Mohamed Khider University of Biskra
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of Foreign Languages

MASTER DISSERTATION

Letters and Foreign Languages
English Language
Sciences of the language

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Submitted and Defended by:

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The Effect of Teaching Vocabulary in Improving EFL Learner' Reading Comprehension.
A Case Study of First Year LMD Students of English at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra

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Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages as Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Sciences of Language.

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Academic Year : 2018 - 2019

Dedication

I dedicate this modest work to my wonderful parents.

Thank you for your support and your endless love.

To my dearest sisters and brothers.

To my fiancé for his unlimited support and encouragements to finish this work.

To my best friends Hadjer and Wassila

To all my dearest teachers and students of English

To all my friends with whom I shared the university life with its lights and shadows.

To all who helped and encouraged me.

My deepest gratitude for their support and encouragements.

Acknowledgements

Abstract

Vocabulary is an important aspect of a language and an effective factor in enhancing the reading comprehension. The present study is an attempt to investigate the effect of teaching vocabulary in improving EFL students' reading comprehension. EFL First year university students generally come with a poor vocabulary stock which hinders their ability to understand texts. To test the hypothesis if EFL learners are effectively taught vocabulary in class, their reading comprehension will improve. So, in order to confirm this hypothesis, a descriptive method has been used which feeds the nature of the our work to conduct this study and two questionnaires have been designed to gather data. One was handed to a sample of 50 first year LMD students chosen randomly and the other was given to 6 teachers of different modules at the division of English at Biskra University during the academic year 2018/2019. This thesis was divided into two main parts: a Theoretical part that included two chapters in which we made a general overview on reading comprehension and some other important related elements. We also discussed the different aspects of vocabulary and gave a detailed description of the difficulties that EFL learners face during their learning process. The practical part, on the other hand, displayed the analysis of the questionnaires. Findings revealed that both learners and teachers consider vocabulary an important factor in enhancing the reading comprehension. Moreover, teachers showed their awareness of their learners' difficulties to comprehend texts and suggested several strategies to teach vocabulary. In essence, raising students' awareness of the importance of teaching vocabulary is highly recommended since it is a condition for reading comprehension and the learning process as a whole.

Keywords: Teaching Vocabulary, Reading Comprehension, EFL Students.

List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

LMD: License Master Doctorate

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

FL: Foreign Language

et al.: and others

ibid: Ibiden (The same previous source)

P. : Page

Q: Question

%: Percent

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General

Introduction

Introduction

English plays a vital role in global communication. It is considered as one of the most important languages in the world because it is used in many fields of life. Today, mastering the English language is clearly needed by most people especially EFL learners because, for them, it is a medium of interaction and learning. To learn English language, the four skills are needed: Listening, speaking, reading and writing in order to communicate successfully. One of the common factors that play an important role in practicing these skills is vocabulary. Generally, EFL learners have a lot of difficulties in terms of vocabulary learning and use especially while reading because understanding the vocabulary used in a text is a key to efficient reading comprehension.

In fact, a learner acquires rich vocabulary only through experiencing them. Therefore, the relationship between vocabulary and reading has been a well established notion among EFL teachers and language teaching theoreticians. There is no doubt that reading in English and the vocabulary knowledge of English as a foreign language learners are directly related to each other. There are a lot of techniques and methods that can improve the reading comprehension; one of these is teaching vocabulary. For learners, teaching vocabulary is very helpful to improve their reading comprehension.

This research work tries to shed the light on the relationship that exists between vocabulary learning and reading comprehension. Its aim is to investigate the importance of teaching vocabulary to EFL learners in order to improve their reading comprehension.

1. Statement of the Problem

To acquire a language, the four skills are needed, and reading plays a central role in our educational system. Also, it is one of the most important skills in the language learning among the four language skills.

However, one of the major obstacles EFL learners encounter in reading in general and in reading comprehension in particular is their poor vocabulary stock. This issue was particularly observed with first year EFL learners at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra who faced problems to understand some vocabulary (words, expressions, etc) used in written texts when they come to read them.

Therefore, this study attempted to investigate the importance of teaching vocabulary to improve EFL learners' reading comprehension. Hence, it was necessary to enhance comprehension, more particularly through adopting a number of techniques in teaching vocabulary in class.

2. Research Questions

In this study we attempted to answer following questions:

- Why do students difficulties to comprehend writing texts?
- Does learners' poor vocabulary background have a negative influence on reading comprehension of English?
- How can teaching vocabulary enhance EFL learners' reading comprehension?

3.   Research Hypothesis

If EFL learners are effectively taught vocabulary in class, their reading comprehension will be improved.

4. Aim of the Study

This study aimed to investigate the role or the effect of teaching vocabulary in enhancing learners' reading comprehension. More specifically, this work aimed to shed light on the most common and effective ways to teach English vocabulary.

5. Significance of the Study

This work was significant for both teachers and learners of English as it tried to contribute to the enhancement of reading comprehension through vocabulary teaching. Moreover, it was helpful because it suggested some effective techniques to teach vocabulary in an EFL classroom. In addition, this study aimed to raise the awareness of students as well as teachers towards learning and teaching vocabulary.

6. Research Methodology

6.1.   Research Method

This research work was mainly built on the descriptive method as an appropriate way to conduct this study and gather data. More specifically, it helped to describe the effectiveness of teaching vocabulary to improving reading comprehension in an EFL classroom.

6.2. Population and Sampling

The present study dealt with first year LMD English at Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra in the academic year 2018/2019. The whole population consisted of 675 divided into 15 groups of 45 students in each. We have chosen first year because of their poor vocabulary background. Moreover, the aim was to see the extent to which students were able to make a link between vocabulary and reading. From the whole population, we have chosen randomly a sample of 50 students.

In addition, a sample of 6 teachers of different modules has been selected to gather their opinions, attitude and experience about the topic under investigation.

6.3. Data gathering Tools

Concerning the data collection used in this study, we directed two questionnaires in order to collect a considerable amount of data. One questionnaire was designed to EFL teachers in the English division of Mohamed Kheider University in order to gather their opinions about teaching vocabulary and its effect on first year EFL reading comprehension. Moreover, they were the best source of investigation considering their experience in the field of teaching. The aim was to know if they implement the suitable techniques of teaching vocabulary in order to improve reading comprehension.

The second questionnaire was directed to a sample of first year LMD students of English in order to find out their difficulties in reading as well as to know their awareness concerning the importance of teaching vocabulary and the strategies used. It was distributed to our sample of 50 students.

7. **Limitations of the Study**

This current study was limited to first year LMD students of English at Mohamed Kheider University. More specifically, it was restricted to a representative sample of 50 students chosen randomly as well as to a sample of six teachers. In addition, the research was limited in terms of time and materials. Moreover, it was conducted to see the effect of teaching vocabulary as a technique to improve EFL reading comprehension in the classroom and did not deal with the other language skills. We had also limited tools, so we have selected the questionnaire as a suitable tool to collect data from both samples.

Chapter One

An Overview on Reading Comprehension

Chapter One

General Overview on Reading Comprehension

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Introduction

In the domain of teaching and learning processes, the reading skill is considered very significant to learn; it helps learners to open the doors of knowledge and enriches them with a wide range of information. Therefore, in general, people read in order to gain information that serves their needs. They usually read newspapers, maps, instruction manuals, etc. Academically, reading is an essential part of the learning process; it enables students to enhance their language proficiency in general and expands their cultural features in particular. It is believed that the purpose of reading determine the way people read. Usually, learners read to extract the information they need and understand it effectively, which is a basic principle that reading comprehension provides.

In this initial chapter, we shed the light on some various definitions of some researchers about reading and reading comprehension and their interpretation of the reading process. Then, we talk about its components, models, purposes and types of reading in general and its principles in particular. Finally, we conclude the chapter by speaking about how to improve reading comprehension.

1.1. Definition of Reading

Different definitions have been put to describe reading in different ways. Studies affirm that children live in an environment that encourages them to read and display a great competence in different aspects of the English language. Grabe & Stoller (2002: 9) claim, "Reading is the ability to draw meaning from the printed page and interpret this information appropriately." So when the reader begins to read, he/she actually decodes words and tries to reach the intended meaning; in other words, the reading process begins with a visual activity and ends with logical understanding. In a similar point of view, Oakhill et al (2015) see reading as the ability to understand a written text (production) in which comprehension is the ultimate goal. Another definition has been set by Richard

(2012: 01) who described, "Reading is a process that involves interaction between a reader and a text."

Also, Vacca et al (2000: 168) suggest, "Reading is process that takes place inside the mind; it is not directly observable or measurable through any one instrument or procedure."

In addition, Baudoin et al (1994) define reading as follow, "Reading is a complex activity that involves both word recognition and the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language; and comprehension, the process of making sense words, sentences and connected paragraphs".

