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Submitted by: Rouai Souhila

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**The Use of Reading Strategies in Improving Reading
Comprehension**

The case of First Year LMD English Students

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On:

President : Bel Arbi Ahmed

Before the jury

KMU – Ouargla

Supervisor : Sayah Lambarek Samira

KMU – Ouargla

Examiner : Drid Thouraya

KMU – Ouargla

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Dedication

*To my parents, especially my mother, my friends without
exception and my relatives.*

*To everyone who has encouraged me
and made me stronger.*

Souhila

Acknowledgment

Praise to Allah for giving me the ability to complete this work,

*I am deeply grateful to my supervisor Dr. Sayah Mbarek for her great
help, precious advice and guidance.*

*My deepest gratitude goes first to my family for their support and for offering me
the best conditions for working at ease.*

*I extend my thanks to the first year English students who accepted to be part of my
research.*

*Special thanks go to all my teachers and my classmates of English Department of
Kasdi Merbah University without any exceptions.*

Abstract

Reading in foreign language is considered one of the most challenging and difficult tasks that most of EFL learners face. Due to the complexity of this skill, many students suffered from reading for their failure in the achievement of reading comprehension. For these reasons, the main purpose of this research is to make EFL learners aware of reading dealing with some effective strategies that will help them to overcome their difficulties in reading comprehension. In this research work, the hypothesis states that the practice of First year English students in using these strategies of reading appropriately; they will be able to achieve comprehension in reading easily. To test this hypothesis, it was administered questionnaire and practical exercises to students in order to collect data about their use of these strategies and their ability to achieve comprehension in reading. The obtained data from questionnaire and practical exercises indicate that students' problems in reading can be avoided to achieve comprehension in reading effectively; that means some of these students understand what they read by their appropriate use of reading strategies. Furthermore, the data suggested that there are students still faced some problems in reading for their lack and misuse of reading strategies correctly.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- ✓ **EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

- ✓ **RS:** Reading Strategies

- ✓ **RSI:** Reading Strategies Instructions

- ✓ **N:** Number

- ✓ **MCQ:** Multiple-choice Questions

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Reading is one of the four skills that students should learn and care of. At university, EFL students have always many different reading materials to read, such as: textbooks, articles, stories and soon. Reading is more beneficial to them during their study because it enables them to acquire many things about the knowledge of language and understanding different subject areas. For these reasons, it is more important for EFL learners to have not only the ability to read written materials but also the ability to understand what they have read. So, EFL learners need to achieve comprehension in reading through applying appropriate and effective reading strategies. In other words, the appropriate use of reading strategies will always facilitate the ability of getting meaningful reading easily. Reading strategies include, for example, prediction, skimming, scanning, inferring, guessing the meaning of new words, and self monitoring which will enable EFL learners to achieve comprehension in reading successfully without facing any problems.

1. Statement of the Problem

Reading plays a significant role in improving readers' language proficiency, especially in a foreign language setting. If the comprehension in reading failed, students would need to repair their comprehension. This is indicated in how reading strategies are so important and their aim to facilitate not only the reading process for students but also give them a clear view about what they are reading.

Most of students at university have the ability to read, but unfortunately, they always failed in the achievement of comprehension in reading, owing to the fact that they are unable to use certain effective reading strategies or lack of understanding of these strategies, that help them to access comprehension in reading. So, the question to be posed is: Does the misunderstand of First Year LMD English students of reading rely on the misuse of reading strategies?

2. Aim of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to show the importance of reading strategies in the comprehension of reading for first year English students.

3. Hypothesis

In conducting the present study, we hypothesize that if first year LMD English students use reading strategies correctly, then they would improve their reading comprehension.

4. Tools of Research

In order to test our hypothesis to reach the objectives of our study, we will use; first, a questionnaire designed for first year English students chosen randomly, and then, test their reading comprehension, that means, use an informative/expository text followed by four tests using some of strategies such as: prediction, skimming, scanning, and guessing the meaning of new words. The purpose of that is to assess the ability of respondents in extracting meanings from texts. After collecting data for this research, we would analyze them quantitatively and qualitatively to understand the issue under study i.e. the importance of using reading strategies to achieve comprehension in reading.

5. Structure of the Dissertation

The present research will be basically divided into three main chapters. Chapter one and two will be devoted to the literature review while Chapter three will be about the field work and outcomes obtained from the questionnaire and practical tests. The first chapter will be based on making an overview of reading that means definition of reading, its models, its types and definition of reading comprehension.

In the second chapter of the literature review, we will define both reading strategies and reading strategies instruction. In addition to that, we will shed light on some effective reading strategies, namely as follows: predicting, skimming, scanning, inferring, guessing the meaning of new words, self monitoring and summarizing.

Finally, the last chapter of the proposed research will be mainly an investigation of the effectiveness of some reading strategies applied to first year English students, and show their impact in the achievement of reading comprehension.

Chapter One: An Overview of Reading

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Introduction

Reading is one of the most important skills. It is a constructive process that can help students to acquire new knowledge of language, experience about life and so on. Simply, reading is defined as “the active process of understanding print and graphic texts”. In this chapter, we will introduce both terms reading and reading comprehension through stating different definitions by different researchers. It also deals with three models of reading which are: the Bottom- up model, top-down model and interactive model. Finally, we conclude our chapter by speaking about types of reading followed by conclusion.

1.1. Definition of Reading

Reading is a complex cognitive ability that is considered one of the basic language skills which can help students in learning foreign language; however, it used more by most of EFL learners who always need to read various printed materials such as: Books, stories, articles, poems and so on.

