetorical frames and link the text to the reader base.

2.4.4 Reading to Integrate Information

Reading to integrate information requires additional decision about the relative importance of complementary, mutually supporting or conflicting information and likely restructuring of a rhetorical frame to accommodate information from multiple sources.

2.4.5 Reading to Write and Reading to Critique Texts

Reading to write and reading to critique texts may be task variants of reading to integrate information. Both require abilities to compose, select, and critique information from a text.

2.4.6 Reading for General Comprehension

Reading for general comprehension when accomplished by a skilled fluent reader, require very rapid and automatic processing of words, strong skills in forming a general meaning representation of main idea, and efficient coordination of many processes under very limited time constraint.

Purposes of reading are not only for students, but also the people in general. They must read extensively to get information and knowledge of social living. It can help a person keeps informed on the social, political, and economical problems of his country.

2.5 Reading Techniques

There are many techniques that we can use to make our reading easy.

Reading can help much more if we can read well. The techniques are:

2.5.1 Scanning is a technique you often use when looking up a word in the telephone book or dictionary. You search for key words or ideas.

Steps in Scanning are:

- a) State the specific information you are looking for.
- b) Try to anticipate how the answer will appear and what clues you might use to help you locate the answer. For example, if you were looking for a certain date, you would quickly read the paragraph looking only for numbers.
- c) Use headings and any other aids that will help you identify which sections might contain the information you are looking for.
- d) Selectively read and skip through sections of the passage.

2.5.2 Skimming is technique used to quickly the main ideas of the text.

Steps in skimming are:

- a) Read the title.
- b) Read the introduction or the first paragraph.
- c) Read the first sentence of every other paragraph.
- d) Read any headings and sub-headings.
- e) Read the summary or last paragraph (mikulecky and Jeffries, in Rahmad, 2008).

2.6 Theoretical Models of Reading Process

Three views of reading processes are bottom up, top down, and interactive views.

2.6.1 Bottom Up

Simply stated, the bottom view of reading focuses on text-based processing as t The interactive view of reading focuses on the active constructive nature of reading as the major instructional concern of the teachers. The reader is viewed as using reader based (top down) processing to form a model of meaning. Although he is active, his guesses are formed based on what the text says and what he already knows about this information; that is reading is viewed as constructing meaning. This is viewed as an interactive process where the reader strategically shifts between the text and what he already knows to construct his response.

he majors instructional concern of teachers. Learning to read is viewed as a series of association or sub-skills that are reinforced until they become automatic. Letters are linked to form words, words are linked to form sentences, and sentences linked to form ideas; that is, the part of reading are put together to form the whole. This is viewed as a bottom-up processing text shapes the learner's response.

2.6.2 Top Down

Top-down view of reading focuses on the reader. In this reading process, the reader is viewed as an active the problem solver who guesses what the author is saying. Then he samples textual cues; that is reading is viewed as negotiating meaning between an author and a reader. This is viewed as top-down process, in which the readers idea creates his response.

2.6.3 Interactive

The interactive view of reading focuses on the active constructive nature of reading as the major instructional concern of the teachers. The reader

is viewed as using reader based (top down) processing to form a model of meaning. Although he is active, his guesses are formed based on what the text says and what he already knows about this information; that is reading is viewed as constructing meaning. This is viewed as an interactive process where the reader strategically shifts between the text and what he already knows to construct his response (Barbara, in utomo, 2008).

2.7 Teaching

Teaching is guiding and facilities of learning, enabling the learner to learn, setting the condition for learning. It means that the Teaching reading is help the students to read English fluently in their class. Furthermore, teacher will recognize it during teaching. He or she needs to utilize kind of terms such as approaches, method, or techniques in teaching learning process (Brown, 2007, :8).

Teaching cannot be separated from learning because teaching is leading and facilitating learning, enabling the learners to learn, managing the condition for learning. Teacher's understanding of how learners learn will determine their philosophy of education, the teaching style, the approach, methods and classroom techniques (Brown, 2006, :8).

Teaching becomes the interaction between teacher and students. Teaching learning process must be an effective where the teacher is demanded to utilize the approach, method, or appropriate techniques used in teaching and learning process.

2.8 Teaching Reading

As one of language skills, reading has an important role. For example: nowadays, there are a lot of magazines, and internet, we can find some articles in the form of English too.

Sometimes we find the reading text easier to understand is difficult to judge, since our level of English is obviously too high for this example; but

for the leader, the purpose could probably have been easier simply because of the preparation of topic and vocabulary which was provided through some questions related to text (Ur, 2009).

It has been explained above that reading is a complex process, it is not only to read the text but the reader must be able to comprehend the writer's message so the reader can express their idea, infer conclusion in order to obtain information. Regarding the important of reading, the teaching of reading should be started as early as possible.

A major aim in the teaching of reading is to get students use their knowledge to help them with their comprehension of reading text.

There are basic steps to teach reading for the purpose to develop students' comprehension:

- a) Activate or develop background knowledge necessary for understanding the text.
- b) Set purpose for reading (identify information to be searched for question to be answered, prediction to be verified).
- c) Have students read for these purposes.
- d) Have students how in some way (by answering question, summarizing, reading relevant information aloud) whether they have met the purposes.
- e) Give students feedback about their comprehension performance (Cunningham, et. al., in Fahimsyah, 2008).

When we look at the activities carried out by the teachers to help students gain reading habits, it is evident that they created a library in the classroom and took into account the characteristics of the students while creating the library. On the other hand, they mentioned that they also read during the reading activity to provide a role model in gaining reading habits and that they differentiated the reading environment.

"Yes, there is. First of all, we created a classroom library with the students in line with the age and interests of my students. We changed the books we read, and I gave interesting little clues about the book's content so that students were curious and excited about the events in the new books. While the children are reading, I do some reading as well". (Yasemin)

2.9 Stages of Teaching Reading

In teaching reading, there are number of steps or stages which can be applied by the teacher to achieve the objectives stated and to make the students effective and skilled reader. There are three stages of teaching reading: Pre-Reading, Whilst-Reading, Post-Reading.

2.9.1 Pre-Reading

This reading stages is intended to arouse the students' interest. The students can answer all the teacher question. Pre-reading is based on the students' experience or knowledge. Pre-reading can be done by some activities, those are:

- a. Using picture. It means that a teacher will give a picture to get response of the students about the topic of reading. In this case, the students will try to talk about the essence of the picture that the teacher gives, and the students will answer some questions that have relation with the picture.
- b. Completing the title. After determining the picture, the teacher will ask the students what the possible title for the picture and the students is will answer it.

2.9.2 Whilst-Reading

During the activity, the teacher gives the task before the students read the text. It is called "surface problem". It can be done with several activities, those are:

- a. Asking simple wh-question (factual), not yes-no question.
- b. Completing a table.
- c. Making a list.

In this step, the students read the text quickly and do the task individually, while the teacher checks them. After finishing the surface problem activities, the teacher provides the tasks which are given after the students read the text. It is called “deep problem” it can be done by:

- a. Giving more difficult WH-question.
- b. Giving true or false statement with reason.
- c. Giving problem with new words by deducting the meaning from the context.

2.9.3 Post-Reading

Post-Reading is a final activity that the students must communicate in English. It also meant to develop the students’ understanding. This activity can be done by:

- a. Retelling the content of reading text. In this case, the teacher is going to know the student’s preparation in mastering reading text. The students retell the content in their own words.
- b. Summarizing the content. It can be done by using the key word to summarize the content of text.
- c. Giving other suitable communicative activity in the form of jumble sentences. In this case, the students will give a response to the problem found in the text. During this activity, the students do the task given by the teacher, while the teacher monitors and check the whole groups.

The teacher should be certain that the class clearly knows about the objectives in reading class. The objectives or aim must be placed where it can be seen by all the students all times. It can be put on the poster or a chart.

2.10 Role of the Teacher

Teacher can apply many roles in teaching learning process. Just as parents are called upon to be many things to their children, teachers cannot be satisfied with only one role.

The roles of teacher classified as follows:

a. The teacher as controller

The teacher should control and know what students such as speaks and language that students use. Teacher also gives chance to the students when they should speak, and teacher should know what students do is related to instruction or not.

b. The teacher as a director

Teacher should make instructions that must be follow by the students such as a teacher wants to conduct his or her class becomes a drama class.

c. The teacher as a manager

Teacher should have plan lessons, modules and courses and arrange the time or duration in teaching and learning process.

d. The teacher as a facilitator

Teacher should be ready to facilitate the source of learn to achieve the goal in teaching and learning activities such as magazine, newspaper.

e. The teacher as a resource

The teacher should ready as resources for the students when the students' needs information (Rebacca Oford et. al., in Brown, 2001).

2.11 Techniques of Teaching Reading

Techniques are the ways and means adopted by the teacher to direct the learners' activities toward an objective.

