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**Application of Reading Comprehension Strategies to Develop Learners' Reading Comprehension Through the Use of Literary Texts: Case Study 1st Year EFL Students at Abou-Bakr Belkaid Tlemcen**

Extended Essay Submitted to the Department of English as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master in Language Studies

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# Dedications 1

First I want to thank ALLAH for giving me the strength and faith to finish this research. A special thanks goes to all people I know and those who made my life special with a deep appreciations to my whole family who supported me all the way especially my mother, My grandmother and my brother MOHAMMED.

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# Dedications 2

I want to thank ALLAH for giving me power and patience to finish my research. This work is dedicated to all whom I know and to all people who helped me finish my dissertation, with a special emphasis on my parents, my brothers and sisters.

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# ABSTRACT

The present study has been conducted in the field of TEFL. It is a well-known fact that reading comprehension increases the effectiveness of the reading skills. Much attention has been given to reading comprehension in recent years, especially to answer EFL learners' reading comprehension problems. Indeed, first-year students at Abou-Bakr Belkaid at the University of Tlemcen are said to have serious problems in reading comprehension. This is mainly related to both, the lack of awareness and use of reading comprehension strategies besides the inappropriate text selection in the classroom. For this purpose, the present study attempted to investigate the use of reading comprehension strategies to cope with students' difficulties and to shed the light on the role of reading comprehension in the enhancement of students' grammar and vocabulary through the use of literary texts. The main results and conclusions showed that students possess basic knowledge of reading comprehension strategies and they are applying them but not in a frequent manner. Teachers emphasize that cultural load; grammatical structure and vocabulary are the biggest obstacles facing their students in reading comprehension tasks. Reading comprehension as it is shown by the data collected can be of great help in enriching students' vocabulary repertoire and building their linguistic competence. Literary texts selected by teachers in the classroom should be suitable for learners responding their needs and interests.

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**E.F.L**: English as a Foreign Language.

**G**: Group.

**PISA:**Program forInternational Student Assessment

**OECD:**Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

# GENERAL

# INTRODUCTION

## General Introduction

Reading comprehension is an essential part for students in learning English as a foreign language. It is a high interactive process that takes place between a reader and a text to develop a level of understanding of a text/message; that accurse during and after reading a particular piece of writing. It is often presented in terms of a process(involving: decoding abilities visualization, and synthesize…etc.) which are reading comprehension strategies that EFL student relay on to have meaning of what they are reading.

The processof reading comprehension can be affected by many factors such as weak decoding skills poor reading prosody and vocabulary. Reading materials introduced to the student may contains unfamiliar words which students do not have the mechanism of contextual guessingthat brings them to understand these words. The literacy level of the text may cause a challenge for students since the style of writing is lacking the simplicity that enables EFL first year students to decode the meaning. Language structure or grammar is also a major factor in reading comprehension, since the complexity of sentence structure can affect the meaning of the paragraph; consequently students will not be successful in knowing the general idea of the text.

The concern of this study is to highlight this strategies and its impact on first year university students (English Department at the University of Tlemcen) and to explore the EFL first year students' use of reading comprehension strategies. Since the language that they have been learning is rarely used in their society out of school and universities. The only way they could be in contact with the English language is through reading.

The main problems that are dealt with in this are that the EFL learners have an issue when they read certain texts in the target language and they are unable to use certain reading comprehension strategies. The

objective of this research is to shed the light on students of first year (in the English Department) understanding of certain strategies and it tries to look at the role of these strategies in helping them achieve comprehension in reading. It will do so by investigating the impact and outcome of using reading comprehension strategies through reading to enhance the level of text understanding and to investigate the EFL first year students at Abou-Bakr Belkaid perception of the other factors that might affect their reading comprehension.In addition to the role of reading comprehension in developing students' level in grammar and vocabulary .it will also explores the impact of introducing literacy texts in the classrooms and their manifestation in the improvement of EFL firs year students reading comprehension.

From what have been raised, the following research question has been formulated:

1- Does the lack of using appropriate and workable reading comprehension strategies leads to a lack of understanding of texts?

2- How does EFL first student at Abou-Bakr BelkaidUniversity perception of reading comprehension contributes in the development of their vocabulary and grammar?

3- In what ways may literary texts teaching improve our EFL learners' reading comprehension?

Regarding the general layout this work contains two chapters. Chapter one will be a literary review that would be devoted to understand the nature of reading comprehension by giving some definition and mentioning its importance as well as highlighting some factors that might affect reading comprehension. Besides this some reading comprehension strategies have been mentioned and briefly defined. It is also going to introduce literacy texts and authentic texts as potential sources for reading materials in the classroom. This chapter will also explore the idea that

reading comprehension can be used as a tool to enrich students' vocabulary repertoire and to develop their grammatical knowledge.

The second chapter will include data collection and procedures undertaken to answer research questions and test the hypotheses, this include the research design i.e. the case study, the methodology (a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies), instruments of data collections (questionnaire),sampling and data analyses techniques. This would be followed by a discussion of the results and giving suggestions and recommendations related to the hypothesis, and the effective use of reading comprehension strategies in addition to the limitations of the current research.

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1.1 Introduction

Reading comprehension is a very important feature, it helps people learn and acquire everywhere and any time. It enables people to enjoy literature and do everyday life things that are part of modern life (reading newspapers, instruction manuals and so on).

Reading comprehension as a structured process is considered as an active and creative mental activity that provides students with much flexibility in processing written materials. As any systematic approach it contains certain strategies i.e. mental process chosen by the reader consciously in order to achieve certain tasks (Cohen, 1986).

This chapter will deal with identifying some reading processes and the major skills involved in reading. These skills, also called strategies, have to be worked on so that comprehension would take part. Finally, the researchers shed the light on the important role of literature as a basic component and source of authentic texts to enhance the learners' reading comprehension.

## 1.2 Reading Comprehension Defined

Reading comprehension is a highly process that takes place between a reader and a text, as Durkin (1993.p.16) explained that it is "international thinking during which meaning is constructed through interaction between text and reader". It is a process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement whit written language as Harries and Hodges(1995.p.30) cleared"the construction of the meaning of a written text through reciprocal interchange of ideas between the reader and the message in a particular text" .This idea was highlighted by (Snow,2002,p.7 )when he said :

> *Reading comprehension is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through instruction, and involvement with written language. It consist of three elements the reader, the text and the activity or purpose for reading.*

In the same vein, reading comprehension was defined by Perfetti, et al (2001.p.21):

> *... The study of reading is, in part, the study of language processes, includingcomprehension. What distinguishes reading most clearly from spoken language processes is the conversion process, or decoding. Beyond decoding, reading shares some linguistic and general cognitive processes with spoken language in the processes of comprehension.*

That is why Basri (2011) pointed out that it is the capacity of treating a piece of writing that someone has read to build understanding and extract information based on the experience or prior-knowledge of the reader. Reader learn to understand the text literally first then infer the meaning and critically evaluate the text.

## 1.3. The Importance of Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is perhaps one of the most critical skills students can master. Without a firm grasp on the comprehension process, learners will struggle, whether it's science, mathematics, or social studies... Reading comprehension is what allows the readers to interact with the text in a meaningful way. It's the bridge from passive reading to active reading -- from letters and words to characters and

contexts, i.e. students are not only identifying words or structures but they are trying to develop a kind of relation between the elements of a given passage. In other words when people read they go beyond what is written to a state where they could imagine situation and characters and can extend upon the context, besides understanding the meaning of the passage they can predict what the author is trying to say therefore they develop their own evaluation and prescriptive on the texts.This shows why reading comprehension is critical for students.

In the same view (Pam MParchal.K12.reader.com)Reading comprehension is important for many reasons. If a person can read, yet is not really able to interpret what is read into usable information, they've not gained much. By definition, reading comprehension involves understanding what is read, and without understanding there isn't much point to one reading a bunch of words on a page. That is to say Reading comprehension can develop student's understanding by helpingthem to see links between what they already know and new information they are encountering. It helps students to understand how readers make sense of what they read, and this helps student go beyond literal interpretation and recall to explore the complex meanings of a text using inference and deduction.

Without comprehension, reading is simply following words on a page from left to right while sounding them out. The words on the page have no meaning. And while people read for many different reasons, the chief goal is to derive some understanding of what the writer is trying to convey and make use of that information – whether for fact gathering, learning a new skill, or for pleasure. That's why reading comprehension skills are so important.

**1.4.Factors Affecting Reading Comprehension**

Reading is a combination of two interrelated pairs which are reading and comprehension.Good man (2000) suggested that reading is a receptive psycholinguistic process .it starts with linguistic representation coded by a writer, and ends with reader constructed meaning.Whereas, on the other hand it has been

defined by Brown (2007.p. 379) identifies comprehension as *"the process of receiving language; listening or reading; input"*. Comprehension is the ability to take in information, analyze it in its respective segments, and come up with an understanding of the input in a cohesive and accurate manner.

As that being stated, a lot of them have looked at the same entity from different angles and have reached somewhat different conclusions about the nature of reading comprehension the following diagram (TAKEN from an article written by **Kirby)** would show this nature of reading comprehension:
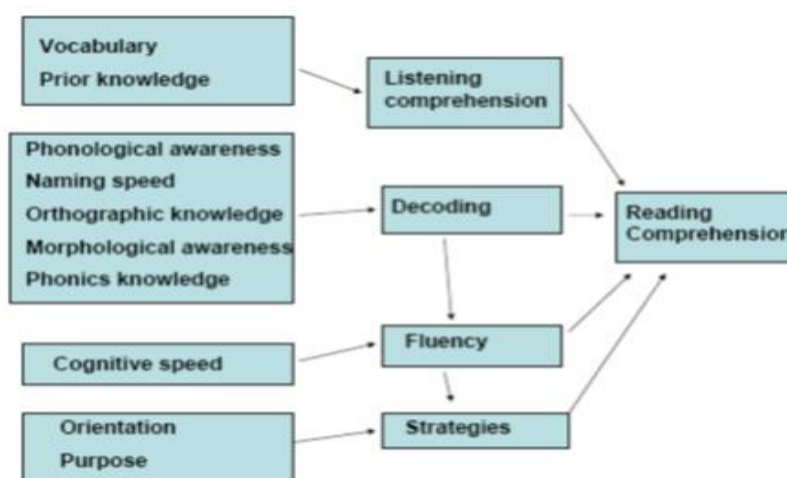


**Diagram 1.1 Causes/sources of reading comprehension. (From John R. Kirby)**

Thought understanding of reading comprehension through illustrating the intricate relationships which exist between so many variables affecting the successof the reader-writer interaction, namely reading comprehension, such as weak decoding skills, or poor reading prosody…etc.,a factors that are to be highlighted in the following .

### 1.4.1. Weak Decoding Skills

Decoding was adopted by (Harmer, 2001; 153). When he said that reading is*"an exercise dominated by the eyes and the brain. The eyes receive messages, and the brain then has to work out the significance of these messages"* the reader is

going to process the vocabulary or the sentences he sees in a passage to extract the thought and build an idea in his brain about what the author is speaking about .

The decoding skill is a highly influential factor in reading comprehension, researchers such as (Prefetti, 1985; Stanovitch, 1980) spoken about The effects of decoding in reading comprehension are mediated by knowing the meaning of decoded words .There is a strong casual relation between decoding and comprehension in that fluent or automatic decoding allows more processing resources to be available for comprehension.Poor decoding skills accuracy results in misread or omitted words, which can change the meaning of sentences and interferes with reading comprehension.

Therefore there is a strong relation between the mastery of vocabulary and the ability of the reader to make sense of the written passage. McKEOWN (2010) in her work *"bringing reading research to life"* suggested a triangle representation of the relationship between comprehension,vocabulary and decoding presented by Prefetti 2010), that she identified as' the interconnected set of cognitive-linguistic components'. Those complex reading skills are not *"an elementary units"* limitations in one of the constituent will directly effects the others  as it is shown in the diagram :
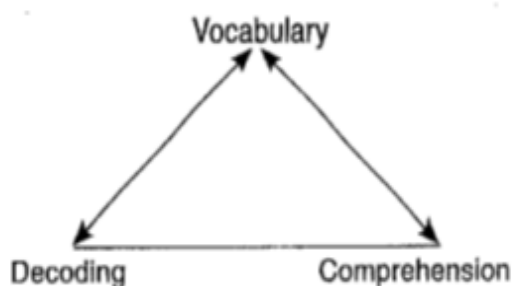


**Diagram 1.2. Triangular relationship (Prefetti 2010)**

In the same vine Hart and Risley (1995) summarized this relation in 3 points:

1-Skill in reading comprehension will be affected by skill in decoding and skill in vocabulary (which will not be independent, according to the model).

2- Skill in vocabulary will be affected by skill in comprehension and skill in decoding (which will be independent).