From those points of view, it is considered that reading is the interaction that occurs between the reader and the written text. It means that reading requires the integration of the reader's background knowledge about the production. Moreover, reading is seen as totally an individual, cognitive task in which the readers are responsible of its size. Indeed, when they start to read, actually they decode words and try to reach the intended meaning; in other words, the reading process starts with a visual activity and ends with clear comprehension.

1.2. Definition of Reading Comprehension

It considered that the process of reading comprehension is the ultimate aim of reading. According to Snow (2002: 07), "reading comprehension is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction, and involvement with written language. It consists of three elements: the reader, the text, and the activity or purpose for reading." Reading Comprehension process occurs when the reader recognizes the meaning in which he/she activates his/her schemata (last experiences), and uses his/her cognitive abilities to filter and organize the obtained information. The good readers do not interpret unless they build new bridges and draw connections between the incoming information and

pre-existing knowledge. In addition, Westwood (2001: 19) defines reading comprehension as "a complex intellectual process of involving a number of abilities." In the same path, Moreillon (2007) sees reading comprehension as the integration and organization of new knowledge with the prior knowledge. It means that reading comprehension is linked to the sources of information people met throughout life; in other words, when the students read a news paper, a book or open a link to website, they are actually activating their background information. We developed this mental representation through years of meeting and greeting of new knowledge, this skill is what we already know, think and believe about the topics we are dealing with. Furthermore, Harmer (2007: 214) states, "if the reader then goes on to buy the news paper he or she will use all this pre-existing knowledge to predict the relevant article's contents both before and during the reading…"

Moreover, Moreillon (2007: 19) affirms, "Like the elephant's tail, background knowledge is always behind us backing up our comprehension." Therefore, reading comprehension is the ultimate aim of reading.

Also, Pang et al (2003) see, "reading comprehension as an active process a reader made to construct meaning from a text. This process consists of using an interaction between prior knowledge and drawing inferences from the different words and expressions, in order to comprehend information, ideas and viewpoints."

Hancock (1998: 69) believes, "comprehension involves understanding the vocabulary, seeing relationships among words and concepts, organizing ideas, recognizing the author's purpose, evaluating the context, and making judgments."

1.3. Components of Reading

In the domain of reading, there are two main components: Decoding words and language comprehension (linguistic comprehension). Therefore, reading ability requires the integration of both components. If one of them is not achievable, the reading ability

will not be achieved as well. In this view, Oakhill et al (2015: 03) claim, "if a child cannot read any words or if a child does not have any language comprehension skills, he/she cannot read." In addition, Sadoski (2004) considers language comprehension as all about the reader's ability to interpret the meaning of the words and the writer's intention.

Scarborough (2001) illustrates a figure that explains the reading components:
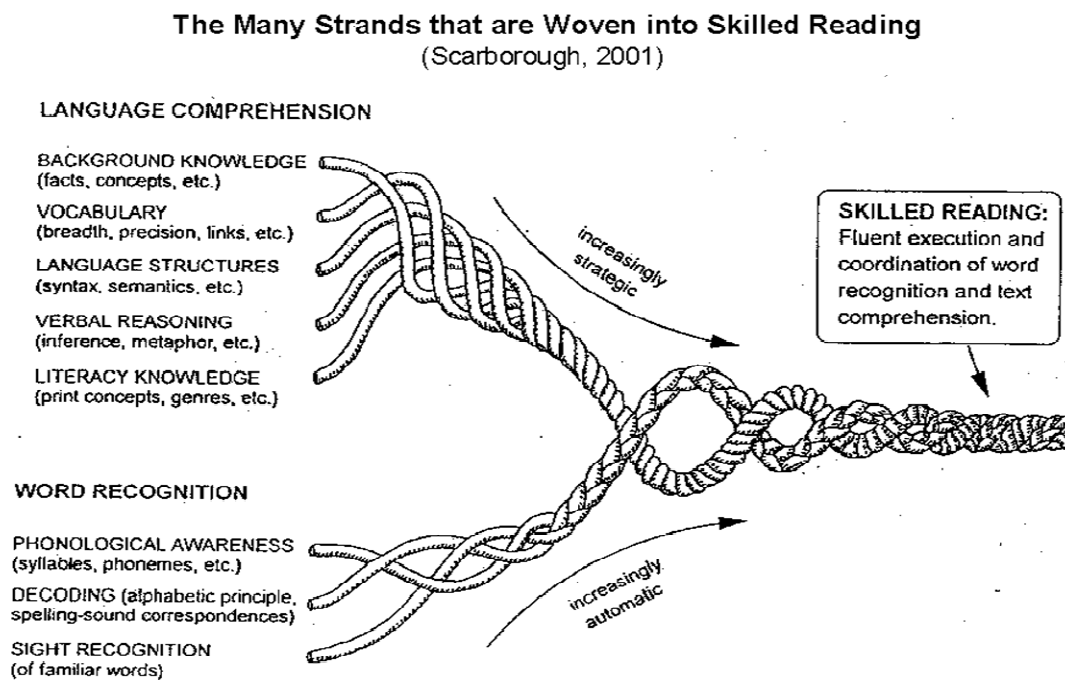
Figure 1: The many strands that are woven into skilled reading (Scarborough, 2001, adapted from family language literacy.blogspot.com)

As shown in the figure, reading skill is related more with language comprehension rather than word recognition because the reader most of the time during reading searches to comprehend the text through testing his /her vocabulary knowledge to understand the main idea.

Decoding words is the ability of understanding and recognizing each word in isolation and within context. Also, it converts printed words to spoken words. So, decoding as the level of words recognition is an important component to master reading ability.

Furthermore, language comprehension is a fundamental component of reading ability as well as decoding, so language comprehension deals with the production of thoughts and information that the printed words intended to convey.

On the other hand, Goodman (1994) suggests three components for comprehension that can be identified, "the reader, the text and the activity". In fact, there is an active interrelationship between these three elements to achieve successful understanding. The first element in the process of reading comprehension is the reader who uses his/her cognitive capacities, motivation, and different kinds of knowledge. The reader "constructs different representations of the text that are important for comprehension" (ibid). The second component is the text. It has a surface encoding which refers to the words in the text, representations of meaning, and models of mental representations implanted in the passage. A passage may be easy or difficult. These two notions depend on the content of the text, the vocabulary used, linguistic and discourse structure, and genre. The final component is the activity. The reading activity is performed to achieve a particular purpose. It is influenced by a number of motivational factors such as interest. While performing this activity, the reader uses some linguistic and semantic process besides decoding.

1.4. Effective Reading Strategies

Proficient readers use different reading strategies in order to understand the meaning of the written text. According to Cohen (1986), a reading strategy is the intellectual process that the readers use intentionally to get a certain goal before starting reading. In addition, Grellet (1981) affirms that reading strategies play a significant role of creating efficient readers since these techniques limit the readers' time by neglecting non-essential data and controlling his/her reading speed. Consequently, effective reading strategies should be adopted for successive reading and time gain.

Many researchers have mentioned the importance of using these strategies to read especially for those who suffer from a lack of knowledge due to reading paucity or their negative attitude towards reading comprehension. Four main strategies have been selected:

1.4.1. Skimming

Skimming is a useful and important technique that aims to extract general points of information. At this context, Grellet (1981) says that skimming is a technique that the reader uses to take an overall view about the written text and identify the writer's intention. West (2000: 12) describes the process as follows, "You let your eye run over it rather like throwing a flat stone onto a lack, so that it just skims the surface."

Slaght & Harben (2009) attribute three main aims to skimming:

- Knowing the topic of the written text

- Knowing the most important idea that the writer has emphasized on this text

- Determining how much the text is beneficial to the reader's aim.

In fact, the process of skimming deals with the most important and useful features that the readers work on to achieve their aims such as the title of the text, the upshot presented by the writer, the first paragraph, the main ideas, and the topic sentences in every single paragraph.

1.4.2. Scanning

Scanning is a strategy used by the reader in order to know specific information about the written text. According to Grellet (1981), "scanning is to locate precise information without following the structure of the lines only moving the eyes across the text until the reader find his gist. This information could be a name, a date or more than that." So, scanning is more limited than skimming as the reader is restrained to precise information which is relevant to the aim.

Similarly, Slaght & Harbben (2009: 255) affirm,

> Scanning is what the reader uses to search for particular and significant information for his own purpose. it involves words, figures, and symbols. Also while scanning, the information is already known by the reader concerning the form of the information that he/she is looking for in few parts of the written text that serve his/her need

Therefore, this process looks for the significant and important information.

1.4.3. Predicting

Predicting is an important skill that is considered to be a basis of all the strategies. It focuses to predict what is coming next according to three factors: Grammatical, logical and cultural guides. Grellet (1981) defines it as "A practice to develop predicting skill; by giving the students incomplete passages and asking them to predict what is coming next in a slowly way." In the same path, Slaght & Harbben (2009) affirm, "predicting is the use of background knowledge before we start reading a topic." It means that what the students have learned about it in order to guess what is coming next and to know the kind of information they will have. Moreover, it is to know how much it is useful to the aim of reading.