In teaching and learning process, a teacher should use various techniques to make the students more understand about the material (Gerlac, Ely, and Melnick, in Ranardo).

Reading is more complex than other language skills. After knowing how important the reading, the English teacher must be able to encourage their students to make reading as their habit and make them accustomed to reading. The techniques used by the teacher are one factor that may determine the success of instruction.

There are some common applied techniques in teaching reading. The techniques are:

- Cloze Instruction

The instructional cloze is a technique that develops comprehension by deleting target words from a text. This encourages the students to think about what word would make sense in the sentence and in the context of the entire story. For example: Mrs. Lee lives in the city. She does not live in the ____1____. Every day she goes to the ____2____. She buys milk and fresh bread ____3____ for the children. She does not go ____4____ the bus. She drives a car (Walker, in Ranardo).

Another method that teachers use to develop reading habits is the reward system. Teachers stated that they give awards to students with various activities according to the number of books they read.

“We are doing a Türkiye map painting activity to determine the number of books students read.

We choose a “bookworm” of the month and post his/her photo in the corner of the classroom.” (Cansu).

2.11.1 Directed Reading Activity (DRA)

A direct reading activity (DRA) is an instructional format for teaching reading where the teacher assumes the major instructional role. He develops background knowledge, introduces new words, and gives the students a purpose for reading. Then he directs the discussion with questions to develop reading comprehension. Finally, he reinforces and extends the skills and knowledge develops in the story. For example: The teacher introduces the words "industry" and "economy" to students. For each word, the teacher writes a sentence from the text that includes the word. The teacher includes enough surrounding sentences so that students have sufficient context to figure out what the word might mean.

2.11.2 Question- Answer Relationships (QAR)

A question-answer relationship (QAR) is a technique used to identify the type of response necessary to answer the question. Questions are the most prevalent means of evaluating reading comprehension; therefore, knowledge about source of information required to answer the questions facilitates comprehension and increases a student's ability to participate in teacher directed discussion. In this example, the teacher provides a question for students to practice answering individually.

2.11.3 Directed Reading- Thinking Activity (DRTA)

Direct reading thinking activity is an instructional format for teaching reading that includes these stages: readiness for reading, activate reading, and reacting to the story.

2.11.4 Readers Theatre

Readers Theater is a dramatic interpretation of a play script through oral interpretive reading. The story, theme and character development are conveyed through intonation, inflection, and fluency of oral reading. For example: the students play drama.

2.11.5 Repeated Reading

Repeated reading is the oral rereading of a self-selected passage until accuracy and speed are fluent and represent the natural flow of language. For example: the students read the text several times for understand the reading.

2.11.6 Summarization

Summarization teaches the student how to write summaries of what he reads. He is shown how to delete unimportant information, group similar ideas decide on or invent topic sentences, and list supporting details. Th. For example: The students write in a short paragraph the most important information.

2.11.7 Word Cards

The word cards technique is technique that can be used to develop the imagination and creativity of students in order to students are able to think critically. Because in this technique the students are required to be more creative and develop their thinking. These words are placed on individual cards so that they may be used to review and reinforce a recognition vocabulary.

The teacher might evaluate himself by asking the students about his techniques. Besides, the teacher is always trying to improve his techniques become more creative and fun, it can make the student easy to understand about the material.

2.12 Comprehension

Is the reason for reading. If readers can read the words but do not understand or connect to what they are reading, they are not really reading. Good readers are both purposeful and active, and have the skills to absorb what they read, analyze it, make sense of it, and make it their own.

2.13 Reading Comprehension

is the ability to process text, **UNDERSTAND** its meaning, and to integrate with what the reader already knows. Fundamental skills required in efficient reading comprehension are knowing meaning of words, ability to understand meaning of a word from discourse context, ability to follow organization of passage and to identify antecedents and references in it, ability to draw inferences from a passage about its contents, ability to identify the main thought of a passage, ability to answer questions answered in a passage, ability to recognize the **LITERARY DEVICES** or propositional structures used in a passage and determine its **TONE**, to understand the situational mood (agents, objects, temporal and spatial reference points, casual and intentional inflections, etc.) conveyed for assertions, questioning, commanding,

refraining etc. and finally ability to determine writer's purpose, intent and point of view, and draw inferences about the writer (discourse-semantics). Dewitz, Jones, and Leahy conducted an analysis on the five core programs mentioned above and their analysis yielded several problems:

"First, the comprehension skills and strategies curricula are wide but not terribly deep. The structure of the curricula is often incoherent so that students and teachers do not know how skills and strategies relate to one another or how acquiring these sets of skills leads to becoming a better reader. Core programs should be educative for teachers and students, helping both understand how readers develop. Core programs do not provide enough practice to ensure that any given skill will be learned, and this probably jeopardizes the weakest readers in the room. Finally, the core programs do not provide sufficient support or scaffolding so that students can learn to use these skills on their own". (Dewitz, Jones, & Leahy, 2009, p. 121).

The teachers stated that students should have sufficient vocabulary to understand the books they read, make inferences from what they read, and express their inferences. Therefore, it is clear that students must have sufficient cognitive development and vocabulary to understand what they read. The importance of family support for the development of these skills was emphasized.

"The cognitive development of the child is significant. For the child to understand what he reads, he must have a certain vocabulary and be able to make inferences and summarize them.

Activities with this purpose can support this process. I think it is important that the parents accompany the child's reading. It is essential to ask the child questions about the book and the family to practice with the child on this subject. In this way, the child will read more guided towards understanding." (Fatih).

2.14 Reading is fundamentally important for success

It opens the door to personal freedom or shuts the door to opportunity. Learning to read is a means to an end. If children have difficulty learning to read early, how can they be expected to excel in other subjects as well? The

best prevention of reading difficulties, therefore, is early intervention strategies at the pre- school/kindergarten level. Instead of heated debates on which approach is best suited for early reading success, educators should be discussing the most efficient method(s) that produces the best results (DeMoulin & Loye, 1999, p.43).

In this review of related literature, the four main topics that will be discussed are reading programs in the elementary schools, reading programs in the middle schools, vocabulary development in students, and diverse classrooms.

2.15 Reading Programs in the Elementary Schools

The reality is there is no one reading program that is the best. Children learn to read in different ways and differ in the type of instruction they need to become proficient readers. The most important concept is that all children are taught by a research-based method of reading instruction that introduces them to reading. Once children are taught by these methods, the instructor will be able to identify the method of reading instruction the child needs for greater success (Duffy, et. al., 2003).

Teachers have stated that sound-based letter teaching in elementary schools negatively affects students' reading comprehension skills. As the reason for this situation, the teachers stated that the students missed the meaning of the text or sentence because they only focused on reading the letter or word.

"Children are quick to read using the sound-based letter method, but it takes time to see the whole as we move from part to whole. Reading comprehension is meaningful when we see the whole, so it affects children's reading comprehension and can prolong the process of acquiring reading habits." (Yasemin).

"I think that the sound-based sentence method delays the development of reading comprehension skills. These skills are acquired later, especially considering sense-making issues and being aware of the content." (Elif).

Two major types of reading instruction used in elementary schools are direct phonics instruction and whole language instruction.

Direct instruction is defined as intense, direct and explicit instruction in reading. The direct instruction model promotes mastery of meaningful reading through explicit teaching. Direct instruction involves an emphasis on fast-paced, scripted, well-sequenced, rule-based and highly focused lessons. Students in direct instruction classes are usually instructed in small groups and given several opportunities to respond in unison and individually, with immediate feedback using a specific correction procedure. Teachers using direct instruction generally employ a three-step instructional sequence. They model (provide the correct response), lead (have the student say the correct answer with the teacher), test (give immediate feedback and probe on the task initially attempted (Shippen, et. al., 2005, p. 176).

In her article, *Phuss Over Phonics*, Mary Jalongo defines phonics as "direct instruction on the sounds of language and the symbols (letters) that correspond to those sounds" (1998, p. 1).

Phonics provides a foundation for students to learn to read, because once a child learns the relationship between letters and sounds in "alphabetic code, he or she can read by sounding out each of the words - a process called decoding" (DeMoulin & Loye, 1999, p. 40). "Advocates of direct phonics instruction will tell you that phonics is a key, a way to "break the code" of language" (Jalongo, 1998, p. 3).

Typically, children learn phonics in the very early stages of reading. They begin by learning the letter sounds of the alphabet and then they learn to blend the sounds together to make very simple CVC (consonant, vowel, consonant) words. Once these skills are mastered, students learn to blend consonant letters together to make larger words. A positive outcome often seen in phonics instruction is the ability for students to sound out many words, even long and difficult words can be sounded out by very young children.