3- Skill in decoding (understood as word identification) will be      predicted by vocabulary knowledge.

## 1.4.2. Poor Reading Prosody

Prosody has been defined in terms of how it affects reading? Thus, prosodic reading may be defined as expressive reading or reading in meaningful phrases. This view was clarified by Miller &Schwannenflugel

*To read prosodically, children must be able to do more than decode the text and translate punctuation into speech. They must also incorporate the ordinary rise and fall of pitch in ordinary conversation. This would include a series of speech features that jointly would be perceived by the listener as an expressive rendering of a text.*(2006 p.*98*)

Though, prosody has been defined in terms of the elements, or prosodic features, which would be indicators of the reader's ability to segment or chunk text in a meaningful way. (Dowhower 1987) identifies six observable speech indicators that may be used in determining reading prosodity:

¤ Pausal intrusions.

¤ Length of phrases.

¤ Appropriateness of phrases.

¤ Phrase-final lengthening.

¤ Terminal intonation contours.

¤ Stress on words.

These *'markers'* improve on previous prosodity reading categorization schemes because they may be observed without impeding normal speech elements such as accuracy and speed, and can be extended to apply to any manner of textual recognition and prosodity. While terminology such as *'appropriateness'* may seem out of place in a scientific structure, as it is subjective, some measure of subjectivity is inherently involved in the analysis of prosodic reading.

Poor reading prosody has a lot of impact on the reading comprehension process for the readers, since the correct use of prosody is a reliable indicator of a student's comprehension, (Miller &Schwannenflugel, 2006) states this influences as follows:

¤ It is difficult for them to chunk the language for meaning.

¤ Readers that do not use appropriate intonation (weather in making statements or asking question) does not help the listener to determine the meaning while speaking or reading aloud.

¤ Students with poor reading prosody does not use pauses appropriately within and between sentences.

¤ Their proper use of stress and intonation indicates that they comprehend how those phrases relate to one another to create the meaning of the sentence, and of the entire text.

### 1.4.3 Reading Comprehension as a Springboard for Vocabulary Development

Vocabulary knowledge is fundamental to reading comprehension and Vocabulary and reading are always interrelated.Rupleyet al (1999, p.5) state that a reader cannot reach comprehension without vocabulary. So that vocabulary links between sentences and ideas together to make the text meaningful and make it easy for the reader to understand clearly the content. It is in fact an integral part of reading and comprehension.

**1.4.3.1. Vocabulary Defined**

Any language has its own vocabulary which is different from that of other languages and enables its users to communicate. The Oxford Online Dictionary defines vocabulary as *"the body of words used in a particular language or in a particular sphere"*. Vocabulary can be found in texts and dialogues where the new terms occur in context and in a set with other words. Accordingly, Hadfield and Hadfield (2008, p.45) stated that*: "vocabulary can be a single word; two or three words that go together to make one meaning or it can be a multi word phrase"*.

Vocabulary is one of the pillars in the acquisition of second language. It is not a process of merely memorizing a list of words, but throughout practical emergence of vocabulary development in the area of other skills like reading. Reading comprehension and vocabulary has a strong relationship The Report of the NationalReading Panel (2000), for example, concluded, *"The importance of vocabulary knowledge has long been recognized in the development of the reading skills. Researchers noted that growth in reading power relies on continuous growth in word knowledge"* (pp. 4–15).

**1.4.3.2. Reading Develops Vocabulary**

Reading and vocabulary are closely related to each other, whenever readers read, they have the chance to increase their knowledge of vocabulary. As Hudson (2007, p.296) stated that the investigation has come with the results that plenty of vocabulary can be acquired through reading comprehension. So, although it is a slow process which takes too much time, a lot of vocabulary is learned this way.

Student in their reading would encounter many difficult new word and try to identify their meaning using the context. Swanborn and de Glopper(1999) highlighted that students at advanced levels and students with higher reading ability are more proficient in using the context. For Graves (2000) the opportunity of learning a word from the context increases according to its frequent occurrences in the text. We might not grasp the whole meaning of the word from our first

encounter but we will grasp the complete meaning as we meet with it in various context. Cunningham (1998) highlights that the more we read the more vocabulary items we espoused to. So reading a lot is the door to build a large vocabulary repertoire.

Moreover, student's attempt to comprehend a text may help in the process of vocabulary building in the sense that the student use discovery techniques to know the meaning of the word. Harmer explained the following *"work out rules and meanings for themselves rather than being given by the teacher"* (Harmer, 2001; 160). So the student would discover the meaning and the right use of the word by himself not relying on the teacher's help.

Reading yields an incidental vocabulary acquisition (Lechmann, 2007). Nation backs up this view and says*: "Reading has long been seen as a major source of vocabulary growth"* (Nation, 1995, p.7). Most people recognize the important relationship between knowing words and reading well. Eskey (2005), on the other hand, describes the relation between reading and vocabulary as being *"well documented and reciprocal"*, this is not far from the view of (Dole, et.al 1995) that reading comprehension and vocabulary is*"well established"* that is the growth of vocabulary is linked to the reading comprehension process via the encounter of new words every time we try to read.

Grabe and Stoller (1997) *"Reading and vocabulary are reciprocally causal… that reading improves vocabulary knowledge and vocabulary knowledge supports reading development"* (p. 119), and that the study *"strongly suggests that reading and vocabulary will develop as the result of extensive reading practice"* (ibid).

Reading Comprehension may provide the student the opportunity to use a multiple techniques to increase their vocabulary repertoire.  When facing unknown word in reading context the student can use vocabulary *"fix up"* skills for unknown words (Klingner&Vaughn 1999), they can apply the following skills:

•Read the sentence again.

•Read the sentences before and after the problem for clues to the ward's meaning.

•Searching for suffixes and prefixes that can give clues about the word's meaning.

•Breaking down the word through syllables and look for smaller word within.

Krashen (1993) suggests that reading is very efficient way to enhance and build one's language competence. He also claims that other methods to learn vocabulary are not very useful as reading. One cannot build vocabulary knowledge without the help of reading. So that Krashen regards reading as a very beneficial way of learning vocabulary and it is considered as a pillar of it. Coady, et.al (1993) found that there is a link between reading and vocabulary, so that whenever there is an increase in reading proficiency there is and increased proficiency in vocabulary.

In the same context, Krashen (1989) claims that the most effective way for learners to acquire new vocabulary and develop their spelling ability is through exposure to large amounts of *"comprehensible input"* via extensive reading. He also argues that such reading activities are the most efficient means by which a learner can acquire new vocabulary (Krashen 1989, 1993a & b).

They can also use compiling a vocabulary journal from course reading (Hedin &Condermen 2010) student highlights unfamiliar vocabulary through course reading and writs the term in a vocabulary journal using regular *"sentence-stem"* like an archeologist is …. If they cannot get the meaning from course reading they write the word without a definition and look it later in the internet or dictionary.

Some researchers emphases the use of extensive reading as a strategy to develop vocabulary, Bell (2001) states that extensive reading is a type of reading

instruction program that has been applied in  ESL or EFL settings, as practical tool to achieve reading fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary development.Krashen(1989) suggested that the most effective way for learners to acquire new vocabulary is *"comprehensible input"* via extensive reading.

Extensive reading is the best way for learners to enhance their level to recognize words automatically when they see them, and it is also the best way to develop their reading in English. Grabe discuses some of the benefits of extensive reading and notes that *"Longer concentrated periods of silent reading build vocabulary and structural awareness, develop automaticity, enhance background knowledge, improve comprehension skills, and promote confidence and motivation"*. (Grabe, 1991: 396).

Similarly extensive reading plays a principal role in the process of learning and developing one's level of vocabulary. Coady (1997) points out that students must read in order to build and develop their level of vocabulary. However, at the same time they must have a prior knowledge of words in their minds in order to achieve successful reading. In the same context, Beck, et.al (1982) have all claimed that an improvement in reading comprehension can be linked to a boost in vocabulary knowledge.

Ying (2001) shows that learning vocabulary through reading has some advantages:

•Student learns words, their meaning and how to use them.

•Inferring word meaning from the context contributes to reading comprehension.

•It is a challenging and active activity.

•Learners focus their attention on paragraphs or text instead of smaller units as sentences.

Many researchers have introduced a diversity of strategies and instruction to teach and develop vocabulary but the National Reading Panel (NICHD, 2001) recommended that:

•Vocabulary should be taught both directly and indirectly.

•Repetition and multiple exposures to vocabulary items are important.

•Learning in rich contexts is valuable for vocabulary learning.

•How vocabulary is assessed and evaluated can have differential effects on instruction.

•Dependence on a single vocabulary-learning strategy will not result in optimal learning.

In relation of what has been said before, we can say that the literature provides good evidence that vocabulary is acquired through reading. Thus, it is the key to keep the progress for learners to gain more vocabulary knowledge. Students are more accessible to vocabulary items while reading. Therefore, they are ought to develop their lexical repertoire.

## 1.4.4. Reading Comprehension to Develop Grammar

There is a clear relationship between syntactic sophistication and reading comprehension; that is, as learners use more complicated utterances in their oral and written language, their capability to make sense of what they read raises too.

### 1.4.4.1. Grammar Defined

Understanding isolated words is not adequate for the task of understanding language. All languages have rules regarding how words can be combined to form sentences, and an implicit understanding of the rules of sentence structure and phrasing is essential to comprehension. Grammar is defined as by Oxford Online Dictionary as *"The whole system and structure of a language or of languages in*

*general, usually taken as consisting of syntax and morphology (including inflections) and sometimes also phonology and semantics".*

Grammar is defined by the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English as *"the study and practice of the rules by which words change their forms and are combined into sentences."* This definition is divided into two parts: first which is word formation (morphology and the second is sentence building (syntax). it seen as a set of rules within the language to form words and combine them into sentences (Hornby 2006 p 648).

### Grammar for Comprehending Texts

Grammatical knowledge is essential for learners to comprehend texts, and thus it is important to build coherence (Givon 1995). Learners will fail to monitor their reading comprehension if they have a lack in grammatical knowledge, and this is shown when lexical information is present while needed cues are not.

A research made by Tunmer et.al (1984) revealed that good readers have better grammar knowledge than bad readers who have a lack in grammar knowledge. This further suggests that bad readers are *"Developmentally Delayed"* in syntactic awareness and that this delay may have affect reading development. Sometimes as students read they cannot get the full meaning of a text without the aid of grammatical knowledge as Berman (1984, p.153) notes that "*efficient foreign language readers must rely in part on syntactic devices to get at text meaning".* Accordingly, Cromer and Wiener (1966) proposed that unskilled readers do not use syntax to assist and help in decoding written material.

### 1.4.4.2. Reading as a Boat to Develop Grammar

Reading comprehension in general is viewed as a process of building meaning of written passage throughout decoding vocabulary items and lexical structures. Krashen (1989) explains that reading a text which is enjoyable and interesting for the student would result an increase of grammatical awareness.

Harmer (1987) states that one of the most successful techniques in enhancing and teaching grammar is the use of text. The students reading of these texts would allow them to observe the use of grammar items in the text.

According to Bossers (1992), a lack of linguistic competence leads to a shackle in the language reading process. Learners may obtain new grammatical knowledge from uncommon texts when the needed constructional cues are provided. As we all know, every language in the world has its own grammatical structure, and words do not come in isolation, they come altogether in a combination into larger units governed by the grammar of the language (Lyons 1981).

Researchers such as Widdowson (1978) favors the use of story reading to achieve grammar competence since *"linguistic knowledge"*involves two key issues: usage (the knowledge possessed about the rules of language) and use (the awareness of how language is manifested in communication).Hence, the literary text would help the student view how grammatical element are adequately applied in the language.

Levy( 2008) explains the effect of reading materials on grammar would show in other skills like writing , in the sense that the more reading exercises the student engages himself in the more complex linguistic structures would appear in his writing. According to him *"what the student hears and reads ultimately comes out in his own language"* Levy 2008.p01). So the learning of grammar via reading literary text has a positive role on the growth of grammar.

Intensive and extensive readings are also used as strategies in the process of reading comprehension. Intensive reading is a careful reading process that requires attention to details and grammatical structure. While during intensive reading the student gets opportunities to recognize new grammatical structures as they reoccur in the text. It is a guided activity on the part of the teacher to acquire structure and lexes besides cultural meaning.

Meanwhile Brown (1989:68) identifies extensive reading as *"occurring when students read large amounts of high interest material, usually out of class. The student focuses on meaning and neglects difficult words"*. Extensive reading major aim is to achieve overall understanding of the passage. This would help the student to develop their knowledge of the language structure.

