Improving Students' Intellectual Development through Reading Context: Case of master one EFL Students at Saida University

Dissertation submitted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of *Master* in Didactics.

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Declaration of Originality

I hereby declare that this submission is my work and that, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution.

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Dedication

First and foremost, I am deeply grateful for having the most encouraging parents. Without them, I will not be able to write this piece of work. With their love and support, I was able to finally graduate.

To my lovely siblings: Mohammed and Aya.

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Abstract

Reading in one of the most significant skills in learning a foreign language since it improves students' intellectual skills. Fostering students' critical abilities is the utmost goal of higher education for the purpose of achieving successful learning. However, students struggle in reading sessions. Therefore, reading sessions are the key to the development of students' thinking abilities. In this respect, the urge behind this study is to investigate the connection between the reading skill and students' intellectual development. Furthermore, the present research aims at discovering the type of reading strategies that students can develop from reading sessions as well as the teacher's role in enhancing students' critical and mental abilities. A mixed method approach has been selected in order to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from the chosen target population. A triangulation approach which includes a classroom observation, students' questionnaire and teacher's interviews were adopted to prove or disprove the research hypotheses. The findings revealed that reading helps in improving students intellectual skills. Moreover, the teacher played a vital role as a guide, a corrector and a facilitator. The study also showed that reading develops students' critical strategies.

Keywords: critical thinking abilities, critical strategies, intellectual development, reading, reading sessions, teacher's role.

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General Introduction

Engaging students in the process of leaning is challenging for EFL teachers, especially after the adaptation of learner-centered approach. This implies that the student is the prior centerpiece in the learning process; therefore, all the teaching practices ought to focus on the student's progress. One way to facilitate the effectiveness of active learning is by developing students' intellectual skills mainly within the reading skill. Reading sessions are the place in which the teacher can improve students' critical thinking abilities since reading stimulates the brain; hence, better understanding of the text. Moreover, reading books helps learners to develop their knowledge about different fields such as, education, culture, science, biology, sociology, human sciences…etc. Therefore, teachers have a mission of encouraging their students to read critically and effectively for the purpose of developing their critical abilities. The latter entails the use of activities which include analysis, interpretation and evaluation.

Since university students are researchers and required to do lots of reading whether books or online articles, it is their teachers' responsibility to encourage them to develop their intellectual skills and critical thinking abilities to be able to be selective readers; being able to judge the credibility of sources and take what is relevant to their needs instead of taking random information. In this respect, master one students at the university of Dr. MoulayTahar, Saida are still passive students and dependent on their teachers. They lack the sufficient skills for a successful interaction with written or online pieces of literature. For this reason, both teachers and students should work together for promoting intellectual skills and encouraging active learning.

The source of motivation to achieve this work is that EFL students at Saida University are fans of reading, but they do not know how to do that on their own. The latter was observed in many reading sessions in which students were not able to answer questions that required analysis and interpretation. It was noticed that the teacher was the one who guided the classroom discussions and encouraged the students to be part of the learning process. Those reading session raised a series of inquires that were formulated into the following research questions:

1. How does reading affect students' intellectual skills?

2. To what extent does the teacher help students to read critically and effectively?

3. What kind of strategies enables students to develop critical thinking abilities?

As tentative answers to these questions, the following hypotheses are suggested:

1. Reading may improve some of students' critical skills.

2. The teacher could implement some critical thinking abilities in students and s/he is a guide, a facilitator and a corrector.

3. Students may develop strategies which contribute to understanding the text without asking the teacher for assistance.

The general aim behind this study is to raise teacher's awareness regarding the importance of implementing reading techniques that promote students' intellectual skills at Saida University. Specifically, the main objective of this studyis to investigate the role of reading sessions in developing students' intellectual skills. It seeks also at exploring the type of reading strategies teachers can develop in their students in order to read critically and effectively. The final attempt is to discover the teacher's role as a corrector, a guide and a facilitator in addition to implementing some critical thinking skills in students.

To undertake this research, the target population includes first year master students of Didactics of Foreign Languages since they dealt with lots of reading sessions. Concerning the research methodology, a mixed methods research design adopted to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. For the purpose of increasing credibility to this research, a triangulation approach is opted for by using three data collection instruments. The first tool to be used is a classroom observation to have deep insights into the students and teacher's practices during the reading sessions. In order to obtain students' views regarding reading sessions, a questionnaire is submitted to them after a few reading sessions. After finishing all sessions, an interview is conducted with teachers for investigating the type of activities they integrate in their learners to improve their critical thinking abilities.

This dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first chapter provides an overview of the examined topic. To begin with, it sheds light on the theoretical background of the Reading skill as it explores its definitions, processes, essentials and a descriptive account of master one students in reading sessions at Saida university. The second chapter is devoted to provide an insightful description of research methodology, the methods and approaches followed in undertaking this research in addition to the different data collection tools used to

investigate the role of reading sessions in developing students' intellectual skills. The last chapter is concerned with the analysis and the discussion of the obtained results followed by a set of recommendations and suggestions that may enhance the adoption of reading sessions. The results of this study show that reading enhances students' intellectual skills. In addition, students' lack of enthusiasm is due to their lack of reading in their native language as well as the strategies that teachers develop in their students challenge them to make efforts for text comprehension. Concerning the research recommendations, students ought to read at home whether in English or their native language, teachers have to encourage students to be engaged in classroom discussions and increase the number of reading sessions.

1.   Introduction

This chapter aims at providing an overview on the Reading skill and its connection to Intellectual Development. It is divided into two main parts. To begin with, it sheds light on the theoretical background of the Reading skill as it explores its definitions, processes, essentials and a descriptive account of master one students in reading sessions at Saida university. Furthermore, the second part adds information to the field of education through giving insight into the concept of Intellectual Development in Reading sessions .The latter is devoted to the various aspects of Intellectual Development, imagination, trial and error, problem solving, creativity as well as decision making.

1.2.   Part one: Reading

1.2.1.   Definitions of Reading

Reading is claimed to be the most important skill in the English language. It is through reading that people learn and increase their knowledge about different fields such as: science, Technology, Politics, Economy, and Culture. The definition of reading is proposed by several experts. Leu and Kinzer (1987, p. 9) viewed reading as "development, interactive, and global process involving learned skills. In the same vein, Tarigan (2008) claimed that reading represents the words which the reader can see and acquire through the conveyed message. This implies that understanding is constructed through an active process of getting meaning.

Interestingly, Mikulecky (2011, p. 5) claimed that reading is a process that involves analyzing and reworking the meaning of the text. It uses various strategies to reconstruct the author's intended meaning. Similarly, Grellet claims that reading is an active skill. It constantly involves guessing, predicting, checking and asking oneself questions. Simply, reading is a skill that relies heavily on the reader's mental abilities as well as strategies.

Equally important, reading is very significant for an individual's academic and personal growth, it is not enough to simply read. An individual also needs to be able to comprehend what the writer is attempting to communicate, so it is kind of an interaction between the reader and the writer. The reading comprehension is a complex process that can be divided into two categories: the lower level and the higher level (Grabe and Stoller, 2002).

Being able to comprehend a certain text is linked to a person's familiarity with the topic, the structure of the text and the reading strategies (Pang, 2008). In a similar earlier work, Janzen and stoller (1998) pointed out ten strategies and processes related to reading comprehension. These include the following: "Identifying a purpose of reading, perceiving, predicting, asking questions, checking predictions or finding answers to the questions, connecting the text to prior knowledge, summarizing, connecting one part of the text to another and recognizing text structure."

In fact, Sadeghi (2007) viewed reading comprehension as related to two main factors, internal and external ones. The former are mainly focused on the reader's cognitive abilities and the latter are concerned with the text characteristics and the time and place of reading.

However, there is another concern regarding the external factors which is motivation. The motivation of a reader can affect a person's ability to read the text effectively. This is a proof that teachers are responsible for increasing their students' motivation inside the classroom for a successful reading session. Over the past few years, there has been a great increase of interest concerning the relationship between the reading skill and motivation. To examine the latter, Anmanrkurd and Braten (2009) noted that the factors that affect a person's performance on reading comprehension were linked to expectancy. But, they only predicted a person's unique variance after entering their gender and cognitive abilities as predictors.

 Moreover, Katzir, Lesaux and Kim (2009) discovered that reading self-concept is associated with reading comprehension skills on the account of controlling verbal ability and word reading. Similarly, Logan et al. (2011) linked children's reading motivation to their end of the year's reading skills. Taboada et al. (2009) also found that both cognitive and motivational variables serve to reading comprehension performance and growth in reading skills. Indeed, they stated that intrinsic motivation can be used as an energizer to help students improve their reading abilities.

1.2.2.   Reading as a thinking process

In recent years, the field of cognitive psychology has focused on study of reading comprehension and critical thinking. Various theories and models have been developed to explain and construct reading comprehension by referring to a set of concepts, such as critical thinking prior knowledge, inference making, and metacognitive skills(limbach and Waugh, 2010; Zabit, 2010). Among the trend that emerged was the concept of the schema theory. It

aims to improve a reader's reading comprehension by explaining how knowledge is organized and represented. A schema is the organized knowledge about people, objects, places, events, processes, concepts and approximately everything that provides a basis for learning (Rumelhart, 1984). Bos and Anders (1990) claimed that, schema theory explains how knowledge is structured in memory and how these structures affect incoming information" (P.49). Additionally, Anderson and Wlison (1986) indicated that schema theory explains how people's existing knowledge affects comprehension.

In the same way, critical thinking is a major factor while activating or constructing schema. Norris and Phillips (1987) showed that critical thinking can help activate existing schema and construct new ones by analyzing, contrasting and engaging in reflective thinking. Moreover, lolins et al. (1980) suggested that inference making can be used to fill in the gaps between the text and the knowledge of the world.

McNeil (1992) argued that the concept of schema theory had special relevance to teachers of reading comprehension. It deals with the fact that students are responsible for reproducing the statements being read in the text. In contrast to the older view that students should simply reproduce the information in the text, schema theory argues that students should be trained to process the text and develop critical thinking strategies through the use of making inference and activating prior knowledge (McNeil, 1992; Aloquaili, 2005a; Orbea and Villabeitia, 2010).

It is worth mentioning that Tieney and Pearson (1986) added crucial information regarding the schema theory. They believed that the latter has a major influence on new ideas of reading and reading comprehension. Tieney and Pearson (1986) stated the fact that new views have changed the way people think about reading. For a long time, it was thought that reading was the reproduction of ideas on the page. Instead, schema theory changed things from a reproductive view to a constructive view. It focused on the reader's participation in the construction of the text. Sometimes, a reader's experience may have a different understanding than the one she or he expected. For instance, a reader with a rich background may understand better than the one with a poor background. In short, schema theory believes in open text or context. The interpretation is relative (Aloquaili, 2005b).

Reading is an interactive process that involves the reader actively producing meaning through a series of mental processes. Reading activates memory nods, which are the building blocks of a mental structure. These blocks are made up of incoming information that is

mapped into a mental structure and it differs from one reader to another. Van Dijk (1981) states that schemata are "higher- level complex and even conventional or habitual knowledge structures" (141) which function as "ideational scaffolding " in the ordering, organization and interpretation of experience. Schemata ere the components of a reading experience that help the reader keep track on the meaning of the text.

It is worth noting that schema is a conceptual framework that helps readers predict and interpret the various elements of a text. Schemata are created through the experience with people, objects, and events in the world. Cook (1989) states, " the mind stimulated by key words or phrases in the text or by the context activates a knowledge schema " (p. 69). Cook implies that people do not necessarily deal with conscious processes; they rather use their given cognitive processes, which are related to external stimuli. Schemata can be activated in one of the following two ways:

1. New information can be collected and processed through the retrieval of previously stored ones.
2. It can then be assimilated into existing knowledge.

1.2.3. Reading as a critical process

In modern society, people often have to deal with complex, public and political issues. In order for them to do so, they must be able to effectively and efficiently evaluate what is seen, heard and read. Thus, they need to read selectively by picking up what interests them and the former process is what is defined by critical reading. Reading as a critical process has been defined in a variety of ways. Flynn (1989) views critical reading as an interactive process in which several levels of thoughts are used simultaneously (p. 664).

Ruggeiro (1984) defines critical thinking as "the close examination of a proposed problem's or issue's solution to determine both its strengths and its weaknesses. Many teachers believe that kids will develop critical reading skills as they get older and become more exposed to different fields of knowledge, but this view has been challenged by various people in the field. Stauffer (1977) believes that developing students' critical reading is an obligatory thing to do in schools as it is the responsibility of teachers to teach the latter to their students. This was supported by various authors in the field (McMillan & Gentile, l988; Cioffi, l989; Nickerson, 1989; Wilson, 1988; and others).

Some scholars have argued that the development of critical thinking should start in the early grades (Hickey, l988; McMillan &Gentile, l988).For example ,Thistlethwaite (l990) strongly believes that the focus on critical reading should not wait until the basic levels of reading skills are mastered (p. 586). Others believe that critical reading should be developed in junior high school (Bean, Hubler ,Smith, & McKenzie, 1987;Frager & Thompson, l984). This is because most of the instruction in senior high and college is presented through textbook. Indeed, college students will need the skills to critically examine and defend their interpretations of literature. These skills include making inferences, developing strategies for analyzing and validating their interpretations, distinguishing fact from opinion, making distinctions, and drawing conclusions.

Critical thinking and reading skills are also needed in order for students to be effective in school. For students, writing a satisfactory summary of a passage is very important. They should be able to identify the most important ideas and to provide sufficient background information to complete the task. Even though students can certainly learn and understand text concepts, they often need guidance to achieve critical reading comprehension (Bean & Ericson, 1989). Flynn's (1989) says:

"Students actively struggle with interesting problems within a supportive environment. They are simultaneously challenged and encouraged to test out their ideas. Young readers develop into independent, critical readers as they learn to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate knowledge by thinking their way through problems in a cooperative environment (p. 668)".

Cohen (2015) regards learning skills of critical reading as the essence of life. He further describes critical readers as active ones when treating a piece of writing in which they evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the ideas presented by the author. Following a similar path, Cottrell (2005) claims that critical reading cannot stand without these following processes : analysis, reflection, evaluation and making judgments (p. 147). In clearer terms, critical readers apply their CT abilities when they interact with a given text. It is significant to be a critical reader since the information provided from books or the internet cannot always be accurate. As a result, students ought to be familiar and aware of the information they use in their everyday inquiries (Mikulecky& Jefferies, 2009).