Reading is defined as “the meaningful interpretation of written or printed verbal symbols and a result of interaction between the perception of graphic symbols that represent language and the reader’s language skills, cognitive skill, and knowledge of the world (Albert. J. et al as cited in Thao Le Thanh, 2010). Moreover, Rumptz (2003) explains this in his words “Reading is a complex process. It involves visual action in analyzing printed letters, and then identifying these letters as the components of words, until reaching the interpretation of the meaning of these words”.

In very similar view, Goodmann(1988) defined Reading as the process which requires readers to make the interpretation of graphic signs, delineates reading in a variety of ways, i.e. matching sounds to letters” (P, 11-12). In this sense, reading is as a cognitive process which could help readers to create meaning from text.

1.2. Reading Comprehension

It is the ability of the readers to understand written materials. According to Seyed et al (2010), the word comprehension refers to “the ability to go beyond the words, to understand the ideas conveyed in the entire text” (P, 376-380). Furthermore, Snow (2002) sees that reading

comprehension refers to “the simultaneous ability used by a reader to construct and extract meaning through interaction and involvement with written materials” (P, 11).

Besides that, Reading comprehension is the process of extracting meaning from text. The goal, therefore, is to gain an overall understanding of what is described in the text rather than to obtain meaning from isolated words or sentences (Woolley. G., 2011; P, 15). A similar view was given by Katherine Maria (1990) who defined “reading comprehension as holistic process of constructing meaning from written text through the interaction of (1) the knowledge reader brings to the text i.e. word recognition ability, word knowledge, and knowledge of linguistic conventions; (2) readers interpretation of the language that the writer used in constructing the text; and (3) the situation in which the text is read” (Maria. Katherine.1990. P, 14-15).

1.3. Models of reading

Reading models explain what happened in the process of reading, they describe how reader processes printed texts to construct meaning that means these models are concerned with how readers could be able to translate given printed words into meanings from the level of perception of the text by the eyes into analysis by the brain. This led us to shed a light on three main theoretical models of reading process that has been researched by many cognitive and behavioral scientists: Bottom-up, top-down and interactive models (Marto Redondo, 1997. P, 140).

1.3.1. The Bottom-up Model

The Bottom up approach is known as *phonics*, which requires the learner to match letters with sounds in a defined sequence i.e. reading in linear process by which readers decode a text word by word, linking the words into phrases and then sentences (Gray and Rogers 1956, cited in Kucer 1987,p 27-51). This model of reading is concerned primarily with the recognition of individual letters, phonemes and words that means the meaning of the whole text begins from the word level, then the sentential level, and finally the text level (as cited by Lisson and Wixson, 1991, in Rumptz, 2003).

Besides this, it emphasizes a single direction, part- to- the whole processing of text. In other words, it involves a series of steps that the reader has to go through i.e. moving from the smallest linguistic units such as: sentences, phrase, and so on, until reaching the meaning of the text (James. E & Gentry, 2008).

Therefore, this model allows students to start with the perceptual processing of text and move upward through word recognition to comprehension, in other words, it is the process in which the reader begins with the smallest units of text (letters) and then move to the higher units of text (clusters) and finally get to words. So, readers derive meaning in linear manner, i.e. building letters into words, words into sentences, phrases and then proceeds to the overall meaning (Laberg and Samuels 1974 cited in Samuel et al 1984).

1.3.2. The Top- down Model

Richards (1990) defined the top-down model referred to “the use of background knowledge in understanding the meaning of a given text that means readers make connection between their previous knowledge about a topic, situational or contextual knowledge, or knowledge stored in long term memory in the form of “schemata” and “scripts” (P, 50-51).

Grabe (1988) states also that reading in this model is not just extracting meaning from a text but a process of connecting information in the text with the background knowledge of the reader that is used in the act of reading. Reading, in this sense, is “a dialogue between the reader and the text” (P, 56). The more readers know in advance about the topic and text to be read, the less they need to use graphic information on the page. So, this process is based on the interpretation of assumptions and drawing inferences.

1.3.3. The Interactive Model

It is the attempts to make connection between both models of reading; the bottom up and top down ones. In other words, it recognizes the interaction of both models simultaneously throughout the reading process. Similarly, Eskey (1988) sees that “the interactive model takes into account the continuous interaction between bottom-up and top-down processing in the construction of the meaning of a text” (p: 93-100). Rumelhart (1981) also views that it is “one in which data driven, bottom- up processing combines with top- down, conceptually driven processing to cooperatively determine the most likely the interpretation of input” (p: 37). Additionally, Carell (1998) puts in his words: “The interactive model suggests that the reader processes reading by starting with a linguistic surface representation encoded by a writer and ends with meaning which the reader construct” (p: 240-254).