## 1.5. Strategies for Reading Comprehension

Reading strategies stands for the different cognitive and behavioral actions that the readers use to gain comprehension in reading. McNamara explained this view as he said that the main purpose of a reading comprehension strategy is to enhance a particular part of comprehension, and it is considered as the *"cognitive or behavioral action"* that is used by the reader in a specific situation for a specific need. (2007, p.06). These strategies are chosen by the readers themselves according to what suits them the most. In the following some reading comprehension strategies are presented in details

## 1.5.1. Make Prediction

Predicting is considered as an essential technique that students use to make comprehension in their reading,as Duke andPearson (2002; 06) stated that*"as they read good readers frequently make prediction about what is to come"*. It encourages active reading to keep students interested and to make students understanding increases.

Moreover john Holmes (1982) pointed out the importance of predicting when he said:*"prediction is an integral part of comprehension, and if the reader is unable to predict during his reading he is reading he is reading blinding"*.That is why predicting is considered as a critical guide line in the process of reading since it pushes the student to engage himself in the text. The student will keep tracks on the authors' ideas and tries to develop his own view on what could be illustrated in the upcoming paragraphs.

### 1.5.2. Questioning

Asking questions are one of the most effective strategies in order to raise students' understanding, Zimmerman & Hutchins, (2003, p.73) highlight this view and positthat *"questioning during reading becomes a strategy to help learners interact with the author and so remain focused throughout the text, and help them to focus attention on what they are to learn"*. Vacca (2002, p.184) explained the role of self-questioning as a kindness for students to control their readingas he claimed that readers who ask questions and are aware of the answers helps them Make connections and associations with the text based on what they already know and they are most likely going to regain control of their reading and the meaning of the written passage become clear.

### 1.5.3. Synthesize

Synthesize is a way of understanding what someone has read to develop his own ideas about the subject, Zimmermann and Hutchins (2003.p.130.) defined it as *"synthesesthe process of ordering, recalling, retelling, and recreating into a coherent whole"*. Readers have to create their own version of the text as they use different materials that helpthem write an understandable essay.

Synthesizing is a complex process involving the learners to stop each time and rethink about what have been read. Readers are able to track their thinking as it evolves during reading, to get the overall meaning (Harvey, S. &Goudvis, A., 2007). Generating a new understanding of the written passage is the aim of this strategy. Harvey and Goudvisexplained this by illustrating that *"When readers synthesize, they reach a more complete understanding"* (p. 19).

## 1.5.4. Summarize and Retell

Summarizing can be defined as stating the main ideas in a text in a clear and coherent manner, Brown et al. (1983, p.1) stated that *"the ability to recursively work on information to render it as succinct as possible, requires judgment and effort, knowledge and strategies".* How we take larger selections of text and reduce them to their bare essentials: the gist, the key ideas, the main points that are worth noting and remembering

Routman (2000) refers to summarizing as the ability to state the main ideas in texts in a clear and coherent manner. This involves paraphrasing and reorganizing text information. It requires readers to audit through large units of text, differentiating important from unimportant, and significant from insignificant ideas (Armbruster& Osborn, 2005).

## 1.5.5. Visualization

Keene and Zimmerman (1997) claim that skillful readers intentionally create pictures in the mind during and after they read. These images come from all five senses—and from the emotions they evoke, and are anchored in the readers' prior knowledge. This idea is supported by Miller (2001). She defined visualization as *"forming a mental image in one's mind"* by focusing on the readers' representation, or prior knowledge. Her belief is that each student's visualization is unique due to their differing prior knowledge developed in their individual schema.

The reading comprehension strategy of visualizing is about creating images in the mind. It's the mental movie that plays while someone reads.Goudvis and Harvey (2000, p15.) claimed that by creating our own movies in the mind we make the book we are reading alive, so that visualization brings smell, sound and light to it .

Visualizing strengthens reading comprehension skills as students gain more thorough understanding of the text they are reading by consciously using the words to create mental images. As students gain more deliberate practice with this skill, the act of visualizing text becomes automatic. Students who visualize as they read, not only have a richer reading experience but can recall what they have read for longer periods of time. (Harvey &Goudvis 2000).

## 1.6. Use of Authentic Texts

Authenticity has taken a part in the language teaching pedagogy at the end of the 20th century, due to the close connection between the target language and culture to the student learning the language in question. Nowadays, it becomes essential to focus on *"the authenticity of target language text, information about target culture, and interactions when acquiring this information"* (Mishan, 2005, p. xi). So the student can have a real life experience presented through these materials.

### 1.6.1. Authentic Text Defined

Authentic text has been defined in various ways Nunan (1999), authentic texts are *"written language data that has been produced in the course of genuine communication, and not specifically written for purposes of language teaching"* Nunan(1999p. 35). In the same context Rogers (1986) defines authentic materials as*"appropriate"* and *"quality"* in terms of what the students goals needs and objectives are  and *"natural"* in terms of real life and communication. Harmer (1991) defines authentic texts *as "materials which are designed for native speakers; they are real texts; designed not for language students, but for the speakers of the language"* .What all of these definitions have in common is that authentic texts is written passages that has some communicative aim and it is not for the purpose of pedagogical reasons Wallace (1992) defines them as *"...real-life texts, not written for pedagogic purposes"* (p. 145).

Authentic text is defined by Guariento and Morley as:

*...one created to fulfill some social purpose in the language community in which it was produced with the onset of communicative movement a greater awareness of the need to develop students' skills for the real world has meant that teachers endeavor to simulate this world in the classroom.* (2001, p: 347)

Authentic texts are therefore written for native speakers and contain "real" language. They are *"...materials that have been produced to fulfill some social purpose in the language community."* So, authentic texts close the gap between classroom knowledge and real life.

Supporting the view that authentic materials (texts) have no pedagogic goal. It has been argued that this material loses its authenticity while applied in the classroom *"As soon as texts, whatever their original purpose, are brought into classrooms for pedagogic purposes they have, arguably, lost authenticity."* (Wallace 1992:79). Although its origin remains authentic as it is highlighted by Widdowson (1990) asserts that *"authentic is material designed for native speakers of English used in the classroom in a way similar to the one it was designed for"* Widdowson (1990:67). Thus Jacobson (2003) simplifies that "*not only considering how the text is formed to determine its authenticity but also the way it is used, besides authentic materials can be use either authentic or school-only way"* Jacobson (2003:2).

In this context Widdowson explained that authenticity is not a quality of text at all; instead, *"authenticity... is achieved when the reader realizes the intentions of the writer".* (Widddowson, 1976: 264). So according to him authenticity is an interaction between the reader and the text not the text in its self.

## 1.6.2. Rationale behind Using Authentic Texts

Authentic texts contain an intrinsic educational value because it presents information which is real and capable of change. It raises the student motivation for learning by exposing them to *"real"* language (Guariento& Morley 2001). It offers a language that is original Nuttall 1996 *"Authentic texts can be motivating because*

*they are proof that the language is used for real-life purposes by real people."* (Nuttall 1996:172). Furthermore (Brinton 2001) suggests that authentic texts *"reinforce for students the direct relationship between the language classroom and the outside world".* Authentic text may fulfill some needs of the students enables learners to become part of the Learning process .learners would able to have opportunities to recognize lexical relation and vocabulary change as well as the grammar usage in the language. Barlow, 1996*: "The learner is not seen as just a passive pattern extractor, but is, in addition, a cognizer the ability to make numerous cognitive distinctions, some of which will be able to with be linked with formal distinctions made in the grammar."* (Barlow, 1996: 17-18)

It is likely that the authentic texts would help the student to recognize vocabulary items Willis, 1993 *"The use of authentic text makes it likely that not only structure and necessary choice but also the typical behavior of words and phrases will be captured and... highlighted for the learner."* (Willis, 1993: 92)**.** Widdowson (1990) argues that language should be presented in its original authentic way. It does not need to be simplified for students.

Authentic text is seen as a source to the target culture and language since it could be a newspaper article or an advertisements *"Even the humblest material artefact, which is the product and symbol of a particular civilization, it is an emissary of the culture out of which it comes"* (Mishan, 2005, p. 45). It develops the concept of culture awareness that the student need to master, especially when these student are learning a language outside of its original context. In contrast textbook have been always the subject of debate in terms of their neglecting of cultural context in the reading materials. Cultural awareness is seen when the learners use their schemata or background knowledge to understand the cultural concepts provided in the text (that could be implicit or explicit) (Mishan, 2005 p46).

Furthermore Tamo (2009:75) put forward a list of advantages that authentic text would provide for the learner as well as the teachers even if they were not presented in authentic situation:

• Students are exposed to real discourse, as in videos of interviews with famous people where intermediate students listen for gist. They provide exposure to real language.

• Authentic materials have a positive effect on learner motivation

• Textbooks often do not include incidental or improper English.

• Authentic materials can produce a sense of achievement, e.g., a brochure on England given to students to plan a visit.

• The same piece of material can be used under different circumstances if the task is different.

• Language change is reflected in the materials so that students and teachers can keep abreast of such changes.

• Books, articles, newspapers, and so on contain a wide variety of text types, language styles not easily found in conventional teaching materials.

• Authentic materials can encourage reading for pleasure because they are likely to contain topics of interest to learners, especially if students are given the chance to have a say about the topics or kinds of authentic materials to be used in class.

• Authentic materials support a more creative approach to teaching.

> **Tamo, D (2009:75). The Use of Authentic Materials in Classrooms.** *Journal of LCPJ*. **2 (1) 74-78.**

To sum up, the use of authentic texts in reading comprehension is found to be helpful for the student development. According to Grellet and Swaffar *"Authentic texts are vital; they motivate students, offer a real context. Transmit the target l language culture, and prepare students to read outside the classroom"* (as cited inMarva A 1989). It is beneficial in enhancing student's different skills as well as to

keep them connected with the target language use in the real world. Thus some disadvantages has been recited by researchers such as (Wallace 1992, Morley 2001), would be mentioned in the following.

### 1.6.3. Drawbacks of Using Authentic Texts

Authentic texts do not always fit the level of the students because it contains many unfamiliar language, and words that learners possibly will not be able to understand and even words that are already known for learners may occur in an unknown context. Wallace (1992; 76). On the other hand Guariento and Morley (2001), suggests that the use of authentic texts can make it hard for learners with a low level to understand the meaning of most lexical items in a particular context.

It is also believe that the teacher has to use authentic texts carefully to help low level students to comprehend texts since the language and the cultural background transmitted through these materials can be a source of confusion. Consequently, students would struggle with the hidden meanings of the texts as the decoding skill manifests as an obstacle for them. Guariento et.al (2001:349)

Ruddock (2000) highlights the point that authentic texts are make for students who reach an intermediate level in grammar. Because it is regarded as a difficult material for beginners.

### 1.6.4. Selection of Authentic Texts

Text selection is a crucial factor in making literature a resource for linguistic development, personal enrichment and cultural appreciation(Maley2001). For this reason, it is imperative to carefully choose the appropriate text for learners. Collie and Slater (1990) suggested some criteria for selecting texts:

•Should take into consideration language level of the students, motivation, interests and the cultural background of the students.

•Importance of using books that have a relation with real-life experiences.

•Choosing a work that is not higher than the reading level of the student.

•In addition, Lazar (1993:52) suggested *that "student's linguistic proficiency should be taken into account in literacy selection"*.

## 1.7. Literary Texts as a Source of Reading

Reading comprehension is the ultimate goal in interacting with written passages. Literacy texts or literature is considered as an important source of reading materials. Thus the introduction of literature in the reading tasks has become an obligatory. The cultural in information that literacy text conveys to the reader as well as opportunities for developing vocabulary knowledge and structural awareness favored the introduction of literature as a source of reading.

### 1.7.1.Literature Defined

Literature has been given much definition according to each author's view. A dictionary would see literature as production of writing that is considered as artistic works, like poetry drama and fiction. So literature can be valued as expression of people thought, fillings and emotion as well as an expression of the way they lived and the changes in their society.

In the same line, while reading literature it can give us pleasure in experiencing different opinions and developing  critical thinking of different values and ideas, that is why Diyanny explains that literature would takes us to a world of fiction and imagination capable of evoking our senses consequently enhancing our views of life (Diyanny 2000).

This concept has been treated in different angles. Eagleton (2008: 9) literature defined as *"a highly valued kind of writing"*Moody (1971) defines it as an umbrella term, that is used to express in words some special aspects of the human experience. Furthermore, Lombardi (2013) defines literature as a work that uses creative thinking in expressing thoughts and ideas. Generally speaking, literature is

defined as one of the valuable authentic materials that can be used in both languages teaching and learning.