1.3.   Essentials of reading

Teaching students how to read is not an easy mission to accomplish since the reading skill requires efforts on behalf the teacher as well as the EFL students. There are five essentials of the reading process: phonetic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency, including oral reading skills and reading comprehension strategies.

First of all, Phonemes are the smallest units of spoken language. They combine the form of words with their syllables. They are also known to be difficult to identify and manipulate. For example, the word run has three phonemes (r-u-n) while the word happy has five phonemes (h-a-p-p-y). These sounds of the spoken language work together to form words.For children, the concept of phonemes is associated with their first language. This concept can be used to teach English phonemic awareness to students. For instance, Spanish-speaking children may categorize phonemes as "read" and "listen" in their first language (International Reading Association, 2001).

Teachers can also help students understand the phonemic awareness of native speakers by studying the characteristics of their native language. Songs and poems can be used to introduce phonemic awareness concepts. Teachers can also ask students to sing these songs with their parents or share them with the class (Hiebert, et al., 1998).

Second of all, Phonetic instruction is a method of teaching reading that involves learning how to identify the sounds and letters in spoken language. It aims to help children develop a predictable and systematic relationship between the sounds and written letters (Ciera, 2001). Not being able to read and understand concepts in their own language may prevent some students from learning about the functions of the English language (Peregoy& Boyle, 2000). Students may have learned to read and write in languages with characters that correspond to the sounds or portions of words. For instance, Greek, Russian, and English have alphabetic writing systems.

In contrast, in Chinese and other logographic writing systems, each letter represents a word or a type of unit(Peregoy& Boyle, 2000, p. 241). A great example for the latter is the Spanish language. In Spanish, the letters b, c, d, f, L, m, n, p, and t are similar to the sounds that are found in English. However, these letters require minimal instruction to transfer easily to English. Due to the multiple spellings of English vowel sounds, it is difficult for Spanish-speaking students to learn how to read English (Peregoy& Boyle, 2000). These examples not

only illustrate the challenges of teaching the reading skill to EFL students, but also show the importance of teachers having a good understanding of their students' native language.

Third of all, vocabulary development is a process that involves acquiring the knowledge of the meanings of words used in communication. This knowledge helps a student make sense of the word after hearing it. Not knowing the meaning of a word can prevent a student from making sense of the sentence. Also, scientific research on vocabulary development demonstrates that children learn the majority of their vocabulary indirectly in the following three ways:

1. Through conversations, mostly with adults.
2. Listening to adults talking.
3. Reading extensively on their own (CIERA, 2001).

In addition, Reading fluency is the ability to accurately read words and understand them simultaneously. Having this capability is very important for children's academic success. A pair of instructional approaches is commonly used to teach reading fluency. One involves repeated oral reading, while the other is silent reading. Both strategies involve students reading aloud while their teacher provides feedback and guidance.

According to the CIERA, EFL students should start learning to read in their first language. Students should also see and hear multiple books over a school year to develop their fluency. Moreover, they ought to participate in read-aloud sessions and listen to books with proficient readers in order to gain fluency in the English language (Hiebert et al., 1998). It is also worth mentioning that although fluent reading is not a requirement for academic success, many students will eventually have an accent. They can still learn and speak English with a native accent.

Finally, Reading comprehension is the end of the learning process that involves acquiring all of the reading skills. The goal of mastery is to enable readers to grasp the concepts introduced in the previous four skills. This process also involves an intentional and thoughtful interaction with the text. Hiebert et al. (1998) proposed that students should scan their text before they begin their reading sessions to prepare for their difficulty. Similarly, Reading for meaning is a process that depends on the student's understanding of the language and the references of the text through developing literacy skills both in their native language as well as English (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998, p. 324).

1.3.1. Comprehension

Reading comprehension is a complex cognitive activity that people tend to engage in. students tend to struggle with a wide variety of literacy tasks, such as identifying the main idea of a text and making simple inferences (Kastberg, Chan, & Murray, 2016; National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). It is also is a process that involves the coordination of multiple cognitive and linguistic processes, including word reading ability, working memory, inference generation, and comprehension monitoring.

 In addition, the complexity of reading comprehension is evidenced by various component models. These models consider sub-branches of the reading process such as direct and inferential mediation model (DIME; Ahmed et al., 2016; Cromley, Snyder-Hogan, &Luciw-Dubas, 2010; Oslund, Clemens, Simmons, & Simmons, 2018; Oslund, Clemens, Simmons, Smith, & Simmons, 2016).vocabulary, and prior knowledge (Perfetti, Landi, & Oakhill, 2005).

According to these models, vocabulary is the strongest predictor of young children's reading comprehension. Furthermore, although not as powerful as vocabulary, background knowledge and inference-making can have significant effects on reading comprehension (Cromley et al., 2010, replicated by Ahmed et al., 2016). The RAND reading model describes reading comprehension as the   process of extracting meaning from the text and the use of interaction with the written language (RAND Reading Study Group, 2002, p. 11). To be more specific,   this process is referred to as the interaction between task characteristics and the reader within a sociocultural context.

On the contrary, DepEd (2016) believes that the act of reading is fulfilled when the reader actually understand the things he or she reads. This implies that reading is an active and interactive process that happens before, during and after a person reads a piece of literature.

A person's background can play a crucial role in reading. It can help a person understand the content of a book or a particular format and how to interact with it. Clearly, a person's reading comprehension is not limited to simply reading the words. It also involves actively participating in making decisions and solving problems. In an effort to improve literacy, the National Reading Panel (2000) has been looking for effective strategies that can help people with limited literacy experience. In particular, Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock

(2001) noted that developing non-linguistic representations and testing hypotheses can help improve students' literacy. Although reading comprehension is a complex process, it can be utilized through the levels of difficulty that readers typically reach when they read.

Thomas Barrett (Clymer, 1968) developed a simple three-level taxonomy that is useful in understanding how readers comprehend literature. The first level is usually focused on factual or literal understanding. The latter refers to the simple understanding of the information that is explicitly stated in the text. Barrett's second level is inferential comprehension, which refers to the ability to rely on information that is implied or not stated in the text. Third of all, critical or evaluative comprehension refers to the process of analyzing a text for its various aspects. It involves making judgments about its literary quality and character. All three levels of comprehension are important and need to be fostered. Literal comprehension is the main focus of instruction, but it is often neglected. Instead, it requires little effort to develop and evaluate logical questions and solve problems.

In addition, according to Dennis (2008), reading comprehension is a process that involves identifying and interpreting written symbols. There are some factors which affect the development of reading comprehension skill. These include the complexity of the text, environmental factors, and the interest and motivation of the reader.

In the following section, these factors are elaborated in details. The first factor which affects readers' reading comprehension is the complexity of the texts. Aside from having a good understanding of the concepts presented in the texts, students 'oral abilities are also affected by the number of words they hear and the context in which they speak (Dennis, 2008).

The second factor that affects the reading ability of students is the environment they are in. In an unorganized environment, readers tend to have a hard time focusing on a text. Having a safe and controlled environment will help improve their reading skills. Readers will lose their concentration in understanding a text when there are noises like televisions or radios (Dennis, 2008).

The third factor is pertinent to the anxiety during reading comprehension. The anxiety experienced by readers is related to the pressure to perform well in exams. It can also put a lot of pressure on students who read for pleasure. Individuals with anxiety may not fully

understand the instructions. This could lead to confusion and poor reading comprehension (Dennis, 2008).

The fourth factor is interest and motivation. According to Dennis (2008), aside from having a good sense of humor, motivation and interest are also important factors that can help improve a person's reading comprehension skill. If a person is not interested in reading, then his or her lack of motivation will affect their ability to read. EFL teachers should motivate their learners through providing interesting reading materials during reading sessions.

The fifth factor is related to word recognition speed. People with slow decoding   tend to have a harder time understanding the pronunciation and meaning of words than those with good reading comprehension skills. Having enough vocabulary can help people read passages faster than those with limited knowledge (Dennis, 2008).

Aside from the physical factors, the other factor that could affect a child's reading ability is his or her hearing and speech disorders. According to Hollowell (2013), these issues could be linked to the developmental delays that children go through before they become old enough to be diagnosed. Learners With speech and hearing difficulties are less likely to participate in class discussions and oral reading.

1.3.2. Reading Comprehension Skills

Reading skills are necessary for people to learn and retain information from texts. Doing so can help improve a person's ability to read and understand different texts (McNamara, 2009). Students do not usually learn reading strategies incidentally (Artelt&Dörfler, 2010); therefore, they must be taught directly. Hence, teachers should focus on teaching reading strategies (Pressley, Graham, & Harris, 2006). Numerous studies have been conducted in the last two decades to develop effective reading strategies and methods. However, despite the many advantages of these programs, many teachers still do not use them regularly (Koch &Spörer, 2016).

For teachers, the process of teaching reading strategies to EFL students is not an easy mission to accomplish. Kline, Deshler, and Schumaker (1992) pointed out that   teachers became more likely to implement strategies based on educational psychology after seeing how effective they were. Due to the nature of psychological research, it is very important that

teachers are informed about the various strategies used to improve reading skills (Borko& Putnam, 1996).

Moreover, Sailors (2009) determined that teachers tend to rely on what they learned in their own classrooms when they teach reading strategies. They do not typically learn how to improve their reading comprehension through strategies such as asking questions and summarizing (Hollenbeck &Kalchman, 2013). On an overall basis, regular classrooms are not conducive to teaching scientifically based practices (Stanovich&Stanovich, 2003).

Scientifically based reading practices are programs that help individuals improve their reading skills (Fletcher & Francis, 2004). A teacher's knowledge and expertise in reading instruction are two important factors that can help improve the effectiveness of students' literacy skills (Darling-Hammond &Bransford, 2006; McCardle&Chhabra, 2004). Incongruously, some study results have suggested that teachers do not know the necessary knowledge to teach reading strategies. One reason for this is that teachers are often unfamiliar with specific scientifically based programs (Podhajski, Mather, Nathan, & Sammons, 2009).

Therefore, learning how to teach reading strategies is a must for EFL teachers as it serves for a successful reading session to take place in EFL classrooms. Regarding university students' reading skills, Spinath, van Ophuysen, and Heise (2005) found that students perform on a moderate level. However, their use of reading strategies is generally rather unsystematic (Felipe & Barrios, 2014). Being a good teacher of reading is not only about having good comprehension skills, but also about being able to use effective reading strategies (Carlisle, Kelcey, Rowan, & Phelps, 2011; Phelps, 2009). Joshi et al., 2009 focused on developing the skills of future teachers by teaching them about scientifically-based reading instruction. In addition, it requires that all teachers must take courses in order to improve their understanding of the texts (Drechsel&Artelt, 2007; Walsh, Glaser, & Wilcox, 2006).

Furthermore, there are several findings that indicate that teachers' habits, engagement, and competence in reading are related to those of their students (see the so-called "Peter Effect," in Applegate & Applegate, 2004; Binks-Cantrell, Washburn, Joshi, &Hougen, 2012). The specific competences of a teacher predict students' learning outcomes (Brouwer&Korthagen, 2005; Wayne &Youngs, 2003).

Recent research has examined the unique contribution of higher-level skills to reading comprehension (Landi&Perfetti, 2007; Nation &Snowling, 1998; Yuill& Oakhill, 1991).

Comprehension requires accurate word decoding and recognition,thus, the latter are highly predictive of a person's ability to read and understand (Perfetti& Hart, 2001; Shankweiler et al., 1999). Although it's commonly believed that children with low-level skills face difficulties while reading more than those with more advanced ones. These abilities can also be affected by age (Shankweiler et al., 1996). The importance of decoding skills is linked to the deep orthography of English. A study conducted on Greek speaking 4th-grade students revealed that kids with poor reading skills(spelling, word and pseudo word reading accuracy, and fluency) were more likely to have trouble with comprehension (Protopapas, Sideridis, Simos, &Mouzaki, 2007).

Although the consensus is that low-level skill such as decoding play a large role in children, the picture is less clear for adults. Braze, Tabor, Shankweiler, and Mencl (2007), a population of less-educated adult readers found that certain tasks could lead to additional difficulty in reading after listening comprehension was taken into account. Although reading pseudo word terms did not significantly affect the reading variance, it was reduced by vocabulary addition. This shows that analyzing skilled readers plays a vital part in developing a comprehensive understanding of how reading skills are interrelated.

1.3.3. Description of Reading in Master classes (Saida University)

Master one students at Saida University seem to struggle in reading sessions. The majority of them like to read, but they do not know how to. Reading comprehension is the major difficulty which students face in reading sessions since they cannot understand the text on their own. The second thing is that master one students are not familiar with the various types of reading pieces due to the lack of practice.

1.4.   Part Two: Intellectual Development

1.4.1.   Perry's Model of Intellectual Development

According to Barker (2011), the value of higher education does not lie only in acquired knowledge, but also in developing students' thinking abilities. Developing a new brain is similar to putting in new information in the brain. It goes through a series of predictable stages. These stages occur at a speed rate and reveal various aspects of the structure of the brain (Barker, 2011). Perry's work explored the characteristics of the brain during various

stages of development.Although Perry articulated nine stages, at its simplest, his model shows us four main stages in cognitive development.

Dualism is the very first stage of Perry's model. In the early stage of development, a person's brain believes that all problems can be solved by authorities (teachers, leaders, scholars). This belief, which can be triggered by various factors, is usually translated into correct answers (Barker, 2011). At this level, students tend to see all kinds of things as black or white. They know where truth and knowledge are located at the presence of authorities only. Experiencing group work makes dualistic students feel like the teacher is no longer involved in the discussion.

The second stage is referred to as Multiplicity. In this stage, the brain tends to seek validation and company. In the absence of an authority to serve as an arbiter of truth, arguments seem to be only opinions or potentials. Becoming educated is seen as a process that pushes the brain to accept a systematized learning method. At this level, students begin to question authorities and may conclude that there are no absolute truths, but only subjective perceptions. This is not only problematic of academic value, but it can also be tiring for teachers (Barker, 2011).

Contextual Relativism is the third stage in Perry's model of Intellectual Development. At this stage, the brain is more likely to accept less-defensible solutions. Yet, it is not likely to resolve which argument is most reasonable when all the competing arguments are plausible (Barker, 2011). Therefore, this stage brings   feelings of insecurity, self-doubt, and anger. Students at this stage also tend to ignore making decisions.

The last stage is called Commitment within Contextual Relativism. At stage four, the brain is more likely to find solutions to complex problems by analyzing and criticizing evidences (Barker, 2011). Many college students never reach this stage because they do not find themselves comfortable with the situation. They might start to feel that way after they are in their undergraduate years. Perry's model of Intellectual Development can help explain what it is like to be a university student, and it can also help professors understand why some students struggle.

