The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

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The Effect of Teaching Strategies on Reading
Comprehension: A Study with Reference to the Students of
Basic Education Schools in Sirte

"A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in
Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in ELT"

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DEDICATION

In memory of my generous, modest father.

To my mother

To my family

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluates the effectiveness of teaching strategies used by English language teachers in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. It concentrates on teaching reading comprehension to basic education students in Sirte. This study includes five chapters.

The first chapter states the problem, objectives, scope, relevance and significance of the study. It narrates the English needs of the people of Libya and studies how far these needs are incorporated in the school curriculum. It discusses the relative importance given to each of the four language macro skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing at various levels of English language teaching in the country. It also briefly evaluates the series of books entitled, *English for Libya,* taught in our basic education schools.

The second chapter surveys the pedagogic and learning theories related to reading comprehension. This survey of literature related to the study is handled in five parts. The first part is concerned with the theories related to the nature of reading as a language skill. The second part describes the sub-skills and supporting skills required for accurate reading. The third part describes the general pedagogic strategies used by teachers to

teach reading. The fourth part justifies the use of "reading aloud" activity at the preparatory level reading classrooms. It is pointed out that our students need pronunciation input, particularly intonation. In such a situation, reading aloud by the teacher and the student is an indispensable activity inside the classroom. The fifth part sheds light on the reading comprehension testing techniques.

The third chapter discusses the methodology and procedures of the study. It addresses issues like the limitation of the study, the subjects of the study, data collection methods and data analysis. Data is obtained from two main sources, classroom observation and the teachers' responses. Teacher's responses are gathered on a special questionnaire designed and administrated for the purpose.

The fourth chapter represents the experimental part of the study. It deals with the analysis of pre-reading / reading / post-reading strategies the teachers utilise and their impact on the basic education learners in the city centre of Sirte.

First, this chapter deals with the methodology used by the teachers to develop reading as an independent activity. The skills analysed are those related to motivation, self-confidence, interest-building, skimming, scanning, extensive reading, intensive

reading, use of pictures and Arabic language in vocabulary development exercises.

Second, it is concerned with the strategies used by the teachers to make reading an integrated language activity. It evaluates the extent to which the reading text is exploited to teach items such as spelling, punctuation, capitalization, pronunciation, intonation, grammar, conversation and writing.

The fifth chapter is the concluding one. It summarizes the findings of the study; presents valuable statement on the teachers' competence and commitment as well as the learners' responses and responsibilities; offers feedback suggestions to the curriculum planners. Finally, the study lists the possible areas of research in this field for prospective researchers.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE SURVEY ON READING SKILLS AND READING INSTRUCTION

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS

.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

Reading is the most practised skill of the language skills inside the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom. Outside the classroom, it is practiced on a large scale by various categories of people. A number of theories are available on the learning and teaching of listening, speaking and writing. Depending on these theories, teachers evolve key strategies to teach these skills.

In contrast, in the case of reading, some theories are not available on the nature and the process of reading. In a comprehensive review of reading research, Alderson remarks that researchers do "not agree on what skills are involved in the teaching process" (2000: 13). The fact that there are plenty of educational materials on "reading" today confirms Alderson's remark. In the absence of decisive strategies, teachers find it difficult to choose their teaching methods or materials.

Teaching, basically, aims to make learning happen. To measure the effectiveness of a teaching strategy, it is necessary to

1

ensure that learning has taken place. But empirical evaluation methods are not available to measure reading skills. Being aware of such a necessity, this study is conducted with the primary purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of teaching strategies on reading.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

In Libya where English is not the official language, it still has an essential role to play as the lingua franca. Although considered as a foreign language, English is an important school subject in the overall curricula and it is necessary to pass an English proficiency test to join a university course. In addition, English is also the medium of instruction for many courses in the university. Further, Libyan students, researchers, scientists and translators must have a good command of English to be successful in their day life communication.

As a matter of fad, we live essentially in an age of fast and sophisticated communication. Whereas, English is increasingly adopted as a universal language of mass media. Most books on science, medicine and technologies are published in English. Without them no higher education or interchange of professional knowledge might be possible. Reading is, therefore, a necessary skill to acquire proficiency in English. A large amount of reading

is therefore demanded for the purposes of education, professions and also for pleasure.

It may now be asked how this need can be accomplished as an educational outcome. The way by which a set of needs become translated into actions is a complex process involving curriculum planning material development, teacher training, update instruction, appropriate text-books, well prepared classrooms and motivated learners. Once we succeed in doing so we could say that our country Libya might be leading for prosperity.

The main reason that led to this study is that many of our school learners in Al-Jamahiriya find reading skill as a challenging task. They have difficulties in understanding the reading text because of the lack of auxiliary vocabulary. They are not used to independent reading, nor do they have been trained to be able to cope with the demands of such task. This study attempts to identify the steps by which reading skills can be progressively utilized by our learners.

At the basic education level, English is taught as an independent subject for five years. The researcher's introspection and observation show that most of the basic education school leavers pass this stage with little knowledge of the reading skill.

In some cases, they are not able to read even very basic words like "father", "mother", "food", "camel" and "country". They are not aware of the concepts of "skimming" and "scanning". They have a misplaced notion that every word is important and has to be learnt meticulously.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are:

1. The first objective is to understand and evaluate strategies that teachers adopt in teaching reading comprehension.
2. The second objective is to study the nature of the classroom response and interaction and the strategies which the teachers use to elicit from the students in order to gain positive learning.
3. The third objective is to propose suggestions by which reading skills can be beneficially learned by our students.
4. The fourth objective is to try to utilise the reading passage in teaching other language skills like listening, writing, vocabulary and grammar learning.

1.4. Hypothesis of the Study

The basic schooling students find it difficult to understand a reading passage in English language.

1.5. Scope of the Study

In this research, "reading comprehension" refers to a multifaceted activity of four components: the perception of words, a clear understanding of meaning, thoughtful response, and integration.

The choice of "basic education level" is because, in Libyan school curriculum, substantial activities related to "learning to read" are carried out at this level.

Sirte town is chosen because it presents a wholesome social, cultural and educational microcosm of Al-Jamahiriya, and the findings of the study can be favourably projected to be those for the country.

Besides, and as far as the present researcher could ensure, there is less research done on listening and reading skills, and none on preparatory level students. Hence, this study is claimed to be of higher scope and relevance.

1.6. Limitation of the Study

The study is limited to students of Sirte-city-centre basic education schools – grade nine during the academic year 2007-2008. The observation is restricted to three basic education schools: Al-Majid, Al-Bian Al-Awal, and Talaia Al-Nasr. It

continued from 11-11-2007 to 25-2-2008. There is one teacher, teaching grade Nine in each school. The questionnaire is administrated to thirty teachers in basic schools in Sirte city centre. Four of the copies are dropped-out and twenty-six of them are analysed.

1.7. Significance of the Study

The researcher believes that this study gains importance because of the central position the basic education stage holds in the academic achievements of the Libyan learners. In order to make them interested in English, we should endeavour to facilitate the learning difficulties that they face, especially in reading, which, some instances believe, is the skill that "consolidates" learning.

1.8. Procedure of the Study

The procedure of the study includes two parts: a theoretical part and a practical one.

The theoretical part discusses the theories of reading a foreign language. Barnett advocates, "To teach foreign or second language reading well, we need to know as much as possible about how the reading process works and how to integrate that knowledge effectively into our reading pedagogy" (1989: 1).

Accordingly, the theoretical part of this study includes an elaborate literature survey of the nature and the process of reading. It also includes a study of the aspects of teaching reading in an EFL situation.

The practical part of the study comprises: (1) collection of data (2) analysis of data, and (3) feedback recommendations.

Collection of data includes classroom observation for several weeks; and teacher responses for an administrated questionnaire.

This researcher visited regularly three different sets of students of Class Nine in three basic education schools in Sirte and observed the classroom procedures for several weeks throughout the academic year (2007-2008).

The questionnaire was answered by 26 teachers of English who teach the basic education stage (seventh, eighth and ninth levels) in 15 different schools in Sirte city centre. The questions are intended to find out how they teach reading; what strategies they adopt to ensure comprehension; and what kind of problems the students encounter while learning reading.

The third chapter discussed the methodology of the study in a detailed manner. While the classroom observation and teachers'

questionnaire are analysed in the fourth chapter. Based on the results and the findings obtained some recommendations are given in the fifth chapter.

1.9. English Language in the Libyan School Curriculum

The purpose of this section is to acquaint the readers with the status of English language in Libya and the teaching of it in the Libyan schools.

As the economy of Libya grows and expands beyond its borders, English is perceived as indispensable for social and economic mobility to conduct practical, social, economic, and technical interactions with the people of the rest of the world. The teaching of English has now become one of the country's educational priorities. The General People's Committee and the National Centre for Planning of Education are addressing the ways in which the teaching of English can be improved throughout the country.

English is the only foreign language offered to students as a compulsory subject in the Libyan school curriculum. The teaching of English starts at the age of ten in class five of the primary stage. It continues in class six of the same stage and class seven, eight and nine of preparatory stage. The students study

English for five years before they move on to the secondary school.

In these stages, English is taught at the rate of three lessons per week and each lesson is of forty-five minute duration. Most of the teachers who teach English in Sirte basic education schools now are entirely Libyans graduated from the English departments of the Faculties of Arts and the Faculties of Teacher Training.

1.10. English Syllabus for the Basic Education Classes

The aim of this section is to provide information on the books used at the basic education stage, especially grade seven, eight, and nine. The focus of discussion is on the content and activities related to reading.

The books prescribed are part of the series, *English for Libya*, especially designed for young, teenage, Libyan learners in terms of age and cultural environment. The preparatory series includes three graded books, one for each preparatory class. Each course book is accompanied by a workbook, audio cassettes and teacher's book. The teacher's book gives brief guidance on teaching procedures, and answer-key to the exercises.

The course books are structured in such a way as to serve both as a terminal course for basic language skills and as an

introductory course for advanced language skills. The books are based on the communicative approach, which views language learning as an interactive process. These books make the students learn the language skills through language use instead of linguistic rules. The books cover all aspects of language learning, such as practising the four skills independently and together, using words and phrases, practising pronunciation and spelling and mastering grammatical structures.

These course books present reading as a developmental process. In the first basic education courses, students learn to read by starting with 'spelling-sound' relationship. They learn what spelling represents what sound. Then they learn to read the new words and sentence patterns. As the course progresses, the students begin to read a variety of text types like conversations, extracts from diaries, letters, newspaper stories, poems, puzzles, instructions, comic strips, cartoons, caricatures, maps, short stories and factual reports. Most texts are recorded, so that the first thing the students do is to hear the whole text. This supports such ancillary activities like "listen and read" which is found in almost every lesson.

The reading texts in the course books are directly connected to the students' real life. They are familiar with the cultural

context of the materials they are reading. The content and vocabulary used are familiar to the students' cultural environment and interest. These techniques may help the students to build up such reading skills like prediction and retrospection, inferential and critical reading.

On the whole, the prescribed books, *English for Libya*, provide an integrated English language course in the sense that each teaching unit contains a variety of exercises which aim at adequate use of English for purposes of communication.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE SURVEY ON

READING SKILLS AND READING INSTRUCTION

2.1. Introduction

Our knowledge of the nature of reading and our perception of the reading needs of learners have evolved over the years. The major issue of this chapter is to summarize the important concepts on the nature of reading. A second issue is to describe the teaching strategies adopted by teachers to teach reading.

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first section is concerned with the nature of reading as a language skill. The second section describes the sub-skills and supporting skills required for efficient reading. The third section describes the general pedagogic means and methods used by teachers to teach reading. The fourth section justifies the use of "reading aloud" activity in the preparatory level reading classrooms. The fifth section sheds some light on testing techniques.

2.2. Nature of Reading

Learning a language involves learning a number of skills. Richards and Schmidt (2002: 293) define language skills as "the mode or manner in which a language is used." There are four of such skills which are known as macro skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In addition to these four skills, there are a number of "micro-skills" or strategies, which learners use to communicate with other people.

Some of these skills are inherent to all languages, which are capable of positive transfer. Others have to be learnt. Gower et al state: "Many of these skills are common to all languages. Although students may have to be made aware that the skills they already use in their first language can be transferred to the language they are learning, other strategies may have to be introduced" (2005: 85).

2.2.1. Reading as a Receptive Skill

Speaking and writing are described as productive skills. The productive skills are the skills we use to produce language either orally or in writing. Harmer (2005: 247) states that these skills give students opportunities to "rehearse language production in practical terms." They are also called active skills.

Listening and reading are described as receptive skills. Between the two, reading has an advantage. According to Byrne, "The reader is in a better position than the listener to some extent. He has the facility to re-read at his own pace and as often as he likes" (1999: 3).