Moreover, there are three genres of literature; Serir (2012:10) summarizes them in the following diagram:
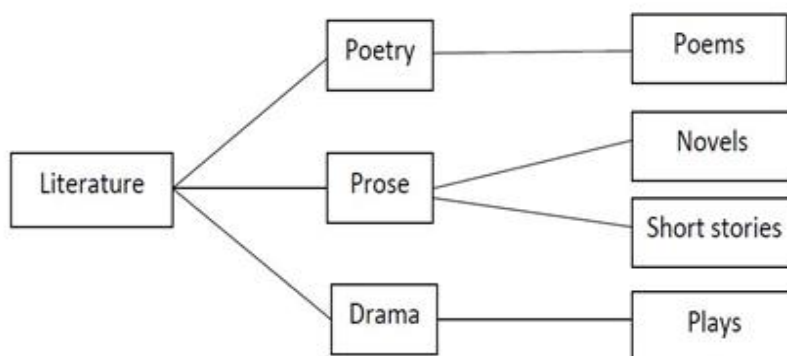


**Diagram 1.3 Literary Genres**

Literacy is no longer considered as acquired only at early ages of schooling but a continuous process of building knowledge relying on a set of skills and strategies that individuals gain throughout life in various contexts, The PISA 2009 defined literacy is to comprehend by reflecting upon written passages to develop knowledge and enhance one's self to take part in the society. (As cited in OECD .2010).

### 1.7.2. Reader's Literacy Competence

A reader who possess literacy competence is able to relate to the text in order to create comprehension (coherence). They can also make their own interferences about the text, and extract similarities and differences of ideas between paragraphs. Lazar et.al (2003) explain that readers who are competent in literature have a kind of pre- knowledge and adaptability with certain *"conventions"* which allows them to convert written passages into "literacy meaning". So this competence is what makes literacy text important source of reading materials in any classroom.

Literacy competence is the complete mastery of tools and techniques that enables the student to achieve comprehension. For example, in reading poetry the student should be able to find out the real intension of the writer, since the majority of poetry is written in a high level literacy style and the real intension could be implicitly implied in the verses. The responsibility of developing this competence is a shared task between the student and teacher alike. Students should engage themselves in reading as much as possible for them in order to be accustomed to different literacy style. The teacher's role is to help  students  to develop appropriate tools and skills (such as decoding skills, structure knowledge as well as the ability to use techniques like skimming and scanning to get overall view of the written passage) to cope with those literacy styles.

## 1.7.3. Literature Importance in EFL Classroom

Literature is a valuable source of knowledge and understanding, therefore it is considered as a part of education, Kramsch and Kramsch (2000) highlight that *"literature has symbolic prestige, artistic and cultural meaning, entertainment and educational value"*Kramsch and Kramsch (2000:553). Thus the introduction of literary text is important to the development of reading, besides it helps the prosperity of other skills like grammar building by reading literary text. According to Knutson (1997) resent research in reading showed the advantages of using literary text to attract the student's attention to the formal knowledge about the text (like structure organization) and the meaning.

Researchers such as MacKay (1992) advocates the beneficial role of literature as he explains: literature could be helpful in developing the *"linguistic knowledge"* both in the level of production or understanding besides the student *"reading proficiency"* increases since reading literacy can attract their attention and raise their motivation consequently the student  would interact efficiently with the text . It can help them understand the target culture as well as to develop their own imaginative creative thinking.

Similarly researchers like (Eliot1990 &Goatly2000) support the idea that literature helps in the development of all the skills needed by the learners. Since literature provides the learners with a wide range of vocabulary items in various concepts. It exposes the learner to complex language structure and gave him the mechanism to express his ideas and emotion adequately with a degree of command on the language. In this respect Knutson (1997: 53) takes it even further by makes the point that even using literary text in different stages during the educational year has great effects on the student:

*"... The same text can be used at various different points during a semester, each time with a different task or focus. In reading the same text with a different purpose, students derive a sense of accomplishment from their progressively greater comprehension and more extended use of the text"*. Likewise, Lazar (1993:19) focuses on the critical role of literature in the classroom as an element responsible for developing the student as a whole:

> *Literature may have a wider educational function in the classroom in that it helps to stimulate the imagination of our students, to develop their critical abilities and to increase their emotional awareness. If we ask our student to respond personally to the texts we give them, they will became increasingly confident about expressing their own ideas and emotions in English.*

In addition, Lazar (1993) maintains that by using literary texts as a technique to teach EFL, learners will be able to function effectively in the acquisition of Foreign Language skills, because of its high educational potential, motivating and interpretative qualities. She emphasizes the efficiency of using literature, and outlines the following:

•It is very motivating, especially when learners are exposed to read texts about culture of other foreign countries, which would make them know the reality

about the country they are reading about and that would raise learner's cultural awareness, because literature is often more interesting than texts found in course books.

•It is authentic material, learners will be exposed to such fountain of original language in the classroom when they are dealing with difficult language and they obtain new skills which can be used outside the classroom.

•It has general educational value.

•It is a stimulus for language acquisition.

•It develops students' interpretative abilities.

•It expands students' language awareness and development as Pavey (1972:187)argues that *"literature will increase all language skills because literature will extend linguistic knowledge by giving evidence of extensive and subtle vocabulary usage, and complex and exact syntax"*.

•It is a beneficial element in the language classroom. In this respect Tomlinson (1985) states that literary texts as an authentic material can make the learner acquire *"authentic English",* and their interaction with the written passages and with their classmates will let them have the chance to increase their *"communication skills"*.

These advantages can be achieved through the combination of literature and language together and through guided activities which are aimed to motivate students and make them interested. Furthermore, Lazar (1993) states that literary texts can be a great help for students to gather knowledge about the culture of the country whose language they are studying. Thus, they make a comparison or a contrast between the target culture and their own culture.

Students will be familiar with literary texts through reading. Therefore, they will develop their writing skills, i.e. literary texts foster personal involvement in

learners, and might give them the opportunity to relate their personal experiences to the content of the subject matter. Moreover, Mackey (1982) argues that literature can be used to develop the linguistic knowledge either on usage or use level. Usage involves the knowledge of linguistic rules, and use requires employing these rules for effective communication (Widdowson: 1978).

Literature plays an important role in teaching four basic language skills; reading, writing, listening and speaking as Povey (1972:187) argues that *"literature will increase all language skills because literature will extend linguistic knowledge by giving evidence of extensive and subtle vocabulary usage, and complex and exact syntax"*.

On the other hand, Collie and Slater (1987) support the inclusion of literature in the language classroom as it provides valuable authentic material, develops personal involvement, and helps contribute to readers' language and cultural enrichment. These advantages they move on to assert, can be achieved through the use of activities that promote involvement, reader response, and a solid integration between language and literature. Moreover, literary texts can help students understand the cultural norms and values embedded in the language, i.e. by using literary texts, EFL students are given the opportunity to study and use English in a language context, in addition to that, they are provided with access to the values and ways of thinking of the people whose language they are studying (Lazar, 1993). Students will compare and contrast the target culture to their own culture and thus gather a new peace of knowledge

### 1.7.4. Literary Texts as a Source of Reading

Reading is *"an active attempt on the part of the reader to understand a writer's message"* (Smith & Robinson, 1980, cited in Dutta, 2008, p. 11).

Literature makes people think and takes the development of one's thought process to become a proficient reader. It makes students acquire the ability to understand other people's attitudes, thoughts and culture. Thus, it gives students the

chance to shape and increase a personal language which can develop their skills. Furthermore, when students read a literary text they are able to see the life through the eyes of the character and thus begin to read with pride. Reading in this way is responding both emotionally and intellectually. Accordingly reading literary texts develops student's language proficiency as it provide them with different ideas, grammar, vocabulary, etc…Thus, students could probably gather cultural and language background that help them in achieving their goals.
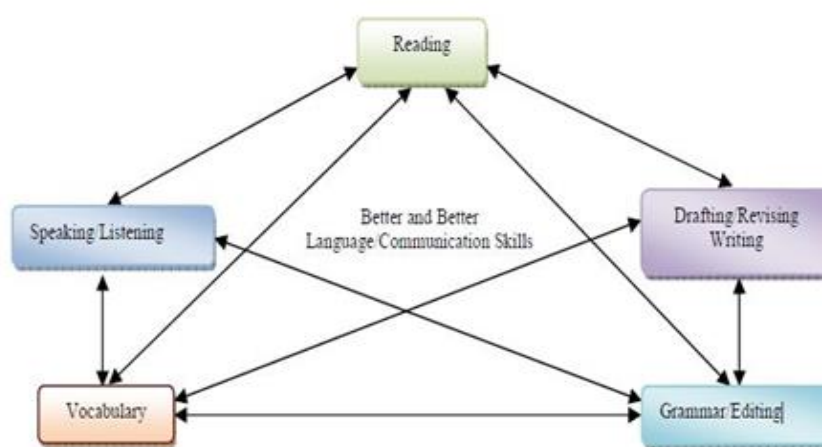


**Diagram 1.4 Language skills connection (Elder & Lester 1994)**

Maley (1989:12) lists some of the reasons for regarding literature as a potent resource in the language classroom as follows:

1. Universality:Because we are all human beings, the themes literature deals with are common to all cultures despite their different way of treatment - Death, Love, Separation, Belief, Nature ...the list is familiar. These experiences all happen to human beings.

2. Non-triviality: Many of the more familiar forms of language teaching inputs tend to trivialize texts or experience. Literature does not trivialize or talk down. It is about things which mattered to the author when he wrote them. It may offer genuine as well as merely *"authentic"* inputs.

3. Personal Relevance:Since it deals with ideas, things, sensations and events which either constitute part of the reader's experience or which they can enter into imaginatively, they are able to relate it to their own lives.

4. Variety:Literature includes within it all possible varieties of subject matter. It is, in fact, a battery of topics to use in ELT. Within literature, we can find the language of law and of mountaineering, of medicine and of bull-fighting, of church sermons and nursery talk.

5. Interest:Literature deals with themes and topics which are intrinsically interesting, because part of the human experience, and treats them in ways designed to engage the readers 'attention.

6. Economy and suggestive power:One of the great strengths of literature is its suggestive power. Even in its simplest forms, it invites us to go beyond what is said to what is implied. Since it suggests many ideas with few words, literature is ideal for generating language discussion. Maximum output can often be derived from minimum input.

7. Ambiguity:As it is highly suggestive and associative, literature speaks subtly different meanings to different people. It is rare for two readers to react identically to any given text. In teaching, this has two advantages. The first advantage is that each learner's interpretation has validity within limits. The second advantage is that an almost infinite fund of interactive discussion is guaranteed since each person's perception is different. That no two readers will have a completely convergent interpretation establishes the tension that is necessary for a genuine exchange of ideas.

### 1.7.5. Characteristics of Literary Text Selection

The application or literacy text to reading opens the door to a variety of text choices. However the success of using literary sources in the classroom, according

to Mackay (1982p 531) is strongly depended on the literary materials that are selected by the teachers.

It is for these reasons experts tries to label some characteristics that can be of help to the teachers in their choice of materialsSwaffar et.al (1991: 137) suggested that text selected should be at the level of students so they can access their background knowledge. This later plays a great role in dealing with reading comprehension.

In the same view texts selected should have a certain familiarity to the learner and it can meet their need for learning the language taking in to account their motivation cultural background and even their proficiency in the language. Westhoff (1991 p32) claimed that: text  should contain enough fresh, unknown elements to give the learner   frequent opportunities to hypothesize about their meaning but should at the same time have enough familiar, repeated elements to allow the learner to test these hypotheses and to read at a considerable speed.

In more precise manner the student proficiency in the language and the cultural difficulties presented in the text is a critical criterion in regards to the literacy chosen. Teachers should be aware of this as an efficient factor that leads to difficulties in comprehending a text Mackay (1982: 531) echoes this claim *"a text which is difficult on either a linguistic or cultural level will have a few benefits is therefore important for teachers to select text with appropriate vocabulary and structural complexity"*.

## 1.8. Conclusion

In so far, we have seen the impact of reading comprehension strategies and its vital role in achieving understanding. There are some factors that hinder students' such as weak prosody and decoding skills. Through reading comprehension students may get the opportunity to develop grammar and vocabulary. Researchers emphasize on reading courses as a variable source to expose students to new vocabulary items and to implicitly teach them grammar rules. On the other hand,

one might argue that using literature as a material and source of authentic text can widen learners' awareness and to pay more attention about the importance of vocabulary knowledge and grammar structure in achieving comprehension as learners read, besides this learning and mastering the language can be raised.

The following chapter will deal with the objectives behind choosing case study as a research design, the choice of the methodology used to conduct the present work. Besides this, it will introduce the results and discusses some conclusions derived from the data.

# CHAPTER TWO

## 2.1. Introduction

This chapter overviews the research design, approaches and procedures. It proposes a manner in which case study can contribute in this research. Then, a general representation of the quantitative and qualitative approaches isprovided, along with an explanation of the combination between them (quantitative and qualitative). As they are used to analyze the study and collect data, questionnaires (for teachers and students) will be use as instrument. Finally, this is followed by analyses of the obtained data, results and interpretations in addition to the limitations of the current study as well as recommendations for further investigation.