1.4.4. Inference

Inference, according to Grellet (1981) is

> to think ahead. It is indispensable strategy that allows discovering the meaning of the words that are unknown based on three factors: logical, syntactic, and cultural factor. It would be not good for the learners to explain difficult words in advance when they are dealing with new text, teachers should encourage their students to make efforts and guess their meaning by their own to train the inference skill.

Furthermore, Slaght & Harbben (2009) state, "inference is a strategy that the readers use to   assume the writer's intention. Usually, the writers push the readers to think about implicit meaning".

To conclude with, interference is a step that facilitate to the reader to get the deeper meaning of the writer and understand more the text.

1.4.5. Previewing

The process of previewing is a strategy that the readers use to pick up the information they want through the table of contents, the paragraphs' headlines and the preface. Previewing is considered to be a very useful study skill to students. It means that just in a few minutes, the reader takes all the information he/she wants by looking to the table of contents to locate the page where the missing data is found. (Grellet, 1981).

All in all, reading strategies are very important to the reader in order to understand the written material; therefore, the good reader applies it because he/she knows the significant role that those strategies play in reading comprehension.

1.5. The Purpose for Reading

Before beginning to read, it is quite important to know the purpose of reading; i.e., why we read. Identifying the purpose greatly enhances the effectiveness of the reading and makes learners adopt a style of reading that suits this purpose.

According to Grabe (2009: 7), "when we read for different purposes, we engage in many types of reading particularly in academic setting." Alderson (2000) suggests that each reader is different from the other according to the purpose of reading itself: If the reader aims to detect the main idea of the text, he/she will neglect all the details he/she meets. It would be a completely different purpose if another reader wants to find the key information. Alderson (2000: 50) also claims, "the reason you are reading a text will influence the way you read it, the skills you require or use, and the ultimate understanding and recall you have of the text."

Teachers have to enlighten students about the provided purposes especially for EFL settings to benefit all advantages of reading; Nuttal (1982: 4) reported, "A teacher has to

draw students' attention to the sort of purposes for which they might conceivably find foreign language reading useful."

Whatever the setting is (educational, professional or occupational) and the way we read, both are affected by the purpose we read for. Therefore, students read a text to understand it, to construct meaning of what is understood and to put this understanding to use. For that, Stoller & Grabe (2002) suggest four purposes for reading. They are summarized in the following points:

1.5.1. Reading to search

This technique is used by most of the readers. Its purpose is typically used to search for simple and specific information about a topic. This task could be a word, a date or a name. Furthermore, reading to search demands the skimming strategy as to search for the general idea of the text.

1.5.2. Reading to learn from text

This process is used when the reader reads a considerable amount of written materials in a slow way that helps to remember. So, this purpose is based according to the persons' need and it demands three abilities: 1) The ability to recall the most important and detailed ideas in the text and make elaboration between them, 2) Realize and construct rhetorical frames that order the information of the text, 3) The ability to coordinate the readers' pre knowledge to the incoming information of the text.

As an example, Alderson (2000: 50-51) says, "Reading a short story for pleasure at bedtime is likely to be different in all three aspects process, product and recall-from reading a history text for an examination the next morning." So, it is clearly noticed that reading to learn from text is totally related to the reader's need of knowledge.

1.5.3. Reading to Integrate Information

According to Stoller & Grabe (2002),

In order to integrate information through reading is to rebuild your prior-knowledge reading by reading different sources of information in which the reader filters the incoming information and reviews his/her background knowledge. Then the reader has to make a decision; whether the new information is ready to be integrated and how to integrate it as well according to his/her goal of reading. For example, we read to integrate information for better writing.

In short, reading to integrate information requires three abilities: to select, to critic and to combine the information of the written materials. These academic abilities are needed to successfully integrate information.

1.5.4. Reading for general comprehension

According to Stoller & Grabe (2002), this kind is one of the most complex reading task because reading for general comprehension is a process that cannot be improved only if several skills are accomplished. Here, the reader has to be fluent, confident, and a very well former of the general idea that the writer implicitly introduced in the text. This idea cannot be found provided that the reader interprets the intended meaning of the main ideas. So, it is definitely clear enough to say that reading for general comprehension is a difficult reading task to do.

As a conclusion, we can say that setting a purpose for reading helps keep students focused and engaged while reading so that to reinforce their comprehension. Students learn how to set goals for themselves and adopt specific strategies/style for an effective reading process.

1.6.   Models of Reading

The reading process has many useful models and theories suggested by researchers over the last twenty years and which made reading comprehension an easy task to do. These

models enable readers to grasp the intended meaning of the printed materials. In fact, the main aim of models is to translate written texts into meaning.

Three common models are selected:

1.6.1. Bottom-up model

In this model, the reader should translate the printed letters into sounds to construct the meaning of the text. Alderson (2000: 111) assumes,

> The bottom-up model is referred to the behaviorism theory in the 1940s and 1950s in which leads the reader is considered to be passive not active, because it imposes him/her to follow a system that focuses on decoding a series of written, phonemic, syntactical, semantic aspect until he/she reaches the meaning of the text.

In the same path, Harmer (2001: 90) states, "bottom-up model is when the reader emphasizes on every single letter, word, and sentence to accomplish the meaning of the text by; collecting the text's detailed parts to reach the whole meaning that is intended by the writer". It is means that the reader has to understand the text in details in order to get the deeper meaning and main ideas of the text.

Stoller & Grabe (2002) affirm that bottom-up model follows a mechanical way of translation, in other words; this model requires a high level of knowledge through building the word letter by letter, the sentence word by word and the text sentence by sentence following the linear of the text. This theory considered to be a traditional view that has supporters and rejecters. In this model the reader must show his /her high level in reading through explain each word or sentence or phrase to get the general thoughts of the written material.

1.6.2. Top-down models

Hedge (2000) defines top down models as "those models that have used to describe the application of prior knowledge to working on the meaning of a text." In addition, Top-down models is a view that strengthens the relation between the reader's expectations and

last-experiences with the writer's intention. These set of expectations and prior-knowledge are used to process information to reach the writers' intended meaning. The expectations (schemata) that the readers have are used as a mechanism to filter the incoming information based on readers' background knowledge. (Stoller & Grabe, 2002)

In similar, Alderson (2000: 112) states, "most of the models that focus on the significance of the background knowledge that a reader holds while reading are called schema-theoretic models. Those models are based on the activation of previous information to work as a filter to the new data. Top-down model demands schemata activation by using the maximum of past experiences and minimal written information".

This kind of model is concerned with the interaction that occurs while reading between the reader and the text in which he/she processes information and builds knowledge.

1.6.3. The Interactive model

Stoller & Grabe (2002) assumes that the reading process demands top-down view formulating suppositions and building up the meaning of the text through decoding letters and words. Thus, the interactive model allows readers to be active and act both as a constructer of meaning, and as an identifier of letters. (Alderson, 2000: 112)

In addition, Stanovitch (1980) affirms, "An interaction model of reading appears to provide a more accurate conceptualization of reading performance than do strictly top down and bottom up model. They provide a better account of the existing data or the use of orthographic structure and sentence context by poor and good readers."

This kind of model synthesizes the valid insights of both bottom-up and top-down models. In other words, it joins the main idea of bottom-up model of decoding letters and words to top-down model's main idea of using past experiences for prediction and filtering the incoming information.

To conclude with, there are just those three models that can help the reader to understand the exact meaning of the text and get its main ideas.

1.7. Extensive Reading Vs Intensive Reading: Principals and Benefits.

Extensive reading is an essential approach to language teaching in which the learners are exposed to a large amount of written materials. This kind of reading helps the student to read whatever they want independently. Bamford & Day (2004: 03) argue, "Extensive reading encourages reading for pleasure and information rather than 100 percent comprehension, learners aim only for sufficient understanding to achieve their reading purpose." Moreover Davis (1995) states, " Any ESL, EFL, or L1 classroom will be the poorer for the lack for an extensive reading program of some kind, and will be unable to promote its pupils' language develop in all aspects as effectively as if such a program were present." (Cited in Bamford & Day, 2004: 01).

The concept of extensive reading is not a new idea; it goes back to the 1920s thanks to the work of Harold Palmer. Many recent studies asserted the link between extensive reading and language proficiency in general and vocabulary richness in particular. Bamford & Day (2004:01) claim, "good things happen to students who read a great deal in the new language. Research studies show they become better and more confident readers they write better, their listening and speaking abilities improve, and their vocabularies get richer." The long engagement of reading is the hallmark of vocabulary enlargement, reading and speaking fluency, cultural features expansion, reading comprehension improvement, and writing effectiveness. In other words, extensive reading provides a lot of benefits in which the learners read and speak fluently, communicate appropriately, and write effectively. All in all, extensive reading provides positive attitude towards reading comprehension and creates proficient learners.