However, on the flip side, learning to read exclusively through phonics can become extremely boring and repetitive. The downfall with phonics is that it can become a kill-and-drill method where children become robotic in their reading approach (Demoulin & Love, 1999).

Phonics has been the subject of debate the past several years. Early reading instructors insisted on the use of phonics independent from any other method. A problem discovered with this intense instruction is that children can amazingly sound out long difficult words but are unable to comprehend what the written text is about. Also, direct phonics instruction will not lead to complete spelling accuracy as many of its proponents contend. For example, a second-grade student observed by Jalongo spelled words phonetically because he has been in this method. In his writing he wrote "flicewatur" instead of "flyswatter" (1998, p. 3).

In past direct phonics instruction first and second grade classrooms, time was spent solely on "sounding out" words. By the time the students were in third and fourth grades they had difficulty with reading comprehension because their focus for reading was sounding out the words and not the comprehension of the text. It is comprehension, not word-calling that defines the complex process of learning to read (Jalongo, 1998).

The whole language method was quite popular in the 1980s. There seems to be a pendulum-effect attitude in the field of education that sways from one extreme to the other whenever a new teaching method is introduced. During the 1970s, direct phonics was the preferred method. However, national and state reports indicated that most elementary school children were not reading at basic levels. In response to this reading crisis, the whole-language concept caught on during the 1980s and the direct phonics instruction was considered defunct. Perhaps predictably, the lack of rousing success with this new approach caused some educators to call for a return to the older, "better" ways. In the 1990s the pendulum in the process of swinging back was

intercepted, before it went to the extreme of "all phonics," by a balanced approach to reading instruction. Even though there has been an increased emphasis on explicit phonics in reading instruction in recent years, research continues to indicate the benefits of a balanced approach to reading instruction (Farstrup & Samuels 2002; Guthrie, Schafer & Huang, 2001; as cited by Smith, 2003a p. 3).

Whole language is another method used to teach reading to young children.

"Whole language represents the skilled stage of reading, given its reliance on the graphic word, whereas phonics represents the unskilled stage owing to its emphasis on the intermediary role of phonological processing in word recognition" (Post, 2004, p. 99).

Using the whole language method is like teaching from a basal textbook. The focus is to teach students to become competent in reading (fluency and comprehension) and to be able to communicate what they have read through their personal ideas, both orally and in written form.

When using whole language, reading becomes part of the Language Arts area in the curriculum. This method exposes students to many kinds of texts and genres of literature. Students use prior knowledge and visual skills to help them read the text. Students are also introduced to different methods of communication by use of writing skills. In the article Building a Whole Language Writing Program authors Jennifer Porcaro and Karen Gudeman Johnson shadow a third-grade teacher who implements the whole language method and observe a writing workshop that is based on the whole language approach. "The theory behind the program is that, in order to look more critically at their own work, children must have a working knowledge of the writing process they use when writing"(Porcaro & Johnson, 2003, p. 75).

2.16 Reading Programs in the Middle Schools

Many teachers at the middle school level implement the use of basal textbooks, trade books and language experience to teach reading along with direct phonics and whole language instruction.

Throughout the years, these four major approaches-phonics, basal, trade books and language experience have waxed and waned in popularity. Generally, once one approach has dominated long enough for its shortcomings to be recognized, it is replaced by a different approach with different shortcomings. The search for which of these methods is best has led educators to conclude that each method has undeniable strengths (Foertsch, 2003, p.10).

Foertsch (2003) reports indicate that the use of trade books goes hand in hand with whole language. In the late 1980s trade books became part of the larger whole language movement. In this approach to teaching reading, students choose a trade book they want to read independently and confer with the teacher when they need individual help. This is also known as individualized reading. Trade books can also be used in a whole class setting using one title. During this approach, students stay in the same place throughout the book. This pacing can allow for group reading and partner reading along with group activities throughout the book. The use of trade books is often implemented in addition to other reading programs (Ediger, 2002).

Ediger (2002) identifies that the use of basal texts in classrooms has been a popular method in teaching reading. This is in part because they include a teacher's manual that defines objectives, lesson ideas and assessment opportunities, making teaching easier, especially for new teachers. This is a very flexible method for teachers because the teacher's manual can be used in toto or in part as the teacher chooses. Basal texts are carefully written for each grade level by a team of reading specialists and usually come with workbooks that focus on comprehension, English skills, writing skills and other

opportunities related to reading. In *The Psychology of Reading Instruction*, Ediger states, "the content may become too easy which can make for boredom or a lack of interest, nor should it be too complex making for pupil failure" (2002, p. 3).

This identifies downfall of using basal texts, because students learn at different paces.

The final method of reading instruction is language experience discussed by Foertsch. "This approach is based on the premise that the easiest material for children to read is their own writing and that of their classmates. The stories that children themselves compose, orally or in writing, are the primary reading materials" (2003, p. 10).

This method has been used more widely in Australia and other countries but appeared in the United States in the late 1980s.

It is evident that there are many different reading programs available to teach children to read. It is also evident that there is not "one" best program to use because individuals integrate information differently using each method.

2.17 Vocabulary Development in Students

There are important influences that lead to the development of vocabulary knowledge in students. Two major influences that affect vocabulary development are home influences, and school instruction.

As cited in Biemiller (2003), Hart and Risley reported that children of working-class parents (who interact with their children as much as parents of advantaged families) have vocabulary levels comparable to those from advantaged families. Additionally, the author went on to say that children who spent more one-on-one time with adults developed a larger vocabulary than those who had limited contact.

Author Carl B. Smith states, "Most educators think of vocabulary as one skill taught in many different ways. However, there are many different

levels of vocabulary proficiency that a student must work through" (2003b, p. 2).

The four levels of vocabulary proficiency identified are listening to vocabulary (words whose meanings we recognize when we hear them), reading vocabulary (words whose meanings we recognize when we encounter them in our reading), writing vocabulary (words we know well enough that we can use them in our writing) and speaking vocabulary (words we use in our speaking). Students do not necessarily have all levels mastered just because they have one mastered. The levels tend to lead from one to the other in a progressing order, with listening being the lowest and writing the highest.

As students attempt to increase their vocabulary, there are many different teaching methods to use. Just as in teaching reading, there is not one perfect method to use with all students.

Smith (2003b) identifies three factors that affect the methods of teaching.

Vocabulary as:

- Active processing: when students are doing something with a word more than just parroting the definition-they are more likely to remember that word.
- Different contexts: we can learn much about a word's meaning through different contexts in which it is used. And the more different contexts we encounter with that word, the more flexible we become with that word and its meaning and the more likely it is that we will remember it.
- Using several techniques for reviewing that word instead of only one: Just as learners acquire vocabulary more readily through encountering words in varying contexts, varying kinds of review activities apparently enhance vocabulary development. Each review activity reveals a word and its meaning in a different way, offering its own perspective on the word and its meaning (p.2-3).

In the article *Drama Activities that Promote and Extend Your Students' Vocabulary Proficiency* the author identifies ideas to help students learn and practice vocabulary. "Using drama activities to teach target vocabulary words can be an effective and motivating instructional practice for all students, especially those with learning problems" (Alber & Foil, 2003, p.1).

There are endless ways to teach and practice vocabulary. Teachers of vocabulary need to identify research-based methods and determine which method works best for the students in his/her class. The scale of methods used to teach and practice vocabulary ranges from drill and practice to multiple choices of games. Any of these methods can be used on an individual basis or with partners or groups.

2.18 Teaching in Diverse Classrooms

"The premise - one teaching and learning approach fits all-is not working for a growing number of student populations. Twenty-first century classrooms challenge traditional teacher-centered curriculum to meet the increasingly diverse needs of students and make the required increases in achievement gains"(Brown, 2003, p. 49).

This section focuses on teacher-centered learning vs. learner-centered learning. It will also focus on acknowledging students sociocultural and providing these students recommendations for reading comprehension.

In the article *From Teacher-Centered to Learner-Centered Curriculum: Improving Learning in Diverse Classrooms*, author Kathy Laboard Brown discusses the difference between teacher-centered learning and learner-centered learning in diverse classrooms.

Additionally, Brown states that the characteristics of the teacher-centered approach are associated primarily with the transmission of knowledge. Primarily, the achievement of the students is at the forefront of a teacher-centered curriculum. Teachers are pressured to meet accountability standards, and often sacrifice the needs of the students to guarantee exposure

to the standards. Another characteristic of a teacher- centered approach is to focus on content more than on student processing. Teachers focus on creating relationships with students that are fixed in intellectual explorations of selected material. The control for learning is basically held in the hands of the teacher where the teacher uses personal knowledge to help the learners make connections. The effort to get to know the learner and how they process information is secondary. Direct instruction is the predominant teaching technique used in teacher-centered learning (2003).