## 2.2. Research Design

This research is based on case study research design. The reason of choosing this type of research is that it focuses on understanding the phenomenon, and explaining whether those strategies are able to manifest in the developments of students' vocabulary and grammar, the application of different strategies by students to cope with their reading disabilities. In this case,a use of effective reading comprehension strategies for higher education is being implied in the use of authentic and literacy sources for reading in the classroom.

Crotty (1998) suggestedthree key features to consider in research design:

1- The psychological background, that determine the appropriate kinds of knowledge to be used, and how they can be justified as adequate and legitimate.

2- The reasons behind choosingthe research question.

3- The methodology itself, and the techniques and procedures used in the research design, to collect data.

In educational research, it is usually possible (and certainly popular) to characterize a research study's methodology as qualitative; as quantitative; or as involving both qualitative and quantitative methods.

There are several definitions and understandings of the case study. According to Bromley (1990, p.302), it is a:

*"Systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest".*

The unit of analysis can range from an individual to a corporation. While there is utility in applying this method retrospectively, it is most often used prospectively. Data come largely from documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participants' observations and physical artifacts (Yin, 1994).

Case study research is an essential research methodology for applied disciplines. Regardless of how it is used, for either theory building or theory testing, it is a process of scholarly inquiry and exploration.Its underlying purpose is to create new knowledge (Herling et al., 2000). It is an appropriate research study where a contemporary phenomenon is to be studied in its natural contexts. According to (Eisenhardt;1989,p.13) "the focus is on understanding the dynamics present in single settings". There for it tries to explaine or test some hypotheses about the phenomenon in question.

According to Yin (2003) a case study design should be considered when:

(a) The focus of the study is to answer *"how"* and *"why"* questions.

(b) You cannot manipulate the behaviour of those involved in the study.

(c) You want to cover contextual conditions because you believe they are relevant to the phenomenon under study.

(d) The boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context.

Besides this case study research, like all other forms of research, must be concerned with issues such as methodological severity, validity, and reliability. This is accomplished through the six elements below:

- ✓ Determine and define the research questions.
- ✓ Select the cases and determine data-gathering and analysis techniques.
- ✓ Prepare to collect data.
- ✓ Collect data in the field.
- ✓ Evaluate and analyze the data.
- ✓ Prepare the report.

All the above mentioned strengths of case study justify its choice in this work. For example, it enables the researcher to understand the importance of using strategies in reading and howreaders can employ certain techniques to increase their reading comprehension at the University of Tlemcen. It also allows providing a reliable data based on instruments that are used. So it can provide us with an adequate data base for the level of students' reading and how teachers are working to develop certain awareness in students towards reading comprehension strategies.

## 2.3. Research Approaches

This study tries to use a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods as an effective strategy to increase the validity of this research. A practical approach adopted to achieve the objectives; both of the methods are used interchangeably within this investigation. But before giving the

strength and the benefit of using this combination it is suitable to define what qualitative and quantitative approaches are individually.

## 2.3.1. Qualitative Approach

Qualitative research methods focus on discovering and understanding the experiences, perspectives, and thoughts of the participants; that is, qualitative research explores meaning, purpose, or reality (Hiatt, 1986). As what (Denzin& Lincoln, 2005, p. 3) defines qualitative research as:

> *...a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.*

Moreover, Shank (2002 p. 5) defines qualitative research as structured and systematically based on conventional laws besides it relays on transcription and analyses of others experiences.In the same line Merriam (1998) indicated, qualitative case study is a perfect design for understanding and interpreting educational phenomena. As she describes it:

> *A case study design is employed to gain an in depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved. The interest is in process rather than outcomes, in context*

*rather than a specific variable, in discovery
rather than confirmation. Insights gleaned
from case studies can directly influence
policy, practice, and future research.*
(Merriam, 1998, p. 19)

The qualitative approach is being used in this study to provide the researchers with explanations, and conceptualizations from details provided by participants.That would demonstrate the validity and reliability of the information provided, specially the effects of using reading comprehension strategies on students of English in the University of Tlemcen and the manifestation of these strategies in enhancing students level in grammar and vocabulary as well as to overcome the barrier that culture impose in the literary texts. In addition, this approach would provide a detailed exploration of the topic of interest, which is in this case, the application of appropriate reading comprehension strategies. From all what is said about the positive points of the qualitative approach, the quantitative approach is also used in this study for more reliability and flexibility this may give clear understanding of the topic under investigation.

### 2.3.2. Quantitative Approach:

Unlike qualitative approach, quantitative research according to Cohen (1980) is a social research that employs empirical methods and empirical statements. Moreover, Creswell (1994, p.13) has given a very concise definition of quantitative research as a type of research that is *"explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods (in particular statistics)"*. Therefore, quantitative research is essentially about collecting numerical data to explain a particular phenomenon as what (Glesne and Peshkin, 1992, p.6) explained: *"...supported by the positivist or scientific paradigm, leads us to regard the world as made up of observable, measurable facts"*, i.e. this

approach honors the logic of experimental or creational method in adhering to agreed rules and predetermined sequences, irrespective of emerging data and analysis.

From all what have been said Trochim and Land (1982, p. 1) defined quantitative research design as:

> *The glue that holds the research project together. A design is used to structure the research, to show how all of the major parts of the research project—the samples or groups, measures, treatments or programs, and methods of assignment—work together to try to address the central research questions.*

Quantitative research is, as the term suggests, concerned with the collection and analysis of data in numeric form. It tends to emphasize relatively large-scale and representative sets of data, and is often, falsely in our view, presented or perceived as being about the gathering of *"facts"*. Qualitative research, on the other hand, is concerned with collecting and analyzing information in as many forms, chiefly non-numeric, as possible. It tends to focus on exploring, in as much detail as possible, smaller numbers of instances or examples which are seen as being interesting or illuminating, and aims to achieve *"depth"* rather than *"breadth"*. (Blaxter, et al 1996: 61)

Despites all what have been mentioned about the benefits of using the quantitative approach,there are many phenomena we might want to look at, but which doesn't seem to produce any quantitative data. Qualitative and quantitative research approaches differ basically in some major areas, including: their analytical objectives; types of questions posed; types of

data collection methods used; types of data produced; degree of flexibility in study design (see Table 2.3.2.1) (Mack *et al.*, 2005).

| | Quantitative | Qualitative |
|---|---|---|
| General framework | - Seeks to confirm hypothesesabout phenomena<br><br>- Instruments use more rigid style of eliciting and categorizing responses to questions<br><br>- Use highly structured methodssuch as questionnaires, surveysand structured observation | -Seeks to explore phenomena<br><br>- Instruments use more flexible, iterative style of eliciting andcategorizing responses toquestions<br><br>- Use semi-structured methods such as in-depth interviews, focus groups and participants' observation |
| Objective Analytical | - To quantify variation<br><br>- To predict casual relationships<br><br>-To describe characteristics of a Population | - To describe variation<br><br>- To describe and explain relationships<br><br>- To describe individual experiences<br><br>- To describe group norms |
| QuestionFormat | Closed – ended | Open – ended |
| Data format | Numerical (obtained by assigning numerical | Textual (obtained from audiotapes, videotapes |

| | values to response) | and field notes) |
|---|---|---|
| Flexibility in study design | - Studies design is stable frombeginning to end<br><br>- Participant responses do notinfluence or determine how andwhich questions researchers ask next<br><br>- Studies design is subject tostatistical assumptions andconditions | - Some aspects of the study areflexible (for example, the addition, exclusion or wording of particular interviews questions)<br><br>- Participant responses affect how and which questionsresearchers ask next<br><br>- Studies design is iterative, that is, data collection and research questions are adjustedaccording to what is learned |

**Table2.1. Comparison between Qualitative and QuantitativeMethods**

(Source: Mack,*etal.*2005, p.3)

Regardless of what have beenalready said about the importance of using each method alone. Some researchers go to consider the use of mixed methods i.e. which combine qualitative and quantitative methods in ways that ostensibly bridge their differences in the service of addressing a research question.While mixed methods research combines qualitative and quantitative methods in ways that draws on the strengths of both traditions of inquiry, it is a clear step away from the boundaries and practices of those

traditions, especiallythose linked to quantitative methods. According to (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie2004):

> *Mixed methods research is formally defined here as the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study. Mixed methods research also is an attempt to legitimate the use of multiple approaches in answering research questions, rather than restricting or constraining researchers' choices (i.e., it rejects dogmatism). It is an expansive and creative form of research, not a limiting form of research. It is inclusive, pluralistic, and complementary, and it suggests that researchers take an eclectic approach to method selection and the thinking about and conduct of research. (pp. 17–18)*

This definition highlights the potential value of mixing multiple elements of qualitative and quantitative methods, as well as the potential complexity of doing so.

In the case of understanding the use of effective reading comprehension strategies by 1st Year EFL students  at the University of Tlemcen,in order to gain comprehension in reading. Both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods are being appliedto strengthen the validity of the conclusions, and to provide a better recognition of the research problem. Some of the questions that are raised in this investigation could be better understood through quantitative method other by the use of qualitative approach others may be better explained using combination of the two.

## 2.4. Data Collection

Data Collection is an important aspect of any type of research study.According to Yin (1994, p.78) data collection for case studies can rely on many sources of evidence. He identified six primary sources of evidence for case study research. The use of each of these might require different skills from the researcher. Not all sources are essential in every case study, but the importance of multiple sources of data to the reliability of the study is well established (Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994). The six sources identified by Yin (1994) are:

- ✓ Documentation
- ✓ Archivalrecords
- ✓ Interviews
- ✓ Direct observation
- ✓ Participant observation, and physicalartifacts

Forthis study, questionnaire has been submitted for both teachers and students as an instrument to collect data.

## 2.4.1. Setting

The present study has been conducted in the Department of English at Abou-BakrBelkaid University of Tlemcen. The purpose behind this investigation is to describe the use of reading comprehension strategies to enhance the capacity and the ability to comprehend written materials of1st year EFLstudents, in order to make them understand and to be aware of how to use those strategies to achieve reading comprehension. Besides this a certain attention has been given to the role of reading comprehension in the development of student's grammar and vocabulary. To reach these goals several questions have been delivered to both students and teachers.

### 2.4.2. Participants'Profile

The participants engaged in this study are first year English students at the University of Tlemcen.50 students have been chosen randomly, they belong to two groups. Their ages varybetween (21-24) 10 males and 40 females are supposed to answer some questions about their reading comprehension and the different problems they encounter while reading different materials. Besides what are the different strategies they are relying on to solve these problems and achieving comprehension. In addition to students, 6 teachers have been requested to answer some question concerning the underlying research. Those teachers are dealingwith discourse comprehension at the University of Tlemcen and they are dealing with first year students as well as other levels. The questionnaires aimed at highlighting strategies they use to teach reading comprehension and the crucial role of these courses in promoting students comprehension and how they can help student to cope with their reading weaknesses.

### 2.5. Instruments

In this study a set ofquestions have been directed to teachers and student. The purpose of using the questionnaire as a research instrument is to answer the research question raised in this research and test the hypotheses derived from them, besides providing a reliable data about the phenomena under study. It would highlight how much students understand the different reading comprehension strategies, and the successful usage of them, since students have a difficulty in decoding the sources of reading (literacy texts and authentic materials) provided to them by teachers. Data collected from teachers questionnaire would show the progress of their students and how they are dealing with their shortcomings in reading.

**2.6. Data Analysis**

Data analysis is a process used to transform, remodel and revise certain information (data) with a view to reach to a certain conclusion for a given situation or problem. Data analysis can be done by different methods as according to the needs and requirements of different domains. In a research, data analysissupports the researcher to reach a conclusion. Therefore, simply stating that data analysis is important for a research will be an understatement rather no research can survive without data analysis.

Regardless on the type that data analysis is built on (qualitative or quantitative). It has a curtail benefits in any research that are cited in the following:

- ✓ Data analysis helps in structuring the findings from different sources of data collection.
- ✓ It is again very helpful in breaking a macro problem into micro parts.
- ✓ Data analysis acts like a filter when it comes to acquiring meaningful insights out of huge data-set.
- ✓ It helps in keeping human bias away from research conclusion with the help of proper statistical treatment (it can filter both qualitative and quantitative data).

At the beginning of this chapter, it is cited that a combination of quantitative or qualitative research is used in the analyses of data.

**2.6.1. Quantitative Data Analysis**

It is a systematic approach to investigations during which numerical data is collected and/or the researcher transforms what is collected or observed into numerical data. It often describes a situation or event;

answering the *"what" and "how many"* questions you may have about something.