On the other hand, intensive reading focuses on the arguments and supporting details of the written materials, as Harmer (2007) affirms, "the term intensive reading refers to the detailed focus on the construction of reading texts." In addition, Hedge (2000) suggests,

"intensive reading involves looking carefully at a text, as a solicitor that would study the precise wording of legal document."

All in all, this type of accurate reading for detailed understanding can be used for bookkeeping report, an insurance claim, a contract, etc. Furthermore, intensive reading involves the details of reading the written materials; therefore, it aims at understanding the text and learning the language features through a deliberate focus on these items. Palmer (1921), argues "intensive reading means that the readers take a text, study it line by line, and refer at very moment to the dictionary about the grammar of the text itself.

For a successful intensive reading, Nation (2009) puts seven procedures to follow: 1) Overview (surveying or skimming), 2) Planning purposes (Thinking about the purpose of reading before beginning), 3) Questions (Asking or making questions about the reading), 4) Reading (Line-by-line reading, Careful/thoughtful reading), 5) Summarizing (Reflection, summary, main idea), 6) Testing (Fill-in-the-blanks, Self-test, after paragraph),

7) Understanding (Reviewing and checking understanding).

To end with, intensive reading mainly deals with 'accuracy' which means reading for a high degree of comprehension and retention over a long period of time ,it helps to develop reading skills and it is a method based on a variety of techniques such as comprehension, sound-spelling relations, vocabulary, cohesion, information structure, genre features, and strategies.

1.8.   Improving Reading Comprehension

Readers have different reasons and techniques to read, and according to the interest of the readers they select what they want to read for better comprehension of the text. For example, in order to improve reading comprehension, there are a lot of strategies that can facilitate to the reader to comprehend the meaning becoming purposeful, active readers who control of their own reading comprehension.

➢ **Comprehension monitoring**

Salkind (2008) defines comprehension monitoring as a strategy in which readers can learn how to understand the meaning when they reading. It teaches students to be aware of what they do understand, to identify problems when comprehension breaks down and takes steps to solve their comprehension problem.

➢ **Cooperative learning**

Salkind (2008) cooperative learning is a strategy in which readers read together to learn from one another. Students may work together on an endive problem or individually on components, sharing the results to complete the understanding and get the exact meaning.

➢ **Summarizing**

This type focus on the ability of readers to put together or synthesize information in a text to explain in their own words what the text is about; i. e., the general ideas of the materials. And this leads readers to be able to summarize the contents in one or two sentences, without looking at the text (Lee, 2005). This means that the reader has to highlight the essential ideas and thoughts that integrate or relate the other ideas or meanings of the text into a coherent whole.

➢ **Understanding vocabulary**

Vocabulary is one of the most important strategies of effective reading. Therefore, content of the text is packed with concepts and technical vocabulary that students must understand if they want to be successful readers and learners, so vocabulary is designed to help students learn content-specific terminology. Moreover, the use of vocabulary increases depth and breadth of word knowledge resulting in greater comprehension of the written materials.

Conclusion

Nowadays, English language has received the whole attention of the world as a global means of communication in which the researchers started to consider the reading skill as an essential part of learning this language, especially in academic settings. Therefore, many teaching specialists have evidenced the importance of using reading strategies to get all the benefits of reading. Recently, reading comprehension has received wide interest and many studies proved its effectiveness in enhancing the learners' proficiency in general. Moreover, it provides positive attitude towards reading and the long exposure to large amount of written material allows the learner to meet a lot of new words. All in all, reading comprehension is one of the most significant means of acquiring and promoting learners' English as foreign/second language.

Chapter Two

General Overview on

Vocabulary

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Introduction

Vocabulary has an important role in language learning and it recently became a center of language teaching and learning as Morgan & Rinvolcuri (2004: 05) claim, "teachers seemed keen to teach grammar and pronunciation, but learning words-particular words that they need in everyday life-came a very poor third." Reading or listening comprehension are a tedious tasks in case learners meet a lot of unfamiliar words; therefore, students may lose the passion of reading/listening if they cannot interpret the intended meanings. However, students should not just acquire vocabulary incidentally, but they have to learn an adequate number of words to communicate appropriately.

In the present chapter, we shed the light on the definition as well as on the main principals of teaching vocabulary. In addition, we will look at certain effective strategies for learning vocabulary which are important to enlarge the foreign language learners' vocabulary knowledge.

2.1. Definition of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is one of the main factors that obscure reading comprehension. Therefore vocabulary is one of the most significant components in learning and teaching a foreign language.

Graves (2000, as cited in Mukoroli, 2011) defines vocabulary as "the entire stock of words belonging to a branch of knowledge or known by an individual." He adds, "the lexicon of a language is its vocabulary which includes words and expressions."

According to Vacca et al (2000: 256), "vocabulary is to suggest that it represents the breadth and the depth of all the words we know, the words we use, recognize, and respond to in meaningful acts of communication." In addition Ur (1999: 60) states, "Vocabulary can be defined roughly, as the words teachers teach in the foreign language." So, Vocabulary represents the breadth and the depth of all the words we know, the words we

use, recognize, and respond in meaningful acts of communication. it is all about the meaningful words we speak and write at different context.

Oxford Dictionary (2005) defines vocabulary as the total number of words that build up a language. Longman dictionary (1995), on the other hand, defines vocabulary as the different views about how we use vocabulary, and how an individual speaker knows, learns, and uses words. In the same path, Brown (1995: 66) assumes, "vocabulary is a list of words in a language in which every speaker might use". To end with, Hatch & Brown (1995) consider vocabulary as a list or set of words of a particular language that individuals speak of a language.

From these different definitions, we can notice that the word vocabulary is all about the meaningful words we speak and write at different contexts.

2.2. Knowing Words

In fact, vocabulary consists mainly of words; acquiring new words is a process that never stops during learning career. "A word is the basic of vocabulary knowledge" (Vacca et al, 2000). Moreover, Nagy & Scott (2000) focused on the necessity to know words in order to know their use; they argued, "Knowing a word means being able to do things with it: recognize it in connected speech or in print, to access its meaning, to pronounce it, and to be able to do these things within a fraction of a second" (cited in Vacca et al, 2000: 253).

Richards (1976, cited in Read, 2002: 25-27) puts principles focused on the different aspects of knowing a word:

- To know a word means knowing the degree of its frequency in speech or writing. Also, it is worthy to know the words that can be related or associated with it.
- Knowing the use of this word according to variation of function and situations.
- Knowing the syntactic behavior associated with the word.

- Knowing its basic form and the derivations that can be created from this form.

- Knowing the network of associations between that word and other words in the language, that may contain such associative links, for instance; synonymy, antonym

- Knowing its semantic value.

- Knowing the many of the various meanings associated with words.

In other words; learning a word requires the probability to get the meaning of the word in case of reading or listening, and to learn a word is being able to know its use and function in all the contexts. Also learning a word provides knowing the formation of the word syntactically in different cases. Moreover, learning a word entails knowing the equivalent words in the other languages and to know its multiple meaning in different situations as well.

In different way, Nation (2001: 27) points to three significant aspects that help learners know words and which teachers need to consider when teaching vocabulary: Form, meaning and use. He summarized all the aspects of knowing a word in the following table:

R= receptive, P= productive

Form	Spoken	R	What does the word sound like?
		P	How is the word pronounced?
	Written	R	Written R What does the word look like?
		P	How is the word written and spelled?
	Word parts	R	What parts are recognizable in this word?
		P	What word parts are needed to express the meaning?
Meaning	Form and meaning	R	What meaning does this word form signal?
		P	What word form can be used to express this meaning?
	Concepts and referents	R	What is included in the concept?
		P	What items can the concept refer to?

	Association	R	What other words does this make us think of?
		p	What other words could we use instead of this one?
Use	Grammatical functions	R	In what patterns does the word occur?
		P	In what pattern must we use this word?
	Collocations	R	What words or types of words occur with this one?
		P	What words or types of words must we use with this one?
	Constraints in use	P	Where, when, and how often would we expect to meet
		p	Where, when, and how often can we use this word?

Table 1: What is involved in knowing a word? (Nation, 2001 adopted from Daller et al, 2007:5)

The table above shows that the main objective of pre-teaching is to get some vocabulary problems away before the student meet them in the written materials, so typically teachers have to bear in mind that they would give some attention to meaning to some aspects of form such as pronunciation , spelling or word part and how the word is used.

2.3. Difficulties in learning vocabulary

Many students think that coming across new vocabulary may obscure their reading interpretation. This is why; they have to know the causes that make these new words difficult to understand it during reading.

In this context, Nuttall (1982: 76-79) stated that there are many factors that make words hard to understand and classified them in seven types:

2.3.1. Idioms   We mean by idioms a particular number of words that students face to understand the meanings of them from single words but from the complete group of words. Therefore, students have to be trained in the use of this kind of words. For example:

- ' show me your colures', means ' I want to know what kind of personality you have'

- ' you lost me ', means 'I do not understand'.