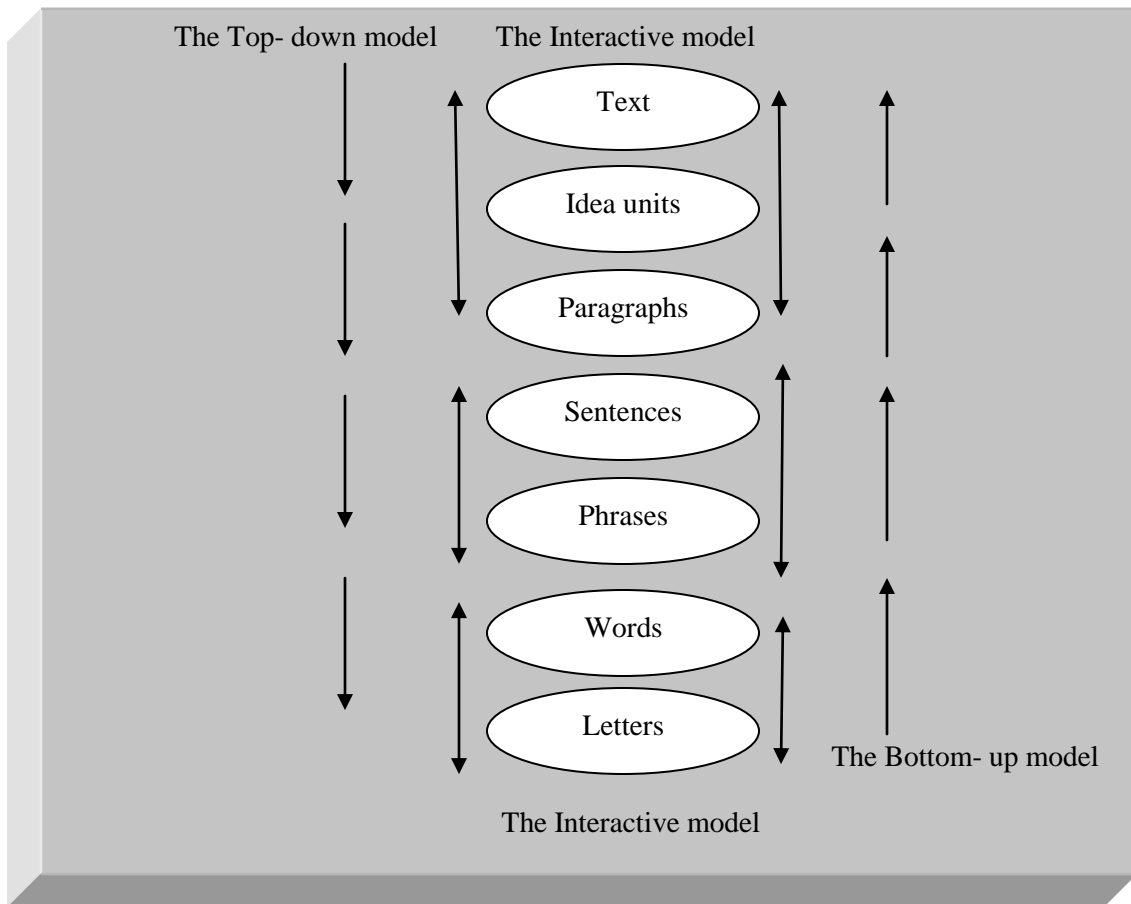


Figure 1: Models of the reading process (Perfetti, Landi & Oakhill, 2005)

1.4. Types of reading

1.4.1. Intensive Reading

It refers to a high degree of comprehension and retention over a long period of time, in other words, it is reading in depth or carefully to comprehend a given text for example; studying it line by line, using the dictionary, comparing, analyzing, translating, and retaining every expression that it contains. Brown (1988) explains that intensive reading “calls attention to grammatical forms, discourse markers, and the surface structure details for the purpose of understanding literal meaning, implications, rhetorical relationships, and the like” (P, 400-450). Therefore, intensive reading is reading for a high degree of comprehension and retention over a long period of time (Texas Women's University counseling Center, 2014).

1.4.2. Extensive Reading

Bamford et al (2004) defined “Extensive reading is a language teaching procedures where learners are supposed to read large quantities of materials or long texts for global understanding, the principal goal being obtaining pleasure from the text” (P, 1-4). According to Liana’s Extensive Reading Journals (2011), it is “reading as much as possible, for your own pleasure, at a difficulty level at which you can read smoothly and quickly without looking up words or translating to English as you go”. So, we can say that extensive reading is connected to student choice and pleasure in reading in order to reach enjoyment.

Conclusion

From what has been said before, we come to a conclusion in which we can say that reading is very important skill for students that helps them to extract meaning and get new knowledge of language from written texts. It includes three models which are the bottom-up, top-down, and interactive model; these models showed us how a reader processes a given text. Reading also, has two types that readers use when reading, intensive and extensive reading. Moreover, this chapter makes some views about the definition of reading comprehension, and how/ what readers do for being able to achieve reading comprehension. For this aim, students need to know the main strategies that are used in reading that are included in the subject of the next chapter.

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Introduction

Both of EFL learners and good readers may use various reading strategies that could help them to achieve a meaning of texts successfully. That is why, the use of reading strategies is more important for learners to reach comprehension when reading. This chapter will define the term reading strategies upon some various views of different researchers dealing with the importance of using them appropriately. Also, it includes some of effective reading strategies and their role in the achievement of reading comprehension. At the end of this chapter, we will speak about reading strategies instruction.

2.1. Definition of Reading Strategies

There are many different views about the definition of reading strategies depending on different scholars that is why there is no clear cut definition. According to Garner (1987) defines reading strategies “as generally deliberate, playful activities undertaken by active learners, many times to remedy perceived cognitive failure” (P, 95). Additionally, Barnett (2002) (Tercanlioglu, 2008) has used the term reading strategy to refer to “the cognitive operations that take place when readers approach a text with the purpose to make sense of what they read. In this sense, reading strategies are as the comprehension processes that readers use in order to make sense of what they read” (P, 1-14). So, Reading strategies are effective techniques that are used by EFL learners to success in reading comprehension. On the other hand, we cannot exclude the role of EFL teachers who should be both aware of the use of reading strategies and should teach learners on how to use these different strategies successfully.

2.2. The Importance of Reading Strategies

In educational system, most of EFL learners face many problems especially in comprehension of written materials when reading. According to them, understanding the meaning of texts can be a great challenge i.e. they able to understand each word and even each sentence; but unfortunately, they fail to achieve the meaning of text as a whole. For that reason, many psychologies and researchers assume that those who always struggle and find reading comprehension as a problematic issue. Because of most of these students lack the reading strategies that may help them to overcome their reading problems.