A quantitative approach is often concerned with finding evidence to either support or contradict an idea or hypothesis you might have. A hypothesis is where a predicted answer to a research question is proposed.For example, you might propose that if you give a student training in how to use a search engine it will improve their success in finding information on the Internet. Quantitative research often aimed at testing a research hypothesis. Involves the analysis of numerical data.

## 2.6.2. Qualitative Data Analysis

Investigators who collect qualitative data use several different kinds of analysis and so only general indications of what can be done with such data will be presented here.However, there would be general agreement among such investigators with the following statement by Patton (1980; cited in Coolican, 1994):

> *The cardinal principle of qualitative analysis is that causal relationships and theoretical statements be clearly emergent from and grounded in the phenomena studied. The theory emerges from the data; it is not imposed on the data.*

As should by now be obvious, it is truly a mistake to imagine that qualitative analysis is easy or can be done by untrained novices, as Patton comments: Applying guidelines requires judgment and creativity. Because each qualitative study is unique, the analytical approach used will be unique. Because qualitative inquiry depends, at every stage, on the skills, training, insights, and capabilities of the researcher, qualitative analysis ultimately depends on the analytical intellect and style of the analyst. The

human factor is the greatest strength and the fundamental weakness of qualitative inquiry and analysisPatton (1990).

The purpose of doing qualitative data analysis is to reduce the amount of text and organize responses to identify trends in your data. One method of doing qualitative data analysis is content analysis. Content analysis creates a structure to organize open-ended information.

## 2.7. Questionnaire Analysis

### 2.7.1. Students'Questionnaires Analysis

**1-How many years have you been studying English?**

This question concerned EFL learning experience in order to see how many years they have been in touch with English language. Most of students have studied English for about 8 to 14 years, taking into consideration students who have been taught English in primary school and students who repeated the years.

**2- What is reading according to you?**

Since reading is an important skill to develop the learners' language, the question was asked to see how learners regard reading, and also to see if they have a positive or a negative attitude towards it. The result was not surprising, almost all students (89%) agreed on reading as a key of success and a key to develop ones' language. While the rest of the students (11%) seem to have a negative attitude towards reading.

**3**- **What is/are your favorite skill(s)?**
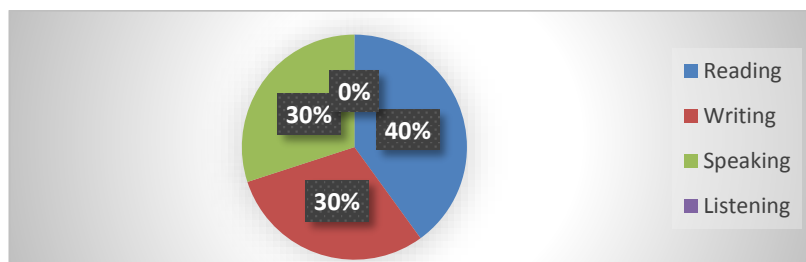


**Figure 2.1. Students' Favourable Language Skill**

Concerning this question, the majority of students 40% seem to like reading as their favorite skill, this maybe because of the material chosen by teachers that suits students. While, writing and speaking (30% each). Unexpectedly, no one of the learners liked speaking, it is maybe because teachers don't manage to teach the listening skill in the classroom, and they don't give too much importance to it.

**4- Do you regularly read English materials other that the reading assigned in your courses?**
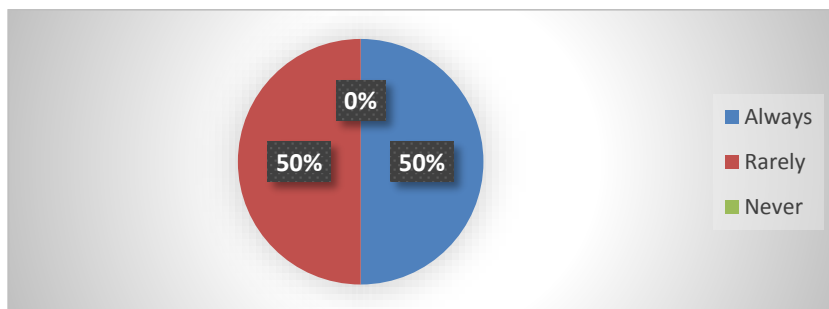


**Figure 2.2. Students' Extra Readings**

Reading is all about self the willingness to read as much as one can, sometimes reading materials presented in the classroom are not satisfying for students. This question was about whether students are accustomed to read materials other than those assigned in their classrooms. the result split in half between always (50%) and rarely(50%) , we can see that what teachers provide in the classroom are not satisfying to their need so all of them read other materials to extend their knowledge some more than the others.

**5- Why do you generally read?**
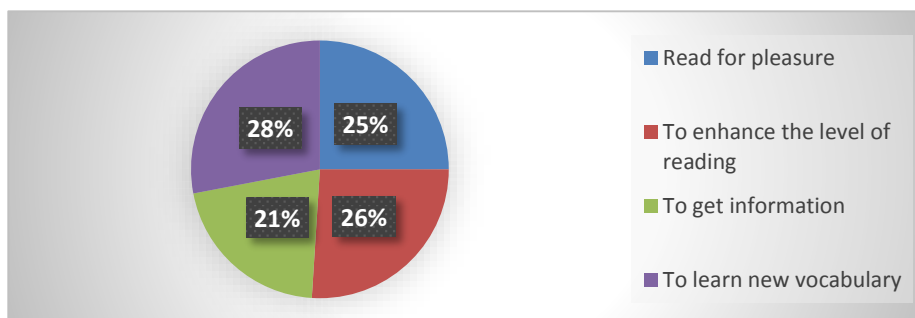


**Figure 2.3. Different Reasons for Reading**

Good readers are those who read various materials whenever they have the time or the opportunity to read. The results of this question showed that: all the students approach the reading material with different goals. The figure displays that about (28%) of students read to learn new vocabulary, others read for pure pleasure (25%) and to enhance the level of reading (26%), thought reading to get information (21%) is the last objective according to our students .the majority of students choose many goals for their objective to read and this can be seen in the closeness of the results    .therefore it can be  explained that our students are striving to developed their level of English and to ease their reading experience   as to develop their weaknesses in comprehending reading materials.

**6- When reading in English, if you don't understand an idea, do you:**
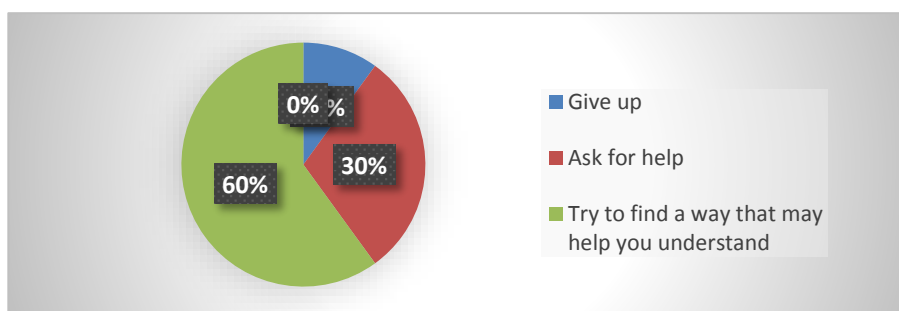


**Figure 2.4. Students Struggling During Reading**

Reading always poses a problem for students. They can't understand all the ideas in a paragraph or a text. The results showed that most of students when encountering an ambiguous idea in the text they rely on them self to find a way that may help them understand (60%)  while asking other for help was the last solution for them(30%) ,which  explains that they are relaying on some strategies for helping them on their reading. The rest of the students (10%) seem to have problems searching for a strategy that may help them understand, and they simply give up.

**7- What are the main difficulties that face you when reading an English text?**
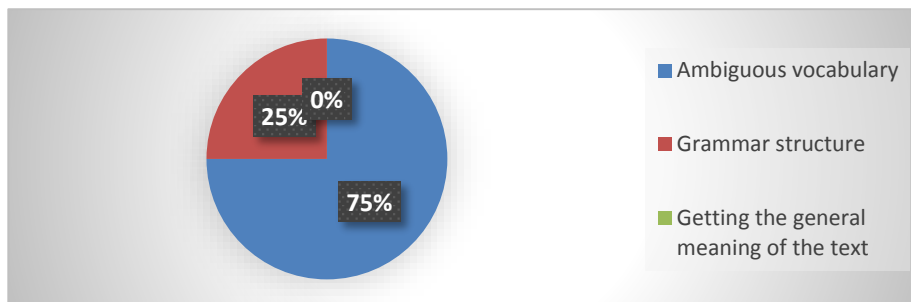


**2.5. The Major Obstacles in Reading Comprehension**

The purpose of asking the question is to know what are the main reasons behind the learners' failure as they read English materials. Ambiguous vocabulary was the first difficulty facing students (75%) when they are reading and (25%) said that the grammar structure of the written materials is difficult. From the results we can assume that the knowledge of words is of a great importance to understand the written materials as students read.

**8- What do you suggest from your teacher to help you learn reading?**

Teachers can make a difference when learners face problems with reading materials, and the strategies given by the teachers in the classroom may not be suitable for all the students. That's why this question opened the way for the students to suggest some strategies that can help them cope their deficiency. Most of students (68%) suggest that the teacher has to encourage and motivate students to read more materials in the classroom and outside the classroom. The rest of the students (32%) suggest from the teacher to give them the meaning of every new or difficult word as they are reading in the classroom. So, here, and according to students, the blame is on the teacher who doesn't motivate the students.

**9- What do you suggest to overcome some of the reading difficulties?**

The question was asked to give a chance for students to propose some strategies that can help them to be good readers in the future. Most of them (80%) said that reading a lot is the key to achieve the goal of being a good reader which

indicates that many students realize the importance of reading a lot, as it is the key to success. While, (20%) suggested using dictionary whenever you are reading.

**10- Do you know what is reading comprehension strategies?**
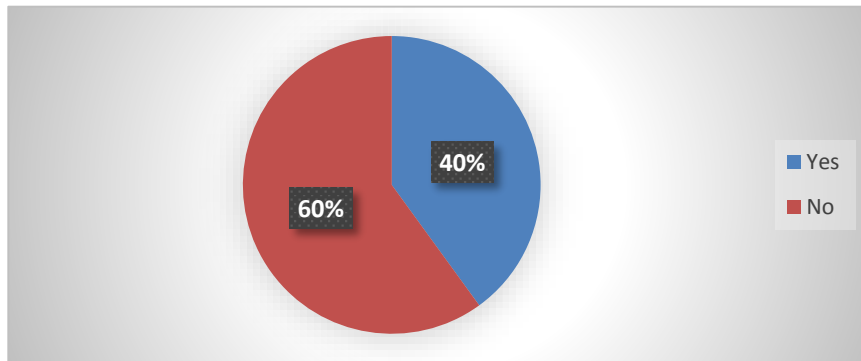


**2.6. Knwoledge about Reading Comprehension**

Reading comprehension strategies are the key to cope with reading difficulties .so it is critical to know if students have the knowledge about these strategies, the results highlighted that the majority of them (60%) know what are reading comprehension strategies which indicate that they are using them whenever they encounter reading difficulties. meanwhile about (40%) of the students deny any knowledge about reading comprehension strategies.

**11- Do you use any strategy to help you understand the text?**
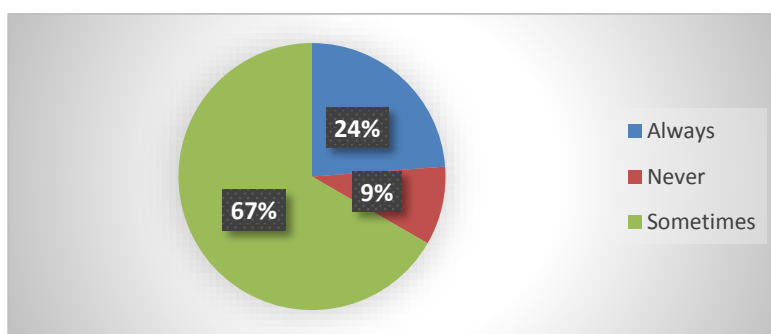


**2.7. The Application of Reading Comprehnsion Strategies**

Reading comprehension strategies are chosen by students to suit their needs, in order to develop a kind of comprehension of texts. what we can deduce from the figure above is that most students use reading comprehension strategies but not at the same frequency as it is demonstrated (67%) of them sometimes use reading

comprehension strategies, others always apply these strategies (24%) . unfortunately there was a minority of students (09%) who never use any strategy either before during or after they read , which indicate a certain deficiency on the part of students concerning comprehending written passages since reading comprehension is an ongoing process of decoding grammar and vocabulary item to reach the intended meaning of the writer , consequently the application of reading comprehension strategies became a must.