Many attempts have been made by teaching methodologists to describe the nature of reading. They generally agree that there are two levels. First, there is the "visual task," that of recognizing the black marks on the page, the brain receiving signals from the eye. Second, there is the "cognitive task," that of interpreting the visual information, a reconstruction taking place in the reader's mind.

Traditional definitions of reading, placing emphasis only on the visual task, called it a passive skill. Today, many researchers argue that it is a misnomer. Yorkey (1974: 154) states:

> "Reading is not a passive skill, as it may first seem to be when compared with speaking or writing. Reading is actually a kind of dialogue between the reader and the author. Reading involves as much alertness and participation, as does a conversation; asking questions, evaluating answers, summarizing ideas, then asking more questions and so on".

Neil Postman, as quoted in Spears (2003: 2), sums up the kind of challenges a reader has to face: "A written sentence calls upon its

author to say something, upon its readers to know the import of what is said. And when an author and reader are struggling with semantic meaning, they are engaged in the most serious challenges to the intellect."

Harmer (2004: 70) emphasizes that even at the visual comprehension level "reading is an incredibly active occupation. To do it successfully, we have to understand what the words mean, see the pictures the words are painting, understand the arguments, and work out if we agree with them. If we do not do these things – and if students do not do these things – then we only scratch the surface of the text and we quickly forget it." Similarly, Grellet (2003: 8) observes that, "Reading is an active skill [....] it constantly involves guessing, predicting, checking and asking oneself questions."

Many times, we have to compare what we are reading with our previous background knowledge. In this regard, the observations of Broughton et al., Kohli, and Tinker and McCullough are significant.

Broughton et al. (1978) hold the view that reading in a foreign language is a complex skill, which includes graphic and linguistic tasks like:

1. The ability to recognize the black marks on a paper to be read.

2. The ability to find a correlation between these black marks, which are words, or phrases, or sentences with the formal elements of language.

3. The ability to make a connection between the black marks as formal elements of language with the meanings, which these words symbolize.

Kohli (2000) presents a similar view, with some modifications, giving prominence to three elements which are symbol, sound and sense. He describes reading as the activity of looking at the written or printed symbols on a paper and understanding it by translating those symbols into meaningful units of sound.

Tinker and McCullough (1968: 8) describe reading as a hyper-activity demanding high seriousness:

> "Reading involves the identification and recognition of printed or written symbols, which serve as stimuli for the recall of meanings built up through experience, and further the construction of new meanings through the reader's manipulation of relevant concepts already in his possession. The resulting meanings are organized into thought processes according to the purposes that are operating in the reader. Such an organization results in modifications of

> thought, and perhaps behaviour, or it may even
> lead to radically new behaviour, which takes its
> place in the personal or social development of the
> individual".

This view of Tinker and McCullough is significant because it considers reading as a mental process, which anticipates the process theory of reading that became very popular later.

2.2.2. Reading as a Process

After the introduction of process pedagogy in the 1980s, reading began to be discussed as a process rather than as an activity.

White and Arndt (1991: 2) explain that process pedagogy is "based on the assumption that teaching and learning are joint enterprises involving both teacher and students in a partnership where the participants have complementary roles and similar status."

This approach greatly changed the classroom atmosphere. The student, instead of being a mere performer, now becomes a partner. He shares ideas, attitudes and feelings with the reading passage and communicates actively his experience to his teacher and his classmates.

White and Arndt (1991) illustrate this technique. Although it is common to ask questions to activate students, it is not usual

to ask them to make up their own. They explain that this activity is intended to stimulate students to think about the questions to which a reader might want to find answers. Their strategy has the following steps:

1. The teacher should introduce the topic and ask students to guess questions people might have about it.
2. Each student should add one question. The teacher should collect the questions on the board.
3. They now have a pool of questions to answer and use as the basis for a written exercise.

It is a good strategy to ask students to generate their own pool of questions. However, at this stage of our discussion, we are not much concerned with its pedagogic niceties as with its insistence on learner involvement.

Anderson, et al. (1981) accept this view stating that reading is the "process" of constructing meaning through dynamic interaction between the reader's existing knowledge, the information suggested by the text being read, and the context of the reading situation.

2.2.2.1. Reading as a Psycholinguistic Process

With the growing popularity of psychology and linguistics during the second half of the twentieth century, the process theory of language learning merged with these subjects and developed a psycholinguistic dimension.

Specialists in these fields, Goodman and Smith, as quoted in Carter and Nunan (2001), hold the view that reading is a language activity as well as a psychological process. Reading for them is not matching up of a visual symbol to sound realization in a linear manner, but a process heavily mediated by the reader to make informed predictions as he or she progresses through the text.

It is a process in which readers make use of "graphic information," "phonetic information" and "syntactic information" to achieve "semantic knowledge." First, readers make use of their knowledge of the visual and phonetic symbols of English, which are called "graphic information" and "phonetic information." Second, they draw on their knowledge of possible combinations of word order called syntactic constraints. This is "syntactic information." Third, they draw on their knowledge of semantic constraints to construct meaning. This is called "semantic knowledge."

2.2.2.2. Reading as an Interactive Process

After the advent of communicative teaching methods, reading began to be seen as an interactive process. In this process, the reader interacts with the text to create meaning as his mental processes work together at different levels. The construction of meaning depends on the reader's knowledge of the language, the structure of texts, knowledge of the subject of reading, and a wide knowledge of the world. Anderson and Freebody (1981: 81) have built the "knowledge hypothesis" to explain the contribution of these elements in the construction of meaning. Byrne (1998) improves upon their hypothesis. He states that these various knowledge elements "interact" with each other to make meaning. He also points out that reading is an interactive process that goes on between the reader and the text, resulting in comprehension of the material being read.

The text presents letters, words, sentences and paragraphs that encode meaning. The reader uses knowledge, skills and strategies to determine the meaning. The reader's knowledge, skills and strategies, from Byrne's point of view, include:

- *Linguistic competence*: the ability to recognize the elements of the writing system; knowledge of vocabulary; as well as knowledge of how words are structured into sentences

- *Discourse competence*: knowledge of discourse-markers and how they connect parts of the text to one another

- *Sociolinguistic competence*: Knowledge of different types of texts and their usual structure and content due to the norms of society

- *Strategic competence*: the ability to use top-down strategies, as well as knowledge of the language (a bottom-up strategy)

Nuttall (1996: 10) also holds the view that reading is an "interactive, communicative process." She makes a comparison between the reading process and a conversation, stating that in the reading process, as in a conversation, the reader and the writer depend on one another; a simple difference is that the writer is absent at the time of reading.

2.2.2.3. Schema Theory

Many researchers highlight the role that schema theory plays in reading. It describes the ways readers might organize and access knowledge. Readers need more than just a collection of vocabulary knowledge, world knowledge and linguistic knowledge in order to construct meaning. Nagy and Herman (1987: 28) point out that "Knowledge does not consist simply of an unstructured set of individual facts, but rather of organized, interrelated structures of schemata." Schema theory describes one

way of understanding how this organization of knowledge might be achieved.

Richards and Schmidt (2002: 469) describe the important role the schema theory plays in second language listening and reading comprehension:

> "Schemata serve as a reference store from which a person can retrieve relevant existing knowledge and into which new information is assimilated. When encountering a topic in reading or listening, the reader activates the schema for the topic and makes use of it to anticipate, infer, and make different kinds of judgments and decisions about it."

Richards and Schmidt distinguish between content schemata and formal schemata. They define content schemata as "the general background knowledge about the cultural orientation or the content of a passage or a particular topic" and formal schemata as "the rhetorical structure of a language and a person's background knowledge of that structure" (2002: 470).

Cook (1989: 69) defines schema as "pre-existent knowledge of the world." The way we understand a text depends on the schemata activated by the text. If our schemata are similar to the writer's schemata, we will comprehend the text fully.

Nuttall (1996: 7) illustrates the working of the schema theory in the following text:

The bus moved along and ended up in the hedge. Several passengers were hurt. The driver was questioned by the police.

While reading these three sentences, the reader relates a schema he has about buses. This includes the fact that (1) buses carry passengers, and that (2) a bus has a driver. Hence, he confirms that the passengers mentioned were in the bus and that the driver was the bus driver. The sentences do not tell him these things; he is making assumptions based on experience.

Another element of his bus schema is that buses run on roads. He assumes that the bus was moving along a road, even though no road is mentioned. The road schema for some readers will include things such as walls, hedges, fences, which mark the limit of a road. Such readers will easily imagine the bus going too fast, away from the road and hitting the hedge that bordered it. Readers whose experience does not include hedges along roads will face difficulty here.

Now, the reader connects to his driver schema. For most of the readers, this will include the idea that the driver is responsible for any accident. Hence, the reader is not surprised to hear that the police questioned him.

Without the right kind of pre-existing knowledge, comprehension becomes very difficult. This is precisely the basic

problem for some foreign language learners. They have to work harder to understand what they read because "they have a different shared knowledge of cultural reference and discourse patterning in their own language and culture from that in the English variety they are dealing with" (cf. Harmer 2005: 200).

Since the schema theory of comprehension uses much processing capacity, it is considered "usually costly in terms of demands on attention" (cf. Samuels 1994: 829). This is even truer for beginning readers. The loss is such for beginners that the link between the decoding process and the comprehension processes may be cut. As Samuels (1994: 821) indicates, "if the reader's attention is on decoding and if attention can be directed at only one process at a time, the comprehension process is not getting done."

It is evident from this discussion that many theories exist on the nature of reading, and that learning reading which began as an "activity" in the past has evolved into an "interactive process" today.

2.3. The Purpose of Reading

We normally read with a purpose. The purpose could be a very general one like reading a story for pleasure, or it could be very specific like reading an instruction manual for a computer.

The purpose will generally determine the right type of reading and the level of comprehension.

This section discusses the sub-skills, supporting skills, tasks related to different ways of reading and varying levels of comprehension, and different types of comprehension and their testing.

2.3.1. The Four Types of Reading

The four main types of reading are skimming, scanning, extensive reading and intensive reading. Williams and Moran (1989: 222) note that these four reading styles are recognized "on the basis of observable behaviour, notably speed of reading."

These different ways of reading are not mutually exclusive. For example, we often skim through a passage to see what it is about before deciding whether it is worth scanning a particular paragraph for the details we are looking for or not.

Harmer highlights the necessity of using sometimes both of the activities while reading a text: "For instance, we may well skim through an article first just to know whether it is worth reading, and then read it through more carefully because we have decided that it is of interest. It is also possible afterwards to scan

the same article in order to note down a figure or a name, which we particularly want to remember" (2004: 69).

It may look strange. Some readers may feel hesitant to "skip" some parts of a text while reading. They have to be convinced of the necessity to do so while skim-and-scan-reading a text.

2.3.1.1. Skimming

Skimming can be described as running our eyes quickly over a text to get the gist of it. It is very important to enable students to skim a text to get a general idea of what it is about by running their eyes over its surface. Gower et al (2005: 95) describe this activity as follows:

> "When reading a newspaper we often glance over the headlines until we find an article that catches our interest. If we are in a hurry, we read through the article quickly – probably not reading every word, may be reading only the first sentence of each paragraph. When we do this, we are actually reading for the general sense or gist of the article. We want to know what is in the article but only on a rather superficial level."

To sum up, skimming through a text means that we do not read each sentence, but rather we run our eyes over a text, reading a few sentences here and there and recognizing certain

words or expressions as clues to the function and ideas of what follows, thereby making it unnecessary to read the text in detail.

Practising skimming requires more careful attention to the text than scanning does. It is an effective activity inside the classroom.

2.3.1.2. Scanning

Scanning is the process of going through a text quickly to find a particular piece of information. When we scan-read, we normally search for a specific piece of information. It is a continuous process of selecting and neglecting instantaneously all the other information until we get the specific piece of information we are looking for.

Scanning simply means, "Retrieving what information is relevant to our purpose" (cf. Grellet 2003: 19).

Gower et al (1995) give an example of scan reading in a real life situation. When we want to know what is on in a particular television channel this evening at 8 o'clock, we look at the TV columns in a newspaper. We are not reading the list of programmes chronologically from the beginning to the end. Instead, our eyes search quickly until they stop at 8:00 pm. Then we start reading in detail. While scan reading, the reader does not

follow the linearity of the passage. He simply lets his eyes roam over the text until he finds what he is looking for, whether it is a name, a date, a word, a number, or a less specific piece of information.

2.3.1.3. Extensive Reading

It is Palmer (1968) who first applied the term extensive reading in second language pedagogy. For him, extensive reading means reading "rapidly" (ibid. 1964: 111). In Palmer's idea of extensive reading, texts are primarily read for the purposes of language learning; but because attention is on the content and not on the language, it could be that texts are also being read for pleasure and information. Extensive reading, thus, takes on a special sense in the context of language teaching.