1.3.2. Transfer of meaning

Transferred meanings to some expression such as metaphors, idioms and other resemble sorts mostly lead to misunderstanding of word meaning and create many problems. The main reason for this is that these sentences have an implicit meaning that demands to be inferred. For example:

- 'he is a legend ', expresses the fact that this person is a hero and well crafted in his specialty

- 'has something at your tongue tip' means to have words to say. (Cited in McCarthy, 1990)

2.3.3. Words with several meanings

In English language, many items have more than one sense or we can say have different meaning .This shows the flexibility of the language. Well educated people use particular words that serve their aims which might be hard for simple readers. For example: the word 'bank' is a polysemous word that has got several meanings:

   a) I'm just off to the bank to deposit a cheque.

   b) The bank was steep and overgrown.

   c) I know I can bank on her.   (cited in McCarthy, 1990)

Although there appear to be three different senses of "bank" stated here, there is an implied meaning that all of these meanings are related.

2.3.4. Sub-technical words

Sub-technical words are certain words that have precise technical meanings coordinated to a specific area of study that are considered being difficult to understand for readers. It is the case of legal English words that are connected to law like court, crime, witness, guilty, etc.

2.3.5. Super ordinates

The super ordinates words have famous meanings in relation to other words which have particular meanings and are referred to by the more general term. For example:

a) A piano is a kind of musical instrument.

b) A banana is a kind of fruit.

This is what we call hyponyms.

2.3.6. Synonyms and antonyms

Those words may hinder learners to interpret because there is no same meaning or same opposite to other words. For example:

a) tepid, warm, boiling, scorching, and hot are all synonyms in that they share the same meaning, but not the exact meaning since there are degrees of temperature, and they are all the opposite of cold/freezing.

b) harmful, hurtful, dangerous, painful, are all synonyms in that they share the common meaning, but not the exact meaning, but they are the opposite of safe, secure, comfortable, fine.

2.3.7. Irony

According to Nuttal (1982: 78), "irony is probably the most difficult of all uses of language for the student to interpret." In fact, the difficulty in irony is different because the hindering is not in the words themselves but in their use by well educated people (writers). Thornbury (1988: 25) confirm this through the following statements:

- Words can indicate more than one function; they may serve the grammatical or the informational meanings.

- Words are different in the form even with the same word.

- Words can be classified together to form collections that act as if they were single words.

- A lot of words consistently act with other words.

- Words may have the same form and/or sound but they so different in meanings.

- One word may have several meanings.

- Some words share similar meanings or may have opposite meanings and they are different words.

- Words with similar meanings behave differently according to the context.

So, we can say that word difficulties appear that a word is a more complicated issue that it might indicate.

2.4. The Importance of learning vocabulary

Vocabulary has become a major concern of linguistic works. Meara (1995: 11) points to the crucial importance of acquiring vocabulary to understand and use a language. He claims, "vocabulary is one of the most if not the most important element that makes up a language; we cannot learn a language without its words."

In the same path, Read (2000: 1-2) assumes, "words must have all the priority of language teaching. This requires tests and activities in order to assess the students' development in vocabulary learning."

Morgan & Rinvolcuri (2004: 5) confirm that learning vocabulary is a need and a necessity for language development; they state, "if teachers have not always recognized the need to devote time to the teaching of vocabulary, students themselves feel a very real need to devote time and effort to the process." In addition, Willkins (1972) (cited in Thornbury, 2002: 13) address his learners and advises them by saying: "If you spend most of your time studying grammar, your English will not improve very much. You will see most improvement if you learn more expressions. You can say very little with grammar, but you can say almost anything with words."

Similarly, McCarthy (1990) adds, "no matter grammar is well learned by students, no matter the pronunciation of the target language is mastered, without vocabulary in the foreign language, communication cannot occurs in any way."

Definitely, the acquisition of vocabulary is a requisite task. Words are very significant elements for English as foreign language (EFL) learners because these latter frequently want to learn and to broader their vocabulary knowledge as a desire and as a need. They intrinsically recognize the importance of vocabulary in their language learning as Krashen (1989) argued that they hold dictionaries with them, not grammatical books.

So we can deduce that the term vocabulary is obvious one for learners at all levels of education , therefore readers cannot understand a written message unless they understand the meaning of the most of the words in the text. It is a crucial component of reading comprehension at all levels that need to build vocabulary to allow readers to comprehend a variety of materials. Moreover, vocabulary for success in life, a large vocabulary is more specifically predictive and reflective of high levels of reading achievement. Researchers noted that growth in reading power rely continuous growth in words knowledge.

2.5. The lexical approach in teaching vocabulary

Teaching lexis must be developed to achieve successful language. According to Lewis (2005: 2), "The lexical approach is not a new all- embracing method, but a set of principles based on a new understanding of language." So, from what he said we can say that he against the usual way of teaching grammar, but he focuses on the different methodologies that the teacher is able to use in order to reach new and effective teaching of vocabulary (lexis). The terminologies that describe this theory are many; they are not always very precise, and they always overlap in meaning. For example, we can refer to the lexical phrase and the lexical sequences.

> **The lexical phrase**

Nattinger & DeCarrico (1992) have developed group of phrases that act like units and have specific function in the written and the spoken form (cited in Read, 2000). They are

called the lexical phrases. Those phrases are almost grammatical structures which are divided into four categories:

- Polywords: They are phrases that are considered to be short and stable. They have several functions.

- Institutionalized expressions: They are phrases that are considered to be long and fixed in their structure; they consisted of proverbs, and aphorisms.

- Phrasal constraints: They are phrases that are consisted of one or two gaps to fill with words like 'the sooner, the better…

- Sentence builders: They are phrases that are consisted of one or two gaps to form a sentence in which an idea is expressed, like 'not only …but also'.

  ➢ **The lexical sequences**

In the units of words are phrases and also sequences, and they have certain characteristics. Read (2000: 23) affirm, "They are relatively fixe in form, although there may be some variation in the actual words." In addition, he claims "it may be difficult, if not impossible, to work out what they mean from just knowing the meaning of the individual words." They are also sometimes difficult to understand especially when the words are separated; however, they can be recognized as familiar expressions that can be used to communicate in daily life. It is the case of such expression as 'nice to meet you', or 'I'm afraid I have some bad news for you'.

2.6. Effective strategies and techniques for teaching/learning vocabulary

Without some knowledge of vocabulary, learners can neither produce nor comprehend the foreign language. Thus, the growth of vocabulary knowledge is essential and it can only be possible when the teacher employs effective vocabulary teaching strategies and techniques.

Vacca et al (2000) suggest four strategies: Two for the growth of vocabulary, and two for the creation self- independence in the process of learning vocabulary.

- **Operating context:** Students have to learn words in different contexts; thus, defining words and forming sentences is a helpful practice. Vacca et al (2000: 267) argue, "we know that using context provided in most text tells us something about the words meaning." In addition, when we operate the context, students may discover the meaning of the unknown words.

- **Classifying and categorizing:** Classifying and categorizing words is a strategy that treats the relationship among words and gives students the opportunity to engage words together, not to use this, or to imply ideas. Indeed, " such strategies involve the processes of joining, excluding, selecting, and implying" (ibid: 270). This technique shows students how to think critically about words.

- **Self-selection strategy:** It is concerned with the words or terms that the students have found in literature or in incidental learning experiences. As this technique's name implies, students select words to be studied in the classroom, then they give an explanation about the words' importance and why they should be learned.

- **Word knowledge rating:** It is concerned about to which rate are students familiar with vocabulary words, students use self-selection strategy to choose words with the teacher and witting them in the board Dale (1965, cited in Vacca, Gove, Burkey, Lenhart, McKeon 2000, p.282) in order to display the student's vocabulary cognition, it is stated as: several views about what student face when the teacher present something new in the board for example:

  a) I've never seen the word.

  b) I've heard of it, but I don't know what it means.

  c) I recognize it in context. It has something to do with.

d) I know the word in one or several of its meanings.

There are two other major types of teaching vocabulary strategies to be tackled in this point: Incidental vocabulary teaching and planned vocabulary teaching.

- **Incidental vocabulary acquisition**

It is a learning strategy that is defined as "the by-product of any activity not explicitly geared at committing information to memory" (Hulstiyn, 1992: 113-125). In the same path, Seal (1991:298) says that "incidental vocabulary is the teaching of problem vocabulary that comes up without warning in the course of a lesson."

Schmitt (2000) explains this strategy as it is, "Learning through exposure when one's attention is focused on the use of language, rather than on learning itself. Context, then, plays a very important role in assisting such learning."

Indirect or implicit vocabulary learning involves learning the meaning of new words implicitly when language learners hear or see the words used in many different contexts. For example, through daily interactions, conversations with others and reading extensively on their own (Read, 2000). Thus, this strategy involves extensive comprehensible input and autonomous learning. Anderson & Nagy (1991: 88) state, "Indirect vocabulary learning is concerned with unconscious processes of learning through reading or listening without being aware of the goals of learning. In this type of learning, new words are learned unexpectedly when learners read or listen to stories, films, television or the radio."