1.4.2. Imagination

Burton (2018) defines motivation as" the faculty of the mind that forms and manipulates images, propositions, concepts, emotions, and sensations above and beyond, and sometimes independently, of incoming stimuli, to open up the realms of the abstract, the figurative, the possible, the hypothetical, and the paradigmatic or universal ". He further adds that there are various forms of imagination, such as belief, desire, emotion, and memory. Most of these constructs overlap with other cognitive constructs such as belief and perception.

Interestingly, Plato is the first modern philosopher to develop an explicit account of imagination. He is not as precise or systematic as Aristotle (1907; 1957) or Galen (1916; 1997). For Plato, the imagination is primarily associated with the irrational part of the soul in its dealing with the visible realm, especially with images, shadows, and reflections.

Davles's contribution to the field of scientific psychology is very significant. According to Davles (2012), one of the words that inspire people is imagination. It's often used to refer to children playing with Einstein or to remind us of the importance of knowledge, but mostly, people mean one of the two things. First, people use the word to refer to creativity in general — saying that someone has a great imagination or no imagination at all. Second, people often use the word to refer to images in their heads, such as a photo of their childhood or a song they hear in their heads.

1.4.3. Trial and Error

Edward Lee Thorndike was regarded as the most significant psychologist in the world. He is best known for his contributions in the fields of psychology and education. According to Thorndike (1913), connections are made in the brain through the use of stimulus and response. He further adds that Learning occurs by trial and error. This process involves the learner trying various solutions until he learns the one that works for him. He then rejects the first one and tries another one until he finally learns the correct one. Thus, in trial and error method, the student makes random activities and concludes that he or she has reached the goal. The activities are not random and are guided by the situation. The learning curve is then revealed in the form of phases, which are known as goals, blocks, random movements, selection and fixation (Thorndike, 1913).

Furthermore, Trial and Error is a process utilized for solving problems. It involves repeated, varied attempts until the goal is achieved. Errorless learning is considered to be an effective way to promote new learning. Baddeley and Wilson (1994) contrasted the use of trial and error learning and errorless learning in a healthy young and older group of individuals. In the trial-and-error condition, individuals were told "I am thinking of a word that begins with QU" and participants generated up to three errors (Question, Quality, Queen). Before being provided with the correct word they were to remember (QUOTE). In the errorless condition, participants were told "I am thinking of a word that begins with QU and it is 'QUOTE'," thus eliminating the generation of errors. In a later memory test, the amnesic patients' and older adults' performance was higher if the initial learning phase was errorless rather than trial-and-error; young adults did not show this pattern but their data were at ceiling (Baddeley and Wilson, 1994). As a result, due to the success of errorless principles in the rehabilitation of memory impaired individuals, their principles have been widely Clare & Jones, 2008). For younger and older adults, the concept has also been used (Anderson &Craik, 2006; Rodriguez-Fornells, Kofidis, &Munte, 2004).

Although errorless learning procedures are commonly used in the rehabilitation literature, their findings are not supported by extensive body of research (Craik, 1983; 1986). Many studies have also shown that trial-and-error learning is an advantage over errorless learning in young adults. For instance, Bjork, Kornell, and Hays (2009) were able to test their participants' ability to identify weak word pairs. Their study found that students who had hard time learning were more likely to improve if they were asked questions that were frequently incorrect. This implies that students tend to learn more from their study opportunities if they are not forced to answer the questions (Pressley, Tanenbaum, McDaniel, & Wood, 1990; Richland,Kornell, & Kao, 2009).

Some argue that retrieving information from a memory can lead to deep processing (Jacoby, Shimizu, Daniels, & Rhodes, 2005; Bjork, 1975; Carpenter &DeLosh, 2006). Consistently, retrieving previously learned material from a memory can improve a person's performance even if they have encountered errors. These findings support the concept of the testing effect (Pashler et al., 2005; Butler, Karpicke, &Roediger, 2007; Butler &Roediger, 2007; Pashler, Rohrer, Cepeda, & Carpenter, 2007; Slamecka&Fevreiski, 1983; Izawa, 1967, 1970). Notably, older adults have a higher testing effect than their younger counterparts (Rabinowitz&Craik, 1986).

1.4.4.   Problem Solving

According to Ormond (2006, p. 111), problem solving is the process of identifying an issue or a situation that requires the use of existing knowledge and skills. While working on a complex problem, students develop new knowledge and skills (Ormond, 2006, p. 121). Problem solving was introduced in education a long time ago. It was mostly used by philosophers such as Socrates and was revived in the 1960s. Although it has been studied and popularized in various academic and teaching fields (Martinez, 1998; Botti, J.A. & Myers, R., 1995, Simon, 1980), it has not been widely used in schools and universities which teach foreign languages.

On the one hand, the profession of teachers is characterized by the need to make numerous decisions each day in class "Researchers have found that teachers make up to thirty decisions every hour and do so in a context of a class between twenty five and forty pupils where 1,500 interactions can take place daily between teacher and pupils" (Berliner as cited in Burke, 1996,p. 534) . On the other hand, the goal of teaching foreign languages is to provide students with a variety of options and to enable them to develop their own skills and attitudes toward learning.

More importantly, there is evidence that shows that problem-based learning can improve the quality of students' education. According to Finkle and Torp (1995, p. 1), "problem-based learning is a curriculum development and instructional system that simultaneously develops both problem-solving strategies and disciplinary knowledge bases and skills by placing students in the active role of problem-solvers confronted with an ill-structured problem that mirrors real-world problems". Additionally, According to Schmidt and Norman (1992, p. 557), problem-based learning is a process that involves acquiring factual knowledge, mastery of general principles, and the acquisition of prior examples. They further added the following points:

In a problem-based learning environment, it is possible that learning medicine will initially reduce levels of learning. However, this can be quickly replaced by increased retention of knowledge;

1. Preliminary evidence suggests that problem-based learning could improve the transfer of concepts and integrate scientific concepts into clinical problems;
2. Problem based learning enhances intrinsic interest in the subject matter;

3. Problem-based learning can improve the skills of self-directed learning (Norman & Schmidt, 1992, p. 564).

It is also worth mentioning that in a problem-based learning environment, teachers should serve as models and help students develop effective behavior (Stepien& Gallagher, 1993).

1.4.5. Creativity

The concept of creativity has been treated by several authors. According to Kaufman and Beghetto (2004), creativity has been associated with fields such as art, economics and education. Furthermore, creativity has been identified as a critical component in problem solving (Plucker, Beghetto and Dow, 2004).

Additionally, the importance of providing opportunities for creative learning is widely acknowledged (Cole, Sugioka, & Lynch, 1999; Torrance, 1976). To foster creativity in students, teachers need to identify the child's unique characteristics and develop an environment that promotes their interests (Hill, 1992).

Ironically, a study conducted by Torrance in 1963 revealed that the characteristics of creative students are at odds with those of their teachers. Those who are more outgoing and positive are considered disruptive to the organization. Regarding school discipline, Guncer and Oral (1993) reported that teachers regarded creative students as non-conformists who are easily distracted and can't fulfill their academic obligations. According to Dawson (1997), the more creative students are the more they are likely to get into trouble with their teachers. Throughout the literature, teachers' negative attitudes toward creative students are reoccurring themes (Dawson, 1997; Stone, 1980; Bachtold, 1974; Torrance, 1963).

Reportedly, students who have personalities that are disliked by their teachers tend to be creative individuals. In fact, many of those who have such personalities are unaware of their limitations. According to Mayfield (1979), a group of students was asked to participate in a standardized creativity test. They were then asked to describe their creativity abilities .The findings showed that teachers couldn't judge creativity dimensions. Although teachers often described creativity as positive attributes, their interpretations were often inconsistent (Fleith, 2000; Reid & McGuire, 1995; Slabbert, 1994; Torrance &Safter, 1986). Runco, Johnson, and Bear, 1993) found that teachers describe creative students as cheerful, easy-going, emotional, friendly, and spontaneous. According to Tan and Collings (1991), many

teachers describe creativity as mere imagination or uniqueness, while Fryer and Collings (1991)   believed that it involves nothing more than brainstorming and memorization. Optimistically, however, most teachers stated that creativity could be developed.

1.4.6. Decision Making

There has been a growing recognition that Design and Technology education can help develop critical thinking skills of decision making (AAAS, 1993; Fisher, 1990; Wehmeyer, 2002). According to Kortland (1996), decisions are formulated using a set of criteria that are not yet clear. These are formulated through a process of evaluation (Jimenez-Aleixandre and Pereiro-Munoz, 2002).

Many reasearch papers that deal with decision-making are related to cognitive development (Sternberg, 1996; Birnbaum, 1998; Baron, 2000) or operational research, economics and management (Bazerman, 2005; Gibson et. al., 1997). In the field of educational research, decision-making strategies have only recently gained significant attention, with most of the studies related to science education (Patronis et. al., 1999; Kennett &Stedwill, 1996; Kolstø, 2001; Papadouris&Constantinou, 2005).

However, Values are also an important factor in designing behavior. There are many factors that can influence decisions, such as cultural characteristics and preferences (Coles and Norman, 2005). Similarly, decisions are often required at every step of designing. When evaluating an alternative solution or selecting materials for a particular project, decisions should be made quickly and effectively   (Davies, 2004). This indicates that it is important that students' decisions are taken with an awareness of the different factors that influence the outcome.

1.5.   Conclusion

This overview provided clear insights into the concepts of reading and intellectual development. The first part was devoted to reading as a concept, its processes as well as essentials and at the same time it gave a short description of how master students deal with reading, their understanding and comprehension. Moreover, the second part of this theoretical chapter was concerned by giving a background of the idea of intellectual development and aspects of imagination related to students; trials and errors, problem solving, creativity and decision making which deal with their academic achievement and their success as future

professionals . The following chapter will describe the practical part of this research to closely examine the connection between reading and intellectual development.

2.   Introduction

Since the previous chapter was designed to address the literature which reveals the relationship between the reading skill and intellectual development, the present chapter attempts to provide an overall description of the practical phase of this academic study. Therefore, it highlights the sample population (Master one students) that is a significant part in providing an accurate picture of this research. Moreover, this descriptive chapter aims at highlighting the data collection tools employed which includes classroom observation, students' questionnaire as well as teachers' interviews. Finally, it discusses the research limitations.

2.1   Research Methodology

Research is one of the most significant activities students are required to do in higher education in order to answer questions and solve problems. According to Bansell and Waltz (1981), research is a process utilized to identify, analyze, and solve problems. Additionally, Research is a process used for acquiring knowledge or making new discoveries. It involves the use of observation, comparison, and experimentation (Kothari, 2006). This entails that research is a scientific way to collect data to gain a clear insight into a particular subject of the field of study.

However, undertaking a research is not a process that is done randomly, it requires the right methodology. According to Creswell (2003), methodology is a group of methods that can work seamlessly together to deliver findings and data that are relevant to the research question. Furthermore, a good research study involves the complete structure of the study, which includes the methods and procedures utilized to collect and analyze data (Bowling, 2002).

2.2   Procedure

The present research was carried out with first year master students of didactics at the department of English literature at DrMoulayTahar, University of Saida. This study was conducted in a module which involved lots of reading practices that were relevant to students' intellectual skills. It took place in the second semester of the Academic year (2021_2022) through a combination of ten sessions. The first step of this research was

conducting observations in class. Second of all, after a few sessions, a questionnaire was submitted to master one didactic students. The last step was interviewing four different teachers for gaining more data about the topic.

2.3 Context of the Study

The study took place within first year master students of didactics at the department of English literature at DrMoualyTahar University of saida. The fact that this study aims at discovering the role of the reading skill in developing students' intellectual skills, reading sessions were the place to conduct the latter. Since reading sessions in master one level took place only in one module, the researcher had to attend the reading sessions once a week for the progress of this research.

2.4 Participants

According to Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2012), the key for any research to be successful is the right choice of the target population. They define the sample being studied for the research as "the group on which information is obtained" (p. 91). The latter indicates that it is highly significant for the researcher to be aware of the choice of the target population since it adds validity to the study.

As far as this study is concerned with, the selected group for this research is about thirty (27) master one students of didactics of English language (twenty five females (25) and five males (02)) who belong to DrMoualyTahar University of Saida. The target population was not chosen at random, there was a crucial need for discovering the connection between the reading skill and master one students' intellectual skills. Besides the students, the four teachers are also a key element for the progress of this present research paper.

2.4.1 Description of theStudents' Profile

To accomplish this research paper, the observation was done with a class of thirty (30) master one students in a module where reading occurs practically in all sessions. Furthermore, the twenty seven(27) students (twenty five females (25) and five males (02)) were asked to answer a questionnaire.

2.4.2 Description of the Teachers' Profile

For the progress of this study, four EFL teacher were involved, three females along with a male. These teachers were selected due to their long experience in teaching reading sessions. Because of the teachers' long years of experience in the field of teaching English as a foreign language, the researcher had to conduct interviews with these skillful teachers. The aim of the interviews was discovering how reading as a comprehensive skill could participate to the development of master one students' intellectual skills.

2.5 Mixed Method Approach

In order to conduct the present study, the researcher had to use a mixed method approach for ensuring this research authenticity. Mixed methods research is a method used for carrying out experiments that combine qualitative and quantitative data. It involves guiding assumptions about the data collected .The goal of mixed methods research is to combine qualitative and quantitative data in order to provide a better understanding of the various problems that arise when performing experiments with both approaches(Creswell and Plano Clark ;2007,p. 5).This implies that mixed research is a synthesis that includes ideas from qualitative and quantitative research.

In 1959, Campbell and Fiske's article "Theory of multiple research methods" was regarded as formalizing the use of multiple research methods. According to Campbell and Fiske (1959), triangulation is a process that involves using multiple methods to validate the results of an experiment, which ensures that the observed variance is not the result of a particular method or phenomenon. Pouring in the same vase, the theory of convergence states that the findings of multiple experiments can enhance our beliefs regarding the correctness of the results (Bouchard, 1976, p. 268).

Interestingly, Boring (1953) explained that as long as the new construct has the same operational definition, it is still a construct until it gets two or more alternative operational definitions (p. 222).

In contrast, Campbell and Fiske (1959) are rightfully credited as being the first to show explicitly how to use multiple research methods for validation purposes. The ideas of Campbell and Fiske (1959) were later extended by webb, Campbell, Schwartz, and

Sechrest (1966) who defined multiple operationalism as "the use of various measures that are hypothesized to share some or other irrelevant components" (p. 3). Thus, the term triangulation was first used by William Webb and James Sechrest.