West (1955) calls extensive reading "supplementary" reading. For him, the aim of extensive reading is "development to the point of enjoyment of the ability to read the foreign language" (ibid. 1960: 301).

Grellet (2003: 4) defines extensive reading as "reading longer texts, usually for one's own pleasure." He considers it a fluency activity, mainly involving "global understanding."

Richards and Schmidt (2002: 193) define extensive reading as "reading in quantity." They insist that it is intended "in order to gain a general understanding of what is read, to develop good reading habits, to build up knowledge of vocabulary and structure, and to encourage a liking for reading."

As such, extensive reading is very much essential for second language learners because it helps to make them confident readers. In addition, it helps them to develop positive attitude to study the new language.

2.3.1.4. Intensive Reading

Palmer defines intensive reading as studying a text "line by line, referring at every moment to our dictionary and our grammar, comparing, analysing, translating, and retaining every expression that it contains" (1964: 111).

Abbott and Wingard (1990: 92) consider intensive reading as "study reading" because the text needs to be "scrutinized carefully to be understood." Grellet (2003: 4) defines intensive reading as "an accuracy activity involving reading for detail." Richards and Schmidt (2002) believe that intensive reading needs a slower speed and a high degree of understanding.

Mowla et al (2004: 90) agree with all these views, when they identify intensive reading as "critical reading or reading for comprehension."

The views presented above open the way of discussing the skills and tasks related to various levels of comprehension.

2.3.2. The Three Levels of Reading Comprehension

Barnett (1991) defines reading comprehension as the level of understanding of a text. It requires motivation, mental framework for holding ideas, concentration and good study techniques. It presupposes that the reader has not only to understand the surface meaning of a text but also to understand what it suggests beyond that. Spears (2003: 20), suggests that comprehension requires "internal translation."

Generally, intelligible reading, inferential reading and critical reading are considered as the three important levels of reading comprehension. Intelligible reading and inferential reading aim at developing the basic skills required to make reading easier and more productive. Critical reading aims at developing the advanced skills required to make reading interpretive and evaluative.

2.3.2.1. Intelligible Reading

Intelligible reading, specifically, refers to vocabulary development and the ability to predict and retrospect while reading a text. Lexical knowledge is the most important requirement for comprehension. Spears (2003: 9) points out that:

> "A good vocabulary is probably the single most important prerequisite for good reading. Every other skill – comprehending, retaining information, making inferences, drawing appropriate conclusions, evaluating – depends on whether you know what the words on the page mean in relation to each other and in their context".

In an intensive reading situation, an intelligent reader discovers the meaning of words by context clues like synonyms, antonyms, examples and illustrations. In the sentence,

"Zidane is a very skilful foot-ball player, but Pedro is inept,"

a good reader will guess the meaning of **inept** as "inefficient" because **inept** and **skilful** are antonyms. However, depending on context clues is not a substitute for looking up exact meanings in the dictionary, nor will every sentence with unfamiliar words provide the reader with a clue. But if a clue is there, it is a useful shortcut to efficient reading.

Yet another ability related to intelligible reading is the ability to introspect and retrospect, which is the ability to think forward and backward recognizing the transition-markers in the text. This gives practice in understanding correctly the author's purpose and his mindset.

2.3.2.2. Inferential Reading

In inferential reading, the focus is on the process and structure of reading. Abilities emphasized in inferential reading include structural analysis and inferential analysis.

Structural analysis relates to identifying the topic, main idea and supporting details; seeing relationships between ideas; learning the patterns of organization; and determining the writer's tone.

Inferential analysis is related to the ability to make inferences from statements. If it is stated, *"Our living room is only 20 sq. ft.; I have twelve brothers and sisters"*. A resourceful reader will infer that the writer has "only very little space for living." Inferential abilities help a reader to interpret a text by going outside it.

2.3.2.3. Critical Reading

Critical reading involves the ability of the reader to think critically and independently while evaluating argumentative and analytical written material.

Writers write with a point-of-view. It is the critical reader's responsibility to find out what it is. A careful reader studies the author's line, notice whether opinions have been supported by facts and reasons, and then decides whether the writer's point-of-view is acceptable or not. Moreover, in argumentative writing, many writers go wrong knowingly or unknowingly because of hasty generalizations and misplaced thinking. A sharp reader with good critical reading skills easily finds out these false arguments.

Reading is, thus, a magical process. The good reader participates fully in the world the writer creates on the page. However, and that is the magical part of it, the good reader is unaware of these things. They occur involuntarily and effortlessly; the reader is "moving along and down the page with the sweep and flow of the words" (cf. Spears 2003: 3).

2.4. Types of Comprehension and Their Testing

According to Day and Park (2005), there are six types of comprehension that are useful in helping our students become interactive readers. Day & Park's taxonomy has been influenced, in particular, by the work of Pearson and Johnson (1972) and Nuttall (1996). These types include:

1. *Literal comprehension*

Literal comprehension refers to an understanding of the straightforward meaning of the text, such as facts, vocabulary, dates, times, and locations. Questions of literal comprehension can be answered directly and explicitly from the text.

2. *Reorganization*

Reorganization is based on a literal understanding of the text; students must organize information from various parts of the text and combine them for additional understanding. For example, we might read at the beginning of a text that *a woman named Maria Kim was born in 1945* and then later at the end of the text that *she died in 1990*. In order to answer this question, *How old was Maria Kim when she died?* the student has to put together two pieces of information situated at different parts of the text.

Questions that address this type of comprehension are important because they teach students to examine the text in its entirety, helping them move from a sentence-by-sentence consideration of the text to a more global view. In our experience, students generally find reorganization questions somewhat more difficult than straightforward literal comprehension questions.

3. *Inference*

Making *inferences* involves more than a literal understanding. Students may initially have a difficult time answering inference questions because the answers are based on material that is in the text but not explicitly stated. An inference involves for students combining their literal understanding of the text with their own previous knowledge and intuition.

4. *Prediction*

The fourth comprehension type, *prediction*, involves for students using both their understanding of the passage and their own knowledge of the topic and related matters in a systematic fashion to determine what might happen next or after an event in the text being read.

Generally two varieties of predictions are used, while-reading and post-reading. While-reading prediction questions differ from post-reading prediction questions in that students can immediately know the accuracy of their predictions by continuing to read the passage. For example, students could be made to read the first two paragraphs of a passage and then be asked a question about what might happen next. They can determine the answer by reading the reminder of the text.

In contrast, post-reading prediction questions generally have no right answers in that students cannot continue to read to confirm their predictions. However, predictions must be supported by information from the text. To illustrate, consider a romance in which the woman and man are married as the novel comes to a close. A post-reading prediction question might be: *Do you think they will stay married? Why or why not?* Depending on a variety of factors including evidence in the text and personal experiences of the reader, either a *yes* or a *no* answer could be justified.

Allowing students make predictions *before* they read the text is a pre-reading activity. This type of prediction cannot be seen as a type of comprehension. Rather, it is an activity that

allows students to realize how much they know about the topic of the text.

5. *Evaluation*

The fifth type of comprehension, *evaluation*, requires the learner to give a global or comprehensive judgment about some aspects of the text. For example, a comprehension question that requires the reader to give an evaluation of this study is: *How will the information in this thesis be useful to you?* In order to answer this type of question, students must use both their literal understanding of the text and their knowledge of the text's topic and related issues. Some students, because of cultural factors, may be reluctant to be critical or to disagree with the printed word. In such circumstances, the teacher might want to model possible answers for evaluation questions, making sure to include both positive and negative aspects.

6. *Personal response*

The sixth type of comprehension, *personal response*, requires readers to respond with their feelings for the text and the subject. The answers are not found in the text; they come strictly from the readers based on their attitude to the text. While no personal responses are incorrect, they cannot be unfounded; they

must relate to the content of the text and reflect a literal understanding of the material.

An example of a comprehension question that requires a personal response is: *What do you like or dislike about this thesis?* Like an evaluation question, students have to use both their literal understanding and their own knowledge to respond.

Also, like evaluation questions, cultural factors may make some students hesitate to be critical or to disagree with the printed word. The teacher guiding the students to various responses is helpful in these situations.

Helping students to move beyond literal understanding of the text, and allowing them to use their own knowledge while reading, can help to make reading an interactive process. It may be challenging, however, for beginning and intermediate students to create their own understanding, if they are accustomed to reading word-for-word and focusing on meaning at the word- and sentence-levels.

When questions move beyond literal understanding, students' answers have to be supported by information in the text. Inference questions can have clearly correct and incorrect responses. In contrast, prediction, evaluation, and personal

response answers are correct as long as they depend primarily on students' reactions to what they read. Evaluative and personal response answers not only depend primarily on students' reactions to what they have read, but they need to reflect a global understanding of the text. Thus, if we would like our students to be able to go beyond a literal understanding of a text, then it is necessary to teach them how to do this and to give them opportunities to work with different types of comprehension.

How comprehension can be approached through a variety of question forms is the focus of the next section.

2.4.1.Forms of questions

Five forms that comprehension questions may take to stimulate students' understanding of texts are presented and discussed. This is not a discussion of all possible ways of questioning students. For example, we do not discuss *fill-in-the-blank* activities or *cloze*, as such activities or tasks may be more appropriate for assessing, and not comprehending.

1. Yes/no questions

Yes/no questions are questions that can be answered with either *yes* or *no*. This is a common form of comprehension

question, but it has the drawback of allowing the student a 50% chance of guessing the correct answer. So when using *yes/no* questions, following them up with other forms of questions is necessary to ensure that the student has understood the text.

Yes/no questions can be used to prompt all six types of comprehension. When *yes/no* questions are used with personal response or evaluation, other forms of questions seem to follow readily, for example using *why/why not?* The follow-up questions may be more useful in activating students than the initial *yes/no* questions.

2. Alternative questions

Alternative questions are two or more *yes/no* questions connected with <u>or</u>. Similar to *yes/no* questions, alternative questions are subject to guessing, so the teacher may want to supplement them with other forms of comprehension questions.

3. True or false

Questions may also take the form of *true* or *false*. While *true* or *false* questions are found frequently in commercially available materials, there is a potential danger in relying exclusively on them. As with *yes/no* questions, students have a 50%

chance of guessing the correct answer. Teachers might simply accept a right answer, failing to ask why the answer is correct or the distracters (the wrong choices) are not correct.

True or *false* questions are difficult to prepare. The false answers must be carefully designed so as to exploit potential misunderstandings of the text. False answers that are obviously incorrect do not help teach comprehension because students do not have to understand the text to recognize them as incorrect.

4. Wh- questions

Questions beginning with *where, what, when, who, how,* and *why* are commonly called *wh*-questions. According to methodologists, these questions are excellent in helping students with a literal understanding of the text, with reorganizing information in the text, and making evaluations, personal responses and predictions. *Wh*-questions are also used as follow-ups to other questions forms, such as *yes/no* and *alternative.*

In particular, *wh*- questions with *how/why* are often used to help students to go beyond a literal understanding of the text. As beginning and intermediate readers are often reluctant to do this, using *how/why* questions can be very helpful in shaping students to become interactive readers.

5. Multiple-choice

Multiple-choice questions are developments of other forms of questions. There can be, for example, a *wh*-question with a choice. Generally, but not always, this form of question has only one correct answer when dealing with literal comprehension.

The *multiple-choice* format may make *wh*-questions easier to answer than no-choice *wh*-questions because they give the students some possible answers. Students might be made to go back to the text to see if any of the choices are specifically discussed, and then make a choice.

Multiple-choice questions may be used most effectively with literal comprehension. They can also be used with prediction and evaluation. However, when used for these types of comprehension, follow-up activities that allow students to explain their choices are essential.

As with *true or false* questions, developing good multiple-choice questions requires careful thought. We have found that developing a question with four choices works best for students with low proficiency in the target language. One of the four, obviously, is the desired answer; the others should be seemingly plausible responses.

2.5. The Stages and Strategies of Teaching Reading

In this section, the focus shifts from the process of reading to the methodology of teaching reading. The various factors discussed in the previous two sections, like the nature of the reading process, purposes for reading and types of reading, are brought together to describe the stages and strategies in teaching a reading lesson.

This is done in five parts. The first part narrates the preliminary issues in planning a reading lesson. The second part lists the pre-reading activities in the classroom. The third part describes the activities at the time of reading. The fourth part lists the post-reading activities. The fifth part describes testing techniques.

2.5.1. Planning a Reading Lesson

Planning is one of the most important things a teacher must do before teaching a lesson. Planning the lesson helps the teacher to present the lesson effectively. In this context, Lindsay and Knight state, "the aim of teaching a lesson is the first thing teachers should bear in mind before putting the plan of the lesson" (2006: 74). The three things to consider while deciding upon the aim of teaching a lesson are integrated approach, flexible framework and global comprehension of the text.