Brown identifies the characteristics of the learner-centered approach as quite contradictory to those of the teacher-centered approach. Learner-centered approach is defined as "a foundation for clarifying what is needed to create positive learning contexts to increase the likelihood that more students will experience success"(McCombs, 1997 as cited by Brown, 2003, p. 50).

The focus of the learner-centered approach is on individual learners" "heredity, experiences, perspectives, backgrounds, talents, interests, capacities, and needs" (Brown, 2003, p. 50).

In the learner-centered approach the learning characteristics of all learners are put under a microscope, studied, identified, and individualized. There is a nominal amount of direct instruction used in the learner- centered approach to teaching.

Differentiated instruction meets the needs of diverse student populations by coupling student needs with a focus on content, process, and learning profiles. With the learner-centered approach, teachers bring command of content knowledge but design flexibility for learners to construct their learning. Learner's needs and characteristics take precedence over knowledge of facts and skills (Brown, 2003, p. 52).

As identified, there are different teaching strategies that can be implemented. This leads to the discussion of reading comprehension in sociocultural diverse classrooms and how to improve in this area. To obtain

the most out of each student in the area of reading comprehension professional educators need to respond flexibly to each situation and each student's abilities within a particular text. Author Dawnene Hammerberg (2004) suggests the following recommendations for teachers of socioculturally diverse classrooms:

2.18.1 Know, respect, and empower your students

This requires that teachers view their students as capable of understanding themselves and their words in multiple ways. It entails building an atmosphere of respect, support, and academic achievement, coupled with the use of texts and reading for culturally relevant purposes.

2.18.2 Explain what resources or knowledge a student might have to draw upon to understand a particular text

In a sociocultural approach, we can overtly explain to children that they have knowledge resources to draw upon (e.g., skills and abilities) and identify resources (e.g., roles in the classroom, social ways of being, cultural identities).

2.18.3 Know that learning occurs through social interaction - skills and techniques are not enough

Encourage conversations and connections. Not only should we help children make connections to the known and use what they know to support further learning, but we should also encourage them to use what they know to answer questions.

2.18.4 Open up educational notions of text

We need more than using comprehension strategies in and of themselves to regurgitate an author's meaning. We need include discussion about the multiple answers, perspectives, and interpretations possible. Interactive discussion is a key element, so that students can learn to comprehend beyond decoding the words. Opening educational notions of text also allows us to

think in terms of critical literacy or literacy for social change, because the author's meaning is situated in the readers' heads in such a way that the message can be questioned, critiqued, and used in socially empowered ways (p. 655).

These recommendations have been suggested for sociocultural diverse classrooms, but they apply to all classrooms. Following these recommendations could lead to more success in the area of reading comprehension, especially in diverse classrooms (Hammerberg, 2004).

In conclusion, the areas discussed in the review of related literature were reading programs at the elementary level, reading programs and the middle school level, vocabulary development and teaching in diverse classrooms.

2.18.5 Ivy & Fisher (2005) state the following:

Educators are flooding the professional learning community with requests for strategies that work to improve reading comprehension in the upper elementary and secondary grades. In these achievement-driven times, we want to know what works best to raise test scores, improve comprehension, and motivate students to read. The answers are not simple for most students, particularly for older students still learning about literacy. Getting to the bottom of older readers' comprehension and motivation difficulties requires careful, ongoing assessment of instructional practices and students' literacy needs (p.9).

2.19 Vocabulary and Knowledge Building Support Reading Comprehension Development

"Not Just a Hole in the Ground" contains many words that are likely to be in some third graders' working vocabulary and not others', such as complex, entrance, hind, roam, and system. As one might guess, research has found that teaching students the meanings of words in text supports their comprehension of that text, although there is little evidence that doing so

improves comprehension overall (Wright & Cervetti, 2017). Being able to figure out the likely meanings of words one encounters in text and attend to vocabulary-building opportunities the author offers (e.g., “hibernates (sleeps through the winter)” in “Not Just a Hole in the Ground”) is also supportive of comprehension.

The likelihood that a student knows the words in the article about woodchucks is likely affected by how much the student knows about other wild animals. For example, a student who has learned a lot about wild animals is more likely to know the words enemies, burrows, and hibernates. For that and other reasons, a student who knows more about wild animals is likely to be able to comprehend the article better. For many decades, research has established that one’s knowledge, including one’s academic content knowledge and the cultural knowledge developed through day-to-day activities in one’s family and community, affects one’s reading comprehension (e.g., Hwang & Duke, 2020; Pritchard, 1990).

Surprisingly little research has focused on the impact of content instruction on reading comprehension. However, research to date has suggested positive effects of content knowledge building on comprehension development (e.g., Cabell & Hwang, 2020; Cervetti, Wright, & Hwang, 2016; Connor et al., 2017, although this study incorporated some strategy instruction as well). Further, as explained in the next section, many effective approaches to comprehension strategy instruction are set in the context of content knowledge building, suggesting the efficacy, and perhaps synergy, of simultaneously building content knowledge and improving students’ metacognition.

2.20 Previous Studies

2.20.1 Local studies

(a) Mohammed Taha and Prof. Alhameem, 2019. University of Al-Zaeim Al-Azhari, Sudan. Study title “Reading Comprehension Difficulties Faced by Sudanese School Learner”.

The study intends to investigate the reading problems encountered by Sudanese EFL secondary school learners in reading texts and comprehension.

The data gathering tools was a questionnaire.

The most important results could become included that Sudanese secondary school students face problems in reading and answering reading comprehension questions.

Likewise, the present study revealed difficulties of reading comprehension among 3rd class tertiary level students at Shendi University, Faculty of Arts.

(b) Sid-Ahmed Osman Sid-Ahmed Al-khapeir, 2014. University of Nile Valley, Sudan. Study title “Overcoming the Difficulties of Learning Reading Comprehension”.

The study aimed to look for and trace back the reasons of the difficulties of learning reading comprehension and the impact of this on student` reading abilities as well as providing some strategies that can help affected students.

The data gathering tools was a questionnaire.

The researcher found out that most of students confront difficulties because of non-phonemic awareness as well as the lack of alphabetic knowledge.

Similarly, the present study stressed the same point and nearly came up with the same results.

(c) Um Al-Hussein Adam Mohammed, 2013. University of Al-Gazira, Sudan. Study title “Utilizing Multiple Intelligence Theory in Teaching Reading Comprehension to Secondary School Students”.

The study aimed at detecting the difficulties that hinder the students reading comprehension as well as to investigate the effect of teaching strategy based on the theory of multiple intelligence for Howard gardener on the Sudanese secondary school students.

The data gathering tools was a questionnaire.

The most important results could become included that students are of different intelligences, the syllabus, teacher`s book, teacher`s performance and teaching strategies affect student`s performance in reading comprehension.

As well, the present study examined the importance of teaching strategies for reading comprehension among 3rd class tertiary level students at Shendi University, Faculty of Arts.

2.20.2 International studies

(a) Noura M.A Tomize, 2013. University of Hebron, Palestine. Study title “Investigating the impact of Extensive Reading on Reading Comprehension”.

The study examines the impact of integrating extensive reading activities within EFL context on learner`s attitudes towards reading.

The data gathering tools was a questionnaire.

The researcher finds out that there were significant differences between the control and the two experimental groups in reading comprehension level and attitude towards reading.

Similarly, the present study revealed to the poor vocabulary problems among 3rd class tertiary level students at Shendi University, Faculty of Arts.

(b) Christina Yvonne Contreras, 2019. University of California State, USA. Study title “Reading Comprehension in the After School Program”.

The study was conducted as an experimental pilot to evaluate a new reading comprehension curriculum, for students in a local after school program.

The data was calculated statistically.

The most important results could become included that the students exhibited less negativity towards the concept of reading, improve their vocabulary, encompassed the value of reading as fun and/or interesting.

likewise, the current study discussed problems such as lack of self-confidence and fear of the concept of reading among in 3rd class tertiary level students at Shendi University, Faculty of Arts.

(c) Nicole Richardson, 2010. University of St. John Fisher, USA. Study title “Guided Reading Strategies for Reading Comprehension”.

The purpose of this action research was to discover which guided reading strategies should be implemented to help develop comprehension skills.

There were multiple forms of data collected throughout this study.

The multiple data sources used throughout this action research have revealed three consistent themes that have been successful in supporting reading comprehension. The three themes are the following: the positive impact of pre-reading strategies on comprehension, how during-reading strategies (which are most often self-implemented) help with comprehension by forcing the student to slow down and focus on the text, and attitudes about reading.

As well, the current study highlighted the reading strategies for 3rd class tertiary level students at Shendi University, Faculty of Arts.

(d) Aida, Fitria, and Faiqah Mahmudah, 2022. University of UIN Sulthan Thaha Saifuddin Jambi, Indonesia. Study title “Students’ Difficulties on Reading Comprehension”.