**12- Do you use literary texts as a source to enhance your reading ability?**
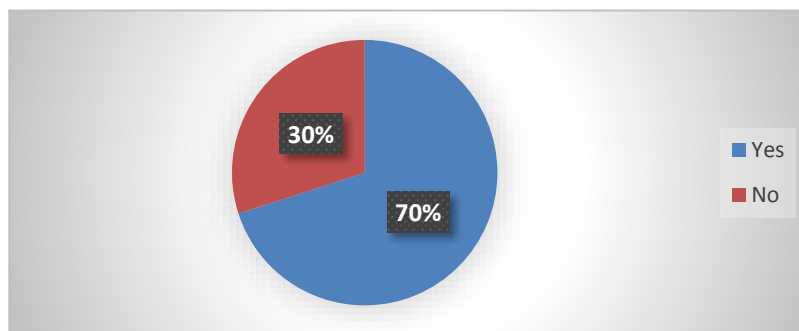


**2.8. Literary Text as a Reading Material**

Literary texts are considered as a valuable source of reading materials since it presents different styles and a various levels of language difficulty which can pose a challenge for students. Therefore thoseliteracy texts can help bridge the gap between the students and their reading comprehension, as it is demonstrated that (70%) of students use these text to develop their reading ability. This implies the achievements of a richer vocabulary repertoire and fluency in reading. Though (30%) of them do not see literacy texts as a source to enhance reading.

**13-Do you prefer using authentic texts as a source of reading?**
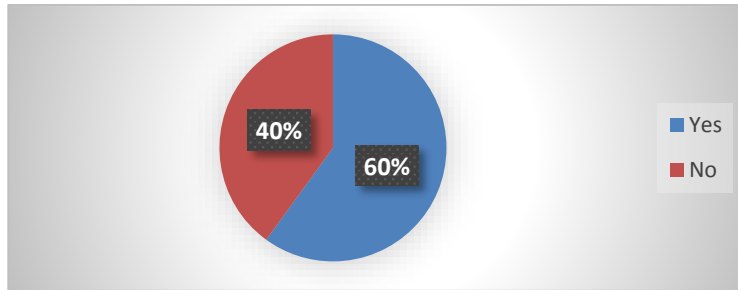


**2.9. Authentic Texts as Reading Material**

Authentic texts are materials that presents real life language in the classroom, (60%) of students acknowledged the importance of Introducing authentic texts in reading courses . though (40%) of them don't see authentic text as a source of reading and prefer texts that are pedagogically designed for the classroom.

**2.7.2. Teachers'Questionnaire Analyses**

**1-  Teaching experience, number of years:**

This question concerned EFL teaching experience in order to see how many years they have been in touch with the English Language. Most teachers have taught English for about 4 and 9 years. The asked teachers were not selected randomly, they all have an experience in teaching reading comprehension.

**2-  What objectives do you intend to reach in teaching reading comprehension to your first year students?**

This question highlighted the idea that teachers aims at achieving certain goals or developing the shortcomings of their students. Through teaching reading comprehension, teachers attempt to develop students' strategic competence and increase their metacognitive awareness, therefore students would be able to learn reading comprehension strategies and to choose what strategy suits them. Besides, when and how to successfully and conveniently employ reading strategies in any assignment to help students access comprehension of any given materials. In addition to giving students the mechanism to develop their comprehension.

Teachers also use reading comprehension to help students in mastering their language since reading comprehension would be a valuable tool in enriching students' vocabulary and sentence structure knowledge. Reading comprehension can also be used to enhance students' spelling, punctuation and writing skill.

**3- In which skill do your students feel most involved?**
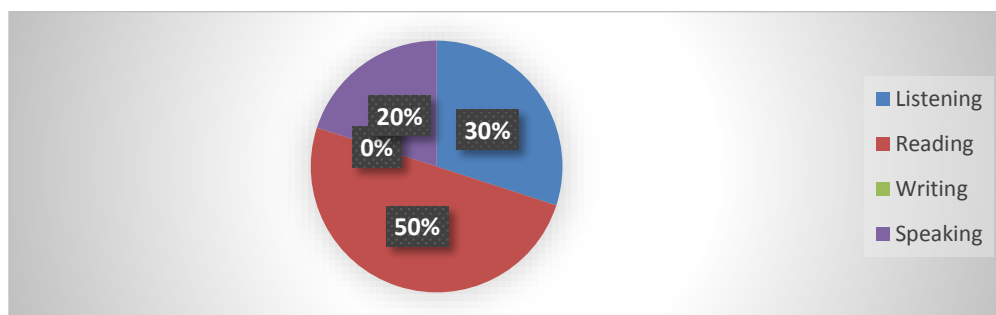


**Figure 2.10. The Degree of Students' Involvement in Language Skills**

Teachers were asked this question in order to see what is the most preferable or easiest skill for their students, because some of the them may not feel comfortable when they are listening, speaking, reading or writing. For many teachers (50%), the majority of students feel themselves at ease when they are reading. While, (30%) of teachers mentioned listening and (20%) mentioned Speaking. Surprisingly, no one of the asked teachers mentioned the writing skill, and that is because teachers themselves do not help students to achieve their goals in writing. As opposed to writing, reading seems to be the most preferable skill for most of students.

**4- How do you assess your students' progress in reading?**

Reading is a skill developed either in the classroom or throughout free voluntarily reading. Teachers are able to assess their students reading level. In this question, all the teachers have answered that their students have an average level on reading. Teachers mentioned that they rely on testing and other techniques such as reading allowed to assess the progress of their students in building a fluency in reading as well as an easier accessibility to the intended meaning of the written

passage, regardless of the type of information presented or the level of difficulty in the text.

**5- What are the main difficulties that face your students while reading an English text?**
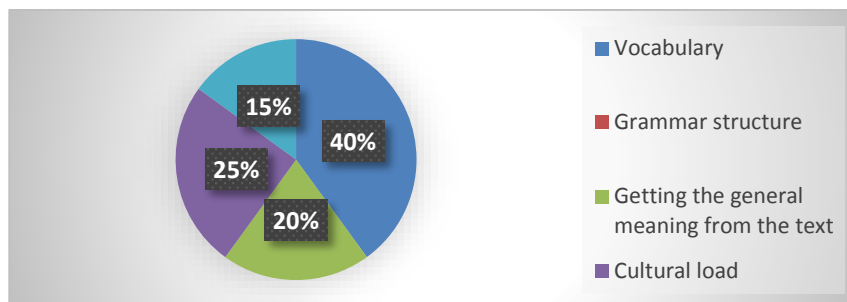


**Figure 2.11. Teachers' Suggestions about Students' Difficulties**

To access comprehension of any reading material is not an easy task, since several elements may cause problems for students. The below figure illustrates that the major obstacle that faces students according to teachers is grammar structure (40%) since the complexity of sentence structure can hinder the meaning of paragraphs, that is why getting the general meaning from the text (20%) is unreachable due to the absence of coherence in collecting ideas on the part of students. Besides this, cultural load or cultural background (25%) of the text can be unfamiliar for students especially when it is a foreign culture. In addition, vocabulary items (15%) are also problems for students since they cannot get the meaning of all the words in the paragraph especially if they are technical word. In addition to these reasons other difficulties have been provided by teachers such as the absence of a good strategy to follow (reading comprehension strategy) that makes their reading a structured process of breaking down the element of texts and also text selection that should be at reach to students' level and suits their interests, because this would make them more involved and interested in the task that is given to them.

**6- What types of reading comprehension strategies do you try to inculcate in order to overcome their reading weaknesses and/or cope with those weaknesses?**

Teachers try to inculcate certain reading comprehension strategies in their students' minds in order to facilitate their reading experience. This question shows the major strategies used by teachers in their classrooms, and they have ranged between strategies that focuses on the students' background such as brainstorming, and integrating one's background knowledge. So, students may link the content of the text to his previous encounters. Besides, teachers present strategies to help students decode the language of a given text, for example; the use of contextual guessing instead of using dictionaries as well as inferring and synthesizing strategies, which can help students know the meaning of words in the context of use. In addition to the above mentioned strategies, providing students with vocabulary check-tests and encouraging them to ask questions before, during and after reading can help in identifying the topic sentence of each paragraph and to summarize the main ideas of the text.

**7- How do you help your students deal with the different kinds of questions in a reading comprehension test?**

While testing students in reading comprehension some of them may face a kind of difficulty in dealing with the question. Teachers try to facilitate those questions as much as it is possible for students. They range the activities from the easiest to the most difficult since some question require students to summarize the meaning or to give their own view about the ideas presented in the text. Teachers also use pictures, graphs and web materials, they also rely on technology such as data shows to facilitate the course in attrition to teaching them different strategies e.g. ' once I teach them different strategies I don't say anything I only ask them to emphasize on the content.'

**8- How do you introduce your reading comprehension strategies in your course?**
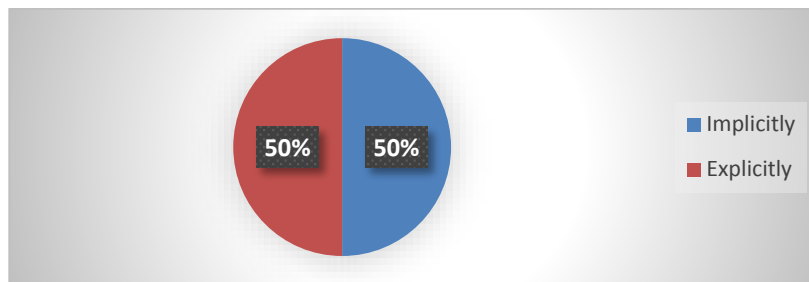


**Figure 2.12. Teaching Reading Comprehension Strategies**

The introduction of reading comprehension strategies in the classroom could be of two ways either explicitly or implicitly. The teachers agreed on the use of compilation of the two ways. Explicitly as an instruction in the classroom .the teacher is going to providing definition and purpose of use for the targeted strategies, this could be done through individual work or arranging student in groups so they can practice the use of these strategies .the implicit way in the other hand require students to know the usage of the strategies in their own while they are searching for answers and developing their comprehension.

**9- Relying on your teaching experience, what suggestions would you make to help your students develop their vocabulary stock?**

Vocabulary is considered to be one of the critical criteria in reading comprehension. Thus the objective of the above question is to know how teachers help students to develop their vocabulary repertoire through reading comprehension, all teachers were in the favor of asking students to read and reread the written passage available to them so they can make use of the contextual guessing that enable them to learn the meaning of the words in its context of use. If they encounter new words in the text, other advices were presented by teachers such as: dictionary consultation and the use of new words in sentences as well as the recycling of vocabulary. Though what kept repeating in the answers is the emphases on reading and the encouragement of students to read because with reading they

have much opportunities to encounter new word therefore acquiring a consistent vocabulary stock.

### 10- Does the use of reading comprehension strategies manifest in the development of students' linguistic competence?

The reason behind asking this question is to know the impact of reading comprehension strategies on the developments of students' linguistic competence. All teachers agreed that, reading comprehension strategies help to a certain degree in developing the grammar competence of students, because it drives students to break down sentence structure into basic elements (nouns, verbs), so students can understand the meaning.Consequently as longue as students are exposed to complex grammatical structures the more their use of reading comprehension strategies will increase, therefore, it will lead them to develop their linguistic competence.

### 11- How often do you introduce authentic texts in the classroom?

Authentic texts are often introduced as materials for reading in the classroom. All the teachers agreed on the frequent use of authentic text to meet their students' needs since it present genuine information since the majority of the language used in authentic texts are at the reach of their students' level. The real life language presented in these texts (in newspapers or articles) keeps students updated and can attract their attention and make them more motivated in the course. the variety of data presented on these text make it easier for student to capture the typical behavior of words and phrases as well as be familiar with the structure of language in real communication because authentic texts was first written for native speaker not for pedagogical purposes . In addition to this they are a valuable source of the target culture.

**12- Does the literary content introduced in the reading materials pose a difficulty for first year students in our Department? Please explain why?**

Reading material presented in the classroom should be parallel with the level of students. All the answers presented by teachers highlighted the fact that literacy content introduced in the reading materials can sometimes cause difficulties for first year students. Literature is generally viewed as an area of defeat for many students due to the difference in cultural content of the presented text and students' cultural background. Besides literacy text is written in high quality language like in poetry or, students can't comprehend the general meaning because they may encounter old fashioned words or complex grammatical structures. For these reasons literacy texts are carefully chosen by teachers and sometimes introduced in reading comprehension courses so that students can develop their literacy competence.

**13- Please provide some suggestions that would inculcate better in our students' reading comprehension strategies?**

The objective behind this question is to see the alternative solution that teachers are using to inculcate reading comprehension strategies in their students. The use of new technologies in teaching reading like the internet and presenting reading materials using data shows was the main suggestion made by teachers besides this  a high concentration on text selection and a variation in reading comprehension activities to carter all learners' strategies and interest . This can help all types of learners to know what and how to use reading comprehension strategies and to benefit from their reading experience, therefore students can rely on themselves and became fluent readers.