Integrated Approach: One of the important things a teacher has to remember while planning the lesson is that classroom reading has to be very similar to reading in real life situations. In real life, we do not pigeonhole language skills. Our use of language in real life integrates language activities. Therefore, teaching reading need not exclude speaking, reading and writing. We always need the other skills to give variety to learning and to enable the students to learn effectively.

Flexible Framework: Apart from integrating the skills, there is the need for a flexible programme. Different texts need different treatment. Not all of them can be handled within the same framework. The reading programme therefore needs to be flexible. It should include different kinds of text and skill, so that the teacher can respond to unforeseen needs.

Interpretation and response is the core of a text-based lesson. We want students to respond to the text exactly as the writer intended. However, we also want them to exploit the text for their own purposes if they wish, to skip difficulties when their aim is not accuracy, and to respond according to their own preferences. We need to look at ways of achieving these aims.

Global Understanding: The primary objective of reading a text is to achieve a global understanding of it. Nuttall defines

global understanding as the ability "to understand the text as a whole and relate it to personal experience, other sources of knowledge and other texts" (1996: 151).

Methodologists hold the view that readers should start with global understanding and switch between it and the detailed understanding, as each kind of understanding supports the other according to the needs required. Global understanding deserves a great deal of attention throughout, especially in the early stages when it can build up the students' confidence. Nevertheless, it is required to devote more class-work time to detailed understanding for two reasons. First, without complete understanding the reader's response to a text is worth very little. Second, it is what learners find most difficult.

When the teacher has planned his lesson based on these three general guidelines, he is ready for classroom teaching of the lesson. He has to decide upon the pre-reading activities now which will be discussed in the subsequent section.

2.5.2. Pre-Reading Activities

The purpose of pre-reading activities, according to Wallace, is to "raise the readers' knowledge of what they are about to read" (1992: 90). The key to building readers' confidence is to prepare them effectively to read. The teacher can do many things

before reading a text to attract students to it and make it simpler for them to understand. Abbott and Wingard (1990: 93) state "the overriding aim" in doing any class works with learners before they begin to read a text is to create a "positive attitude" in them towards the text to be read. Lindsay and Knight (2006: 75) support this viewpoint. "Pre-reading activities," they state, "are designed to set a task for the learners; help the learners prepare for the task and motivate the learners to read."

Nuttall (1996) recommends a pre-reading activity of six steps: providing a reason for reading, introducing the text, global understanding of the text, breaking up the text to smaller units, dealing with new words and arousing learner curiosity.

We would like to summarize the views of these scholar-teachers under three sub-headings: motivating the students, introducing the text, and vocabulary work.

Motivating the Students: The teacher has to teach texts that are interesting, but this will not always be easy. For one thing, what interests one learner may not interest another who is even of the same age, sex and cultural background. However, the teachers are the best judges of what topics are most interesting and appealing to a particular set of students.

Despite the fact that exploiting an interesting topic in the textbook may contribute towards enjoyable reading, sometimes the teacher may have to teach a text chosen by somebody else. On such occasions, the teacher has to set a task. In the absence of a real reason for reading, the teacher has to give students an imaginary one, so that they can decide when to skim over and when to attend to in detail. The fact of the matter is that students need a lot of practice in adjusting their way of reading to their purpose.

The teacher can also motivate a class by encouraging some anticipation. By starting with longer units and by considering the layout of the text, the accompanying photographs or diagrams, the students can be encouraged to anticipate what they are to find in the text. This is essential in order to encourage their skills of inference, anticipation and deduction.

Introducing the Text: It is always essential to give a brief introduction about a text. A good introduction takes the students in the right direction and gets them into the right mood. It has to be short. A lengthy introduction takes up valuable time and is likely to give away much of the content of the text.

Extensive background details are normally not necessary. However, some texts are difficult to understand if the students do

not know the background. In such cases, it is sensible to give some facts to the students. The basic purpose of an introduction is to remove the cultural and linguistic blocks that students may face while reading a text. The teacher has to do it quickly and cleverly. Moreover, most things that need saying can be elicited from the students, and the best introductions are those that the teacher mostly draws out from the students through short-response questions. The purpose of such questions is to guide the students to the right set of responses, directing their attention to the important points in the text.

Vocabulary Work: Even when the learners are interested in the reading text, they might lose interest if they find the vocabulary too difficult. At this stage, it is necessary to introduce to the students the very essential words help them to understand the text.

It is useful to distinguish between receptive and productive vocabulary. Receptive vocabulary includes the words that are necessary to understand the text, but in general are not useful for the students at their present level. Productive vocabulary includes the words that appear in the text which are useful and therefore should be learnt fully so that the students can put them to active use.

Lindsay and Knight (2006) illustrate the above point with an example which is a text about the life of a farmer. There are some vegetables mentioned in the text, "celeriac" or "marrow", which may distract the students because they do not know them. It is enough to give them a simple explanation that they are types of vegetable. It is not necessary to ensure they practise the words actively. In general, it may be sufficient to give simple definitions, translations, synonyms and illustrations for such words. However, there may be other words in the text, which form a coherent and useful group, for example, a set of words associated with cooking, "fry", "roast", "grill" and "bake". These words have to be taught for their productive use.

Finally, we like to point out that it is of great help in a reading class to integrate the pre-teaching vocabulary stage of the lesson with the introduction stage.

2.5.3. While-Reading Activities

While-reading activities, according to Wallace, train students to be "active and reflective" readers (2003: 93). Students become active and reflective readers if they work in an interactive atmosphere. Researchers identify three kinds of interactive reading activities. These are: the teacher-centred activities, text-centred activities and group-work. These three

kinds can be practised individually or be combined during the teaching of a reading lesson depending upon the students' needs. Each kind is described here in the following section.

Teacher-Centred Activities: In this mode, the teacher controls the learning activities completely. The teacher decides the sequence of work, sets tasks, checks learning and ensures that every student participates in the learning process. Such an interaction keeps the teacher immediately aware of the problems faced by the students. The teacher can stop the students during their reading and correct their mistakes instantaneously. The class management appears to be easier.

Text-Centred Activities: While performing text-centred activities, each student works alone by himself for much of the time. Since reading is essentially a personal activity, this mode is very much suitable for teaching reading. Every student is responsible for his own progress. The teacher keeps a record of each student's work, watches progress and gives support whenever necessary. Since every student should comprehend the text for himself, the teacher should make the reading instructions as complete as possible.

The three tasks suitable for this mode are ordering an event, rearranging jumbled sentences, and consolidating pre-reading activities. These tasks are briefly explained below:

<u>Ordering:</u> the students rearrange a list of events into the right time sequence, for example, a laboratory experiment.

<u>Jumbled Sentences:</u> a story is mixed up and students put the sentences in the correct order to make sense.

<u>Consolidating Pre-Reading Activities:</u> if the students had done prediction, question-forming, brainstorming or discussion activities in the pre-reading stage, it is appropriate, we believe, to use these as the basis for the reading activities. It is better to check with questions like, were your predictions correct? What are the answers to the questions you formed? Is there any other information in the text that you did not discuss earlier? Generally text-centred activities demand meticulous organization from the teacher.

Group-work: In the group activity, the students make joint effort to understand the text. They pool and discuss individual efforts. It gives practice in teamwork. This mode has two advantages. Motivation is generally high. Individuals participate more actively. However such an activity has two disadvantages: the pace and approach may not suit everyone, some students may

not be working. With beginner level students, group-work has to be performed with much supervision by the teacher. However, group-work can be a very positive language activity with responsible learners.

2.5.4. Post-Reading Activities

Post-reading activities always depend on the purpose of reading and the type of information gathered from the text. Post-reading exercises first check students' comprehension and then lead them to a deeper analysis of the text. Nuttall (1996) presents a long list of such extension activities. Much of these activities are concerned with advanced levels of reading efficiency. In the context of preparatory level students, the post-reading strategies involve exploiting the text for teaching other skills, such as writing, speaking, or vocabulary development.

Vocabulary Development: The teacher now deals with some of the new words, which he did not consider at the pre-reading stage. This is a very valuable language work at this stage. The teacher highlights those words that are new to the students and encourages them to guess their meanings from the context. Such activities build students' confidence. They are made to realize that they do not have to look up every new word in the dictionary.

Writing: Most texts are used as a model for a writing assignment. The teacher asks the students to change the ending of a text, or rewrite the last few lines. They can also be asked to give a different title for the text, or to identify the structure of the text; this gives a useful model for their own writing.

Speaking: Students read the text for pronunciation practice. For example, they recast the story into a play and enact it.

Grammar: In this case the lesson is used to teach particular language structures.

Thus, by actively engaging students in pre-reading, guided-reading and post-reading activities, the teacher not only supports students' understanding of the content, but also provides them with opportunities for comprehension, vocabulary and study skills. Most teachers already use these principles and practices. Being thoroughly conversant, these teachers are likely to feel confident as far as their profession is concerned.

The next section of this chapter is concerned with the adaptability of "reading aloud" activity in the classroom. Since reading aloud is considered to be particularly important for learners at the early stages of learning, this issue is discussed in greater detail below.

2.6. Reading Aloud

In the past, reading aloud has always been ignored by teachers and teaching methodologists. They always perceived reading aloud, be it by the teacher or the student, as a taboo in the classroom. However, recent research has provided substantial evidence that reading aloud by the teacher and the students improves students' comprehension and encourages them to read (cf. Amer 1997, Flesher 1988).

When students read by themselves they are likely to read word by word, due to their limited linguistic competence. Anxious to understand the meaning of each word, they break a sentence into meaningless parts. As a result, the sentence loses its structural value and becomes meaningless. Such a habit is a hindrance to self-confidence.

2.6.1. The Teacher Reading Out Loud

Reading aloud by the teacher helps to remove this hindrance. When the teacher reads aloud, the student discovers units of meaning that should be read as phrases ("sense groups") rather than word-by-word. It helps the student to see reading as a continuous, meaningful process of building larger semantic units rather than focusing on the graphics of the letters.

With graded practice, the student achieves self-confidence and a higher level of comprehension. He learns to read larger meaningful units of texts rather than focusing on individual texts. The proper production by the teacher of punctuation pauses, stress and intonation, plays a decisive part in this process. When done with conviction and style, the teacher's reading aloud to a class is an enjoyable activity.

The reading out loud of a text can be extremely motivating and enjoyable for a class, especially when students have been encouraged to predict what they are going to hear at the pre-reading stage. This allows them to hear a clear spoken version of written text, and can be extremely useful.

Nursery rhymes and poems tend to be very interesting as read-aloud texts. These can capture the imagination and mood of the students like nothing else. Nevertheless, in order for this to work, the teacher has to perform the reading in an interesting manner. The teacher should be audible; should read with as much enthusiasm as appropriate for the occasion; should read in a natural rhythm maintaining the normal intonation patterns.

Reading out loud has the additional advantage of "not being susceptible to technical malfunctions, power cuts, or unavailability" (cf. Harmer 2005: 67).

2.6.2. The Student Reading Out Loud

For effective learning to take place, the activity of teacher reading aloud should effortlessly transfer to the activity of student reading aloud. Nuttall (1996: 141) suggests the following strategy: "Read aloud, stopping the story at a tantalizing point. Help the class speculate about what happens next and encourage them to read on by themselves."

The students' reading aloud has another advantage. They learn to speak the target language in a controlled way at first. Reading sentences aloud does not demand the kind of risk-taking fluency which an extempore conversation does. But once students have read out their sentences, the teacher or other students can ask them questions. Psychologically, they are more likely to be able to answer.

Furthermore, reading aloud by students can promote some good reading habits like reading in "sense groups." Nuttall (1996) describes the many stages involved in this procedure. The process is outlined below.

1. Break up the text into manageable sense units of 5 – 10 words. This is done in advance. Initially, the teacher does it. Later, the student is able to do it. For example,

Mark looked out of the window. / It was
raining / and the sky was dark. / 'Why does
it always rain on Saturdays?' he thought. /

2. Once the text is marked, the student who is to read aloud assimilates silently the words in the first sense group.

3. Then he looks at the teacher and the fellow-students.

4. Now he speaks the words without referring to the text; he speaks to the listeners directly and makes every effort to convey the meaning.

5. Then he repeats the same steps for each subsequent sense group.

Practising reading in sense groups, instead of word by word, gives the foundation for improving both speed and comprehension.

In the Libyan context, the only reading that students do is for schoolwork and preparation for tests and more tests. Reading at home, going to libraries, or swapping books with friends is definitely not part of their daily life. Classroom reading alone can provide them exposure to the target language. In addition, our preparatory students certainly need pronunciation input, specifically intonation. In such a situation, reading aloud by the teacher and the student is an indispensable activity inside the

classroom. However, the teacher must be careful not to use this activity too frequently, and never to extend it for more than 15 minutes at a time.