This research aimed to analyze students' difficulties in reading comprehension at SMPN 22 Jambi.

The technique of data collection used in this research is observation and interviews.

The results of this study indicate that the difficulties faced by class VIII G students in reading comprehension are four difficulties. Firstly, students have difficulty in understanding the complexity of grammar. Secondly, the students have difficulty in knowing certain vocabulary when understanding reading. Thirdly, students have difficulty in using reading strategies, and the last one the students have difficulty in concentration.

Similarly, the present study revealed grammar, vocabulary and reading strategies problems among 3rd class tertiary level students at Shendi University, Faculty of Arts.

(e) Margaret Middleton, 2011. University of Ohio State, UK. Study title “Reading Motivation and Reading Comprehension”.

The main purpose of this study was to examine the multivariate relationship between reading motivation and reading comprehension.

The data was calculated statistically.

Results suggested statistically significant genetic and nonshared environmental contributions to the overlap between reading motivation and reading comprehension.

The current study also addressed some teaching strategies, such as; motivations for reading comprehension among 3rd class tertiary level students at Shendi University, Faculty of Arts.

(f) Tasneem Abu Abeeleh, 2021. University of Ajloun National, Jordan. Study title “Reading Comprehension Problems Encountered by EFL Students”.

This research aimed at investigating the reading comprehension problems encountered by students of Ajloun National University, and also

aims to provide more insight into the factors affecting the students' reading comprehension.

The data gathering tools was a questionnaire.

The study results indicate that students have high estimation to certain problems they encounter in reading comprehension as a result of the complexity of the texts, anxiety, and word recognition (decoding). The findings of the study also revealed that there were statistically significant differences between male and female students in their reading comprehension challenges in favor of female student.

Likewise, the current study emphasized the same point and almost reached the same results.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1 Overview

This chapter outlines the research methodology. It is going to present the study population and samples. At the same time, it is going to present the reliability study tools including the test and questionnaire with their validity and reliability.

3.2 Research Population

The population of the study was represented in Shendi University faculty of Arts, and the sample was purposively from English teachers at Shendi University and, Shendi University 3rd class students for the academic year 2024-2025.

3.3 Research Sample

The subjects of the study were 3rd class University students in the Faculty of Arts for the academic year 2024-2025 it consists of 50 students and English teachers at Shendi University it consists of 15 teachers.

3.4 Instrument

To implement this study successfully, the researcher has developed an achievement test and a questionnaire. The researcher (Appendices) designed them. For data collection the researcher designed a reading comprehension test consisting of four main questions that include 12 items for 50 students, and 9 questionnaires for 15 teachers.

3.4.1 Instrument Validity

The test and questionnaire were shown to four university lecturers as referees. They were asked to validate of the test and questionnaires. The referees agreed with the design and they were satisfied with the data gathering tool. Teachers at Shendi University of English language departments validate the test and questionnaires. They confirmed their validity and that it measured what has

been designed to measure. The remarks of the validating team, their notes and suggestions were taken into consideration and the researcher made the necessary modifications before applying the questionnaire.

3.4.2 Instrument Reliability

Selinger and Sholawy (1989:185) argue that reliability is information on whether the instrument is collecting data in an accurate way. That refers to whether the instrument gives the same result when different researcher uses it. For testing instrument reliability, cronbach's Alpha was applied. The resulted coefficient was .0. 95 which indicates that the instrument was reliable.

Table (1) Reliability Statistics (Cronbach's Alpha).

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized	No of Items
0.7	0.7178	50

3.5 Procedure

In the present research, the responses were analyzed by using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS), the questionnaire and analysis tackle the difficulties and problems in reading comprehension among the students at university. In order to obtain strong information; the study-employed test and questionnaire as a main tool. The test and questionnaires, which were used to test the hypothesis of the research, were teacher's questionnaires and student's test. This instrument was adjusted by referees and finally became a final version of the test and questionnaire. The hypothesis has been tested to ensure that the statics have been taken from the participants to take the decision about statistical features.

Chapter Four

Data Analysis and Discussion

Chapter Four

Data Analysis, Discussion and Results

4.1 Overview

The study was carried out with the purpose of investigating English reading comprehension difficulties that faced the 3rd class university students. It is essentially aimed at investigating reading comprehension difficulties made by English language students at university level. On the other hand, the study aimed to investigate those difficulties that committed by learners and experienced by teachers.

4.2 Data Analysis (Students' test):

Question (1): Answer the following questions:

Table (4.2.1): Frequencies and percentage of subjects Responses to question (1):

NO	Questions	Correct Answers	Correct Responses Frequencies	%	Wrong Responses frequencies	%
1	What is the name of the writer?	Jack	29	58%	21	42%
2	Where was the writer playing?	In a park	27	54%	23	46%
3	How was the water in the pond?	It was very dirty \ It was full of weeds and slime	24	48%	26	52%
4	Who pulled the young boy out of the pond?	Jeremy's dad \ His father	8	16%	42	84%
		Total	88	176%	112	224%

Table (4.2.1) shows the frequencies and percentage of responses of the subjects to each item. The correct answers to the first question numbered (88) percentage (176%), as well as those who chose the wrong answers numbered (112) percentage (224%). This indicates that the first hypothesis is true, which is that students do not understand direct questions from the text.

Question (2): Put (√) or (X):

Table (4.2.2): Frequencies and percentage of subjects Responses to question (2):

NO	Questions	Correct Answers	Correct Responses Frequencies	%	Wrong Responses frequencies	%
1	There was a boy <u>there</u> named Jeremy. (refer to) in the park.	✓	26	52%	24	48%
2	I crept up behind <u>him</u> . (refer to) Jack's parents.	✗	23	46%	27	54%
3	I denied <u>it</u> . (refer to) pushing him in the pond.	✓	24	48%	26	52%
4	The writer regrets pushing the boy in the pond.	✓	19	38%	31	62%
		Total	92	184%	108	216%

Table (4.2.2) shows the frequencies and percentage of responses of the subjects to each item. The correct answers to the first question numbered (92) percentage (184%), as well as those who chose the wrong answers numbered

(108) percentage (216%). This indicates that the second hypothesis is true, which is that students do not understand what some words refer to in the text.

Question (3): Complete The following:

Table (4.2.3): Frequencies and percentage of subjects Responses to question (3):

NO	Questions	Correct Answers	Correct Responses Frequencies	%	Wrong Responses frequencies	%
1	The story happened over	twenty years ago.	22	44%	28	56%
2	Without any proof, the writer's parents	took his side.	13	26%	37	74%
		Total	35	70%	65	130%

Table (4.2.3) shows the frequencies and percentage of responses of the subjects to each item. The correct answers to the first question numbered (35) percentage (70%), as well as those who chose the wrong answers numbered (65) percentage (130%). This indicates that the third hypothesis is true, which is that students are unable to complete some phrases from the text by finding some missing words.

Question (4): Choose the correct meaning:

Table (4.2.4): Frequencies and percentage of subjects Responses to question (4):

NO	Questions	Correct Answers	Correct Responses Frequencies	%	Wrong Responses frequencies	%
1	neighborhood = (nearness – farness – distance)	nearness	21	42%	29	58%
2	innocent = (guilty – guiltless – faulty)	guiltless	23	46%	27	54%
		Total	44	88%	56	112%

Table (4.2.4) shows the frequencies and percentage of responses of the subjects to each item. The correct answers to the first question numbered (44) percentage (88%), as well as those who chose the wrong answers numbered (56) percentage (112%). This indicates that the fourth hypothesis is true, which is that students cannot find equivalent words or the word that has the same meaning to some words in the text.

Table (4.2.5): The overall summary of subjects, responses of lest out of (600).

Correct responses	259	43.1%
Wrong responses	341	56.8%

4.3 Hypotheses Testing

By comparing the result in table (4.2.5) it could be said that there was enough evidence that the target subject had problems in reading comprehension properly and this deficiency might be attributed to lack of vocabulary and less of knowledge.

4.4 Data Analysis (Teachers' questionnaire):

Question (1): The students read English texts in the class most of the time.