Practically, unplanned vocabulary teaching consists of three steps (Read, 2000):

a- The teacher conveys the meaning using various strategies such as; body language, giving them synonyms, providing opposites, or through anecdote (short story, joke)

b- The teacher assesses his/her students' understanding of the words through asking them a set of questions.

c- The teacher supports the information that the students gathered by aiding them to use the words in different context.

In short, incidental vocabulary acquisition is the act of storing information through an activity unintentionally, so the learning of words is unconscious. In addition, this unplanned vocabulary learning happens when the student expresses his ignorance to some word while the lesson, or when the teacher feels that his explaining to the lesson is not enough. So, he/she would need to clarify some words in order to have clear picture.

- **Planned vocabulary teaching/tearning**

Planned vocabulary is concerned with learning a number of words intentionally; this means that teaching words is one of the teacher's aims that should be improved during the course. Seal (1991: 298) states, "When the teacher goes into the classroom with an item or set of vocabulary items that he/ she has decided before hand will be taught during the course of the lesson." Furthermore, vocabulary teaching strategies (VTS) can depend on various tools and ways like:

- Using Dictionaries: They are very useful sources of information to learn. Grabe & Stoller (1997: 112) clarify, "The conscious thought involved in deciding whether or not to look up a word was useful for vocabulary retention." Teachers should introduce different kinds of dictionaries to their students and teach them how to use them and how to choose good dictionaries to learn words.

- **Glossary:** It is considered to be an easy technique to infer meaning because it saves time and does not require any effort. Indeed, "glossary is substantial and workable in case the learner cannot guess the meaning from the context. Glossary is one of the most helpful techniques that enlarge learners' vocabulary knowledge." (Oxford Dictionary, 2008: 55)

- Focusing on meaning:

When we speak about the semantic value of words, actually we are speaking about their different semantic relationship that typically concern synonymy, antonyms, hyponym, multiple words meaning and homonymy. It is all about the relation between new words and known words. Supporting this view, Vacca et al (2000: 268) state, "The focus of instruction is to help the student associate new words with more familiar ones." Also, McCarthy (1990: 16) pointed out, "this type of evidence suggests that synonymy in an absolute sense has no validity in vocabulary study." In addition, "Antonyms in particular can demonstrate whether children really comprehend the meaning of new words" (Vacca et al, 2000: 267).

To end with vocabulary teaching is an incremental process, and teachers have to focus not only on introducing new words, but also on enhancing learner's knowledge of previously words. Using different strategies by teachers is very important to understand level of student, so teaching and learning vocabulary has often planned in the sense that teachers choose specific vocabulary item to be taught. Using different techniques of presentation brings variety and helps the retention of new vocabulary item.

2.7. The Relationship between Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension

Vocabulary is one of the most significant components in learning a foreign language. Graves & Wattstaffe (2002) state, "vocabulary plays an important role in reading, in many other aspects of schooling, and in the world beyond the school" (Cited in Vacca et al, 2000: 255). However, according to many EFL teachers, vocabulary can hinder students' reading comprehension. Indeed, when the text contains many unfamiliar words, this may reduce the learners' excitement to read; once a reader has a good vocabulary stock, he/she will achieve better reading comprehension, so it is obvious that vocabulary richness enhances reading comprehension.

Moreover, Stah (1992, as cited in Mukoroli, 2011) found that vocabulary instruction directly improves comprehension. He explains that as the difficulty of words in a text increases, understanding this text–inevitably –decreases. For this reason, it is critical for students to understand deeply the lexis in order to understand the new concepts and terms.

Anderson & Freeboy (1981) proposed three hypotheses in which vocabulary knowledge is a necessary factor for reading comprehension (cited in Vacca et al 2000: 254). They are Aptitude hypothesis, Knowledge hypothesis, and Instrumental hypothesis.

a- Aptitude hypothesis

Vacca et al (2000: 254) suggest, "both vocabulary and comprehension reflect general intellectual ability." So, vocabulary and comprehension share the same ability; it is a mental ability because the more students are capable intellectually, the more they will identify the meaning of words.

b- Knowledge hypothesis

Students with large vocabulary backgrounds are familiar with several topics and have an adequate number of words that certainly lead to reading comprehension improvement. Vacca et al (2000: 254) argue, "Students with large vocabularies related to a given topic also have more knowledge about the topic, which in turn produces better comprehension".

c- Instrumental hypothesis

This hypothesis suggests that there is a relation of cause and effect between vocabulary and reading comprehensions. That is, "the instrumental hypothesis can be defended thus: if comprehension depends in part of the knowledge of word meaning, vocabulary instruction ought to influence comprehension" (ibid). It means that vocabulary knowledge has a positive influence on reading comprehension and vice versa.

Conclusion

Learning a foreign language is to learn a large amount of words of that language. Students' vocabulary improvement relies on teachers who provide and select vocabulary activities that enhance the learners' vocabulary stock. So, if learners learn and use words appropriately, they will develop their ability to comprehend what they read. In addition, this encourages students to read more and more. In this way, they can meet unusual words frequently in varied context. In addition to that, they will improve their language proficiency in general (grammar, pronunciation, expand their cultural features), and improve their reading comprehension in particular.

Chapter Three

Field Work and Data Analysis

Chapter Three: Field work and data analysis

Introduction

3.1. Review of research methodology

3.1.1. Research method

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3.3. Teacher's questionnaire

3.3.1. Aims of the questionnaire

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3.3.4. Analysis of the questionnaire

Conclusion

Introduction

This chapter is designed to analyze the results obtained from the questionnaires used in order to investigate the effective role of vocabulary in enhancing EFL learners' reading comprehension. Since the teachers and the learners are the main concerned characters of this study, their views and opinions are very significant. Therefore, a questionnaire to both learners and teachers was designed to conduct our investigation, answer our research questions, collect data and verify the validity of our hypothesis.

3.1. Review of Research Methodology

3.1.1. Research method

In order to undertake this study, a descriptive method is the most convenient method that suits the nature of our research. For that, Singh and Bajpai (2008: 203) claim, "a descriptive study describes and interprets what is. It is concerned with conditions or relationships that exist". Therefore, we chose the descriptive method because it serves our main aim which is to describe the obtained results about the effective role of vocabulary in enhancing EFL learners' reading comprehension.

3.1.2. Sample of the study

From a population of first year LMD 500 students at the division of English at Biskra University for the academic year 2018-2019, a sample of fifty (50) students was randomly selected in order to conduct our research, because those students have experienced learning English, and have accomplished two full semesters. The selection of such sample was based on the consideration that first year LMD students are in a deer need to experience vocabulary and reading very well in order to improve their language in general, and doing well in written and oral expression courses (write their paragraphs, also to prepare their performances with their teachers). Also they are considered to be beginners, in other

words; they should develop their language proficiency. First year students should be aware about the importance of vocabulary in enhancing reading comprehension in particular, and developing the other skills in general. Also, six (6) teachers of different modules have been chosen to provide us with their valuable experience and opinions through responding to a questionnaire.

3.1.3. Data gathering tools

The research tool used in this study is a semi-structured questionnaire. It has been handed to a sample of first year students of English as well as a sample of teachers in the division of English at Biskra University. The aim behind using this tool was to collect both samples' opinions and attitudes about our research topic.

3.2. Students' Questionnaire

3.2.1. Aims of the questionnaire

The students' questionnaire was mainly designed to find out whether vocabulary is important to help students develop their reading comprehension. Second, it attempted to investigate the actual state of learning in terms of using vocabulary in the learning process and to obtain different views that students have concerning our topic.

3.2.2. Description of the questionnaire

This questionnaire was addressed to a representative sample of first year students of English at Biskra University. It consisted of 14 of questions which were arranged in a logical way. They involved two types of questions: Closed questions and open-ended questions. Closed questions required answers with dichotomies (yes/no question), or picking up the most appropriate answer from a series of options. Open-ended questions, on the other hand, required students to give their personal opinions about the subject or to explain their choices. The questionnaire was divided into three sections:

Section One: General information

This section is about student background information. It contains two items: Students' choice to study the English language and their own evaluation of their level in English.

Section Two: Reading comprehension

This section consists of six (6) items which seek information about reading comprehension as an important factor in this research. More specifically, it deals with the effective role of vocabulary in enhancing students' reading comprehension.

Section Three: Teaching vocabulary

This part is composed of six (6) items attempting to obtain information about the students' attitudes towards vocabulary and its relationship to reading comprehension, ending with an open question which aims to highlight how can teaching helps students to develop their reading comprehension .