It is worth mentioning that Denzin (1978) was the first to talk about method triangulation. He defined it as "triangulate methods are the combination of various scientific procedures" (p. 291). Denzin (1978) divided the technique into four categories: data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theories triangulation, and methodological triangulation. He also distinguished between methods triangulation, which refers to the use of multiple qualitative and quantitative approaches.

In the same vein, Rossman and Wilson (1985) stated that the combination of qualitative and quantitative research can be used to corroborate and confirm the findings of the two studies. It can also enable the development of richer data sets.

Most recently, Collins, Onwuegbuzie, and Sutton (2006) identified four reasons why mixed research is conducted. These include participant enrichment, which involves mixing quantitative and qualitative research to improve the sample's quality. It can also be done through various means such as recruiting and training subjects, establishing a review board, and monitoring the effectiveness of existing instruments.

2.5.1 Quantitative Approach

Around 1250 A.D., quantitative research emerged due to investigators wanting to collect data. It became the main method used to create new knowledge. According to Michael Creswell (2003)," quantitative research involves conducting experiments and collecting data on predetermined instruments "(p. 18). Leedy and Ormrod (2001) argued that quantitative research is focused on surveying and experimentation, and it builds on the theories underlying the empiricist paradigm (Creswell, 2003). Thus, the objective of quantitative research is to find meaning in the collected data. This process is done by analyzing the data and its findings.

Furthermore, Aliaga, and Gunderson (2002) described quantitative research as" a type of study that uses statistics and other quantitative methods to explain a phenomenon or an issue". This shows that a research is the process of explaining an issue or a phenomenon to a group or an audience. This is the first thing that a research study tackles

or deals with. on the other hand (Leedy&Ormrod 2001; Williams, 2011) state that quantitative research refers to the process of gathering and analyzing data in order to support or debunk alternative knowledge claims.

In addition, Williams, (2011) remarked that quantitative research begins with a statement of a problem, which can then be followed by a review of literature and an analysis of data. Similarly, quantitative research is a type of inquiry that involves conducting experiments and collecting data on predefined instruments (Creswell 2003; Williams, 2011, p. 18).

Concerning quantitative research methodology, quantitative research is a type of study that collects data in order to analyze and interpret it. It is carried out in order to support or debunk assertions related to certain knowledge claims (Creswell, 2003, p. 153). Additionally, According to Creswell (2002), the concept of statistical analysis is commonly used in the study of physical sciences, such as physics and chemistry. Other trends in quantitative research include the development of test and measurement procedures.

A quantitative research approach can be divided into three broad classifications: experimental, causal, and descriptive. Descriptive research aims to identify the characteristics of a particular phenomenon or group of phenomena (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001).

An exploratory study is a type of research that involves investigating a certain treatment or procedure before performing a follow-up study. There are three kinds of experimental approaches: pre experimental, true experimental, and quasi-experimental (Leedy&Ormrod, 2001). The pre-experimental design is a process that involves a variable that does not vary and is not randomly selected. The concept of the true experimental design allows for a higher degree of control over the experiment (Campbell and Stanley, 1963). As a result, the goal of a true experiment is to collect quantitative data in a systematic manner. However, this approach usually involves the use of mathematical models.

2.5.2 Qualitative Approach

A qualitative research approach is a process that involves the involvement of people in the actual experience. This type of research is commonly referred to as an unfolding model (Creswell, 1994). What constitutes qualitative research involves purposeful use for describing, explaining, and interpreting collected data.

Moreover, Shank (2002) describes qualitative research as "a process that involves a systematic inquiry into meaning, this type of study is typically conducted in groups or individuals" (p. 4). According to Lincoln and Denzin (2002), qualitative research involves studying phenomena in their natural settings.

Additionally, Researchers use qualitative methods to study how people make sense of their environment. They try to understand how they make sense of their world (Merriam, 2009, p. 13). Qualitative research is a type of study that uses case studies and participant observation to create a narrative or account of a particular setting or practice (Parkinson &Drislane, 2011).

Furthermore, this type of study involves trying to make sense of the world around people. It involves trying to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings that people bring to them (Denzin& Lincoln, 2005, p. 3).Meanwhile, Bogdan and Biklen (1982) state that qualitative research study involves collecting data in the form of words or pictures instead of numbers. This method is commonly used to present findings. Endraswara (2011) also shows that qualitative research is conducted with the goal of acquiring a better understanding of the literature. This method is mainly focused on describing the literature instead of the result.

Ormrod and Leedy (2001) argued that qualitative research less structured because it formulates new theories .A qualitative research model is a process that occurs naturally in a natural setting. It allows the researcher to develop a deeper understanding of the experience (Creswell, 2003). Thus, there is no beginning point to scientific explorations or assumptions. Empirical research is the study of phenomena that are relevant to social behavior (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001).

The literature on qualitative research is wide and does not seem to have a clear definition of the term (Strauss and Corbin 1998). Also, there are many different

interpretations of qualitative research (Long and Godfrey, 2004, p. 182) and many views as well (Denzin and Lincoln 2003, p. 11; Jovanović, 2011, p. 3).

There are many different ways to conduct a qualitative research, but Leedy and Ormrod (2001) highlighted the following: Case studies, grounded theory, ethnography, content analysis, and phenomenological. Creswell (2003) shows how these methods can be used to study various kinds of people. For instance, case studies and grounded theory studies can be used to investigate processes and events while ethnographic studies can study groups and individuals.

2.6   Data Collection Instruments

For this study, there was an employment of multiple data collection tools to ensure the validity and credibility of this research. The research instruments include: a classroom observation, students' questionnaire and interviews with EFL teachers.

2.6.1   Classroom Observation

Observation has been described as a research method as well as a data collection method (Powell&Connaway, 2004; Williamson, 2000; Pearsall, 1970).Additionally, Gorman and Clayton define Observation as "the study of phenomena that can be commonly observed in a natural setting "(2005, p. 40). Likewise, Marshall and Rossman (1989) define observation as "the systematic description of events, behaviors, and artifacts in the social setting chosen for study" (p. 79 as cited in Kawulich, 2004). In clearer terms, observation is a research tool that is used to provide a throughout description of the context of the study.

In this study, the researcher used observation as the first research tool to collect data, especially participant observation as it provides a clear insight into the process of reading sessions. Spradley (1980) believed that participant observation leads to ethnographic description. He describes ethnography as" the process of describing a culture with the goal of understanding another way of life" (p. 3). Undoubtedly, the use of participant observation was a great chance to understand the phenomenon in a better way. One of the main advantages of observation is to gain more reliable data (Vanderstoep and Johnston, 2009).

2.6.1.1 Description of the Observation

More specifically, classroom observation started within the first week of the second semester. That is, the researcher started observing the target population for ten different sessions, from the beginning of the courses until the end of the semester. Concerning the time of the sessions, each session lasted for an hour and an a half, the sessions included at first place an introductive reading to make students familiar with the lecture and its components then the teacher tried to extract students' understanding through different practices…etc. The classroom observation was essentially intended to observe specific items and variables related to both the teacher and the EFL students. These items included: the teacher's role inside the classroom, students' intellectual skills while dealing with the reading activity, students' collaborative work, students-student interaction and students-teacher interaction inside the classroom.

The teacher's role inside the classroom: The focus here is on the teacher's job as a center of learning, as a source and a provider of knowledge, as a facilitator and a guide that most students depend on in the classroom.

Students' intellectual skills: In this case, the researcher focuses on the way students develop their intellectual skills; by observing whether or not they question the knowledge provided by the teacher , the way they interact with the texts and whether they actually poses the ability to comprehend without asking for the teacher's guidance.

Students' collaborative work: The purpose of observing students at this level is to find out whether they enjoy working in groups, whether they ask their classmates for help when facing difficulties understanding the reading passage, and whether they share and discuss ideas in order to shape their own understanding.

Student-student interaction: The researcher drifts her attention to the way students interact with one another while having discussions and whether they ask questions when facing ambiguous knowledge.

Student-teacher interaction: The focus is on the way students interact with their teacher and whether there is an encouragement of collaborative learning.

2.6.2 Questionnaire

The questionnaire is the second research tool that was adopted to collect qualitative and quantitative data. A questionnaire is a document that asks questions about an issue or topic to gather information about an individual (Babbie, 1990, p. 377). Additionally, Krishan Kumar (1992) defines the questionnaire as" a document that an investigator needs to complete in order to properly answer questions related to a particular study". That is a questionnaire is often a survey question which is a set of written questions that are usually asked of survey respondents. These questions become the basis for an investigation. A survey question typically consists of multiple questions that are designed to elicit a variety of responses from the (Schvaneveltd, 1985). The questionnaire is the most common data collection tool in academic research. One of the main advantages of a questionnaire is that the data is accurate and easy. However, participants do not always provide honest answers and sometimes they do not answer all the questions which imped the process of data collection.

To investigate the role of the reading skill in developing students' intellectual skills, twenty seven copies of the questionnaire were handed to first year master students of didactics of right after having a few reading sessions. The aim of choosing this particular timing is that students get used to the researcher while conducting her observation and they were ready to cooperate and answer the questionnaire in a smooth way. In addition, the first year master students were already familiar with the reading sessions which helped to provide authentic data to this study.

2.6.2.1 Description of thestudents' questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of both close-ended and open-ended questions for the purpose of obtaining qualitative and quantitative data for the present study. Close-ended questions aim at exact answers by providing the participants with yes/no questions, questions which contain multiple choice answers and agree/disagree questions .The latter aim at providing the appropriate answer on behalf of the respondents. However, open-ended questions are intended to obtain personal opinions and to give space to participants to add further explanation. In terms of organizing the questionnaire, it is intentionally divided into four sections and each section contains a number of questions.

➢   *Section One: Reading sessions* (Q1-Q6)

In this section, students are asked about their opinions and attitudes toward the reading sessions. Question one (01) aims at discovering whether students enjoy the reading sessions and what they find interesting about them. In addition, question two (02) looks at the relationship between reading session activities and motivation allowing participants to clarify their answers. Question three (03) gives respondents the freedom to express their opinions about the positive things about reading sessions. Then, question four (04) is designed to collect students' attitudes toward the impact of the reading sessions on the thinking abilities as they are required to clarify the way the latter occurs. Question five (05) aims at collecting participants' opinions by giving them space to express the things they would like to change about reading sessions. On the other hand, question six (06) attempts to know whether or not students find that reading involves critical thinking allowing them to explain their answers.

➢   *Section Two: Reading strategies* (Q1-Q3)

The second section targets students' reading strategies. The first question is designed to discover how often students read at home by providing them with several choices to choose from while answering the question. The second question investigates whether the participants agree or disagree with using skimming and scanning as techniques for a good comprehension of the text. The last question of this section is intended to reveal the strategies students use when reading a written document. The suggested answers include: highlighting key words and taking notes, summarizing and using dictionaries. At last, an open-ended question is given to provide other reading strategies they use.

➢ *Section Three: students' Intellectual Development* (Q1-Q5)

This section is devoted to the connection between the reading skill and intellectual development. Question one (01) aims at finding out whether or not students use their imagination while reading. Question two (02) attempts to discover whether or not participants feel the need to comprehend a certain text. The third question is intended to discover how long students take to forget the content of the reading session by providing students with four (04) choices for the answer. Additionally, question four (04) is designed to figure out whether or not students find that creativity has an impact on reading activities by giving space to clarify how the process happens. Then, the forth question is linked to understanding the number of times students need to fully comprehend the text.

➢ *Section four: The teacher's job* (Q1-Q3)

The aim of this section is to discover the role that the teacher plays inside the classroom since s/he represents the classroom authority. The first question investigates whether or not students appreciate a good warm up on behalf of the teacher and whether it is beneficial for a successful reading to take place inside the classroom. Question two (02) aims at discovering whether or not students believe in group work. The last question of this section attempts to find out who students ask for clarification when facing a problem understanding the text. The choices include: the teacher, friends, or Google. To conclude, there was also an open-ended space to mention other sources of clarification.

2.6.3 Interview

In order to prove or disapprove the questionnaire's and observation's findings, a structured interview was opted for the sake of collecting detailed data from the informants. Qualitative interviews are conducted in order to gather general information about a person. They usually involve asking multiple questions to record and hear the participants' responses (Creswell, 2012) According to (McNamara, 1999), interviewing is often conducted to gain in-depth knowledge about a person or a topic. It allows the researcher to follow up with the respondents after completing the survey. Usually, open-ended questions are used to obtain unbiased answers, while closed-ended ones are used to force participants to provide a particular way Creswell, 2012; McNamara, 1999). An open-ended question allows the participants to respond in a variety of ways. For instance, it could ask them about their involvement in athletics or their school work (Creswell, 2012). An open-ended question allows the participants to respond in a variety of ways. For instance, it could ask them about their involvement in athletics or their school work (Creswell, 2012). A close-ended question provides an accurate response. The answers are limited. For example, it could ask whether or not people exercise (Cresswell, 2012). In qualitative research, interviews are used to explore the meaning of central themes in a person's life. The main goal of interviewing is to find out what the subjects said and how they felt (McNamara, 2009). As far as this present research is concerned with, the researcher conducted a structured interview with four different teachers, a male and three females from the department of English literature to increase this research credibility.

2.6.3.1 Description of the teachers' interview

The teachers' interview was the very last step in the process of collecting data for this study. It was used in order to obtain additional information regarding the connection between the teacher's job in teaching the reading and students' intellectual development. The interview was composed of four open-ended questions and one close-ended question. The reason behind opting for an interview with four teachers who are responsible for teaching EFL in the department of English literature, DrMoulayTahar University of saida is to investigate the strategies adopted by teachers, the degree in which students value reading, critical thinking activities which are employed by teachers, and teachers' strategies to avoid boredom inside the classroom.

Question one (01) is an attempt to discover the main strategies that teachers adopt for the aim of extracting students' critical thinking/ cognitive abilities in reading sessions.

Question two (02) seeks to investigate the extent in which students value reading and whether or not they are aware of the benefits of the reading skill on their academic improvement.

Question three (03) is intended to discover the critical thinking activities which teachers implement after the reading sessions and whether or not students have positive attitudes toward such activities.

Question four (04) investigates the type of activities that teachers adopt for raising their students' intelligence and creativity in reading sessions.

Question (05) attempts to discover the strategies which teachers adopt to avoid boredom in reading sessions.