2.7. Testing Techniques:

As they progress through the various stages of learning English, students are usually given formal tests and examinations from time to time (at the end of the year, before starting a new course, etc.). But in addition to these formal kinds of test, the teacher can also give regular informal tests to measure the students' progress.

2.7.1. The Value of Testing:

It is very important to know the purpose for testing. Doff (1988: 257) points out that tests are useful for both teachers and students. Tests tell the *teacher* what the students can and cannot do, and therefore how successful the teaching has been; and they show what areas need to be taught in the future. Tests tell also the *students* how well they are progressing, and where they need to focus their attention as learners. Regular tests also encourage students to take their learning seriously, and give them a series of definite goals to aim towards. Nevertheless, Alderson (1996: 214-18) states that reading tests might be given to students to serve

58

four main reasons. Tests determine *placement* of a student into a reading class; *diagnosis* of a student's reading needs or weaknesses; assessment of a student's *progress* over a given period of time; assessment of a student's *achievement* at the end of a course or year. Nuttall adds another reason for testing reading which is measuring students' *proficiency* in reading.

2.7.2. What to Test:

Deciding what to test is usually based on the purpose of the test and what is taught. Doff (1988) states that tests often focus on grammar and vocabulary; but if we expect students to develop the ability to understand and use English, it is important to test skills as well as knowledge of the language. All the skills are useful in some way: listening, for understanding spoken English on radio, television, etc.; reading, for study purposes (books, journals, etc), and for understanding written instructions in English; speaking, for social contact with foreigners; writing, probably for study purposes.

2.7.3. How to Test:

Alderson (1996: 221-25) indicates that there is "No One Best Method" for doing reading tests. Tests depend on purposes. According to Doff (1988), while testing reading skills, students

should not be asked to write too much; otherwise the test will be unfair to students whose comprehension is good but who are bad at writing. The questions should test comprehension of the main 'message' of the text, so they should focus on main points rather than on individual details. The students should not be able to guess the correct answer without understanding the text. Questions should be reasonably easy for the teacher to set and mark; especially in large classes.

2.8. Conclusion

The first section of this chapter discusses the nature of reading as a language skill. It is known from this discussion that there are many theories on the nature of reading. It is understood that learning reading which began as an "activity" in the past has evolved into an "interactive process" today.

The second section dealt with the sub-skills and supporting skills required for efficient reading. It is stressed that the four main types of reading -- skimming, scanning, extensive reading and intensive reading -- are not mutually exclusive. Any one of them is never used for a long time. In real life, these skills are integrated based on our reading aims.

It is also learnt that intelligible reading and inferential reading are aimed at developing the basic skills required to make reading easier and more productive. Critical reading is aimed at developing the advanced skills required to make reading interpretive and evaluative.

The third section described the methods used by teachers to teach reading. It is learnt that by actively engaging students in pre-reading, guided-reading and post-reading activities, the teacher not only supports students' understanding of the content, but also provides them with opportunities for comprehension, vocabulary and study skills.

The fourth section identified the essential nature of "reading aloud" activity in our classrooms. The classroom alone provides our students with a longer exposure to hear, speak, read and write English. Our students especially need pronunciation input, specifically intonation. In such a situation, reading aloud by the teacher and the student is an indispensable activity inside the classroom.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

3.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology and the procedures of the study. It addresses some issues such as: the place of the study, the population of the study, data collection tools and data analysis.

In order to confirm genuineness of data, it was collected from two main sources, classroom observation and teachers' opinions. These two main sources were of great help for us to understand what was going on in the classroom, how the reading lesson was taught by the teacher and what kinds of strategies the teachers used to simplify and make the reading lesson a happy learning experience.

These procedures are discussed here in detail in three stages:

Selection of Setting

Classroom Observation

Teacher Responses

3.2. Selection of Setting

The data used in this study was collected from the teachers of Class Nine in 15 preparatory schools in Sirte city centre during the academic year 2007-2008. Class Nine is the fifth year of English language teaching in the Libyan school curriculum. The researcher believes that this is the crucial period in the students' education as far as teaching English as a foreign language is concerned. In this class, English is taught three periods a week. Each period is of 45 minute duration. All language skills have to be taught within the time allocated in the weekly schedule.

Classrooms in these schools are crowded. Often, classes have more than thirty-five students. Students get opportunities to use English only in choral practice drills, and while answering questions.

The researcher has made a random selection of three preparatory schools in Sirte town and approached the authorities of these schools seeking permission to observe Class Nine students for a few days. They gladly agreed and gave us the necessary access and facilities.

3.3. Classroom Observation

Different lessons of Class Nine are observed during the academic year 2007-2008, in three preparatory schools in Sirte. The observation continued from 11-11-2007 to 26-2-2008. The researcher observed three sets of Class Nine students in three schools for at least five times. To ensure objective and reliable observation, she visited the very classrooms allocated to her. Whenever the teaching session was not on reading, the researcher slipped away and she visited the classroom on a later date. Each set of the students were observed for at least five reading sessions. To make her observation useful, the researcher divided teaching into different categories, so that she can observe on specifically different aspects of teaching:

- Teaching procedures.
- Use of teaching aids.
- Management of the class.
- Command of English.

The observations made are related to pre-reading activities like interest building, removing semantic and cultural blocks in the text to be read; while-reading activities like the teacher and the students reading out loud, skimming and scanning; post-

reading tasks like integrating language skills, and consolidating learning.

The observation carried on for about three months. The books employed are ***English for Libya-Preparatory 3***, for grade nine. Different reading items were observed like: Unit 2 "Around the house", section eight "Safety in the home" Quintana (1999:10), Unit 3 "Town and Country" section five and six "Homes around the world" Quintana (1999:14-15), and section seven "The city man and the country man" Quintana (1999:16), Unit 4 "Planning Ahead" section eight ":The ant and the grasshopper" Quintana (1999:19), and Unit 5 "Having Visitors", section seven "Food from around the world" Quintana (1999:25).

In all the classes observed, teachers used almost the same methods, techniques and strategies. All the teachers start the reading lesson with the students' books closed and the new words of the reading text on the board. The teachers read the new words word by word and ask the students about the meaning of each word. Sometimes students give the meaning of the new words in direct translation, if they failed to give the right meaning, teachers would correct them by giving the appropriate meaning. No audio-visual aids are used in illustrating meaning except the board. Teachers read the new words from the board and students

repeat what they hear. Then they practice individually. 5-10 minutes are often spent on this task. It is noted that the new words are not used in sentences to show how they can be utilized.

The next step, students are asked to open their text books on the lesson's page. Teachers read the title and translate it into Arabic and starts reading the passage without any motivation or warming-up activities. First, the text is read in parts and every phrase or sentence is translated. Then it is read again completely at a stretch before students begin to read. Although silent reading is not practiced at all during the all lessons observed, students are often given an opportunity to read the text aloud. Generally more than five students practice reading during the lesson.

The questions following the reading text are usually answered by students with the teacher's help. At the end of the lesson, teachers sometimes give students homework which is often from the workbook. However, sometimes the lesson's time finishes while the students are still reading.

In tests, the first question usually concerns reading in which students are asked to read the text and answer the comprehension questions that follow the text. This text has been presented before in the course book, therefore in most cases students know the answer even without reading the text.

The researcher has prepared an observation work-sheet of 15 points. Serial numbers 1 – 3 are concerned with pre-reading activities; 4 – 6 deal with while-reading activities; 7 – 15 are concerned with class-room management during and after reading (Appendix - A).

3.4. Teacher Responses

Depending on the observations made during class room visits, the researcher have short-listed important and crucial classroom factors. Accordingly, she prepared a questionnaire encompassing these problems to obtain opinions from the teachers.

Questionnaires are widely used in the field of research, particularly to put forward enquiries concerning attitudes and opinions. In this context, Nunan (1992: 143) points out the advantages of using a questionnaire as follows:

> "Questionnaires are relatively popular and an attractive means of collecting data. They enable the researcher to collect data in field settings, and the data themselves are more amenable to quantification than discursive data such as free-form fields, participant observers' journal, and the transcripts of oral language".

3.4.1. The Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of a brief introduction about the research; some questions of personal information about the teacher answering the questions; and 30 core questions related to classroom teaching strategies and the respondent's opinions to these strategies (Appendix - B).

The purpose of the introduction is to emphasize the responsibility of the teacher in answering the questions accurately so that the information furnished is valuable for analysis.

The questions of personal information like name, age, qualifications and teaching experience do not serve any immediate aim. They are merely needed for reference purposes. However, these questions do provide a psychological input. Getting ready to answer these questions, the teacher mentally gets set to answer the core questions.

The questionnaire consists of 30 core questions linked to the teaching of reading. They relate to motivation aspects like adoptability of the prescribed texts and preparing the learners to the reading task; relevance of reading out aloud activities; acceptability of memorizing; and concepts related to the time, quantity and methods of teaching new words.

Most of the questions are four-point scale questions requiring the answer **often / sometimes / rarely / never** and three-point scale questions need the answers of **agree / partially agree / do not agree.** These questions are arranged in three parts. The first part (1 - 19) is related directly to classroom practices. These questions require the answer **often / sometimes / rarely / never.** The second part (20 - 27) is related to eliciting the teachers' opinions on the adoptability of these practices. These questions require the answer **agree / partially agree / do not agree.** The third part (28 - 30) is of very general nature. These questions need free answers.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction:

The questionnaire was administrated to 30 English language teachers of Class Nine in the basic education stage in Sirte city centre. Twenty-six copies of the questionnaire are analysed in this chapter and four copies are dropped-out.

4.2. Teachers' Personal Information

The responding teachers' personal information was needed for the analysis. It consisted of furnishing information like name (which was optional), qualification, age, years of experience, sex (male or female) and nationality. All the teachers who answered the questionnaire are Libyan nationals. All of them are females. Thirteen of the teachers (50%) have 1-3 years of experience in teaching English, six teachers (23.08%) have 4-6 years of experience, five teachers (19.23%) have 7-9 years of experience, and two teachers (7.69%) have an experience of 20 years. Twenty-four of the teachers (92.30%) are under-graduates (B.A) in English; two of them (7.69%) hold a Special Teaching

Diploma. Their age ranges between 22 – 41 years. The eldest of them is 41 years of age and the youngest 22 years of age.

4.3. Analysis of the Questionnaire

The responses of the 26 teachers for the 30 questions are analyzed here. Each question is analyzed on the following four point structure. First, the question is restated. Second, the purpose of the question is explained. Third, the responses of the teachers are consolidated, analyzed, and a summary of the results obtained. Fourth, the analysis is summarized visually in a Table for each question.

Q1. What do you think of the reading comprehension passages included in the text-book you are teaching?

The aim of this question is to collect teachers' views about the reading comprehension passages included in the course book they teach. Even though the teacher has no control over the choice of text books, it helps to be aware of their good and bad points so that the teacher can exploit them effectively; supplement them with additional materials if necessary. So the teacher needs to evaluate passages for reading development.

Out of twenty-six teachers, sixteen teachers (61.54%) said that the reading comprehension passages included in the course

book are **interesting and they suit their students' level**, eight teachers (30.77%) said that the passages are **interesting but do not suit their students' level**, two teachers (7.69 %) said that the passages are **not interesting but they suit their students' level**, none said that these passages are **not interesting and do not suit their students' level.**

Options	Interesting and they suit my students' level	Interesting but they do not suit my students' level	Not interesting but they suit my students' level	Not interesting at all and they do not suit my students' level
No. of Teachers	16	8	2	0
Percentage %	61.54%	30.77%	7.69%	0%

Table One

Q2. When do you explain the title of the reading passage?

Methodologists are divided on their opinions of whether one should begin with global understanding and move towards detailed understanding or begin with detailed understanding and go to global understanding. Nevertheless, the title and pictures are helpful to "predict" what the reading text is about. In such a context, this question becomes relevant.

Twenty-two teachers (84.61%) state that the **pre-reading stage** is the appropriate time for explaining the title of the reading passage; one teacher (3.85%) wants to explain the title of the passage **while skimming;** one teacher (3.85%) wants to explain it **while scanning;** two (7.69%) say that they explain the title of the reading passage **at the post-reading stage**.

Options	At the Pre-Reading Stage	While Skimming	While Scanning	At the Post-Reading Stage
No. of Teachers	22	1	1	2
Percentage %	84.61%	3.85%	3.85%	7.69%

Table Two

Questions 3 – 4 are concerned with reading out loud by the teacher and Question 5 relates to reading out loud by the students.

Q3. How often do you speed up when you read the text for the first time in class?

Generally, a reading passage is read more than once in a classroom. Since subsequent readings concentrate on intensive reading and language exercises, it is always preferable to speed up during the first reading. Some readers read so slowly that a text read aloud fast is actually too fast for them. However,

following the text with their eyes while listening, improves both speed and comprehension. So, speeding up during first reading is a very useful technique. How often do the teachers do it?