3.2.3. Administration of the questionnaire

Some copies of the questionnaire (exactly 21) were given hand to hand to our sample. These respondents were available in different places at the university including the library. Some students filled in the questionnaire on the spot while others gave me back their answers few days later. Because of some external factors that made the process of distributing questionnaires difficult, they were posted online where we received a good amount of interaction; we received 29 responses which give a total of 50.

3.2.4. Analysis of the questionnaire

The procedure of analyzing data from the questionnaire was as follows:

- ✓ Statement of the questionnaires as they appear.
- ✓ The results of the questions are presented in the form of tables and graphs.

Section One: General information

Item 01 : Students' consideration of their level in English

Options	Number	Percentage
Very good	8	16%
Good	20	40%
Average	7	14%
Poor	15	30%
Total	50	100%

Table 01: **Students' consideration of their level in English**
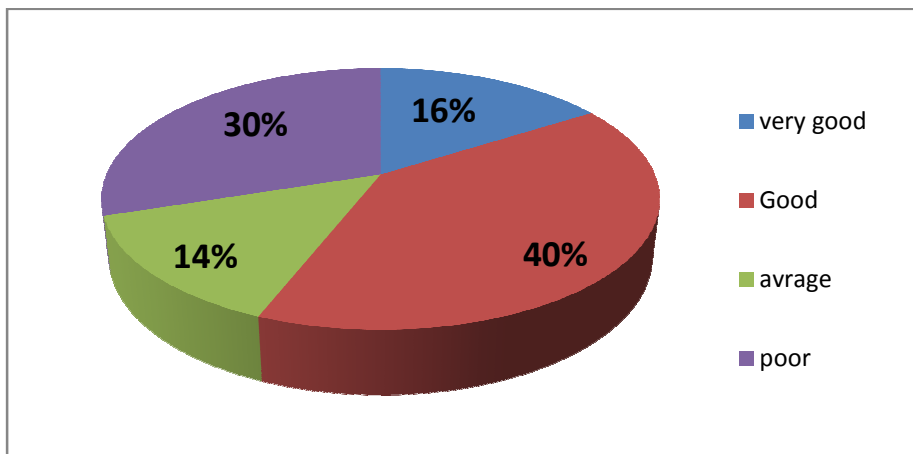
Figure 01: Students' consideration of their level in English

We can notice from the table above that the highest percentage of students (40%) claimed that their level in English is good. Others (16%) showed that they are very good in English whereas some of them (30%) said that they have a poor level in English. The least percentage (14%) of students considered their level as average.

Item 02: Students' Choices for studying English

Options	Number	Percentage
Personal	40	80%
imposed	10	20%
Total	50	100%

Table 02: Students' Choices for studying English
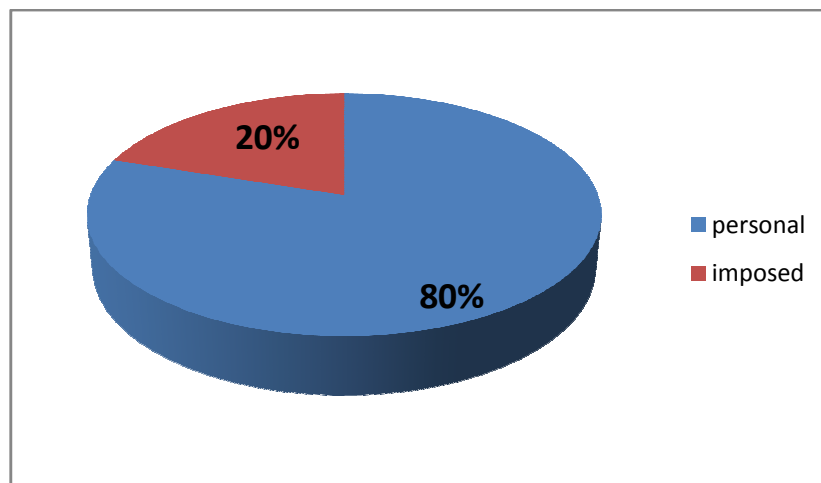
Figure 02: Students' Choices for studying English

From the above table, we can see clearly that the choice to study the English language was personal for the vast majority of students (80%). However, the rest of the sample, which consists of (10) students- making up (20%), confessed that they were imposed to study English at university. We may suggest that their baccalaureate average did not give them the opportunity to study the specialty they wanted to follow.

Section two: Reading comprehension

Item 03: Students' attitude towards reading

Options	Numbers	Percentage
A lot	**40**	**70%**
A little	**5**	**20%**
Not at all	**5**	**10%**
Total	**50**	**100%**

Table 03: **Students' attitude towards reading**
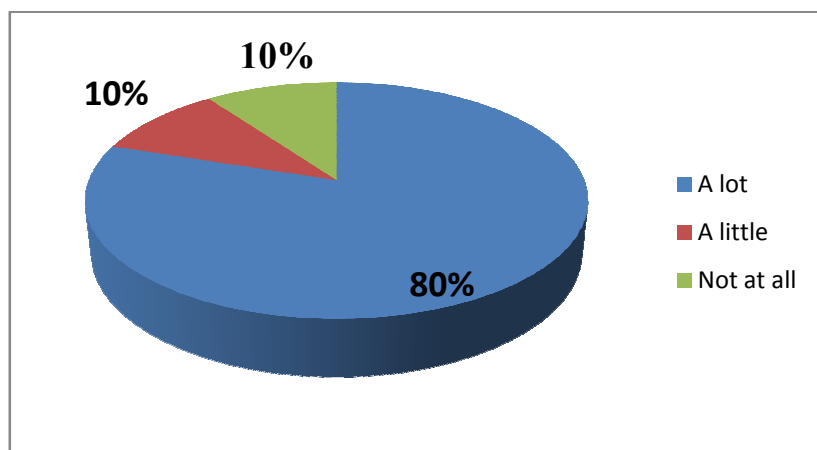
Figure 03: **Students' attitude towards reading**

It can be seen from the table above that (80%) from our respondents prefer reading as they know that reading skill is important to enhance learning. In addition vocabulary is a basic enhance students" writing skill, and we consider this as good strategy to enlarge learners' vocabulary knowledge, because the strategy of introducing words each lesson improves the process of learning words. However, the rest of the respondents (20%) reported that they like reading a little or not at all.

Item 04: Students' reading frequency outside the classroom

Option	Number	Percentage
Frequently	20	40%
Sometimes	15	30%
Rarely	10	20%
Never	5	10%
Total	50	100%

Table 04: students' reading frequency outside the classroom
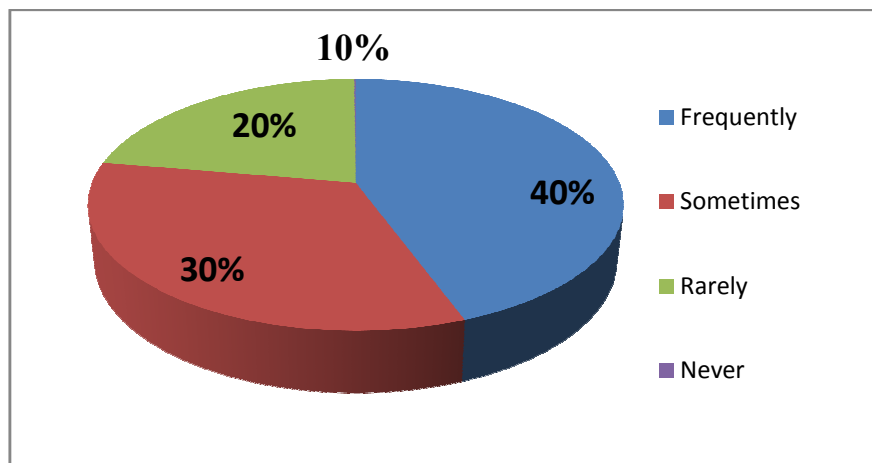
Figure 04: students' reading frequency outside the classroom

The majority of the questioned students (40%) said that they frequently read extensively outside the classroom; they believe that the practice of reading is mostly for vocabulary gain, and for informative ideas. This indicates that most students are motivated and have a positive attitude towards reading. On the other hand, (30%) of the students claimed that sometimes read and (20%) reported that rarely read. The least portion of the sample (10%) affirmed that they never read outside the classroom.