2.7   Difficulties Encountered in this Study

The limitations of this study include: the topic, the target population and the department. To begin with, the topic is a new concept and a bit challenging for some teachers since there are not enough reading sessions; therefore, teachers are not experienced enough to be more familiar with the connection between the reading skill and students' intellectual development. Second of all, the target population of this study is divided into both teachers and students. Concerning the students, some of them were not

cooperative answering the questionnaire while others chose to skip some answers. The teachers also represented a challenge since a lot of them were busy with their schedule and did not have time for a one on one interview. Last but not least, the college library did not provide the researcher with books that are related to the topic of this study.

Finally, these challenges did not stop the researcher from pursuing this present work and accomplishing the study objectives by solving problems.

2.8   Conclusion

This present chapter aimed at revealing the research methodology followed by the context in which the investigation took place, and the participants that were a part in obtaining data for the progress of the current study. As far as data collection instruments are concerned with, a triangulation framework guided this research through the use of classroom observation, students' questionnaire and teachers' interview to accumulate data. Therefore, the upcoming chapter will be dedicated to data analysis, discussion of the findings and recommendation.

3.   Introduction

In order to have a profound picture about the present study, the topic and its purpose, an overview about the concepts of reading and intellectual development were provided in the first chapter followed up by a descriptive account of the research tools that were used for collecting data in the second one. The present chapter is divided into two main parts. The first one is considered with providing an insight into data analysis and its discussion to answer the previously stated research questions. The second one will aim at covering some recommendations and suggestions which will be laid out at the end of this chapter.

3.1.   Data Analysis

This research was carried out through a mixed method approach as stated in the second chapter. The researcher conducted her study using a qualitative approach including classroom observation, the response provided by first year master students of didactics through a questionnaire and teachers' interviews in addition to a quantitative method through the use of students' questionnaire. After the process of collecting data, the latter is analyzed and discussed for the purpose of giving validation or denying the research hypotheses.

3.1.1. Analysis of Classroom Observation

The fact that the researcher opted for a participant interview, it was difficult to focus on the content of the sessions as well as taking notes as the same time. For this reason, the researcher has only mentioned the most important notes about each item during the ten sessions of observation, they are as follow:

The teacher's role inside the classroom:

The teacher had an affective role inside the classroom. Students could not do much without the teacher's guidance and assistance. At the beginning of the sessions, the researcher noticed that students were not motivated enough until the teacher tried to do so by a warm up (questions and answers about their daily lives or interpretations). In addition, students were not yet familiar with the teacher's methods and strategies; the way s/he presented the course and chose the type of activity as well as to tools that s/he used while

delivering the reading course. When few sessions took place, students started adapting with the teacher's methods and were engaged in the process and started participating and communicating with the teacher while others enjoyed their phones. It is also worth mentioning that there was not a notable male presence, only five boys attended the first sessions while just one male attended the last ones. According to the observation notes, the teacher paid more attention to the active students; however, s/he pointed at the others in order to keep them in track as well. Furthermore, students were excited when the teacher was encouraging and this has led to students' engagement and autonomy. At the end of the session, the teacher summed up the course and finished the session with warm words of appreciation.

Students' intellectual skills:

At the beginning of the reading sessions, most of students were distracted and were not interested in what the teacher was talking about. After the teacher smoothed things around by motivating them through the use of interesting reading materials which contained lots of analyses and digging to find the answers, students became more engaged and started paying attention and were focusing on the task that they had to accomplish in fifteen minutes, yet few students were always out of track, busy with their phones no matter how much the topic was interesting, beside the teacher's methods and the teaching materials. It is worth noting that after having time for the task, a discussion between the teacher and students took place; students started to ask questions and gave their feedbacks; however, the researcher noticed that three or four students were still finishing their activities. What is more, in the last sessions, the researcher remarked that students started to be more expressing, giving interesting points of views, and their own understanding and feedbacks of each other's works. However, five or six students were passive and chose to not be engaged in the process despite the teacher's effort to encourage them.

Students' collaborative work:

Collaborative work is a major goal in reading sessions since some students are more productive when they work in groups; however, the researcher noticed that only a group or two worked together while the remaining ones were less productive. That is, members of the groups that worked together were helping one another and finding solutions without asking for the teacher's clarification while few of the members from the remaining groups were sharing their ideas and interacting with one another. Also, if one student failed to

answer the teacher's question, another student of that group answered instead. It is also worth mentioning that the majority of the groups gave the impression that one student was more dominant than the rest of the group members.

Student-student interaction:

The researcher noticed that there were an interaction between students only if the topic being discussed was interesting and fit their needs. When the topic of the conversation was interesting like in one of the sessions, the teacher brought the topic of social values, students started analyzing, asking questions and sharing their thoughts since they belong to the same society. When the topic being held is not interesting, students do not interact with one another; they do not exchange their ideas and opinions.

Student-teacher interaction:

According to the observation, the researcher noticed that only two or three students were fully engaged in answering the teacher's questions and sharing their points of views in others' discussions. The others rarely participated or questioned the provided knowledge. As a result, there was not much interaction between the students and their teacher. After the bad marks, the researcher witnessed a great change on behalf of the students since they had to make efforts for achieving good marks. When the teacher asked the students to write paragraphs that contain a summary of the reading course, students were engaged in the process and started interacting along with the teacher; asking questions and demanding for more clarification.

3.1.2. Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire

The present section is devoted to the analysis of students' questionnaire. The latter was distributed to EFL students at Saida University aiming at collecting data about students' attitudes and perception toward reading and its connection to intellectual development.

Students' perceptions toward reading sessions

Question one: Do you enjoy reading sessions?

This question seeks to investigate whether or not students enjoy reading sessions and what is interesting about them. In case students replied with "yes", they were asked to state the interesting things about reading sessions.

Table 3.1: *Students' Attitudes toward Reading Sessions*

	Number	Percentage
Yes, I like reading sessions	21	77.78%
No, I don't like reading sessions	06	22.22%

As it can be observed in the table above, results show that vast majority of the students (77.78%), that is 21 out of 27 respondents enjoyed reading sessions while the others (22.22%), which is 06 out of 27 participants found that reading sessions were boring. The obtained answers from students' perceptions about the interesting things about reading sessions are summarized as follow:

"Help to improve abilities"

"Depends on the topic"

"Reading is a fundamental skill for learning any language as well as it develops students' mind"

"The reading itself"

"It gives the chance to discover and learn about many things"

"To enrich the mind and expand the knowledge"

"To discover new vocabularies"

Question two: Do you think that motivation is strongly linked to the type of activity in reading sessions?

This question seeks to unveil the link between motivation and the type of activity in reading sessions.

Table 3.2*: Students' Attitudes toward the Link between Motivation and the Activities of the Reading Sessions*

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	24	88.89%
No	03	11.11%

According to the table above, the majority of students (88.89%), that is 24 out of 27 respondents claimed that motivation is strongly linked to the type of activity in reading sessions. However, the 03 respondents, who represent (11.11%) revealed that motivation is not linked to the type of activity in reading sessions. Other answers are listed as follow:

"If you know for instance that the Americans, the most intelligent people of the world read at least 12 books per year"

"For example when answering the comprehension activities it motivates me"

"because when you read and understand what you read like book, articles,….So, we can motivate early in that topic"

Question Three: what is positive about reading sessions?

This open ended question seeks to collect students' attitudes and opinions regarding the positive things about reading sessions. Participants' answers were summarized the following way:

"Enrich your knowledge, new culture about many topics"

"Enhance your English in general"

"To discover new vocabularies"

"Reading gives the person the confidence to stand and talk and discuss his ideas with people"

"It's develop your imagination"

"To develop your reading skills"

"To spell the words correctly"

"Get more information"

"Enhancing your thinking abilities"

"I find them to be boring, so I don't see any positives about them"

Question four: do you think that reading sessions are helpful for enhancing your thinking abilities?

This question has been asked to collect data vis a vis students' responses about whether or not they felt that reading sessions help in enhancing their thinking abilities. In case students answered with "yes", they were asked how they were helpful.
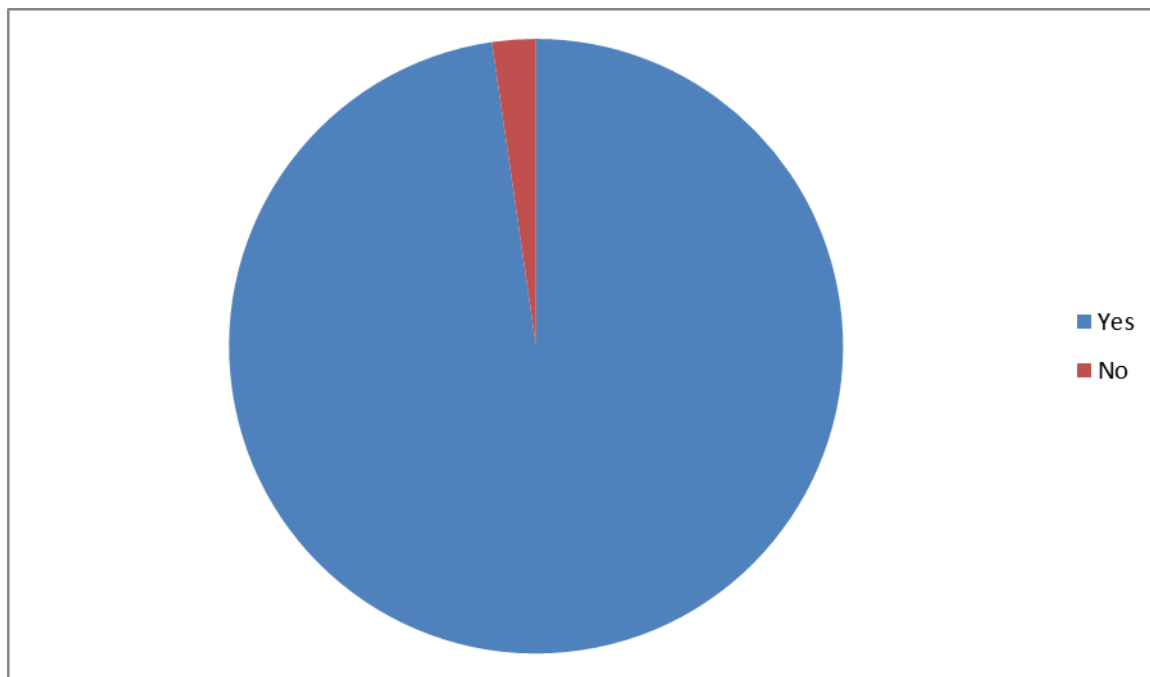
Figure 3.1: The effectiveness of reading sessions in enhancing students' thinking abilities

The figure indicates that (92.59%), that is 25 out of 27 participants agree that reading sessions are actually helpful in enhancing their thinking abilities. On the other hand, 02 students, that is (7.41%) find that reading sessions do not enhancetheir thinking abilities. The obtained answers from students' explanation of how reading sessions help develop thinking abilities are listed as follow:

"By collecting what you understand and using it to enhancing your cognitive abilities"

"When you're reading, your mind links the words with other expressions and events, so it helps using the cognitive abilities of the learner"

"It enriches our thinking abilities because it gives us the opportunity to know different ideas and meet new words which enrich our vocabulary"

"The more you read, the more you get in touch with new ideas of a certain topic"

"By making the mind work more"

"It helps you to gain knowledge in a specific topic and provide you with information, that it may useful one day"

"It increase your critical thinking"

"Because it exercises our brain and our thinking abilities rely on our brain"

"You get to learn new words, and gather new information"

Question five: In your opinion, what are the things you wish to change about reading sessions?

The urge behind this open ended question is to collect data about students' opinions regarding the things they wish to change about reading sessions. Their answers are stated as follow:

"The fact that I have to read something at all"

"It should be taken as daily habit since it helps you to improve your thoughts and abilities"

"Better reading subjects"

"I wish that learners are given freedom to interpret the reading their own way and not stick to what the teacher has to say"

"To give the learner opportunity to select the book or story he/she enjoy reading"

"The repetition of the same topic, the way some teachers present the reading session"

"Actually, we don't have reading sessions here, so the first step is to do it, because it is helpful and important"

"I wish that high institution to change and decrease the number of students in the classroom, below15 students"

Question six: Do you think that reading involves critical thinking?

This question was asked to elicit students'' opinions about whether or not they find that reading involves critical thinking .If they do, they are required to explain how the two are linked.

Opinions	Number	Percentage (%)
Yes	17	62.96
No	10	37.04

Table 3.3: *Students' opinions toward the relationship between reading and critical thinking*

The table unveil that 17 students, that is (62.96%) view that reading involves critical thinking, while (37.04%), which is 10 respondents find that reading does not involve critical thinking. Students' explanation of how reading is related to critical thinking are as follow:

"It makes the reader observes and analyses"

"You will be more aware about your study needs"

"It gives you another perception, another view, another way of thinking"

"Once you read, you start to get exposed to questions, then you will take notes to well grasp what the text is talking about"

"When you read, you certainly have questions in your mind"

"Not all the provided knowledge are true and acceptable which lead the reader to ask questions"

"I think that the critical thinking comes after a long journey of grasping information and gathering vocabulary"

"You don't have to agree to everything you read, you have your own mind and beliefs and perception, use them to identify what you like and what you don't. What you agree with and you don't. and at times reading new materials help you to see things in new way, it pursues you to think and to analyze things from a new perception"

Students' reading strategies

Question one: How often do you read at home?