Answer	Frequency	Percent
Neutral	3	20%
Agree	2	13.3%
Disagree	10	66.6%
Total	15	100.0%

Table 4.3.1 shows subject's choice of the given options

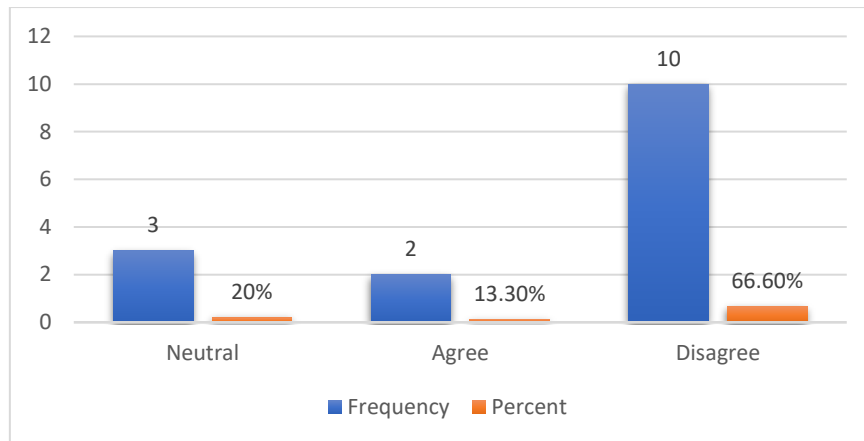


Figure 4.3.1 shows subject's choice of reading practice in percentage:

From the table and figure (4.3.1) above, it was obvious that the majority disagrees with the opinion that the students read English most of the time. This means that students are not practicing reading in the class most of the time. This is another obstacle, faces the students. This reflects the significance of practice.

Question (2): I explain strange words and phrases explicitly to my students.

Answer	Frequency	Percent
Neutral	1	6.6%
Agree	12	80%
Disagree	2	13.3%
Total	15	100.0%

Table 4.3.2 shows subject's choice of the given options

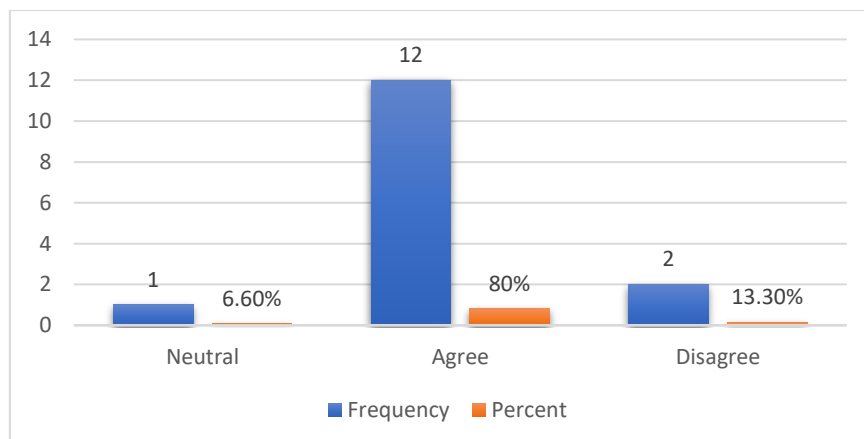


Figure 4.3.2 shows subject's choice of students understanding of new words during the reading process in percentage.

Table and figure (4.3.2) clarify that more than 80% of respondents agree that they explain strange words to their students. Accordingly, the students ignored the strange words while reading. Hence, they do not understand the text.

Question (3): I encourage and motivate the students to read and comprehend English inside and outside the class room.

Answer	Frequency	Percent
Neutral	2	13.3%
Agree	13	86.6%
Disagree	0	-
Total	15	100.0%

Table 4.3.3 shows subject's choice of the given options

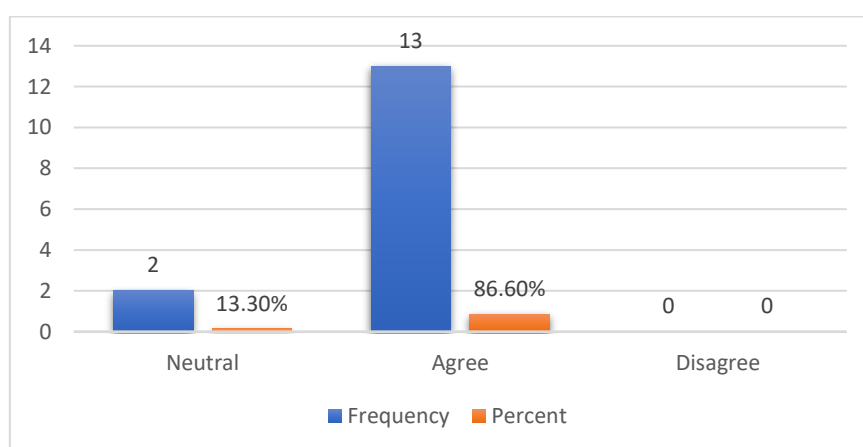


Figure 4.3.3 shows subject's choice of motivating the students to read and comprehend.

Table and figure (4.3.3) confirm that more than 86% of the subjects encourage and motivate the students to read and comprehend English inside and outside the lecture room. It means that the students don't respond to the teachers' speech and they aren't affected by them. Motivation is a key for the reading comprehend gate.

Question (4): The students pay attention during the lecture.

Answer	Frequency	Percent
Neutral	4	26.6%
Agree	3	20%
Disagree	8	53.3%
Total	15	100.0%

Table 4.3.4 shows subject's choice of the given options

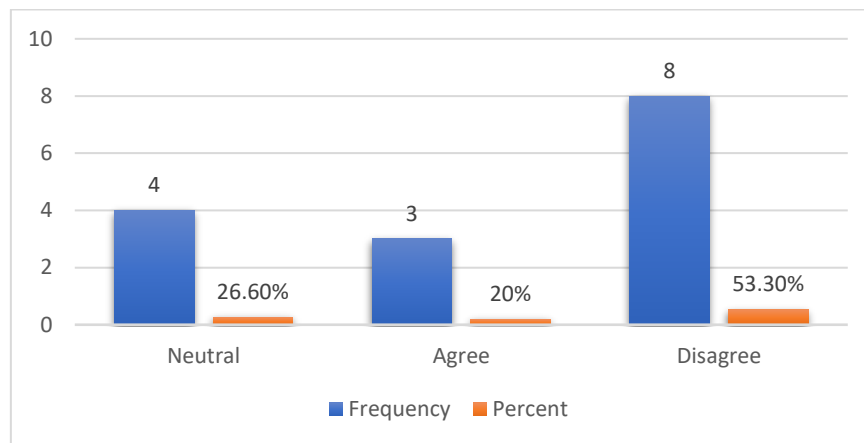


Figure 4.3.4 shows subject's choice of students pay attention during the lecture in percentage.

Table and figure (4.3.4) above state that more than 20% agree that the students are attentive during the lecture. Accordingly, the students do not listen to their lecturers well, and they do not practice reading skill either. They also don't care what their teachers say.

Question (5): Students' little interaction with a text during lectures is due to their fear of making mistakes.

Answer	Frequency	Percent
Neutral	3	20%
Agree	12	80%
Disagree	0	-
Total	15	100.0%

Table 4.3.5 shows subject's choice of the given options

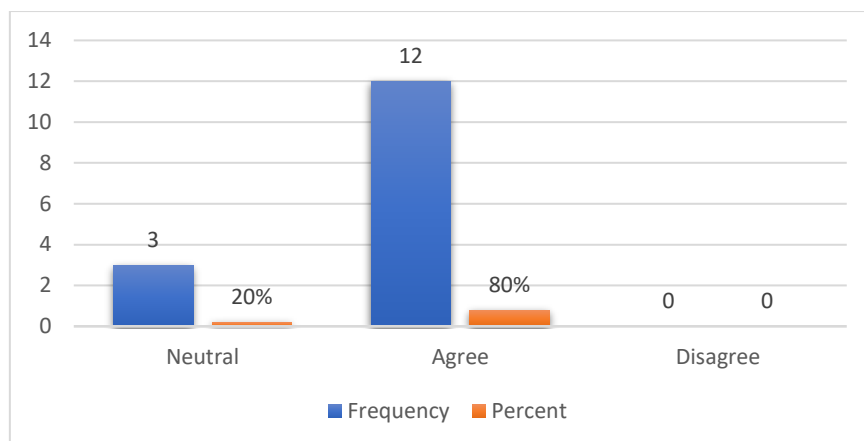


Figure 4.3.5 shows subjects' choice of students' little interaction in reading because of their fear of making mistakes in percentage.

Table and figure (4.3.5) show that more than 80% of the subjects agree that student's little interaction with a text because they are afraid of making mistakes. This process may hinder students' reading and comprehension. The target language is vulnerable to mistakes, but students learn of their mistakes. So, it is not fault to make mistakes.

Question (6): The students need to practice reading more and more.