Five teachers (19.23%) **often** speed up when they read the text for the first time, nine teachers (34.62%) **sometimes** speed up, and four teachers (15.38%) **rarely** speed up, while eight teachers (30.77%) **never** speed up when they read the text aloud for the students for the first time.

Options	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
No. of Teachers	5	9	4	8
Percentage %	19.23%	34.62%	15.38%	30.77%

Table Three

Q4. How many times do you read the text in the class?

Since the first reading of the text is mainly concerned with comprehension, the teachers' reading out aloud for the second time can help students "listen" to good pronunciation and intonation. However, when the passage is read out aloud by the teacher more than two times, it leads to loss of precious classroom time. Hence, if the text has to be read by the teacher more than twice, this has to be done very cautiously and after

much thought. The purpose of this question is to find out whether the teachers read the text more than once in the class.

The analysis shows that one teacher (3.85%) reads the text **one time** to the class, 13 teachers (50%) read the text **two times** to the class, seven teachers (26.92%) read it **three times**, and five of them (19.23%) read the text aloud in the class **four times and more.**

Options	Once	Twice	Three times	Four times and more
No. of Teachers	1	13	7	5
Percentage%	3.85%	50%	26.92%	19.23%

Table Four

Q5. Are the students given opportunity to read the text?

Teaching methodologists have two different opinions on reading aloud by the students. Nuttall states that reading aloud by students is "not of much practical use", so "oral presentation must be treated cautiously" (1996:202). Nevertheless, reading aloud by students has three great advantages. Since the students are already familiar with the content and meaning of the text, their reading aloud now can help to consolidate their understanding. It can also help to concentrate on pronunciation.

Above all, reading aloud by the student, with the appreciation of the teacher now and then, is a psychological input. The student feels a sense of participation, achievement and self-confidence which might attract him to more silent reading.

The aim of this question is to find out whether students are given this opportunity to read aloud during classroom teaching.

All the 26 teachers (100%) make the students read the text in the class. Thirteen teachers (50%) allow **3-5 students** to read out loud in the class, nine teachers (34.62%) allow **6-8 students** to read aloud in each reading lesson, and four teachers (15.38%) allow **9-11 students** to read aloud.

Options	Yes	Number of Students			No
		3-5	6-8	9-11	
No. of Teachers	26	13	9	4	0
Percentage%	100%	50%	34.62%	15.38%	0%

Table Five

Questions 6 – 8 are related to the teaching of new words while the reading lesson is in progress.

Q6. When do you explain the meaning of new words in the text?

In each reading lesson, there are some new words. All these words are not equally important. Some of these words can be ignored. For example, Receptive vocabulary, those words that really stand in the way of comprehension but not necessary for active use, need only be discussed in the pre-reading stage. Meanwhile Active vocabulary, words which are essential for regular use, has to be taught while scan-reading the lesson or during the post-reading period.

Twenty-one teachers (80.76%) explain the new vocabulary **at the pre-reading stage**, one teacher (3.85%) explains new vocabulary **while skimming,** one teacher (3.85%) explains new words **while scanning,** and three teachers (11.54%) explain the new words at the **post-reading stage.**

Options	At the Pre-Reading stage	While Skimming	While Scanning	At the Post-Reading Stage
No. of Teachers	21	1	1	3
Percentage%	80.76%	3.85%	3.85%	11.54%

Table Six

Q7. How often do you explain the meaning of new words?

The new words that appear in a reading lesson need to be explained but not too often. Although teaching new vocabulary is indispensable, it is unrealistic to think that every new word has to be taught, re-taught and taught again.

Reading is a constant process of guessing. The reader must be encouraged to figure out the meaning of the word by analyzing its word parts. If not, the context – the way the word is used in its particular setting – may give a reasonably accurate meaning.

The purpose of this question is to know how often the teachers explain new words.

Twenty teachers (76.92%) claim that they **often** explain the new words; six teachers (23.08%) say that they **sometimes** explain the new words.

Options	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
No. of Teachers	20	6	0	0
Percentage %	76.92%	23.08%	0%	0%

Table Seven

Q8. How often do you directly translate the English words into Arabic?

The method of explaining new words differs among teachers. They use illustrations, demonstrations, definitions and the translation method. The use of translation is a popular method because it attempts to teach the unknown from the known. However, while learning a new word, knowing its meaning alone is not important. The student should learn to use it in active language situation. Hence, in addition to giving the meaning of the new word in another language, the teacher should give the English synonyms for the word and illustrate its use in sentences. The main idea behind this question is to find out how often and how effectively the teachers use the translation method when they deal with new words.

It can be seen from Table Eight, that eight teachers (30.77%) **often** translate the new words into Arabic, 14 teachers (53.84%) **sometimes** translate the new words into Arabic, three teachers (11.54%) **rarely** use this method, and one teacher (3.85%) **never** translates the new English words into Arabic.

Options	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
No. of Teachers	8	14	3	1
Percentage%	30.77%	53.84%	11.54%	3.85%

Table Eight

Q9. When do you explain the new grammatical structures that are presented in the reading passage?

A reading lesson provides a good occasion for the contextual teaching of grammatical structures. Generally it is done as a post-reading activity. The teachers might differ in their approach. This question is intended to ascertain the point in time they availed to teach grammar.

Seven teachers (26.92%) explain the new grammatical structures **before the reading task,** five teachers (19.23%) do this **during the reading task,** four teachers (15.38%) prefer to do this **after the reading task,** and ten teachers (38.46%) do grammar work **in a separate grammar lesson.**

Options	Before the reading task	During the reading task	After the reading task	In a separate grammar lesson
No. of teachers	7	5	4	10
Percentage%	26.92%	19.23%	15.38%	38.46%

Table Nine

Q10. How long do your students take to read aloud a passage of 50 words?

Practicing reading in each lesson helps to make students read fast and more fluently. This question attempts to find from teachers' the time their students take to read a short text loudly.

It can be seen from Table Ten that six teachers (23.08%) say that their students take from **3 to 4 minutes** to read aloud a text of 50 words, fifteen teachers (57.69%) say that their students take **more than five minutes** to read similar text, whereas five teachers (19.23%) say that their students **cannot read at all**.

Options	From 1 to 2 minutes	From 3 to 4 minutes	More than 5 minutes	They cannot read at all
No. of Teachers	0	6	15	5
Percentage%	0%	23. 08%	57.69%	19.23%

Table Ten

Q11. While the students are reading the text aloud, do you pay attention to the way they pronounce words?

In foreign language teaching, pronunciation is the one area where it is generally agreed that imitation is the essence of the learning process. Teachers can direct their students' attention to sound differences and give them plenty of opportunities to listen and practice. This question tries to find out the teachers' responses on this issue.

The majority of the teachers, twenty-four of them (92.31%) claim that they **often** pay attention to the way students pronounce words while they read the text, whereas only two (7.69%) say that they **sometimes** pay attention to students' pronunciation.

Options	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
No. of Teachers	24	2	0	0
Percentage%	92.31%	7.69%	0%	0%

Table Eleven

Q12. How often do you point out the significance of intonation patterns to your students?

Spoken English does not involve only the pronunciation of words; it also includes articulation of sentences. Students should know how to raise and lower the pitch of their voice. The main purpose of this question is to find out how often teachers draw students' attention to the intonation patterns while they read the text.

Twelve teachers (46.15%) say that they **often** point to the intonation patterns during the reading lesson, whereas fourteen teachers (53.85%) say that they **sometimes** do that.

Options	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
No. of Teachers	12	14	0	0
Percentage%	46.15%	53.85%	0%	0%

Table Twelve

Q13. How often do you use English to communicate with your students in the class?

Speaking only in English inside the class during English language lessons plays a vital role on the students' easy access to the language and its comprehension. It enables the students to communicate with the teacher in English. How often do the teachers do this?

Twelve teachers (46.15%) use English **often** to communicate with their students in class, another set of twelve teachers (46.15%) use English **sometimes** inside the class, one teacher (3.85%) **rarely** uses English, and one teacher (3.85%) **never** uses English to communicate with her students in the class.

Options	Often	sometimes	rarely	never
No. of teachers	12	12	1	1
Percentage%	46.15%	46.15%	3.84%	3.84%

Table Thirteen

Q14. When a student commits an error while he/she is reading a passage, what is the appropriate time, in your opinion, for correcting it?

Errors especially in the language classroom are a natural part of the learning process. When the students read a text aloud they make mistakes like not pronouncing a word correctly or not breaking on punctuation pauses. The teacher should correct such mistakes without interrupting the reading activity.

The best time for correction is after the student has finished reading. This question attempts to find out when the teachers correct such mistakes. Twenty-three teachers (88.46%) say that they correct students' errors **immediately** while reading; three teachers (11.54%) say that they correct students' mistakes **after they finish reading.**

Options	Immediately	After she/he finishes reading	Ignore it altogether
No. of Teachers	23	3	0
Percentage%	88.46%	11.54%	0%

Table Fourteen

Q15. When the students finish reading, how often do you check their understanding of the reading passage?

The primary purpose of reading is for comprehension. Other language activities are secondary in a reading class. After

students finish reading, teachers need to check their understanding of the reading passage.

Teachers can ask a question that students cannot answer without understanding the text. It is particularly interesting to encourage comparisons between several interpretations of a text which will lead to a discussion and probably a need to refer to the text to check. Teachers should encourage such activities.

This question tries to identify how frequently the teachers check students' comprehension.

Table Fifteen shows that fifteen teachers (57.69%) **often** check pupils' comprehension of what they read; ten teachers (38.46%) say that they **sometimes** check their pupils' comprehension, while only one teacher (3.85%) says that she **never** checks her pupils' comprehension of the text after they finish reading it.

Options	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
No. of Teachers	15	10	0	1
Percentage%	57.69%	38.46%	0%	3.85%

Table Fifteen

Q16. Who answers the reading comprehension questions on the reading passage?

Usually comprehension questions follow reading texts. The above question tries to find out who answers these questions in the class.

Two teachers (7.69%) say that **they answer** the questions themselves, four teachers (15.39%) say that the **students answer** them, and twenty teachers (76.92%) claim that it is a **combined activity** of the teacher and the students. None of the teachers neglected the comprehension exercises.

Options	I myself answer them	The students answer them	Both the students and I	They are not important so I neglect them
No. of Teachers	2	4	20	0
Percentage%	7.69%	15.39%	76.92%	0%

Table Sixteen

Q17. How often do you give homework to the students?

One way of evaluating students' comprehension and developing their English skills is by making them do homework,

usually related to the lesson. This makes them use English outside the classroom.

The main aim of this question is to know if teachers give homework to students.

Fifteen teachers (57.69%) say that they **often** give homework to their students; ten teachers (38.46%) say that they **sometimes** ask students to do homework, while only one teacher (3.85%) says she **rarely** gives her students homework. None of the teachers said that they **never** give home-work to the students.

Options	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
No. of Teachers	15	10	1	0
Percentage%	57.69%	38.46%	3.85%	0%

Table Seventeen

Q18. Do you make all of your students understand the reading passage before shifting to introduce a new one?

It is likeable that every one of the students benefits from classroom activities. But the level of intelligence differs among people. If some students did not understand some aspects of a passage, a teacher would not need to worry. When the weak

student is exposed continuously to reading exercises in the later lessons, it will bring out the dormant skills embedded in him at times of necessity.

This question aims at knowing whether teachers make certain that all the students have understood the reading text before shifting to introduce a new one.

Ten teachers (38.46%) claim that they **often** make all the class understand the reading lesson, fourteen teachers (53.85%) say that they **sometimes** make all the students understand the text, while two teachers (7.69%) say that they **rarely** make sure all the class understands the reading text before shifting to introduce a new one.

Options	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
No. of Teachers	10	14	2	0
Percentage%	38.46%	53.85%	7.69%	0%

Table Eighteen

Q19. Given the time factor, if only 50% of your students have understood the reading passage, will you be prepared to introduce a new one?

This question attempts to find out what teachers do if half of the class understood the lesson and the other half did not understand. Does the teacher repeat the lesson?

Thirteen teachers (50%) say they **often** do not wait, they move to a new lesson; nine teachers (34.61%) say that they **sometimes** move to a new lesson; four teachers (15.39%) say that if only half the class had understood the lesson, they **rarely** move to a new lesson.

Options	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
No. of Teachers	13	9	4	0
Percentage%	50%	34.61%	15.39%	0%

Table Nineteen

Q20. Teaching interesting reading texts can simplify comprehension. Do you agree?

Selecting interesting reading texts can help to enhance students' comprehension and increase motivation. This, in turn, will lead to the development of reading speed and fluency.

This question aims at getting teachers' views on this statement.