This question seeks to unveil how often students read at home.
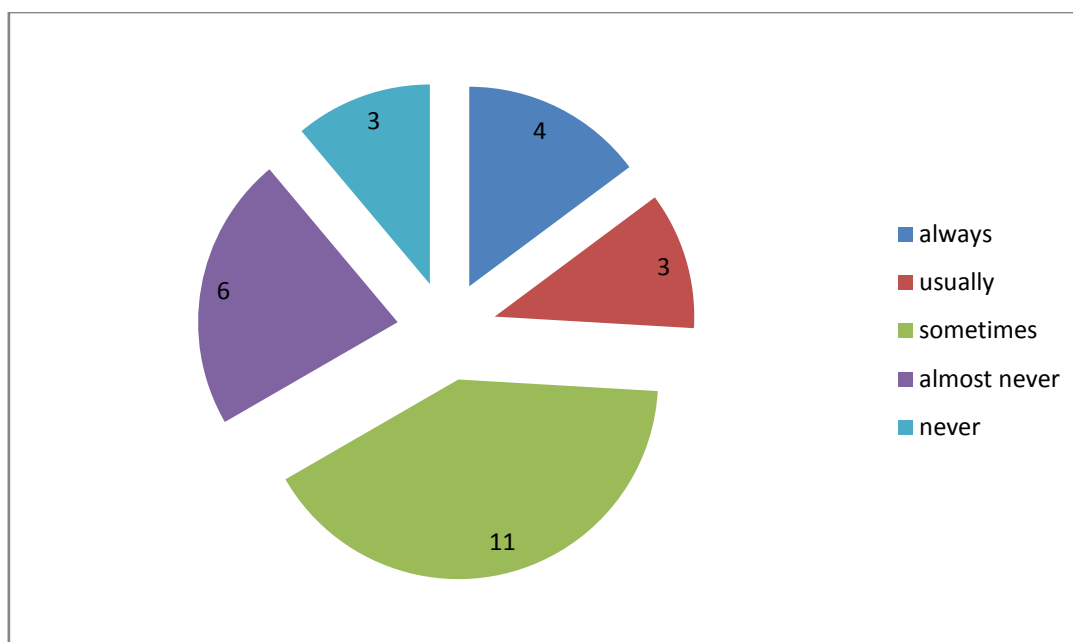
Figure 3.2: students' frequency of reading at home

The figure above illustrates how often do students read when they are home. 11 students which represent (40.74%) of the informants agreed that they sometimes read at home while 04 students, which is (14.82%) claimed that they always read books and articles in their free times. (11.11%) of the learners, that is 03 respondents stated that they usually read a written passage because they are not big fans of reading. Surprisingly, 03 students, that it (11.11%) admitted that they never read while 06 of them, which is (22.22%) acknowledged that they almost never read any written passages.

Question two: Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? " skimming and scanning are crucial for a good comprehension of the text"?

The purpose of this question is to collect students' opinions on whether they agree or disagree with the idea that skimming and scanning are crucial techniques that students use for a good comprehension of the text.
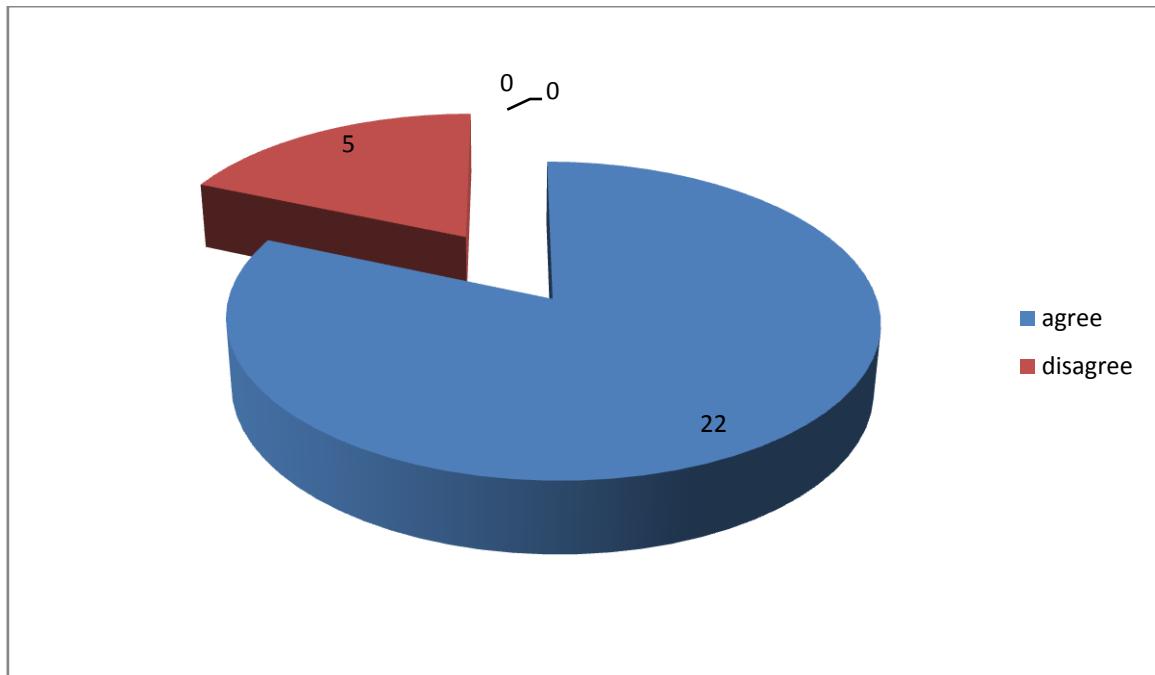
Figure3.3: students' attitudes toward skimming and scanning

The results of the above figure indicate that the vast majority of the students (81.48%), that is 22 participants agreed that skimming and scanning are crucial for a good comprehension of the text. Interestingly, only 05 students (18.52%) disagreed with the above statement.

Question three: How do you read? Others?

This question aims at discovering the strategies that students use while reading. The second part of the question gives other students the chance to provide their own special strategies in reading texts.
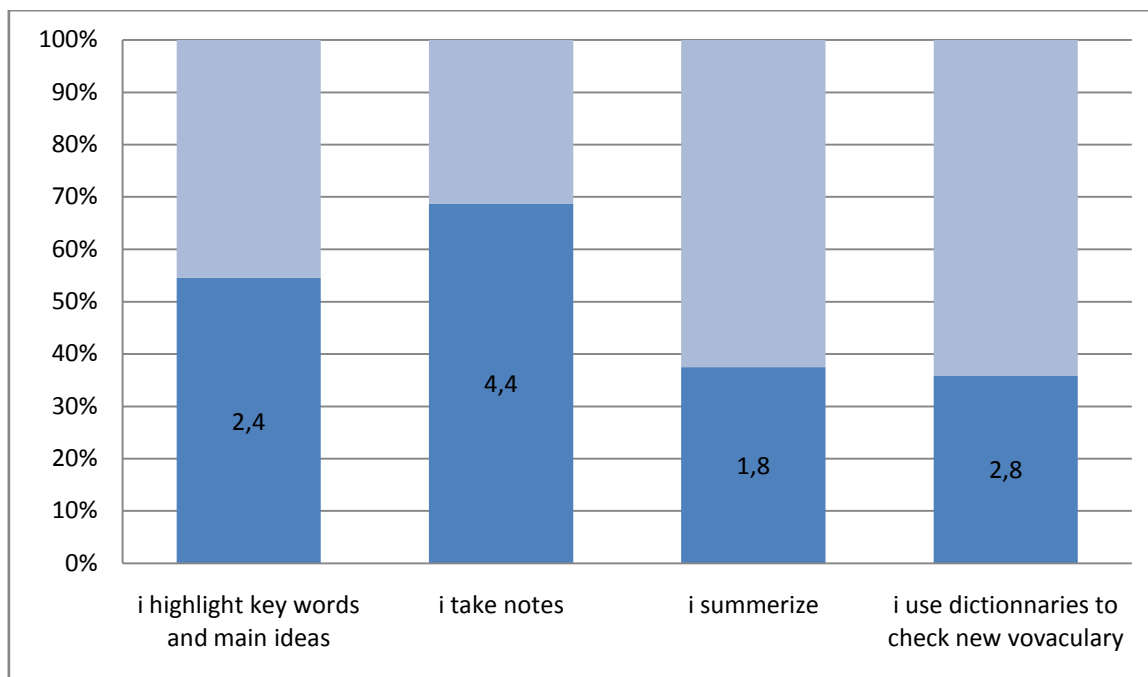
Figure 3.4: Students' strategies in reading

As illustrated in the graph above, the majority of the students (37.21%), that is 12 informants claimed that they use dictionaries to check new vocabulary when they read. Others (27.91%), which is 09 participants stated that they highlight key words and main ideas as a strategy when reading texts. Additionally, 06 students (20.93%) choose to take notes; meanwhile, 02 informants (13.95%) stated that they summarize passages in order to comprehend what the text is talking about. The other answers provided by the students are displayed as follow:

"I read out loud with different voices to match what I read"

"Maybe I read just few pages in order to understand well"

"It depends on what I'm reading"

Students' intellectual development

Question one: Do you use your imagination while reading?

The aim behind this question is to discover whether or not students use their imagination while reading.

Options	Number	Percentage (%)
Yes	22	81.48
No	05	18.52

Table 3.4: *students' use of imagination while reading*

According to the data displayed in the table above, the vast majority of the students (81.48%), that is 22 participants admitted that they use their imagination while reading. Surprisingly, only 05 informants, which is (18.52%) stated that they do not use their imagination in reading texts and passages.

Question two: Do you feel the need to comprehend the text?

The above question seeks to reveal whether or not students feel the need to comprehend the texts they read.
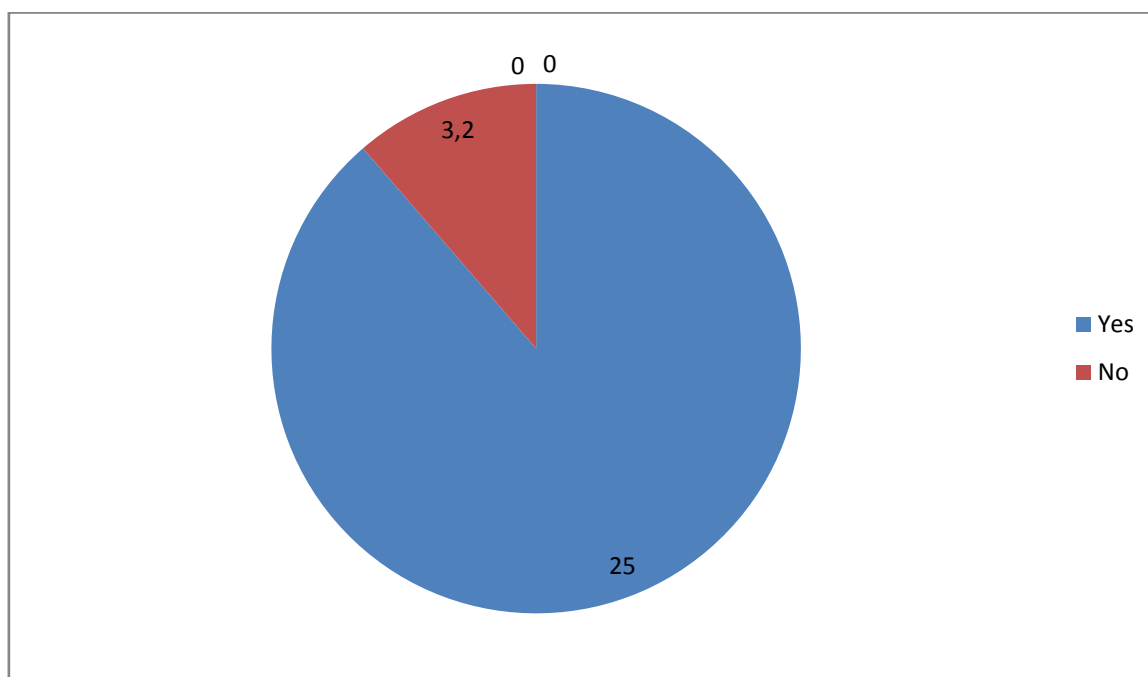
Figure3.5: Students attitudes toward the need for text comprehension

The figure above indicates that the vast majority of learners (92.59%), that is 25 respondents viewed that they feel the need to comprehend the text while only 02 students (7.41%) viewed the opposite.

Question three: When the reading session is over, how long does it take for you to forget the content?

This question aims to sort out how long does it take for students to forget the things they deal with in reading sessions.
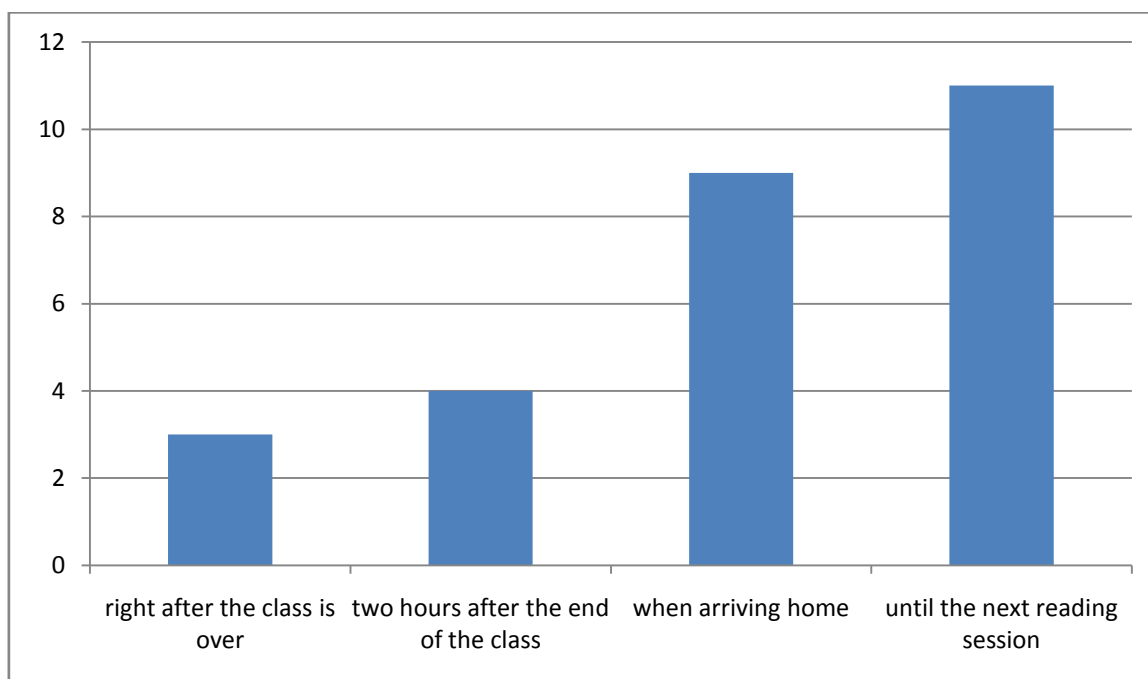
Figure 3.6: Students' capacities of storing information about reading sessions

As it can be observed above, the majority of students (40.74%), that is 11 out of 27 claimed that it takes them until the next reading session to forget the content of the previous one while 09 of the participants (33.33%) acknowledged that they forget what they learn as soon as they arrive home. Furthermore, (14.82%) of the informants, which is 04 students agreed that it takes them two hours to forget the content of the reading session. Interestingly, 03 students (11.11%) revealed that they forget what they learn in the reading session right after the class is over.

Question four: Do you think that reading activities are linked to creativity?