**2.8. Limitations and recommendations**

**2.8.1 Limitations**

Although the researchers tried to obtain a representative sample by assigning a sample of first year students, much caution should be exercised when generalizing its results without considering the sample characteristics, since it took into consideration a sample from students majoring in language studies (first year) and did not extent to civilization and literature first year students.

1- The participants' comprehension level was measured by using a list of questionnaires. These questionnaires might not be an accurate indicator of students' comprehension level. Other studies might employ reading tests or oral recall techniques, to gain more and accurate knowledge of students' comprehension.

2- This study major goal was to investigate the impact of using reading comprehension strategies on EFL learners. It uses a strategy of questionnaire based on each participant evaluation of what has been highlighted in the survey. Although the instrument turned out to be highly reliable in this study, it might need more investigation and improvement to strengthen its reliability and validity. Like any other strategy survey, this questionnaire did not measure actual use of strategies; it only measures perceived importance of strategy use.

**2.8.2. Recommendations**

Some recommendations are suggested for both teachers and learners in order to cope with various reading comprehension difficulties.

**2.8.2.1. Teacher's Role:**

The Reading Comprehension teacher has to follow two main tasks: first, to provide suitable texts, and second to develop activities that will focus the student's attention on the text (Nuttal (1982). In this context, the following recommendations

have been provided for teachers to be more helpful for their students in the classroom.

1- Teachers need to assess the strengths of their students, and build on their weaknesses (Wade, 1990).

2-Teachers teaching Reading Comprehension strategies should integrate their strategy instruction into theirongoing teaching (Brownell, 2000).

3- Struggling readers differ from skilled readers in their use of word knowledge while comprehending texts, as well as monitoringcomprehension and fix-up strategies (Parker, 2002).

4-Teachers need to focus on extensive comprehension instruction with all students, not just successful readers.

5- Because learners will acquire new words knowledge from texts through reading, the teacher has to provide necessary materials and equipment for his/her students. Literary texts are a good and rich source to develop students' word storage.

6- Teacher should select suitable texts for students to serve their needs and interests. Before assigning readings, teachers should ensure that students have the right background knowledge to make sense of what they read.

7- Help students find out the benefits and the purpose of reading, by creating chances for students to see themselves as successful readers.

8- Teacher has to act as a facilitator; he/she should watch, listen and talk to students in order to raise students' self-confidence and give them the chance to indulge themselves freely during a reading comprehension session.

9- Teacher has to observe his/her students individually in order to see whether all students have learned something during the course or not. If not, the teacher may fill the gap of his/her students learning by explaining and re-explaining again in order to facilitate the lesson for them.

10- Teacher should motivate and engage students with the text in order to improve reading comprehension.

**2.8.2.2. Student' Role:**

Students, as teachers, have to follow some steps in order to be successful educators and to achieve the level required by the teacher. These are as follows:

1- Students have to practice more whenever they learn new things, because "reading becomes better with practice, and comprehending becomes better with more reading practice" (Pardo 2004).

2- Students should feel confident and free to ask questions whenever they face a difficulty. They should also express their own ideas about a subject to their teacher and to their peers as well. This allows students to construct their own knowledge about their learning, and apply it to their education.

3- Students should not wait the teacher to give them all what they need. Students have to work in pairs or in groups in order to facilitate the lesson for the teacher and for themselves.

4- Students have to motivate each other in order to raise self-confidence, and they have to show that they are truly interested.

5- They should prepare themselves to learn more about this new concept or idea. By doing so, they will be actively involved in their education.

6- Student's role is to take given information and find some prior experience or knowledge to apply this new learning.

The above mentioned recommendationsare practical solutions for both teachers and students in and outside the classroom. The following are suggested for further study:

1- The high perceived use of reading comprehension strategies shown in this study by EFL learners at the University of Tlemcen should be subjected to more qualitative investigations. The knowledge of reading comprehension strategies may not necessarily indicate that students in Tlemcen University know when and how to use them. A replication of the current study using

think-aloud protocols in examining the reading comprehension strategies of EFL learners and    recall tasks to measure students' comprehension will provide important and accurate details about the different aspects of EFL reading.

2- This study was carried out using a mixed gender sample.  A further study may investigate the significant gender differences that may exist in the classroom. This would show the superiority of one gender over the other and help educators understand some of the major causes behind the low reading comprehension scores of male learners compared to females.

3- The existing instrument indicates significant reliability. It is recommended that this study should be extended to include students from other branches and grades.

4- Studies are recommended that will investigate the role of the internet and online reading in EFL reading comprehension.

5- More studies are recommended to investigate the effects of reading comprehension in the development of linguistic competence and vocabulary size of EFL English students.

6- Studies of reading comprehension might focus on some of its components and their effects on the acquisition of the language four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing).

### 2.9. Conclusion

This chapter provides a brief definition of case study and the reasons behind using it as a research design. The choice of mixed methodologies (a combination between qualitative and quantitative approaches) and the benefits of using them. The method of data collection, analysis, sampling (informants), and procedure were also described. This was followed by an analysis of the data collected from questionnaire directed to students and teachers, in addition to the limitations of the current study, besides introducing suggestions for practical use as well as future research.

The analyses showed that teachers try to inculcate reading strategies in their learners to raise their awareness and to create fluent readers. There are a variety of factors that hinders students' reading comprehension level; grammar vocabulary and the cultural load presented in the reading material have been highlighted by teachers as the most affective factors that causes difficulties for their students. The frequent introduction of literacy texts and authentic materials in the classroom has been proven to be a valuable source of reading since it provides a wide variety of reading contexts, which enables teachers to choose what is suitable for their learners. Therefore reading comprehension was considered as critical tool in developing students' vocabulary size and linguistic competence.

# GENERAL CONCLUSION

Reading comprehension is the process of decoding the elements of a sentence or paragraph in order to gain understanding, in doing so students may encounter certain difficulty related to external or internal factors, which hinders their reading comprehension. These factors can exist at any level of analyses; it could be the cultural load in the text the grammatical structure or vocabulary items. Reading comprehension as a cognitive behaviour is strengthened through the application of certain strategies chosen by students in their reading tasks. Reading comprehension can be a determinant factor in developing students' linguistic knowledge (grammatical skills) and vocabulary repertoire. Literacy and authentic texts are valuable sources of reading materials in the classroom. Teachers may introduce these types of text frequently in the classroom to keep their student interested and engaged in the course.

The present study research tried to investigate the use of the different reading comprehension strategies in the Department of English as well as the different factors that hinders students' reading comprehension. It explores the impact of reading comprehension in building students' grammar and vocabulary in addition to the importance of literacy text teaching in developing reading comprehension.

The general structure of this work contained two chapters; the first chapter was a literary review divided into two sections: the first one shed the light on the nature of reading comprehension as to define it according to different researchers' opinions besides showing its importance. This was followed by a presentation of the different factors that affect reading comprehension process and the different strategies that student may encounter and use frequently. All of them had been defined including their impact on the student reading comprehension. The second section was devoted to define and briefly explore the role of reading comprehension in the development of students' vocabulary repertoire and grammar knowledge, this was followed by an explanation of the importance of

vocabulary and linguistic competence in the process of reading for meaning, Besides this literacy texts and authentic texts have been presented as a potential sources for reading comprehension in the classroom. It was followed by a description of the critical role of these materials in reading discourse including the different criteria that helps both teachers and learners to successfully use these materials in the classroom.

Chapter two reviewed the data collection procedures undertaken to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses. This included the research design, the research methodology, and instruments of data collection, sampling, and data analysis techniques. Besides, in this chapter data analysis and interpretation were included. In addition to the limitations of the current study, the last part of the second chapter dealt with practical suggestion concerning the role of teachers and students in reading comprehension discourse.

The main results that are derived from data collection showed that students have a general knowledge about reading comprehension strategies and they often depend on them in their reading tasks. Teachers in the other hand encourage their students to use reading comprehension strategies and they all teachers agreed on teaching these strategies either implicitly or explicitly. Concerning the main problems that faces students in reading; teachers highlighted vocabulary grammar and cultural load. Students as well as teachers are aware of the importance of literature as the perfect source of authentic texts since it is the boat to improve the students' overall skills including grammar and vocabulary knowledge.

To sum up, reading comprehension strategies are acknowledged widely by students and teachers in Abou-Bakr Belkaid Tlemcen University as a critical solution for achieving understanding. Students encounter a variety of difficulties in their reading, due to different factors (decoding skills and

vocabulary…etc.) related to students' linguistic competence or background knowledge. The improvement of students' reading comprehension level can have greater affect in the enhancement of their grammar and vocabulary knowledge. The selection of reading materials in the classroom is a vital process to insure that, all the material suits students' level. Authentic materials and literacy text are preferable materials for reading courses. However, this study tried to give a representative data concerning the proposed issues but a lot of aspects remain subjects of research for further studies. The researchers proposed the following questions to open the door for future investigations: how can technology are introduced in the classroom as a material to teach reading comprehension?

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# APPENDICES

**Appendix "A"**

**Students' Questionnaire**

## Students' Questionnaires

**Dear student, the following questions aim at giving us an opportunity to understand your inconveniencies in your reading module so that your learning would be easier and answer your needs. For these objectives you are kindly requested to answer the following questions, and making comments when necessary.**

**Thanks for your collaboration**

**1**-For how many years have you been studying English?

………………………………………

**2**- What is reading according to you?

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

……

**3**- What is/are your favorite skill(s)?

☐Listening          ☐Reading                    ☐Writing
☐Speaking

**4**- Do you regularly read English materials other that the reading assigned in your courses?

☐Always                          ☐Rarely                          ☐Never

**5**- Why do you generally read?

☐For pleasure                                          ☐To get information

☐To enhance your level of reading                  ☐To learn new vocabulary

**6**- When reading in English, if you don't understand an idea, do you:

☐Give up

☐You ask for help

☐Try to find a way that may help you understand

Others. Please, specify

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………

**7**- What are the main difficulties that face you when reading an English text?

☐Ambiguous Vocabulary

☐Grammar structures

☐Getting the general meaning of the text

Others. Please,
specify…………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………

**8**- What do you suggest from your teacher to help you learn reading?

……………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………
……

**9**- What do you suggest to overcome some of the reading difficulties?

……………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………
……

**10**- Do you know what is reading comprehension strategies?

☐Yes                                                                            ☐no

**11**- Do you use any strategy to help you understand the text?

☐Always                        ☐sometimes                        ☐never

**12-** Do you use literary texts as a source to enhance your reading ability?

☐Yes                                                                            ☐No

**13-** Do you prefer using authentic texts as a source of reading?

☐Yes                                                                            ☐No

**Appendix "B"**

**Teachers' Questionnaire**

**Dear teacher, the following questionnaire aims at having an idea about your own assessment of the reading skill teaching and learning at the university level concerning 1ˢᵗ Year EFL students and their ability to use affective reading comprehension strategies to overcome some of their reading difficulties to become better readers.**

**For these objectives, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions, and give your opinion when needed.**

**Thanks for your collaboration**

1-Teaching experience, number of years:

……………………………………………………………………………..

2- Modules in charge:

……………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………

3- What objectives do you intend to reach in teaching reading comprehension to your first year students?

.......................................................................................................................
.......................................................................................................................

4- In which skill(s) do your students feel most involved?

☐Listening          ☐Speaking          ☐Writing          ☐Reading

5- How do you assess your students' progress in reading?

.......................................................................................................................
.......................................................................................................................

6- What are the main difficulties that face your students while reading an English text?

☐Vocabulary                                    ☐Grammar Structure

☐Getting the general idea from the text          ☐Cultural load

Others, Please specify

……………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………

7- According to you, what are the main reasons behind students' reading weaknesses?

☐Ambiguous Vocabulary

☐Lack of motivation

☐Difficult reading passages/texts

Others, please specify
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………

8- What types of reading comprehension strategies do you try to inculcate in order to overcome their reading weaknesses and/or cope with them?
.......................................................................................................................................
.......................................................................................................................................

9- How do you help your students deal with the different kinds of questions in a reading comprehension test?
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………

10- Relying on your teaching experience, what suggestions would you make to help your students develop their vocabulary stock?
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………

11- Does the use of reading comprehension strategies manifest in the development of students' linguistic competence?

☐Yes                                                      ☐No

12- How often do you introduce authentic texts in the classroom?

☐Frequently          ☐Rarely            ☐Never

13- Does the literacy content introduced in the reading materials pose a difficulty for first year students in our department?

☐Always                    ☐Sometimes                    ☐Never

Please explain why?
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………

14- Please provide some suggestions that would inculcate better in our students' reading comprehension strategies?
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...........................