There are much evidence that have been shown on the importance of reading strategies and their effective role in enhancing and developing reading comprehension. Mc Namara et al (2009) views that “reading strategies are more useful and beneficial for learners who show lack of knowledge in the domain of reading, as well as those with lower reading skill, these kinds of learners are strongly needed to these strategies to achieve reading comprehension”(P, 218). Therefore, the continuous use of reading strategies will lead the readers to become skilled and later they will be able to utilize the reading skills acquired without conscious efforts.

2.3. Some of Reading Strategies

In the area of reading strategies studies, many researchers have utilized different types of strategies; these last are more effective, useful and beneficial ones for students which some of them are as follows: predicting, skimming, scanning, inferring, guessing the meaning of new words, self monitoring, and summarizing.

2.3.1. Predicting

Magiliano (1993) stated that “prediction strategy involves thinking about what might be coming next in the text. It is applied by effective reader that mean, they used pictures, headings and text as well as personal experience to make predictions before they begin to read”(p: 35-53). So, predicting involves thinking ahead while reading and anticipating information and events in the text. Jessica also viewed that “it is used in reading task, it helps learners to think what will happen based upon the text, the author, and background knowledge in other words it makes students elicit their interest, activate their prior knowledge, or pre-teach vocabulary or concepts that may be difficult” (Jessica, G, 2000 cited in The Ohio University Education, 2014). In this sense, predicting requires learners to use the text to decide what will happen next. Readers confirm or deny predictions with support from the text (Test Wise Word Association, 2006).

2.3.2. Skimming

It is used by readers to get “a general idea about the content of printed materials through reading the text quickly i.e. in this strategy, readers will look for something quite specific or get general ideas before putting effort into close reading”(Grellet,1999, P, 2-25). For instance, One does not want to read the whole texts or articles; s/he may use various techniques to skim: (1)

Use of quick glance through the pages (2) Notice the titles and headings and subheadings (3) Read the opening sentence and the conclusion carefully (4) Read the first and the last sentence of each paragraph in order to gain the main idea of the main points (As Dinah Mack & Holly Epstein Ojalov, 2009 cited in The article of New York Times,2014). So, skimming is one of strategies that require readers to read quickly in order to get an overview/the general idea or gist of a section.

2.3.3. Scanning

According to Grellet (1981), “scanning is a reading technique that requires reader to search for specific information without reading the whole text, through looking at its title, table of content and so on” (pP,58-59). It is a strategy you often use when looking for specific information by reading something quickly such as search for key words or ideas. In most cases, you know what you're looking for, so you're concentrating based on finding a particular answer. It involves moving your eyes quickly down the page seeking specific words and phrases (Wood, P, 1-2). In this way, we can say that scanning is reading quickly to locate specific information (Test Wise Word Assiciation, 2006).

2.3.4. Inferring

Prezler(2006) said that “inferences are evidence -based guesses i.e. in case of reading; students use their prior knowledge to make inferences about the text” (P, 4). According to Zimmermann (2009) saw that inferences are often referred to as what you “read between the lines” that means the author wants the reader to make the jump to the same conclusion the author has made. He states also that “Drawing inferences from text is a technique which requires readers to use their prior knowledge (schema) and textual information to draw conclusions, make critical judgments, and form unique interpretations from text” (p23). So, the inferences are the conclusions that a reader draws about the unsaid passage based on what is actually said by the author.

2.3.5. Guessing the Meaning of New Words

One of the most difficult problems that make an obstacle for students in the comprehension of reading is unfamiliar/new words. According to Clarck (1980) the best way to solve this problem is “to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words from the context in order to save time and to

continue reading without interruption or referring to a dictionary” (P, 211-220). The ability to guess meaning from context is a useful skill to practice and try to improve. There are many things that could help students such as: (1) Guess the meaning of the text which surrounds it (2) the way the word is formed (3) background knowledge of the students about the subject (E.O.I. de Sabinaningo organization , 1993).

2.3.6. Self Monitoring

Hanson (1996) views that the ability of a student to self-monitor his or her performance is a natural step toward becoming independent, which can only happen when students take responsibility for their own behavior and essentially become “agents of change” (P, 173-191). Furthermore, self-monitoring can be used both to assess where students are functioning academically and behaviorally and to improve academic or behavioral performance (Carr, Punzo, Rutherford, Quinn & Mathur, 1993.P, 50-241).

2.3.7. Summarizing

It is the last strategy that can be used by readers, it requires the readers to organize or restate the information or the main ideas of a given text by his/her own style after their comprehension or in other words, taking a lot of information and creating a condensed version that covers only the main points. Oxford (2006) defines “summarizing as a short description of the main ideas or points of something without any details” (p: 717). Similarly, Reading Rockets Organization (2014) puts: “*Summarizing teaches students how to discern the most important ideas in a text, how to ignore irrelevant information, and how to integrate the central ideas in a meaningful way. Teaching students to summarize improves their cognitive ability about what is read.*”

Finally, students cannot able to apply all of these reading strategies without relying on their teachers who have a role in teaching some instructions for EFL students, and this, will be spoken in the next page.