Twenty-three teachers (88.46%) **agree** that interesting reading texts can simplify comprehension; whereas three teachers (11.54%) say that they **partially agree** with this statement.

Options	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
No. of Teachers	23	3	0
Percentage%	88.46%	11.54%	0%

Table Twenty

Q21. While reading the text, students can expand their vocabulary, grammar and background knowledge. Do you agree?

Reading is an excellent source of knowledge. Apart from comprehension, reading is the most powerful and easiest way to integrate language skills like vocabulary, grammar and knowledge. What do teachers think about this statement?

Twenty-two teachers (84.61%) **agree** that students can expand their vocabulary, grammar and knowledge during reading lessons; three teachers (11.54%) **partially agree**; while one teacher (3.85%) **disagrees** with this statement.

Options	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
No. of Teachers	22	3	1
Percentage%	84.61%	11.54%	3.85%

Table Twenty-One

Q22. Reading aloud is helpful for the students in the early stages of learning a language. Do you agree?

Reading aloud by the teacher at the early stages of learning the language is very important, and recommended by many methodologists. It helps students to read larger semantic units rather than focusing on graphic cues.

Twenty-two teachers (84.61%) **agree** that reading aloud is very important and helpful especially for students at early stages of language learning; four teachers (15.39%) **partially agree** with this statement; none of the teachers **disagrees.**

Options	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
No. of Teachers	22	4	0
Percentage%	84.61%	15.39%	0%

Table Twenty-Two

Q23. The pictures presented in the reading text have no effect on the students' comprehension. Do you agree?

Teachers can ask students to look at the pictures which are presented with the reading texts and make them predict what the text is about.

In the framing of this question, a methodological trick common in designing of questionnaires is applied. It has an inverted structure. The purpose is to check whether the teachers are answering the questions carefully or not. The responses show that the teachers are alert on this inversion.

The question attempts to find out the position of the teachers on the instructional validity of the pictures presented with reading comprehension passages.

Only five teachers (19.23%) **agree** with the statement that the pictures have no effect on the students' comprehension; six teachers (23.08%) **partially agree** with the statement; and fifteen teachers (57.69%) **disagree** with the statement that the pictures have no effect on the comprehension of the text.

Options	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
No. of Teachers	5	6	15
Percentage%	19.23%	23.08%	57.69%

Table Twenty-Three

Q24. Preparing the learners to read is vital in building up their confidence; it consequently enables them to read efficiently. Do you agree?

It is important to motivate learners to read, it is essential to build their confidence which can ultimately lead them to improve their reading ability. What do the teachers think?

Twenty-two teachers (84.61%) **agree** that students can read efficiently if the students are properly prepared for reading, three teachers (11.54%) **partially agree** with this concept, whereas one teacher (3.85%) **disagrees** with the statement that preparing learners to read will build up their confidence in reading.

Options	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
No. of Teachers	22	3	1
Percentage%	84.61%	11.54%	3.85%

Table Twenty-Four

94

Q25. During reading the text, it is very important to explain all the new words found in the reading text. Do you agree?

Teaching all the new words and structures in the text before the reading begins, is generally considered to be the dullest part of reading classes. According to Nuttall, "the new language would often be more easily and effectively learnt during the process of reading" (1996:159-60). The teacher may pre-teach a few key words, while others can be reserved for practice in "guessing" meaning from context.

The purpose of this question is to find out teachers' opinions on the concept of teaching vocabulary in a reading classroom.

Nineteen teachers (73.07%) **agree** with the statement that it is very important for teachers to explain all the new words in the reading text; three teachers (11.54%) **partially agree** with this statement; while four teachers (15.39%) completely **disagree** with this view.

Options	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
No. of Teachers	19	3	4
Percentage%	73.07%	11.54%	15.39%

Table Twenty-Five

Q26. Introducing the text before starting to work on it is very helpful in teaching reading. Do you agree?

It is often helpful to introduce a text before starting work on it. This introduction will route the students' existing knowledge in the right direction by activating relevant schemata in their minds. This will make them feel interested in reading this particular text.

This question is included to reflect the teachers' point of view in relation to motivational pre-reading activities.

Twenty-four teachers (92.31%) **agree** that introducing the reading text is very helpful in teaching reading; two teachers (7.69%) **disagree** with this outlook.

Options	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
No. of Teachers	24	0	2
Percentage%	92.31%	0%	7.69%

Table Twenty-Six

Q27. Asking the learners to memorize the content of the reading texts is very helpful in the process of teaching reading. Do you agree?

In the real world, the purpose of reading is not to memorize an author's point of view or to summarize text content, but rather to see into another mind, or to mesh new information into what one already knows. Memorizing is an ability not directly connected to any cognitive language skill.

However, seventeen teachers (65.38%) **agree** that memorization is very important in teaching reading, six teachers (23.08%) **partially agree**, three teachers (11.54%) **disagree** with the observation that memorizing is helpful in the teaching of reading.

Options	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
No. of Teachers	17	6	3
Percentage%	65.38%	23.08%	11.54%

Table Twenty-seven

Q28. What, from your experience, are the major problems encountered by your students while learning to read a text in English?

Although Class-Nine students have studied English for two years before this stage, they still have problems with reading. Teachers must know what problems their students have while their reading-learning process in order to find how to solve them. This question is put forward to our subjects in an attempt to collect most of our students' problems with reading to find out the suitable solutions for them.

Most teachers about **(50%)** say that *pronunciation* is the biggest problem for their students. They say that most students cannot pronounce words correctly even when they repeat them after the teacher. They feel that this problem is due to the effect of Arabic language on the pronunciation of English words and sentences; and to the students' first years of learning English

which are not as effective as they must be. As what other teachers say that most of their students have a negative attitude about English, that it is a very difficult subject and this idea is usually reinforced if they are faced with new difficult words, that they do not know their meanings, while they read. As a result, they do not exert any efforts to improve their English believing that they cannot be improved. Some students do not like to read aloud in the class, because they feel shy of committing mistakes while they read.

Reading exposes learners to vocabulary and language they are not familiar with. According to some teachers, students often worry about failing to understand everything and try to use the e-dictionary or ask the teacher about every strange word they find in the text. Nevertheless, looking up all the unknown words in the text is very slow and boring. Students often need a lot of time just to get past a few sentences. Sometimes even the dictionary does not help. They say that they sometimes do understand the meaning of all the individual words in the sentence, but the overall meaning is still unclear. It discourages them from further reading because they feel the effort invested is not worth the outcome.

Q29. How do you help the students who have got some problems with reading?

Teachers try to solve most of their students' problems and try to improve their reading ability using different techniques. This question is an attempt to find out what efforts teachers exert to solve such problems.

Concerning the students reading problems, some teachers say that they use simple audiovisual aids in teaching new words, so that students can memorize and remember them easily. Other teachers believe that giving students more opportunity to read inside the class can play an important role in solving students' reading problems. According to some teachers, students should practice the four types of reading and thus their reading can be improved. To encourage students - as some teachers say – to read and read either in class or outside is effective for students to overcome some difficulties they face. Another solution is to ask students to learn new vocabulary from each lesson and show them easy ways to do that. Sometimes it is also useful to look for a link between reading skills learners have already built in their first language and reading in the foreign language. However if students want to improve their reading skills, it is important for them to keep in regular contact with the language.

Q30. How do you integrate reading with the other skills in your teaching?

Integrated approach, according to Richards and Schmidt (2002: 262), is "the teaching of the language skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking, in conjunction with each other, as when a lesson involves activities that relate listening and speaking to reading and writing". This question is asked to know how teachers integrate reading with the teaching of the other skills.

Most teachers think that learners do much more reading during the lesson than we sometimes realize. It is often the type of reading that has been integrated with other skills. For example, they often need to read instructions before they start doing a speaking or listening exercise, or they make notes and read them to be able to report back. According to those teachers there is a natural partnership between reading and writing.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Summary

The main purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching strategies used by teachers when teaching reading. It focused on preparatory level students in Sirte town. Its specific aim was to improve the students' reading skills at this particular stage of education. The study was carried out on the hypothesis that Libyan students respond inadequately to reading texts and in order to treat this inadequacy their reading habits need to be improved in the formative stages of their education.

To test this hypothesis, two approaches were employed: classroom observation and teacher's responses. The researcher observed a class reading session and administered the questionnaire to the concerned teachers.

The results obtained from the analysis showed that though the texts used in the classroom were extracted from ready-made material prepared due to update approaches, the teaching methods used by the teachers were old fashioned and outdated. For

instance, the students spend too much time on reading practice at the expense of the other parts of the lesson. Moreover, the reading text often focuses on teaching vocabulary and grammar rather than practicing reading skills. Thereby, creating the wrong impression that all reading texts have to be read intensively. Grellet (2003:10) calls this, "squeezing the text dry."

To make students get involved in what they are reading, they must be made to feel that they are reading in a real, meaningful, global context. They must be made to feel that they are engaged in factual communication. Keeping this in mind, based on the results obtained from data analysis, the following recommendations for the improvement of teaching reading in the preparatory classes are made.

These recommendations relate to such core areas like motivating and preparing the students to the reading task; reading aloud by the teacher and the students; practices related to the duration, quantity and methods of teaching new words; reading at flexible speed; and homework.

5.2. Format of Recommendations

Each of the following recommendations has two parts. The first relates to summary of findings, the second to recommendations.

First, while presenting summary of findings for each core area, questions of similar nature are grouped together. For example, while analyzing the quality of texts taught, **Q 1** concerned with classroom practice **(What do you think of the reading comprehension passages included in the text-book you are teaching?)** is grouped together with a related question **Q 20** on teacher opinion **(Teaching interesting reading texts can simplify comprehension?)**. In this way, validity of data and findings is ascertained.

Second, based on the findings, recommendations are presented.

5.3. Recommendations

5.3.1. Quality of Textbooks

<u>Findings</u>: Teachers agree that interesting reading texts can facilitate comprehension. They find the reading lessons they teach of higher level requiring higher tasks which do not match their students' level.

<u>Recommendations</u>: Teachers need to supplement such texts with additional information during pre-reading stages to remove cultural / linguistic blocks. However, teachers need to know that the level of difficulty of a text is not important here. What is

important is the degree of complexity of the tasks the students are asked to perform in relation to the text. The difficulty of a reading exercise depends on the activity which is required of the students rather than on the text itself. In other words, a teacher should grade exercises, rather than texts.

5.3.2. Title of the Reading Text

Findings: Teachers discuss the title of the reading passage at the pre-reading stage. Generally, a title refers to the general subject of the text and point-of-view of the author. The title is a constituent part of the reading text. It might be appropriate if the teacher discusses the title in the pre-reading stage. It will prepare the students get set for the reading task.

No recommendations.

5.3.3. Teacher Reading Aloud

Findings: All the teachers read the text aloud in the class. They are divided in their practice concerning the number of times the text is read aloud by them. Some of them read the text only once or twice in the class. Many of them read the text more than twice in the class.

Recommendations: It is essential that the teacher reads the text aloud in the class. When the teacher does that he creates

interest in the students' mind. But this has to be practised cautiously. It is necessary that the teacher reads aloud the passage twice in the class. First reading is carried out for general comprehension and for practicing skimming. Second reading is conducted for detailed comprehension. Reading more than twice will result in more teacher talk and control, loss of student interest, and ultimately, loss of time assigned to the English language lesson.

5.3.4. Students Reading Aloud and their Reading Speed

Findings: All the teachers do give opportunities to some students to read the reading passage aloud. Between three and eleven students may get the opportunity of reading in every reading session. They read at incredibly low speed. On an average, each student takes about five minutes to read a small passage of 50 words. Reading aloud by the teacher and the students in the classroom is carried out as a convention rather than employing a strategy of reading.

Recommendations: To make students read aloud, undoubtedly, is a very useful technique. Some students may read so slowly and hesitantly. However, following the text with their eyes while reading, gradually improves both speed and comprehension.

But reading aloud has to be practised carefully and with a purpose. Instead of allowing eleven students to read a text automatically, the teacher can identify the students with basic reading problems and give opportunities to just two or three of them in a session to read the text. The purpose of making them read aloud needs to be (1) correct eye movement (2) speed reading, and (3) flexible speed. It is necessary to reach a certain speed in order to read efficiently.

5.3.5. Vocabulary Teaching

Findings: Teachers put in meticulous effort to teach new words. They very often explain the meaning of new words. They prefer to do this at the pre-reading and while reading stages. Many times, they translate the new English words into Arabic.

Recommendations: Vocabulary teaching is one area where the teaching strategies need a full consideration. Words should not be taught at the pre-reading stage. Teachers need to avoid any exclusive vocabulary work. New words need not be taught consciously, carefully and thoroughly. Learning is a constant process of guessing. Students need to be trained to use the context as a guide to understand the new words. On unavoidable occasions, when words have to be taught deliberately, not more than five words in a text of 300 words need to be taught.