Answer	Frequency	Percent
Neutral	0	-
Agree	14	93%
Disagree	1	6.6%
Total	15	100.0%

Table 4.3.6 shows subject's choice of the given options

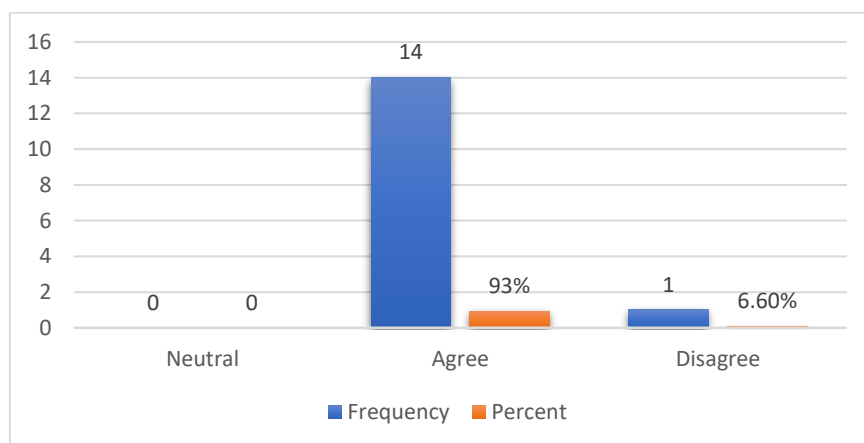


Figure 4.3.6 shows subjects' choice of the students' need for practicing reading in percentage.

From the table and figure (4.3.6) above, it's obvious that more than 93% of the subjects agree that the students are in need of practicing reading. That's why lack of practice causes students' difficulties in reading comprehension. Consequently, the students lose the competence and efficiency in reading comprehension. Practice is the main key for reading comprehension; it helps students to exceed all the difficulties they face during reading.

Question (7): Slow comprehension for the students when they read English due to, they have poor vocabulary.

Answer	Frequency	Percent
Neutral	4	26.6%
Agree	9	60%
Disagree	1	6.6%
Total	15	100.0%

Table 4.3.7 shows subject's choice of the given options

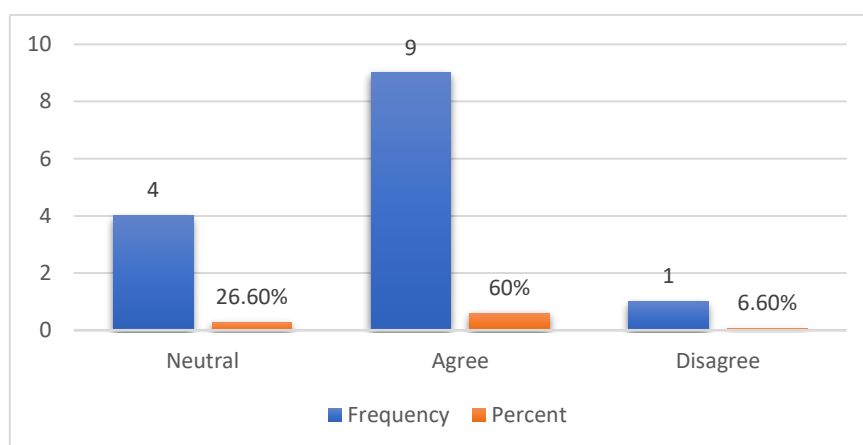


Figure 4.3.7 shows subjects' choice of students slow in comprehension because of their poor vocabulary.

In the table and the figure (4.3.7) above, it's clear that 60% of teachers see the majority of students **slow in comprehension** because of their **poor vocabulary**. In fact, students improve their foreign language by knowing the meaning of new words. This will improve the students' level of reading comprehension. When students do not understand a text because of their poor vocabulary, they will never achieve reading comprehension.

Question (8): When students read a text, they confuse the structure of the Arabic sentence with that of English.

Answer	Frequency	Percent
Neutral	1	6.6%
Agree	13	86.6%
Disagree	1	6.6%
Total	15	100.0%

Table 4.3.8 shows subject's choice of the given options

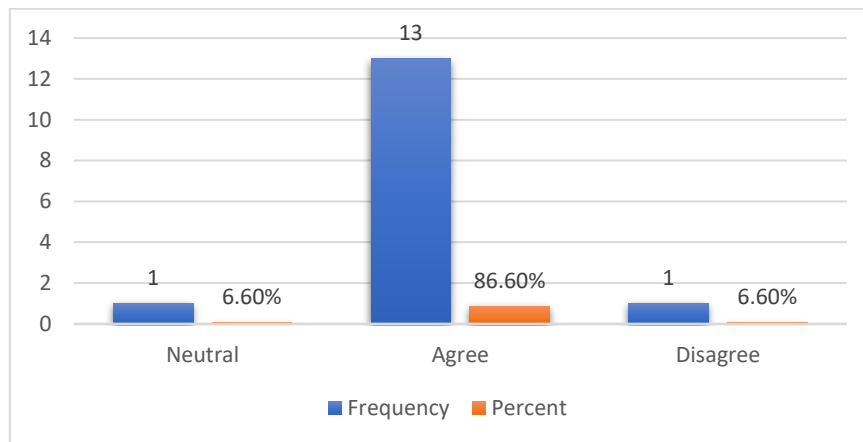


Figure 4.3.8 shows subjects' choice of students, confusion between Arabic and English sentence in percentage.

Table and figure (4.3.8) clarify that 86% of the teachers agree that students confuse Arabic sentence structure that of English when reading. This is big evidence that the students suffer from mother tongue interference, then they make confusion and mixture between English and Arabic. As a result, they find difficulty to comprehend well.

Question (9): Students sometimes have difficulties of comprehending a text with different cultural backgrounds.

Answer	Frequency	Percent
Neutral	0	-
Agree	15	100%
Disagree	0	-
Total	15	100.0%

Table 4.3.9 shows subject's choice of the given options

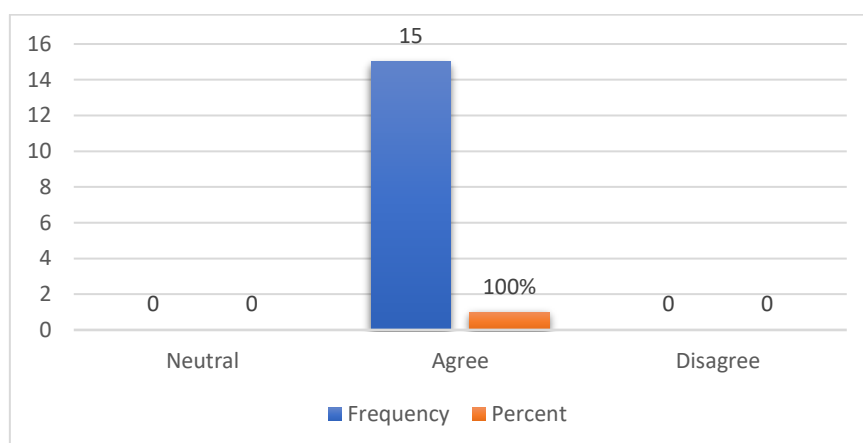


Figure 4.3.9 shows student's difficulties in reading because of different culture in percentage.

Table and figure (4.3.9) show that more than 100% of the teachers agree that student's difficulties of comprehending because the different cultural backgrounds. This process may hinder students' comprehension. Therefore, it is very important to have a background in the culture of what you are reading.

4.5 Hypotheses Testing

In the light of the results of this study, there was no any contradiction between the teachers' responses on one hand and those of the students on the other concerning the study hypotheses which focused on the problems of reading comprehension among 3rd class students in Shendi University, Faculty of Arts.

4.5.1 The first Hypothesis:

In table (4.3.6), (4.3.8) teachers emphasize that when students read a text, they confuse the structure of the Arabic sentence with that of English and the students need to practice reading more and more. Moreover, practice reading can develop students' cognitive skills and it can enrich their language learning knowledge as well. In addition, they can get high grades in exams. These views support the first hypothesis that " There is a huge problem in reading comprehension for 3rd class, that reflect in their examination degrees".

4.5.2 The Second Hypothesis:

The second hypothesis states that: "The 3rd class students face many challenging aspects in fully understanding what they read, for example, teaching strategies, teaching methods, and teachers' personality, and this is reflected on their linguistic and academic achievement and sometimes in their psychological problems". The results in table (4.3.2), (4.3.3), (4.3.4) showed the teaching strategies, methods, and teachers' personality through the role of teacher's in explaining strange words and phrases explicitly, and encouraging and motivating the students to read and comprehend English inside and outside the lecture room, also showed that the students do not pay attention during the lecture. Accordingly, the students don't respond to the teachers' speech and they aren't affected by them. Likewise, the students ignored the strange words while reading. Hence, they do not understand the text. Moreover, the students do not listen to their lecturers well, and they do not practice reading skill either. They also don't care what their teachers say. So, it reflects directly on their linguistic and academic achievement.

4.5.3 The Third Hypothesis:

In table (4.3.1), (4.3.5), (4.3.9), (4.3.7) teachers confirm that there are difficulties and slowness in comprehending among students when reading English text. The little interaction with text during lectures, even though students often read English texts in class, is due to their fear of making mistakes, different cultural backgrounds, and poor vocabulary. These points of view support the third hypothesis that " Poor grammar, lack of vocabulary, and lack of self-confidence are factors facing the 3rd class students, that make it difficult to express what they have read verbally or in writing".