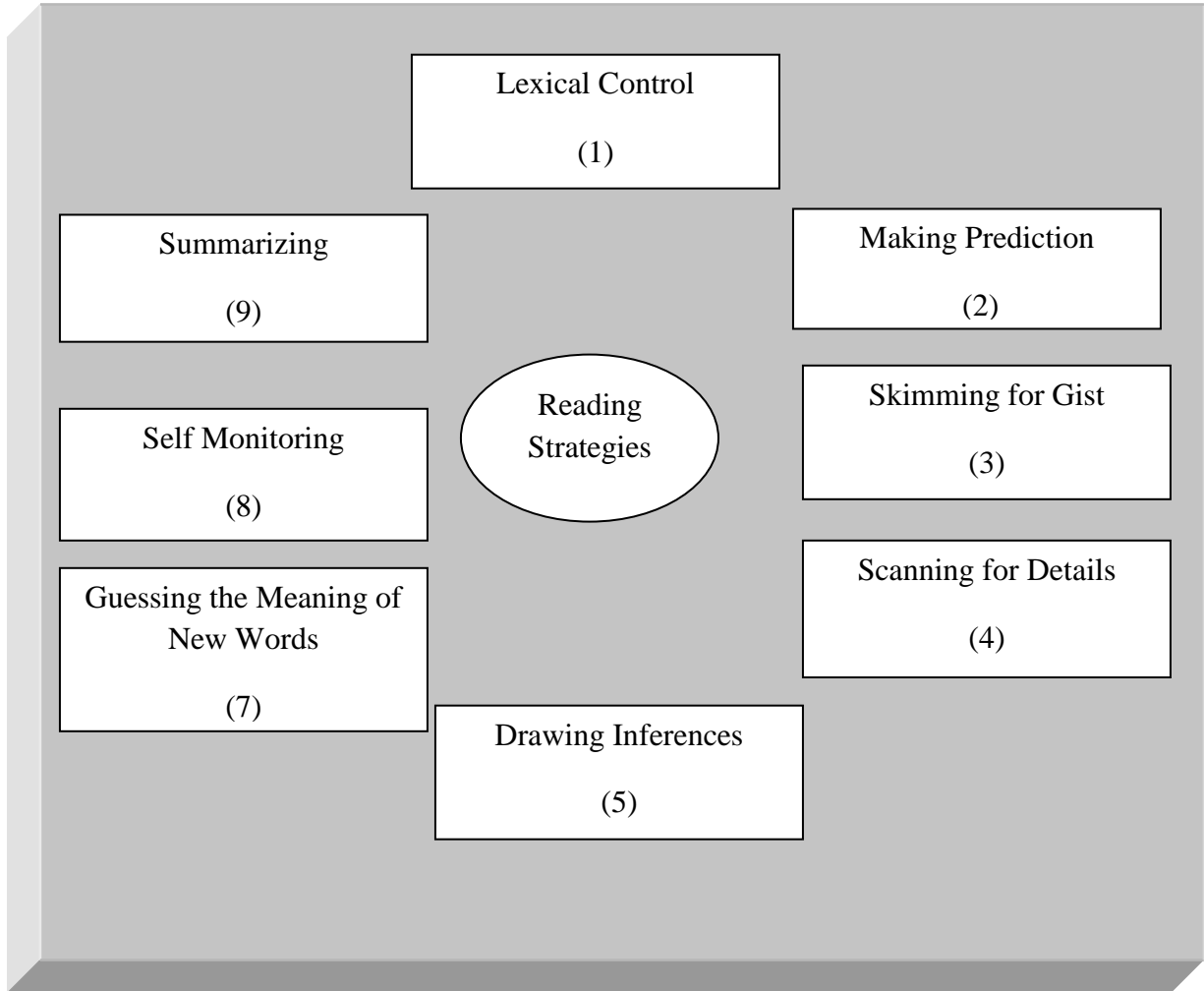


Figure 2: The ability of reading by using reading Strategies (Rumptz, 2009)

2.4. Reading Strategies Instruction

On reading instruction, reading strategies play an important role in the promotion of reading comprehension, especially for poor readers who are always struggling in reading. According to U.S Department of Education (2014), Comprehension strategies are routines and procedures that readers use to help them make sense of texts. Struggling readers need direct, explicit instruction in comprehension strategies to improve their reading comprehension. So we can say that teacher/instructor has also a role on teaching students how to use these strategies effectively and appropriately in different content-area texts through applying some explicit instructions such as: introducing word, giving feedback, providing friendly-explanation, and promoting student's ability on using reading strategies in different situations etc. Practicing these strategies will help students not only to use them flexibly but also solve problem of reading comprehension.

Conclusion

Briefly, this chapter has been concerned primarily with the concept of reading strategies. Additionally, it shows us some of reading strategies that may solve the problem of reading comprehension, and also, the necessity of teaching students to know about these strategies in order to apply them appropriately by giving them some instructions.

Chapter Three: The Practical Part

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Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the practical part, in which we present our study that aims to determine the use of reading strategies to comprehend reading on First Year LMD English Students in Ouargla, Algeria. To test from hypothesis, we obtained data from a variety of sources, a questionnaire and a text followed with practical exercises. In the first section of this chapter, we will analyze the students' questionnaire and in the second section of the same chapter, we will deal with the answers of students about practical exercises of a text. The collected data and the obtained results will enable us to diagnose the effect of using reading strategies to achieve comprehension on reading departing from real situation to solve the existing problems faced by students when they read.

3.1.1. Administration of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was given to twenty students chosen randomly from the Department of English at Kasdi Merbah University- Ouargla. The students are asked to answer the questionnaire in the classroom, and this number of students constitutes the sample of this research. The administered questionnaire discusses an issue that the majority of first year students have faced in reading comprehension of foreign language.

3.1.2. Description of the Questionnaire

The structure of the questionnaire was arranged from general to specific in order to make students familiarize with the topic of the research. The questionnaires designed as a form of scale consisting of eleven (11) multiple choice questions which have the same six statements that students will choose one of them. These questionnaires divided into three sections as follows:

Section One: General information (Q1-Q2): it is to get the idea about whether students are aware of reading and success in reading comprehension or not.

Section Two: The use of reading strategies (Q3-Q10): this section is about reading strategies. It aims at exploring how students deal with reading taking into account its different strategies which may help them to understand what they read.