The urge behind this question is to collect students' opinions on whether or not they acknowledge the relationship between the reading activities and the concept of creativity. Students who say "yes" are obliged to state how reading activities are linked to creativity.

Opinions	Number	Percentage
Yes	20	74.08%
No	07	25.92%

Table 3.5: *Students' attitudes toward the relationship between reading activities and creativity*

The table demonstrates that 20 learners (74.08%) agreed that there is a link between reading activities and creativity while the others (25.92%), which is 07 students denied that there is a connection between reading activities and creativity. Students' arguments in favor of the link between the reading activities and creativity are displayed as follow:

"It provides the reader to use his imagination and abilities in addition to exchanging his ideas and thoughts with others"

"when you read your mind and imagination is working so you will be creative"

"Since you are reading it gives you new thoughts and ideas that can help you later to improve"

"It is making your cognitive side working deeply and this will take your abilities for a creative thoughts"

Question five: How many times do you read the text until you fully understand it?

This question aims at discovering how many times do students read a text until they fully understand it.
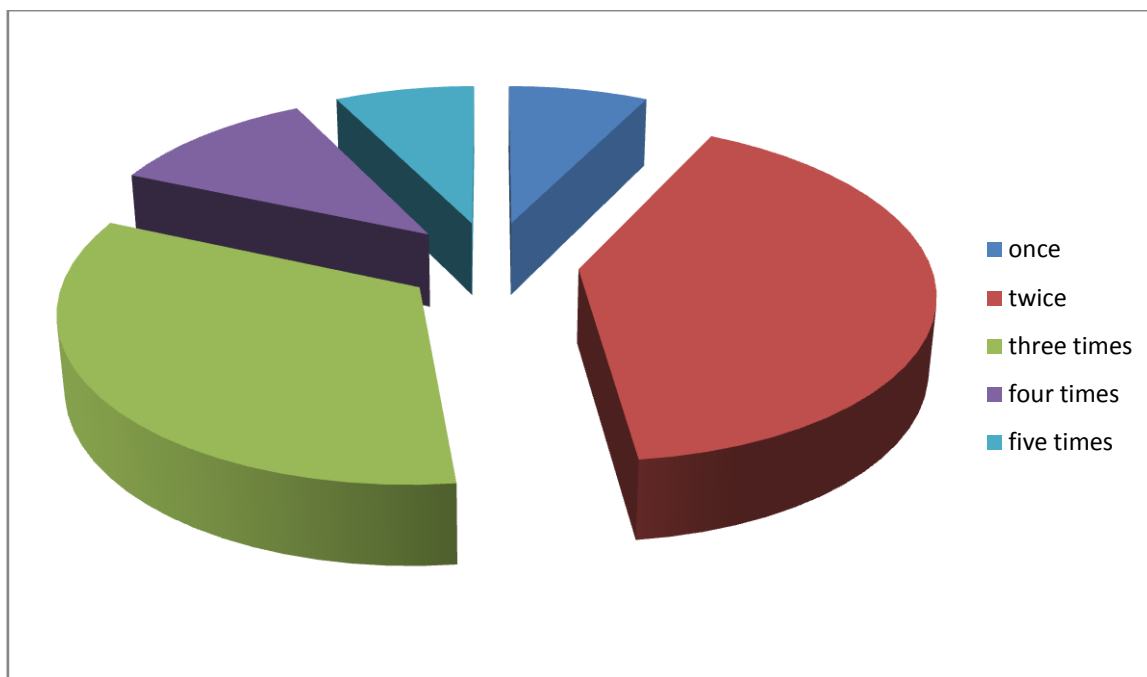
Figure 3.7: The amount of times which students need for text comprehension

The figure above displays that the majority of participants (40.74%), that is 11 read the text twice for a full comprehension of the latter. Nevertheless, 09 leaners (33.33%) agreed upon the fact that they read the text three times until they understand what it is talking about. Additionally,03 students (11.11%) stated that they read the text four times in order to comprehend its content while the same number of participants 02, which they represent (7.41%) claimed that they read the text once and five times for a full understanding of the latter.

The teacher's job in the classroom

Question one: Do you think that a good warm up by the teacher is beneficial for a successful reading session?

The reason behind this question is to discover students' opinions on whether they agree or disagree with the idea that a good warm up by the teacher is beneficial for a successful reading session.

Opinions	Number	Percentage (%)
Yes	21	77.78
No	06	22.22

Table 3.6: *Students opinions toward the teacher's warm up in reading sessions*

The table reveals that 21 participants (77.78%) stated that they think that a good warm up by the teacher is beneficial for a successful reading session while (22.22%), that is 06 learners disagree with the fact that a good warm up by the teacher is essential for a successful reading session.

Question two: Do you believe in group work?

Students' are asked the above question for the purpose of eliciting their beliefs about group work.

Beliefs	Number	Percentage
Yes	17	62.96%
No	10	37.04%

Table 3.7: *Students' beliefs about group work*

According to the table, 17 participants (62.96%) claimed that they believe in group work while (37.04%), that is 10 students do not believe in group work.

Question three: When facing a problem understanding the text, who do you ask for clarification?

This question is designed to figure out the sources which students resort to in order for clarification when facing a difficulty understanding the text. The second part of the question gives other students the opportunity to state other sources of clarification.
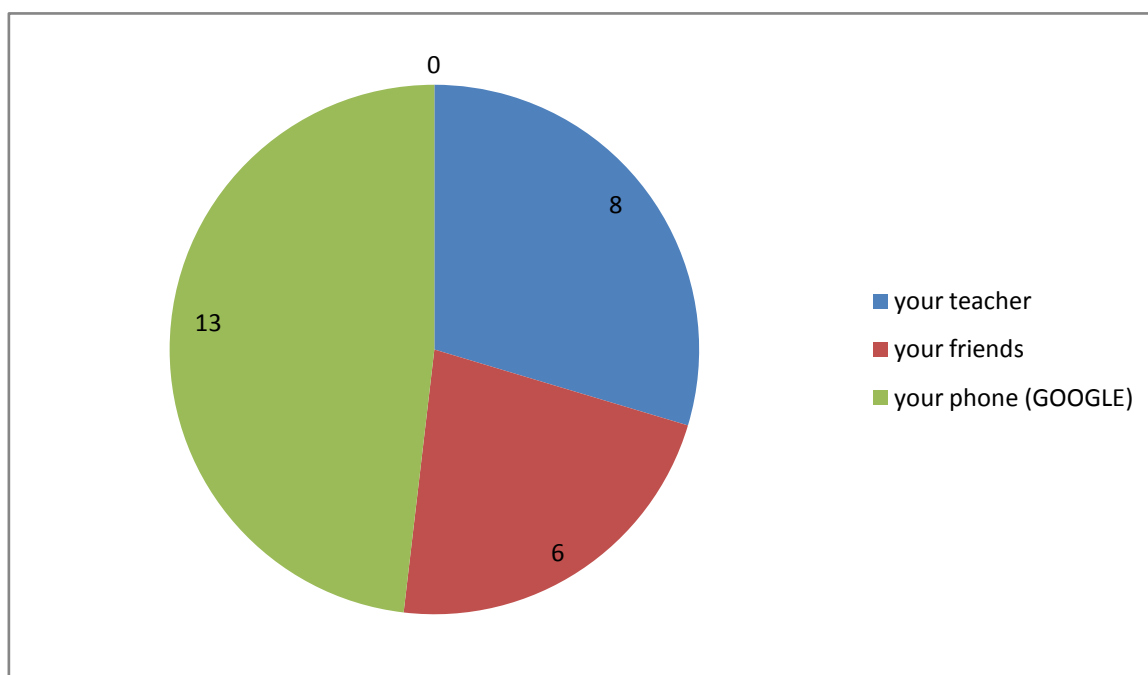
Figure 3.8: Students' sources of clarification when facing a problem understanding a text.

According to the figure, the majority of the students (48.15%), that is 13 stated that they resort to their phones when facing a difficulty understanding a reading passage. ¬06 participants (22.22%) agreed on asking their friends for clarification; whereas, 08 informants (29.63%) claimed that they ask their teachers for help when they encounter a difficulty in text comprehension. Other answers are displayed as follow:

"*It depends on the difficulty*"

"*Dictionary*"

3.1.3. Analysis of teachers' interview

Question one: What are the main strategies that teachers adopt in order to extract students' critical thinking/ cognitive abilities in reading sessions?

Teacher (A)reported:" Teachers depend heavily on skimming and scanning as strategies to stimulate the students' critical thinking".

Teacher (B) confirmed:" The first thing that a teacher must do in a reading session is apply students with the reading strategies and techniques and teach them how to get maximum benefits from what they are reading. If students do not know how to read, they will never be able to achieve the reading task. Knowing how to respond to a written text allow students to improve their cognitive and critical abilities".

Teacher (C) claimed:" As a teacher of oral expression, the main strategy which I generally suggest on my students is to read 2 pages daily from an interesting short story outside the classroom. This strategy can help the students to boost their vocabulary competence".

Teacher (D) asserted:" The main thing is to put students in a problematic situation where they have to use certain skills, pre-learned or pre-taught skills in order to solve real world problems. For example, it is like with research methodology for second year. I teach them how to make references and instead of asking them about definitions, I rather give them the front page of the journal article or a dissertation and then I ask them to give me the reference of that or the in text reference, the integral, the non-integral and we try to diversify; like giving them books or documents with multiple authors, just to push them to

use the information productively in a real world situation rather than just trying to recall or remember what they have learned".

Question two: To what extent students value reading? Do you think they are aware of the benefits of reading skill on their academic improvement?

Concerning the second question, all the teachers agreed upon the fact that students do not value reading. Teacher (A) said thatstudents usually do not read extensively, except when the teacher brings them some literary works as classroom assignments. So, students do not value reading. Albeit, they know its impact".

In addition, teacher (B) asserted thatNowadays, students are visually oriented learners who often do not fancy reading. They think that reading is a boring activity and a waste of time. Therefore, teachers have to drive students' attention that electronic reading is also useful and interesting and that the major goal is to keep in constant contact with the target language".

Moreover, teacher (C) claimed that it is a common idea that the students do not like reading books. Actually, they are aware of the reading skill importance. Yet, they do not show any sense of motivation to read".

Similarly, teacher (D) confirmed that No, they do not, the biggest majority do not even read. They rarely read since they are required to do so and even when they read, they do not know how to do so because the most effective type of reading is the one done for pleasure, not for research… I do not know may be it is the lack of reading module, may be it is an entire culture or may be it is the lack of access of the reading material… but the quality of ideas and the way they develop their essays shows whether they are readers or not".

Question three: Do you implement some critical thinking activities after reading sessions? Do students have positive attitudes toward such activities?

All of the four teachers agreed that they do implement critical thinking activities and students somehow hold positive attitudes toward the latter. Teacher (A) said that s/he does implement some critical thinking tasks and students do appreciate these activities.

On the other hand, teacher (B) claimed:" reading comprehension questions can be considered as an activity which enhances students' critical thinking. However, the reading

questions must be relevant to the topic discussed in the lesson and answering these questions through the text is going to motivate students and put them into action. Undertaking the group-work method in this situation helps students a lot to get rid of their fear of communicating their point of view, exchange ideas with their classmates and help one another. Model writing is another activity that can be assigned after the end of the reading session in which the teacher asks students to use the text as a model and imitate it to produce their own written composition. While writing, students find themselves in a more detailed contact with the text, learning so many things at once; vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure…etc. As far as students' attitudes, I believe that it depends on the students' motivation. Most of the time, students interact with this kind of activities".

It is worth mentioning that teacher (C) and (D) are not usually teachers of reading expression, but they do implement some critical thinking activities. Teacher (C) said:" I'm not a teacher of reading expression. However, I occasionally require my students to read and sum up a given chapter. Later on, they perform it orally in the classroom. The majority of the students don't fulfill the activity as required because they don't take the reading task seriously".

Teacher (D) believes that there is no reading module in the department and it is supposed to be integrated with written expression, but it is not always the case because teachers do not have time. S/he further adds:pff… there are some activities in the other module that I teach like TTU. That requires sometimes some reading for the students to do the task so I give them documents, real life documents like I said journal articles, they read it and then they do the activity, so they employ the information they got from the reading in the activity and I said, it is an activity that requires them to apply or create rather than understand or remember so we are kind of targeting the upper skills in Bloom's Taxonomy".

Question four: What kind of activities can raise students' intelligence and creativity in a reading session?

Teacher (A) said:" students like to be given short stories and then I ask them to give a different end of the story".

In addition, teacher (B) claimed:" Any kind of activities that put the learner into action. A learner-centered classroom environment is always beneficial for both leaners and teachers".

On the other hand, teacher (C) asserted:" As you know, the reading module is unfortunately not taught in our department. Otherwise, the students will learn the reading techniques and get advantage of them adequately".

Finally, teacher (D) confirmed:" there are some activities that help them develop certain skills… so trying to develop their intelligence? I don't know, but helping students rehearsal, acquire and develop their strategies that will help them get to their goals more efficiently and effectively, yet that can be done, but intelligence I don't know".

Question five: What do teachers do to avoid boredom in reading session?

Teachers' answers are summarized into the following points:

• Not providing stories that are beyond their cognitive level.

• Providing literary works that have moral values.

• Stories that have familiar vocabulary.

• Avoiding the traditional teaching method and accompanying students in their learning journey.

• Teachers have to propose short, entertaining and exciting chapters for the students to read with enthusiasm instead of boredom.

3.2. Discussion and interpretation

As mentioned in the previous chapters, the present study aims at investigating the connection between the reading skill and students' intellectual development, especially at the level of master one students at Saida University.

After having the opportunity to analyze the obtained data from the three various research tools, the researcher finally gets the chance to answer the following research questions:

1: How does reading affect students' intellectual skills?

2: To what extent does the teacher help students to read critically and effectively?

3: What kind of strategies enable students to develop critical thinking abilities?

Starting with the first research tool which is the observation, it tried to answer the second research question that this study is based on. At this level, the researcher tries to identify the teacher's role as a facilitator, a guide, and a corrector. In addition, the researcher also gets to reveal the connection between the teacher's role and if students can read critically and effectively.

It is worth noting that the observation played a tremendous role in gaining information about the role of the teacher in reading sessions; as a facilitator, a guide, a source of knowledge and a corrector; however it somehow failed at collecting data about the process of implementing some critical thinking abilities in students because most of them were not fully engaged in the process of reading despite teacher's efforts to encourage them and create a suitable atmosphere.