Chapter Five

Conclusion

Chapter Five

Conclusion

5.1 Overview

According to the results obtained, we can notice that reading comprehension is a complex and essential skill that needs to be developed consciously. It can best be developed with practice in the lecture room through activities, which promote interaction between students. To conclude this, work the researcher comes out with some findings, recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

The study has tried to show that it is easier to obtain students' participation and motivation when the suggested materials are entertaining. The key is to motivate and encourage them to reading comprehension. Students at university face difficulties in reading comprehension, most of these difficulties related mainly to psychological factors. In addition to that the students rarely practice reading inside or outside the lecture room. Here, teachers' role appears by giving the students a chance to read about interesting topics, which can result easy for them and for their level. Students should resist all suggested psychological factors and practice reading as much as possible. It is desirable to say that teachers must support students in their education and encourage them to use English, and at the same time teachers need to be in constant contact with new techniques and materials in the immediate changeable world.

Finally, reading comprehension is somehow difficult and needs for efforts of both, teachers and students. So, what is really important to get students learn how to reading comprehension?

Due to this some suggestions have been offered, which can be put into practice during the course in order to motivate students to participate in the class and

to do interaction activities to develop reading comprehension. These activities allow students to feel more comfortable, and sure when they have to hold a reading process in English and they make the skill more effective.

5.3 Conclusions

Reading comprehension is more than decoding shapes and figures as many teachers and learners think. Comprehension occurs when the reader knows what skills and strategies are necessary and appropriate for the type of text and understands how to apply them to accomplish the reading process and reach high degree of comprehension and retention.

As explored in the four chapters of the paper, several approaches, methods and models have been developed by specialists to understand how the process of reading works in order to supply the appropriate pedagogies for teaching the skill.

In spite of that most of university teachers still think that students come to university with the necessary reading abilities to deal with highly structured and marked texts such as literary materials. In fact, research has proved that students in most of times cannot read just at fundamental levels let alone advanced levels in which reading becomes more complex with content-based materials.

In addition, the results obtained in the analysis of the two questionnaires confirmed firmly that students lack the essential requirements for reading and processing literary texts. Teachers sometimes actually assign literary texts for reading without considering the fundamental criteria and requirements for successful reading.

Proficient strategic readers, in fact, understand that different texts require different approaches and strategies. Teachers need to develop effective activities and strategies for reading different texts and should encourage students to respond to texts both personally and critically. To this end, with

the appropriate skills and strategies, students can become more competent and confident readers.

In order to foster students' interests, teachers need to involve students in text selecting, by providing them with several types of texts from all the literary genres and raise their curiosity in reading texts that they feel close and interested. They should also include intensive and extensive reading materials for both study and pleasure.

Teachers can encourage students to become active participants and proficient readers by incorporating instructional activities and strategies. Instructional reading might consider the following skills:

- Pre-reading skills: establishing interest a purpose for reading.
- While-reading skills: constructing meaning
- post-reading skills: reconstructing and extending meaning

Researchers in the area also assert that reading strategies such as Survey Question Read Recite Review (SQ3R) Critical Reading (CR) and Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR) help learners acquire lifelong independent reading habits both for study or pleasure.

It must, in conclusion, be emphasized that reading a literary text is not an easy job as many teachers reckon, thus they let it to chance and improvisation.

This research, though does not pretend to give all the answers related to the topic, but simply attempts to help teachers and learners alike to get key notions about the reading skill and also to find methods for integrating some skills and strategies in literary reading. It has been my aim to provide methods for teaching and developing syllabi for literature course at university, but it is so an ambitious project to be conducted in the actual available time. Thus, I wish more research will be conducted in the field to help university teachers and learners as well conceive the most essential requirements for literature teaching and literary text reading.

5.4 Recommendations

In the light of the present study results, the following recommendations are made:

To solve the difficulties that face the university students, the researcher suggested the following ideas and recommendations in order to promote the comprehension in reading English:

5.4.1 Libraries should be provided with materials that motivate and encourage the students to learn to reading comprehension. In other words, the environment should be suitable to meet the students' needs to learn to reading comprehension.

5.4.2 The students should recognize and determine the areas of difficulty in reading comprehension English. Working together with their teacher will help them to improve themselves in reading comprehension. Here, the teacher's role is to encourage them to practice reading comprehension both inside and outside the lecture room. In addition, English students should read English short stories to train themselves as much as possible in reading comprehension.

5.4.3 The students should feel safe while reading, even if they make mistakes. Teachers should provide them with healthy atmosphere. This will motivate them to reading comprehension.

5.4.4 Every syllabus in particular, in the secondary or primary school should contain vocabulary, dialogues and different materials that have to do with reading comprehension. Hereafter, when they join the university, they will find it easy to promote them and reading comprehension directly.

5.4.5 English teachers at universities should organize teaching programs to help the students to learn to reading comprehension.

5.4.6 The availability of modern media like (Internet, magazines, newspapers, T.V, Radio, etc...) provides teachers with using up to date teaching techniques. Moreover, the students could easily learn to read. If

they follow the reading rules, likewise, reading English short stories improves the reading comprehension.

5.4.7 Teachers at university should aid their students. They should sow the self-confidence inside them. Hereby, the teachers will pave the way for the students to reading comprehension.

5.4.8 Teachers should raise the students' awareness and motivate them by telling them the importance of reading and comprehension activities.

5.4.9 Students should resort to reading and comprehend in vital and real issues in the society, in addition to the different traditions and cultures they believed.

5.4.10 Students should also practice the listening skill of a native reader while reading a text. During the listening task, they must imitate the reader's techniques and, therefore, will use easy to comprehend reading.

5.5 Suggestions for future research

A research can be done in the following Titles:

5.5.1 The effectiveness of psychological factors making reading comprehension difficulties among EFL learners.

5.5.2 The efficacy of applying new programs and techniques over a limited period of time on students' reading comprehension.

5.5.3 Comparing strategies of different teaching methods in terms of their effectiveness in developing reading comprehension among EFL students.

5.5.4 The importance of environment and adaptation to help students to solve the problem of reading comprehension.

5.5.5 The role of teachers in motivating and helping students to reading comprehension.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Test

Read the following passage then answer the questions:

Regrets

My name's Jack and I want to tell you about something I regret. It happened over twenty years ago. I must have been around five years old. It was a summer day and I was in a park playing with some other kids from the neighborhood. There was a boy there named Jeremy who I didn't like very much, but I can't remember why. Anyway, we were playing near a pond. The water was very dirty and it was full of weeds and slime. You can guess what I did, right...? I waited until he was standing near the edge of the pond, and then I crept up behind him and gave him a good hard push in the back. He went flying straight into the filthy, slimy water! His dad rushed over and pulled him out. Jeremy was crying and pointed at me, saying "It was him. He pushed me!" Of course, I denied it. My parents were there, but I insisted I was innocent and without any proof they took my side. The bad thing is that Jeremy's parents and mine used to be good friends, but after that they never spoke to each other again. I should have told my parents the truth, but I didn't. To this day, I still regret pushing that boy into the pond.

A) Answer the following questions:

1. What is the name of the writer?

2. Where was the writer playing?

3. How was the water in the pond?

4. Who pulled the young boy out of the pond?

B) Put ($\sqrt{\quad}$) or (X) :

1. There was a boy there named Jeremy. (refer to) in the park. ()

2. I crept up behind him. (refer to) Jack's parents. ()

3. I denied it. (refer to) pushing him in the pond. ()
4. The writer regrets pushing the boy in the pond. ()

C) Complete:

1. The story happened over
_____.
2. Without any proof, the writer's parents
_____.

D) Choose the correct meaning:

1. neighborhood = (nearness – farness – distance)
2. innocent = (guilty – guiltless – faulty)

Appendix 2

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear respondent:

This questionnaire has been devised with the aim of finding about reading comprehension difficulties that students may face.

Your responses are voluntary and confidential. If there's a question you don't wish to answer simply skip it.

STATEMENTS:	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
1- The students read English texts in the class most of the time.			
2- I explain strange words and phrases explicitly to my students.			
3- I encourage and motivate the students to read and comprehend English inside and outside the class room.			
4- The students pay attention during the lecture.			
5- Students' little interaction with a text during lectures is due to their fear of making mistakes.			
6- The students need to practice reading more and more.			
7- Slow comprehension for the students when they read English due to, they have poor vocabulary.			
8- When students read a text, they confuse the structure of the Arabic sentence with that of English.			
9- Students sometimes have difficulties of comprehending a text with different cultural backgrounds.			