Section Three: the important of teaching reading strategies (Q11): This section is composed of only one question which concludes the Questionnaire, its purpose is to show the importance of

teaching reading strategies for students in order to not only interest in reading but also achieve a good comprehension of reading.

3.1.3. Analysis of the Questionnaire

The Questionnaire consists of eleven questions followed by six statements which are:

a-Always b- Often c- Usually d- Sometimes e- Rarely f- Never

The abbreviation **N** stands for the number of respondents, **%** stands for the percentage this number represents.

Section One: General Information

Question One:

Do you read in English?

Options	N	%
Always	16	80
Often	01	05
Usually	01	05
Sometimes	02	10
Rarely	/	/
Never	/	/
Total	20	100

Table 3.1: Students' Love of Reading

Table 3.1 shows that the majority of students (80%) like reading. Only few of them often read. There is no student who claims he does not like reading.

Question Two:

Do you success in achieving comprehension in reading?

Options	N	%
Always	01	05
Often	03	15

Usually	02	10
Sometimes	10	50
Rarely	04	20
Never	/	/
Total	20	100

Table 3.2: Students' Opinions about Successful in Reading Comprehension

It seems from Table 3.4 that most of students (50%) face some problems in the comprehension of reading and 20% of them rarely understand what they have read. Only 5% always achieved comprehension on reading.

Section Two: The Use of Reading Strategies

Question Three:

Do you apply some of reading strategies such as prediction, skimming, scanning...etc. to understand what you read?

Options	N	%
Always	03	15
Often	05	30
Usually	06	35
Sometimes	02	10
Rarely	04	20
Never	/	/
Total	20	100

Table 3.3: the use of Reading Strategies to achieve comprehension on Reading

Table 3.5 reveals that some of students (35%) do usually use strategies of reading when they read. 30% of them often use these strategies to achieve comprehension. 20% applied them, but only 15% who apply these strategies which make reading more understandable.

Question Four:

Does the title of book or article give you an idea about its content before reading?

Options	N	%
Always	09	45
Often	02	10
Usually	01	05
Sometimes	05	25
Rarely	03	15
Never	/	/
Total	20	100

Table 3.4: The use of prediction strategy before reading

From Table 3.6, the results show that most of students (45%) make prediction when they read the title of any written material to guess the meaning of its content. 25% of students sometimes use this strategy.

Question Five:

Do you read the text quickly to get an overview of its content?

Options	N	%
Always	06	30
Often	03	15
Usually	01	05
Sometimes	08	40
Rarely	02	10
Never	/	/
Total	20	100

Table 3.5: Students' use of skimming strategy

Table 3.7 shows that most of the students (40%) read quickly to get general idea about a given text while 25% of them use this strategy. Only few of them (5%) apply it.

Question Six:

When you read do you relate the text to your background knowledge?

Options	N	%
Always	07	35
Often	03	15
Usually	04	20
Sometimes	05	25
Rarely	01	05
Never	/	/
Total	20	100

Table 3.6: The connection between the text and background knowledge of student

From Table 3.9, we see that 35% of students always use their background knowledge and then relate it with the ideas of text. Only few of them (05%) rarely use this technique.

Question Seven:

Do the unfamiliar/new words make an English text difficult for you?

Options	N	%
Always	06	30
Often	04	20
Usually	02	10
Sometimes	07	35
Rarely	01	05
Never	/	/
Total	20	100

Table 3.7: The problem of unfamiliar words in English text

The above Table (3.10) indicates that 35% of students sometimes suffer from reading when they read new words and 30% of them consider that new words create great challenge in reading.

Question Eight:

Do you guess the meaning of words from their context in the text?

Options	N	%
Always	04	20
Often	01	05
Usually	05	25
Sometimes	06	30
Rarely	03	15
Never	01	05
Total	20	100

Table 3.8: the attempt of students to guess the meaning from the context

From the results of Table 3.1, we can say that some of students (30%) sometimes guess the meaning of some words from their context in order to both save time and continue reading without any interruption. Only 05% of them do not get the meaning of words when reading.

Question Nine:

Do you reread the text more than once to understand its meaning?

Options	N	%
Always	09	45
Often	06	30
Usually	01	05
Sometimes	02	10
Rarely	01	05
Never	01	05
Total	20	100

Table 3.9: The repetition of reading text

Table 3.14 shows that 45% of respondents reread text more than twice in order to get the real meaning of text. Few of them (05%) do not repeat reading text.

Question Ten:

Do you make a summary for what you read?

Options	N	%
Always	06	30

Often	02	10
Usually	01	05
Sometimes	04	20
Rarely	02	10
Never	05	25
Total	20	100

Table 3.10: the use of summary after reading

The above table (3.15) reveals that 30% of students prefer to summarize what they have read in order to avoid rereading the whole text or book, while 25% prefer to read without making a summary.

Section Three: The Important of Teaching Reading Strategies

Question Eleven:

Do you think that teaching reading strategies may help students to achieve reading comprehension during their study?

Options	N	%
Always	11	55
Often	02	10
Usually	04	20
Sometimes	02	10
Rarely	01	05
Never	/	/
Total	20	100

Table 3.11: Teaching reading strategies for EFL learners

From Table 3.17, we notice that 55% out of total respondents (N=20) argue that teaching students reading strategies will always help them both to be good readers and to solve problems in reading.

3.1.4. Discussion of the Results of the Questionnaire

The analysis of the students' questionnaire shows that students may be able to solve their problems in the comprehension of written materials unless they apply some of reading strategies. As it is shown, in the first section about general information, most of students (80%) interest in reading which help them to enrich their background knowledge and achieve comprehension in reading to be a familiar with English language.