The results of the observation confirmed that the teacher plays a significant role as an authority in the classroom. Students have not yet reached the level of self- authorship and self-autonomy. The teacher is the guide as s/he manages the classroom and boost students to be more engaged by asking them questions and pointing at the lazy students to be a part of the discussions as the teacher tries to create a funny atmosphere in order to attract students' attention and motivate them. The latter can demonstrate a part of the authoritarian character of the teacher. Students' lack of enthusiasm in reading sessions is due to their lack of reading in their native language. Not being able to read and understand concepts in their own language may prevent some students from learning about the functions of the English language (Peregoy& Boyle, 2000).

Furthermore, the reason that students' failed to gain some critical thinking abilities in the first reading sessions is that they were still at the very first level of Perry's Model of intellectual development in which truth and knowledge are located at the presence of authorities only. Experiencing group work makes dualistic students feel like the teacher is no longer involved in the discussion (Barker, 2011).

Indeed, the findings of the classroom observation revealed that the teacher plays a major role as students rely deeply on the teacher's guidance, facilitation, and correction. The latter confirms the second part of the second research hypothesis which suggests that

the teacher is a guide, a facilitator, and a corrector. In addition, the researcher also noticed that students were not familiar with the teacher's methods and strategies in delivering the reading course. For example, they used to study using projected lectures (Power Point), not the type of lectures that contain an activity which requires analysis and digging deep to find the answer by trying to interpret what the teacher wants them to achieve (the lecture's objectives); hence, students were not productive.

However, after having time to adapt with the teacher's new methods that aim at extracting students' knowledge through the use of interesting activities and by motivating them, they started to be more engaging in the reading session; participating, discussing different topics, sharing various ideas, writing analytical paragraphs and communicating with the teacher. The latter is a proof that the teacher is able to implement some critical thinking abilities in students and this confirms the first part of the second research hypothesis.

Moving on to the second research tool which is the students' questionnaire. The latter helped the researcher to identify the impact of reading on students' critical thinking skills and tried to answer the first research question that states that there is a link between reading and students' critical abilities.

According to the questionnaire's findings, the vast majority of the students (81.48%) stated that they use their imagination while reading (see section 3, table 4) and only (18.52%) admitted the opposite. This indicates that reading texts allows the brain to be more productive and serve at improving students' critical thinking abilities. According to Davles (2012), one of the words that inspire people is imagination.

In fact, students do acknowledge the fact that reading involves critical thinking. The majority of the students (62.96%) agreed that it does while (37.04%) claimed that reading does not impact critical thinking (see section 01, table 03). Students who agree with the idea are aware that analysis and asking questions are two abilities of critical thinking which enable them to be self-directed and self-autonomous readers as cited by Flynn (1989) who views critical reading as an interactive process in which several levels of thoughts are used simultaneously (p. 664).

Besides, the vast majority of the participants (92.59%) claimed that they feel the need to comprehend the text after reading it while only a few (7.41%) disagreed with the latter (see section 03, figure 04). Text comprehension is a vital process in reading, because

it allows students to analyze what they read. By doing that, students' cognitive abilities work to obtain meaning as DepEd (2016) believes that the act of reading is fulfilled when the reader actually understands the things he or she reads.

Moreover, the informants(81.48%) stated that they agree with the statement which says that students use skimming and scanning while reading the text which implies that reading does improve students' critical thinking abilities; for example, by collecting the key words of the text and focusing on the main ideas. Indeed, the questionnaire's results declare that the first research hypothesis :" reading improve some of students' critical thinking skills" is accurate.

Overall, the teachers' interviews provided a solid amount of data; it acted as a test of the results gathered from the classroom observation and students' questionnaire. According to them, teachers play a major role in developing students' intellectual skills by using activities that involve reading comprehension questions and activities that put students into action. This way, students will be challenged to make efforts to comprehend the text in order to answer its questions; as a result, being able to develop critical thinking skills. Furthermore, undertaking group-work is a strategy used as claimed by teachers to enhance their students' abilities to be autonomous learners.

A teacher's knowledge and expertise in reading instruction are two important factors that can help improve the effectiveness of students' literacy skills (Darling-Hammond &Bransford, 2006; McCardle&Chhabra, 2004). In brief, the findings of the teachers' interview answer the third research question which states:" what kind of reading strategies enable students to develop critical thinking abilities?". As a conclusion, the findings also confirmed the hypothesis that suggested that students may develop strategies that serve in understanding the text without asking the teacher for assistance.

3.3. Recommendations

After identifying the encountered difficulties and shortcomings of the implementation of reading sessions, some recommendations are suggested below for students, teachers and policymakers.

For Students

Allowing the sufficient time to read at home whether in the native language or English

According to the findings, reading in the native language is beneficial for enhancing students' critical abilities and it paves the way for the chance to read in the English language as some students find it intimidating to read in English due to the new vocabulary and the difficult words. As a result, students have to read at home whether in their native language or the English language as reading improves their skills of analysis and comprehension ;hence, their critical thinking abilities.

For Teachers

Allowing students to select the content of the reading sessions

According to the questionnaire's findings, students complained about the repetition of the same topic in the reading sessions. In this light, teachers should give the chance to their students to choose books and short stories which interest them. By doing that, students will be more motivated and excited for reading session. In addition, the teacher will no longer be the classroom authority and this will develop students' self-authorship and self-autonomy.

Encouraging students to be engaged in classroom discussions

Students claimed that they like to make their own interpretation of the reading pieces. They love to make their own understanding of the things they read and reflect on the lessons they learn from the different literature. Thus, teachers ought to organize reading clubs once a weak in which students get to discuss and analyse what they read. The latter will enable them to be more creative and to develop their intellectual skills.

Improving teaching strategies

Considering the students' complains about the way teachers present the reading session, it is crucial for teachers to develop their teaching strategies. The tutors should think of effective methods and techniques which enable them to connect with their learners. For example, being an eclectic teacher will serve at increasing students' attention and interest in the reading session; hence, better outcomes.

For Policymakers

Increase the number of reading sessions

According to the teachers' interview, there is no reading module in the English department. It was supposed to be integrated with written comprehension module, but the lack of time prevented students from practicing their reading. Thus, policymakers have to come up with urgent solutions and integrate the reading session as an independent module. This will provide the students with time to practice their reading at the university since it is as much important as any other skill and student actually enjoy reading sessions.

Reducing the number of students in reading sessions

Considering the students' views regarding the crowded classrooms, the policymakers should really consider reducing the number of students in reading sessions. Dividing the classroom into two groups in which each group contains 15 students is the best solution for crowded classrooms because it encourages students' discussions by giving the chance to every learner to share his ideas, points of views and interpretations. In addition, studying at the language laboratories will also create a fun atmosphere for learning to take place and will motivate students to attend reading sessions.

3.4. Conclusion

This chapter attempts to answer the research questions through the analysis and discussion of the findings obtained from the three different research tools. To begin with, results have shown that reading sessions do develop some of students' intellectual skills. Second, the teacher plays a vital role as a guide, a corrector and a facilitator. Moreover, the findings revealed that reading enables students to read critically and develop critical thinking strategies. Finally, a set of possible recommendations were provided in order to make reading sessions more successful and fruitful.

General Conclusion

In teaching English as a foreign language, active learning is obligatory for university students who wish to achieve higher levels in education. Yet, they are still passive learners, especially after the development of technology which made the process of obtaining information easy; however, the data available online is not necessary accurate. For this reason, promoting students' intellectual skills is significant for students' to become independent learners. Educators suggest that the most crucial skill that serves in improving students' intellectual skills is the reading skill. The more they read, the more it is possible for them to gain knowledge about the world. The latter is a way to improve their mental abilities through analysis, interpretation and different ways of thinking.

The present study has focused on three main objectives. The main goal is to investigate the impact of the reading skill on students' intellectual development. Second, it focused on the type of reading strategies that can promote students' critical thinking abilities during reading sessions. Finally, it attempted, to reveal the teacher's role in implementing critical thinking abilities in students as well as his role as a guide, a corrector, and a facilitator.

The first chapter covered the theoretical background of the research topic. The first part highlighted the main conceptualizations of reading; its definitions, processes, essentials and a descriptive account of first year master students in reading sessions at Saida University. Furthermore, the second part adds information to the field of education through giving insight into the concept of Intellectual Development in reading sessions. The latter is devoted to the various aspects of Intellectual Development, imagination, trial and error, problem solving, creativity as well as decision making.

As for the methodology followed in undertaking this study, it was described in the second chapter. Given the complexity of the topic, it was important to use a triangulation approach to ensure the progress of this research. A mixed method approach was chosen to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from the target population who included first year master students of Didactics at Saida University. First, a classroom observation was conducted to investigate the teacher and students' behaviors and practices during the reading sessions. To obtain more details from students, a questionnaire was distributed to them after a few reading sessions. The last

step was to conduct interviews along with the teachers for the purpose of gaining more data about the type of activities which they use to promote their students critical abilities in addition to the limitations encountered in the present study.

The last chapter was concerned with the analysis and interpretation of results. First, the obtained data from the classroom observation was analyzed. In addition, the most relevant responses of students' questionnaire was analyzed and demonstrated in tables and figures. Moreover, teachers' feedbacks from the interviews were also analyzed. Last but not least, a general discussion of all the results was provided followed by some proposed recommendations concerning the use of reading session.

Through this study, it was discovered that the teacher plays a vital role in reading sessions as students rely deeply on his guidance, correction and facilitation which confirms that they are still at the very first stage of Perry's Model of Intellectual Development. In addition, when students got familiar with their teacher's methods and materials, it was easy for them to develop critical thinking abilities through engaging in several discussions and analyzing different pieces of literature. Furthermore, the results have revealed that reading does affect students' critical abilities by allowing the brain to be productive; the use of imagination, comprehension, analysis and interpretation. Through the teachers' interviews, it was concluded that they play a major role in developing students' intellectual skills by using activities that involve reading comprehension questions and activities that put students into action. This way, students will be challenged to make efforts to comprehend the text in order to answer its questions; as a result, being able to develop critical thinking skills.

Hence, the previously proposed hypotheses have been proved. It was assumed that reading improves some of students' critical skills. It was also estimated that the teacher implements some critical thinking abilities in students' and s/he is a guide, a facilitator and a corrector. Finally, it was expected that students may develop strategies which serve in understanding the text without asking the teacher for assistance.

Eventually, this research was an attempt to answer a limited number of questions. Therefore, apart from students' intellectual development, it is suggested that there are other significant dimensions regarding the implementation of reading sessions in teaching English as a foreign language at the university to be investigated in further research. Given the fact that the core of reading sessions is to read different literature, it

is important and useful for both teachers and students to be encouraged and used to the latter. Yet, it is advisable to take into account the previously mentioned recommendations in order to achieve more fruitful results. It is hopeful that this work will raise the University's awareness toward the impact of reading sessions on students' intellectual development.

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Appendices

Appendix (1): classroom participant observation

I choose to use participant observation since it aims to capture the content of the session.

Time	Activity	Behavior
11h	The teacher enters the classroom .	
11:05 h	The teacher warms up the students .	
11:15 h	The teacher introduces the reading course.	
11:30h	The teacher gives the students a task to accomplish.	
11:45 h	The teacher asks the students to share their works with their classmates.	
12:10 h	The teacher gives her/ him own interpretation of the task .	
12:20 h	The students along with the teacher discuss the knowledge provided by the teacher.	
12:30 h	The class is dismissed	

Appendix (2): students' questionnaire

Improving students' Intellectual Skills through Reading

The urge behind this questionnaire is to collect data which serves at investigating the connection between students' intellectual skills and reading. The information provided will be helpful for this study. It is anonymous and confidential, so please do not write your name on the paper.

Section one : Reading sessions

1-Do you enjoy reading sessions ?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes , what is interesting about them ?

……………………………………………………………...............

………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………..

2-Do you think that motivation is strongly linked to the type of activity in reading sessions ?

☐Yes

☐No

Other answers (clarify):

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

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

3-What is positive about reading sessions ?

……
……
……
……
……
……
…………..

4-Do you feel that reading sessions are helpful for enhancing your thinking abilities?

☐Yes

☐No

If yes, how ?..

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

5-In your opinion , what are the things you wish to change about reading sessions ?

……
……………………………………………………
……
………………………………………………..
……
………………………………………………..
……
………………………………………………..

6- Do you think that reading involves critical thinking ?

☐Yes

☐No

If yes, explain :

………

………………………

………

………………………………………….

………

………………………………………..

Section two: Reading strategies

1-How often do you read at home ?

_____ Always

_____ Usually

_____ Sometimes

_____ Almost never

_____ Never

2- Do you agree or disagree on the following statement ?" skimming and scanning are crucial for a good comprehension of the text ".

_____ 1 Agree

_____ 2 Disagree

3-How do you read ?

☐ I highlight key words and main ideas

☐ I take notes

☐ I summarize

☐ I use dictionaries to check new vocabulary

Others :

……
………………………………………………….

……
…………………………………………………..

……
…………………………………………………..

Section three: Students' intellectual development

1-Do you use your imagination while reading ?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2-Do you feel the need to comprehend the text ?

☐ Yes

☐ No

3-When the reading session is over ,how long does it take for you to forget the content ?

_____ Right after the class is over

_____ Two hours after the end of the class

_____ When arriving home

_____ Until the next reading session

4-Do you think that reading is linked to creativity ?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, how is that ?

……
…………………………

……
…………………………………………………..

……
…………………………………………………….

5-How many times do you read the text until you fully understand it ?

_____ once

_____ twice

_____ three times

_____ four times

_____ five times

Section five : Teacher's job

1-Do you think that a good warm up by the teacher is beneficial for a successful reading session ?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2-Do you believe in group work ?

☐ Yes

☐ No

3-Does motivation increase your focus on the activity ?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes , what are the thing that motivate you ?

4-When facing a problem understanding the text , who do you ask for clarification ?

_____ Your teacher

_____ Your friends

_____ You phone (GOOGLE)

Other answers:

………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………..

………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………….

Appendix (3): Teachers' interview

The aim of this interview is to reveal the teacher's feedback about the reading sessions and how students react to them.

1- What are the main strategies that teachers adopt in order to extract students' critical thinking/ cognitive abilities in reading sessions?
2- To what extent students value reading? Do you think they are aware of the benefits of the reading skill on their academic improvement?
3- Do you implement some critical thinking activities after reading sessions? Do students have positive attitudes toward such activities?
4- What kind of activities can raise students' intelligence and creativity in a reading session?
5- What do teachers do to avoid boredom in reading sessions?