Moreover, new words need to be practised during post-reading, not before or while-reading, as in most cases.

5.3.6. Grammar Teaching

Findings: Grammar seems to be the favourite area of many teachers in Libya. Most of them teach grammar during pre-reading and while-reading stages. Some of them teach grammar at the post-reading stage or in a separate lesson.

Recommendations: The communicative approach to language teaching emphasizes that grammatical items have to be taught/learned via text discussion and communication. In other words the language structures are learned through the context of the lesson.

5.3.7. Pronunciation Teaching

Findings: All the teachers pay attention to pronunciation and to the significance of intonation patterns when the reading class is in progress. Moreover, they are aware of the limited possibilities that the reading passages afford for intonation practice. So they resort to pronunciation and intonation teaching very judiciously in the reading classroom.

No recommendations.

5.3.8. Classroom Interactions in English

Findings: According to the questionnaire, all the teachers communicate in English with the students. While the classroom observation showed the opposite. The response from the students is inadequate. They reply, almost all the time, in Arabic. In effect, the classroom activities are always bilingual, the teacher asks in English and the students answer in Arabic.

Recommendations: An imaginary English environment needs to be created inside the classroom in order to make English the classroom language as well as the language to be learnt. Initially, teachers may have to spend a lot of time, saying things like *Please speak in English! Stop talking in Arabic!* and it often works. The art of persuading students to communicate in English depends on the friendly encouragement and persuasion the teacher uses while activities are taking place. This generally ensures that most students are speaking English inside the classroom.

Using Arabic inside the English class all the time is very harmful, as it gives the class no feeling that English is a language that can be used to communicate and gives them no chance to hear or use English naturally.

5.3.9. Error Correction

<u>Findings</u>: When a student commits an error, the majority of the teachers correct it immediately.

<u>Recommendations</u>: This practice is false. Not only it interrupts the reading process, but also it makes the student lose self-confidence. The teacher's attitude to such students needs to reflect a spirit of tolerance and common endeavour, not blame and condemnation. It is better to postpone error correction for a later time.

Errors are part of the students' **inter-language**. Harmer (2005) defines inter-language as the over-generalized version of the language which a student has at one particular stage of learning. For example, thinking that the past tense of '**come**' is '**comed**' is the best situational example of a developmental error due to inter-language. Such errors are positive symptoms of learning taking place. They need to be corrected collectively.

5.3.10. Homework

<u>Findings</u>: All the teachers said that they give homework to their students.

<u>Recommendations</u>: Homework is generally seen as a boring assignment rather than an activity to learning. This is due to its

wrong sense. In fact, homework helps to practise classroom learning in a real life situation. The students will perform further learning activities without the help of teacher. When homework is assigned to students to do it outside the classroom they will do it independently, freely, consciously and confidently.

In a reading classroom, students get little chance for reading. Thus, homework is considered essential to make every student to rehearse self-reading experience. But in the first place, a decision has to be made by the teacher about how much homework to be assigned to his learners. Intensive and extensive reading tasks like scanning English language newspapers to report back on certain-items, reading and understanding the instructions on a user manual, interpreting a short poem, reading and understanding a comic book can be given as homework tasks. The purpose of homework in a reading text should be to create a reading habit in the students' behaviour.

5.3.11. Ensuring Understanding

Findings: Sometimes when a number of students fail to understand the lesson, the teachers often repeat explaining that lesson to make the students understd it. This may make teachers become reluctant to introduce a new lesson.

Recommendations: Teachers need to change this attitude for four reasons. First, reading is a cognitive skill, an interactive process; it is a quiet progress. Second, there is no single empirical method available to the teacher to decide whether or not a student has understood a reading text. Third, within the very short time allotted for teaching reading in the basic education classes, a teacher may not find extra time to re-teach the lesson. Fourth, re-teaching has to be conducted at the expense of clever students who might lose interest in repetition of the lesson. Hence, to repeat some lesson items is something that need to be taken very carefully.

5.3.12. Overall Recommendation

Finally, based on general observation, experience, and the specific findings of the study, the following step-by-step guidelines are recommended for a good reading lesson:

-Recommendations for teachers:

1. Build student interest
2. Pre-teach receptive vocabulary
3. Set a skimming task
4. Students read or / and listen
5. Students answer reading comprehension questions
6. Students check answers with the teacher

7. Set an intensive reading task

8. Students read or / and listen again

9. Students perform integrated language learning tasks like reading and speaking, reading and writing.

10.   Set an extensive reading activity as homework.

-Recommendations for the General People's Committee and the National Centre for Planning of Education:

1. Setting summer courses to train teachers, to improve their English and teaching techniques.

2. Providing schools with audio-visual aids, and training and encouraging teachers to use them.

3. Decreasing the number of students in classes to be no more than thirty students in each class.

5.4. Scope for Further Research

Teaching reading is a very broad area with large potential for further research. A good research activity is justified only when it benefits the society and the country. Three problem areas are identified for further research in the Libyan context.

First, research needs to be conducted to discover the methods necessary to develop speed reading skills. Second, the strategies required to teach global comprehension of reading texts

need to be developed. Third, intensive research is required to generate in the students the habit of guessing the meaning of new words through context-clues. When these things are actualized, our youngsters will ever be attracted to academic and pleasure reading.

5.5. Conclusion

The researcher has carried out this research with heart and soul and she will be greatly pleased if this study served as model for any research of this kind. She will also be glad if it served as useful practical reference material for language-planners, teachers teaching the preparatory classes, and teacher-trainees preparing for a career in English language teaching.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix - A

Classroom Observation Form

Name: .... School: ....

Class: ....Date: .... Time: ....

V.G. : Very Good   G.: Good   P.: Poor   N. P.: Not Applicable

s.n	Teaching procedures	V.G.	G.	P.	N.A.
1	Introducing the text orally/ an overview about the topic of reading				
2	Preparing the students for the new language items				
3	Helping the students to make predictions from the title and the pictures				
4	Giving the students a chance to read silently.				
5	The period allocated for reading aloud				
6	The board organization.				
7	Giving the students an idea about pronunciation aspects such as word stress, intonation, etc while reading				
8	Evaluating the students' comprehension about what they have read				
9	Introducing the new structure through the context.				
10	Presentation style, is it appropriate and effective?				
11	Is the teachers' presentation well planned and organized?				
12	Using visual aids for illustration.				
13	Using the board during the reading task for illustration.				
14	Error correction during the reading task.				
15	Round up questions to reinforce understanding.				

First visit	
Second visit	
Third visit	
Fourth visit	
Fifth visit	

Appendix - B

Teachers' questionnaire

Dear teacher:

I am ***Mariam Akilah Omar***, a post-graduate student in Al-Tahadi University. I am writing my M. A. dissertation on a topic entitled: ***"The Effect of Teaching Strategies on Reading Comprehension: A Study with Reference to the Students of Sirte Preparatory Schools"***. In this questionnaire, you will find some questions which are relevant to you and your students. All the questions are simple and short, so you will not find any problem in answering them. The information which you give in this questionnaire has a practical and scientific value since you are one of the respondents. The value of this study depends, to great extent, on your honest responses to the questions.

I hope that you will answer all the questions accurately. If you have no decisive answer for a certain question, you can tick any choice which you feel appropriate. If you could kindly write down your notes and comments about the questionnaire, it would be of great help to me in data analysis.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Teacher's name (optional): ....

Experience in teaching English: ....

Qualification: ....

Male: ....   **Female:** ....

Age: ....

Nationality: ....

Q1. What do you think of the reading comprehension passages included in the text- book you are teaching?

   a. Interesting and they suit my students' level. □

   b. Interesting but they do not suit my students' level. □

   c. Not interesting but they suit my students' level. □

   d. Not interesting at all and they do not suit my students' level. □

Q2. When do you explain the title of the reading passage?

   a. At the pre-reading stage. □

   b. While skimming. □

   c. While scanning. □

   d. At the post-reading stage. □

Q3. How often do you speed up when you read the text for the first time in class?

   a. often □

b. sometimes ☐

c. rarely ☐

d. never ☐

Q4. How many times do you read the text in the class?

a. Once ☐

b. Twice ☐

c. Three times ☐

d. Four times or more ☐

Q5. Are the students given opportunity to read the text?

a. Yes ☐

b. No ☐

- **If YES, how many students read the text during the teaching period?**

  ……………..student(s)

Q6. When do you explain the meaning of the new words of the text?

a. At pre-reading stage. ☐

b. While skimming. ☐

c. While scanning

d. At post-reading stage. ☐

Q7. How often do you explain the meaning of the new words?

a. Often □

b. Sometimes □

c. Rarely □

d. Never □

Q8. How often do you directly translate the English words into Arabic?

a. Often □

b. Sometimes □

c. Rarely □

d. Never □

Q9. When do you explain the new grammatical structures that are present in the reading passage?

a. Before the reading task. □

b. During the reading task. □

c. After the reading task. □

d. In a separate grammar lesson. □

Q10. How long do your students take to read aloud a passage of 50 words?

a. From 1 to 2 minutes. □

b. From 3 to 4 minutes. □

c. More than 5 minutes. □

d. They cannot read at all. □

Q11. While the students are reading the text aloud, do you pay attention to the way they pronounce words?

    a. Often□

    b. Sometimes□

    c. rarely □

    d. never□

Q12. How often do you point out the significance of intonation patterns to your students?

    a. Often□

    b. Sometimes□

    c. rarely□

    d. never□

Q13. How often do you use English to communicate with your students in the class?

    a. Often□

    b. Sometimes□

    c. rarely□

    d. never□

Q14. When a student commits an error while she/he is reading a passage, what is the appropriate time, in your opinion, for correcting it?

    a. Immediately□

b. After she/he finishes reading☐

c. Ignore it altogether☐

Q15. When the students finish reading, how often do you check their understanding of the reading passage?

    a. Often☐

    b. Sometimes☐

    c. rarely☐

    d. never☐

Q16. Who answers the reading comprehension questions on the reading passage?

    a. I myself answer them. ☐

    b. The students answer them. ☐

    c. Both the students and I. ☐

    d. They are not important so I usually neglect them. ☐

Q17. How often do you give homework to the students?

    a. Often☐

    b. Sometimes☐

    c. rarely☐

    d. never☐

Q18. Do you make all your students understand the reading passage before shifting to introduce a new one?

    a. Often☐

b. Sometimes□

c. rarely□

d. never□

Q19. Given the time factor, if only 50% of your students have understood the reading passage, will you be prepared to introduce a new one?

    a. Often□

    b. Sometimes□

    c. rarely□

    d. never□

Q20. Teaching interesting reading texts can simplify comprehension. Do you agree?

    a. Yes, I agree□

    b. Yes, I partially agree□

    c. No, I do not agree□

Q21. During reading the text, students can expand their vocabulary, grammar and background knowledge. Do you agree?

    a. Yes, I agree□

    b. Yes, I partially agree□

    c. No, I do not agree□

Q22. Reading aloud is helpful for the students in the early stages of learning a language. Do you agree?

    a. Yes, I agree□

    b. Yes, I partially agree□

    c. No, I do not agree□

Q23. The pictures presented in the reading text have no effect on the students' comprehension. Do you agree?

    a. Yes, I agree□

    b. Yes, I partially agree□

    c. No, I do not agree□

Q24. Preparing the learners to read is vital in building up their confidence and consequently enables them to read efficiently. Do you agree?

    a. Yes, I agree□

    b. Yes, I partially agree□

    c. No, I do not agree□

Q25. During reading the text, it is very important to explain all the new words found in the reading text. Do you agree?

    a. Yes, I agree□

    b. Yes, I partially agree□

    c. No, I do not agree□

Q26. Introducing text before starting to work on it is very helpful in teaching reading. Do you agree?

a. Yes, I agree□

b. Yes, I partially agree□

c. No, I do not agree□

Q27. Asking the learners to memorize the content of the reading texts is very helpful in the process of teaching reading. Do you agree?

a. Yes, I agree□

b. Yes, I partially agree□

c. No, I do not agree□

Q28. What, from your experience, are the major problems for your students while learning to read a text in English?

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Q29. How do you help the students who have got some problems with reading?

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Q30. How do you integrate reading with the other skills in your teaching?

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الجماهيرية العربية الليبية الشعبية الاشتراكية العظمى

جامعة التحدي ــ سرت

كلية الآداب والتربية   قسم/ اللغة الإنجليزية

" تأثير استراتيجيات التدريس على مادة القراءة
والاستيعاب "
" دراسة تطبيقية للمدارس الإعدادية داخل شعبية سرت"
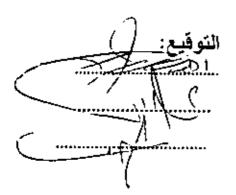
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التوقيع :
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