According to the analysis of students' responses about the second section -the use of reading strategies- we can see that most of students used some of reading strategies automatically but unfortunately they ignored how to apply these strategies appropriately. This section also demonstrates that there are students (50%) who argues that they make a great effort to understand a given text because, according to them they lack not only names of these strategies (prediction, skimming, scanning....etc.) but also lack how to function them effectively.

The analysis of the last section- the importance of teaching reading strategies- reveals that the majority of respondents (55%) agree that with teaching strategies of reading for EFL students will really help them during their study to solve the problem of reading comprehension early.

Conclusion

According to The analysis of students' questionnaire, students have some difficulties in approaching reading strategies task. It confirms that reading is a challenging and complex skill because students showed that they have a great awareness about reading, but unfortunately they have lacked some of reading strategies. For that reason; they have difficulties in the achievement of reading comprehension.

3.2. The Practical Exercise

Since the area of reading is a complex and incomprehensible skill, we designed practical exercises to evaluate the comprehension level of students when they read a text dealing with some of reading strategies.

3.2.1. Aim of the Exercise

The exercise is another instrument used to collect data about student's ability in applying some of reading strategies when reading an English text. The main objective of the exercise is to

identify, first, Students' ability in making general predictions of the content of the reading material by making use of introductory elements such as; the title. Besides that it used to show students' ability on using reading strategies such as: Skimming, scanning, guessing the meaning of new words and summarizing the text. Last, it evaluates students' ability to rely on linguistic information (contextual clues) as well as their background knowledge (of content).

3.2.2. Description of the Exercise

The exercise is based on a text entitled “*where do you want to learn English?*” This is taken from web page Rong Chang, Free ESL Stories and Short Exercises. The text is followed by four exercises (only exercise three which consists of four multiple choice questions). In the exercise, the selected text is divided into four separated passages in respect to its title and topic sentences:

- The first passage, as an introductory passage, consists of the title *where do you want to learn English?* And a short summary to the whole text as a form of question.
- The second passage consists of topic sentence “The advantages of going to Britain seem obvious” and a passage of approximately fifty words.
- The third passage consists of topic sentence “There are also advantages to staying at home to study” and a passage of approximately fifty five words.
- The last passage is as a conclusion and point of view to the author of a text. it consists of topic sentence “To conclude, I think that if you have enough time and enough money, the best choice is to spend some time in the UK”

Questions of the exercises are two formats: multiple-choice and short response questions; multiple choice questions require students to choose from a number of alternatives for the best answer. However, short-response questions require students to write their own responses. So, we designed four exercises to the text which are as follows:

- Exercise one requires students to scan the text in order to look for specific words
- Exercise two asks students to give synonyms of three words.
- Exercise three consists of four MCQs requires students to choose the best answer of each question according to their comprehension of a text.

- Exercise four is used to evaluate students' comprehension as well as enable them to rewrite the text by their own words.

The procedure which is used in conducting this exercise based first on introducing for students both the nature of the study and the task they will deal with. After doing this, we gave each student from the selected sample a copy of the exercise and then asked them to answer the exercise questions individually in one hour. As well as students have a right to ask question if there are some difficulties.

3.2.3. Analysis of the Results

The abbreviation **N** stands for the number of respondents, **%** stands for the percentage this number represents.

Exercise one: Scan the text and extract the countries which are mentioned in the text.

Countries	N	%	Time
Algeria	09	45	05
Britain	11	55	02
Total	20	100	07 sec

Table 4.1: students' scanning of the text

The above Table 4.1 indicates that the majority of students (55%) succeeded on using scanning strategy at few time (02 sec) which they are familiar with.

Exercise two: Give the synonyms of the following words according to their meaning in the text:

- a) Obvious = b) Viable = c) Maximize =

Options	N	%
a	03	15
b	02	10
c	05	25
Don't know	10	50
Total	20	100

Table 4.2: students' comprehension about Guessing the meaning of words from the context

Table 4.1 shows that most of students (50%) have not answered this question. Few of them succeed on given synonyms of words.

Exercise three: Read the text carefully and choose the right answer for each question.

- 1) What is the article about?
- a. How many people learn English?
 - b. The best way to learn English.
 - c. English schools in England and America.

Options	N	%
a	05	25
b	13	65
c	02	10
Total	20	100

Table 4.3: students' comprehension of the topic of the article

The above Table 4.6 indicates that the majority of students (65%) understand what the article speaks about. 25% choose the first possible item 'a' and only 5% choose the last item 'c' which are wrong answers.

- 1) What is one of the advantages of going to the UK to learn English?
- a. There are only few Algerians in Britain.
 - b. You will have to speak English and not your language.
 - c. The language schools are better.

Options	N	%
a	04	20
b	13	65
c	05	25
Total	20	100

Table 4.4: students' comprehension of the second passage of a text

The results of Table 4.7 show that 65% choose the item 'b' which is considered as the correct one. 25% select the last item 'c' while only 20% choose 'a' which are both considered as wrong answers.

- 2) What is one of the advantages of staying in your country to learn English?
- a. The teachers are may be less good in Britain.
 - b. You have to work too hard in Britain.
 - c. Your life can continue more or less as it was before.

Options	N	%
a	08	40
b	01	05
c	11	55
Total	20	100

Table 4.5: students' comprehension of the third passage of a text

The Table above 4.8 suggests that most of students (55%) understand the third passage by answering correctly while 40% choose the first possibility (a).

- 3) People who don't have a lot of time and money should....
- a. Learn English in Britain.
 - b. Try and speak English in class more often.
 - c. Stay in your country and learn English.

Options	N	%
a	05	25
b	12	60
c	03	15
Total	20	100

Table 4.6: students' comprehension of the last passage of a text

Table 4.9 reveals that 60% answer correctly and they select the item (b). The wrong answers chosen by 25% for item 'a' whereas 15% for item 'c'.

Exercise four: Summarize the text in three or four lines

Options	N	%
Poor	01	05
Good	07	35

Very good	02	10
Don't	10	50
summarize		
Total	20	100

Table 4.7: scoring of students about their comprehension of the text

The results of the above Table (4.10) indicate that the majority of students (50%) do not summarize the text. 35% make a good summary by using the main ideas of the text, 10% write a very good summarization and only 5% write down a poor one.

1.2.4. Discussion of the Results

First of all, Students begin rapidly skimming the text in order to get an overview about it, and then they start to answer the questions of reading comprehension test. The first exercise requires students to use second strategy which is scanning in order to look for specific words in a given text. This exercise shows that the majority of students (55%) are successful on scanning but only few of them take time (5 sec) on scanning the text.

The analysis of the second exercise requires students to give synonyms of some words in the text (obvious, viable, maximize) reveals that most of them (50%) do not know the meaning of these words (Table 4.2) but only few of them who successes on guessing the meaning of these words from their context.

From the analysis of students' responses about the third exercise which contains four multiple choice questions, we can see that most of students understand the content of a text and they also answer correctly about the questions of a text. On the other hand, there are students faced many problems on the comprehension of reading because they lack of how to use some strategies appropriately.

Conclusion

It has been proved that there is a strong relationship between the students' knowledge (whether linguistic and background) and their success in applying strategies of reading about the text (whether general or specific).From the analysis of the students' answers to the exercise questions it is concluded that:

- Before reading, the majority of students have succeeded to a large extent in making predictions about text, which they are familiar with, by using their background knowledge,
- There are students who have used strategies of reading correctly to understand what they read as there are students who have failed; this means that, students' failure on applying some of strategies does not mean at all they will not understand anything when they read, but they will face some difficulties in the comprehension of reading;
- Students, as they go further in reading, become more and more conscious on using some of reading strategies to achieve comprehension in reading.

General Conclusion

Reading is a complex cognitive activity that draws on many cognitive strategies, such as prediction, skimming, scanning and so on. That is, in order to be able to read with some proficiency, students have to be able to use some of these strategies in appropriate way to achieve comprehension on reading easily. That is why; the present study is based on an investigation of the effectiveness of these reading strategies on increasing comprehension when reading.

At the beginning of this dissertation, we tried to define both reading and reading comprehension as well as we tried to show its models that readers use, namely the bottom- up model, the top-down model and an interactive model. Besides that, we tried to mention two types of reading which are as follows: Intensive reading and Extensive reading.

As far as reading strategies are concerned, we tried to demonstrate their importance on reading and their role on reading comprehension. In addition to that, we have stressed and mentioned some of these strategies that enable students to achieve comprehension in reading, in addition to that, they should also have some consciousness about the importance of each single strategy of reading in reading namely, predicting, skimming, scanning, inferring, guessing the meaning of new words, self monitoring, and summarizing.

From the theoretical chapter, we tried to obtain data by using two means that will help us to investigate our hypothesis which are: questionnaire and practical exercises. The results of this study show that strategies of reading are more effective, helpful, and time- consuming for students, that is why, students should be interest not only in reading but also learn some of these strategies to be effective readers, but unfortunately, this cannot be achieved unless teachers teach them how to use some of strategies to be successful in reading comprehension and also they will become able to achieve comprehension in reading texts at the early stages of learning English as a Foreign Language.

General Conclusion

Finally, we recommend that students should ask themselves the following questions before, when and after reading foreign language texts:

- Am I a good reader?
- Will I understand what I have read?
- Do I have enough linguistic knowledge/ background about what I will read?
- How can I improve my level in the comprehension of reading?
- Do I know how to use some of explicit strategies to achieve comprehension in reading?
- Do I apply these strategies appropriately?

We hope that these recommendations ameliorate our learners; in this case, we wish our learners to become proficient readers. Moreover, we hope also future studies will go more than that and make investigations relative to how to teach these strategies in the classroom which was not given much importance in this research.

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Appendix # A:
The Students' Questionnaire

Dear student,

We would be deeply grateful if you fill in the following questionnaire for a research on the use of reading strategies to achieve comprehension in reading for Master dissertation. To answer the questionnaire, please choose the right answer you think most appropriate.

Thank you in advance

Questions	Always	Often	Usually	sometimes	Rarely	Never
1. Do you read in English?						
2. Do you success in the comprehension of reading?						
3. Do you apply some of reading strategies such as prediction, skimming, scanning...etc. to understand what you read?						
4. Does the title of book or article give you the idea about its content before reading?						
5. Do you read the text quickly to get an overview of its content?						
6. When you read do you relate the text to your background knowledge?						
7. Do the unfamiliar/new words make an English text difficult for you?						
8. Do you guess the meaning of words from their context in the text?						
9. Do you reread the text more than once to understand its meaning?						
10. Do you make a summary for what you read?						

11. Do you think that teaching reading strategies may help students to achieve reading comprehension during their study?						
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Would you like to add any suggestion or comment?

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Thank you for your collaboration

- 2) What is one of the advantages of going to the UK to learn English?
- a. There are no Algerians in Britain.
 - b. You will have to speak English and not your language.
 - c. The language schools are better.
- 3) What is one of the advantages of staying in your country to learn English?
- a. The teachers aren't very good in Britain.
 - b. You have to work too hard in Britain.
 - c. Your life can continue more or less as it was before.
- 4) People who don't have a lot of time and money should....
- a. Learn English in Britain.
 - b. Try and speak English in class more often.
 - c. Go to Algeria to learn English.

Exercise Four: Summarize the text into three or four lines.

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