Item 05: Frequency of reading sessions in classroom

Option	Number	Percentage
Frequently	35	70%
Sometimes	10	20%
Rarely	5	10%
Never	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Table 05: Frequency of reading sessions in classroom
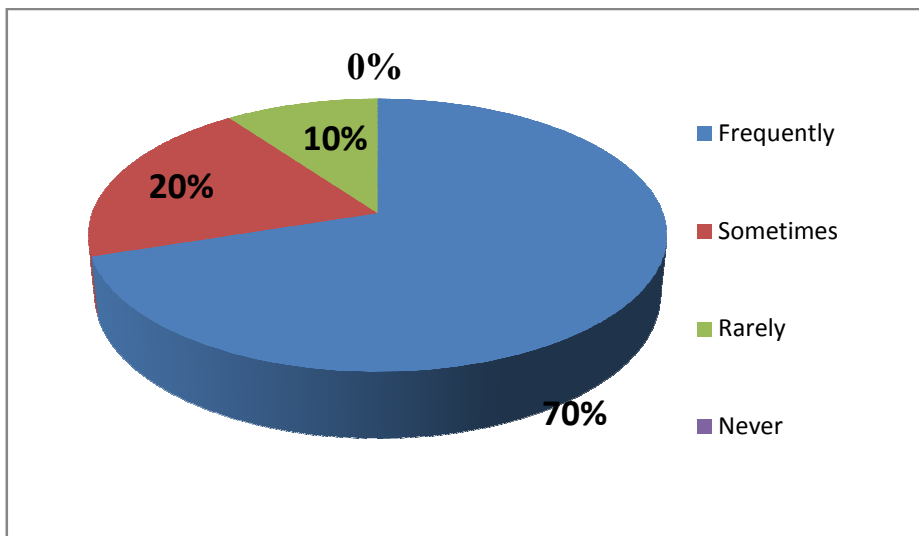
Figure05: Frequency of reading sessions in classroom

The obtained results show that (70%) of students affirm that their teachers' do reading sessions in class. (20%) of the sample, however, opted for "sometimes" whereas few students (10%) said that they rarely have sessions for reading.

These findings show that students have different teachers who do not rely on reading at the same extent. This depends on each teacher's priorities in terms of lesson/course objectives, students' needs, time, etc.

Item 06: Students' attitude towards the difficulty of the reading materials

Option	Number	Pecrentage
Easy to understand / comprehend	**0**	**0%**
Difficult to understand / comprehend	**10**	**20%**
Somehow difficult	**40**	**80%**
Total	**50**	**100%**

Table 06: Students' attitude towards the difficulty of the reading materials
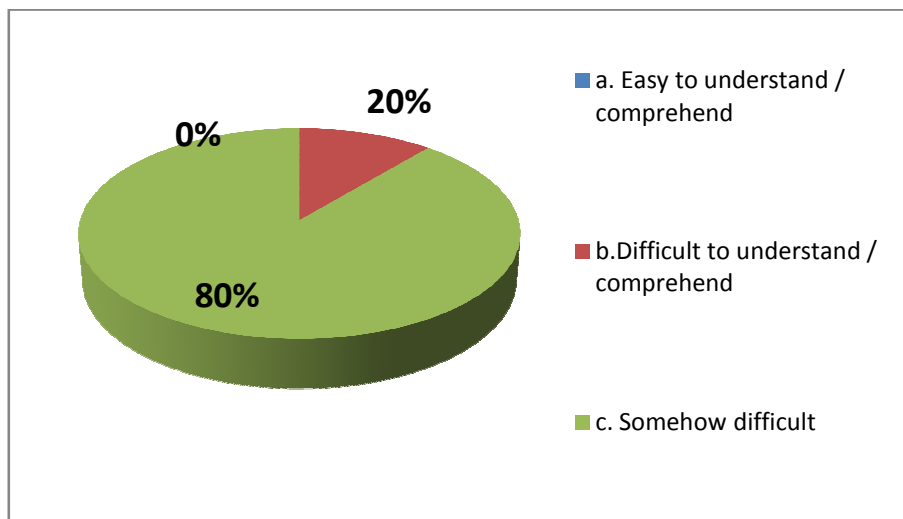
Figure 06: students' attitude towards the difficulty of the reading materials

The results, as shown in the table, reveal that (80%) of the respondents find the reading texts and books somehow difficult. However, (20%) of student claimed that when they read, they find it difficult to understand and comprehend it. This reveals that students need to know vocabulary in order to comprehend the text effectively. Therefore, unsurprisingly, no one asserted that the reading materials they deal with in class are easy to understand.

Item 07: Reasons of students' difficulties to understand a text

Option	Number	Percentage
Difficult vocabulary	40	80%
Intended meaning	10	20%
The use of idioms / slangs/ metaphors	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Table07: Reasons of students' difficulties to understand a text
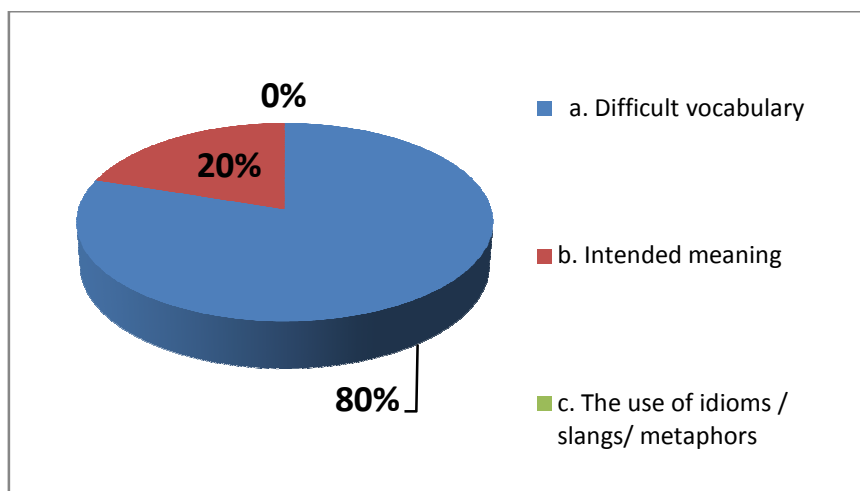
Figure07: **Reasons of students' difficulties to understand a text**

This question sought to identify the reason behind students' difficulty to understand a text when reading it. The results show that the majority (80%) of students affirmed that the most difficulties they face when they are reading a text are due to the difficult vocabulary. The rest of the sample (20%) finds reading difficult because the text contains intended meaning. In fact, students need to know how to read "between lines" and guess what the writer means in order to comprehend the whole text.

Item 08: Students' reading strategies for effective comprehension

Option	Number	Percentage
Predicting	10	20%
Skimming	6	12%
Scanning	10	20%
Inferring	6	12%
Guessing the meaning of unfamiliar word	10	20%
Self- monitoring	8	16%
Total	50	100%

Table 08: **Students' reading strategies for effective comprehension**
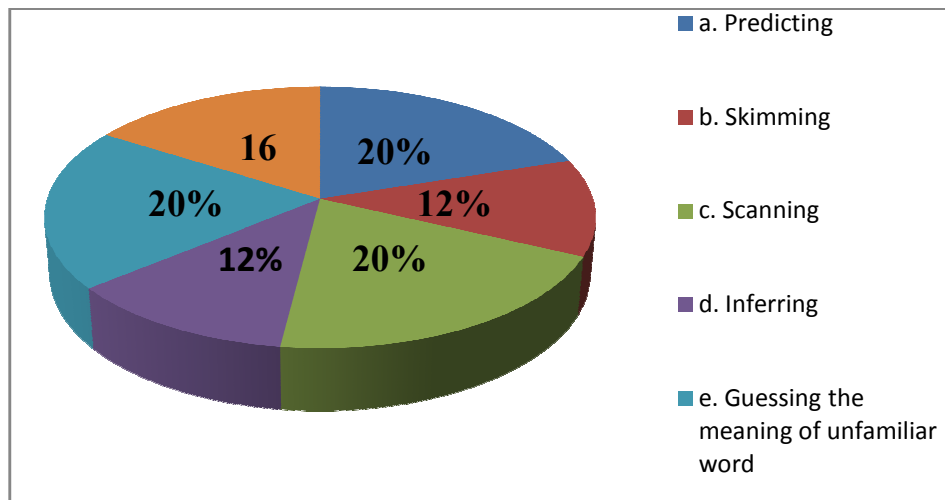
Figure 08: **Students' reading strategies for effective comprehension**

The figure above indicates that 10 respondents (20%) prefer using predicting to understand the meaning of the text. Two equal portions (12%) opted for skimming and inferring as the most useful strategies to comprehend a text while (20%) of the sample believe that they have to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words in order to master the

reading text. The remaining (8) respondents (16%) prefer self -monitoring strategy to understand what they read.

Item 09: Students' opinions about the teachers' role in helping them understand a text.

For this open-ended question, students mentioned different useful methods that teachers employ in order to make them comprehend the written materials. They suggested the following strategies:

- Translating the meaning of the difficult words.

- Explaining new terms.

- Highlighting the general idea of the text.

- Analyzing of the text.

- Discussing the text ideas.

Clearly, students discussed strategies which focus mainly on explaining difficult and new vocabulary as well as describing the overall meaning of the text. Moreover, they find that translating some vocabulary can be helpful in their reading comprehension.

Section three: Teaching vocabulary

Item 10: Students' opinion about their teachers' frequency of introducing new vocabulary

Option	Number	Percentage
Always	40	80%
Often	0	0%
Sometimes	10	20%
Rarely	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Table 09: **Students' opinion about their teachers' frequency of introducing new vocabulary**
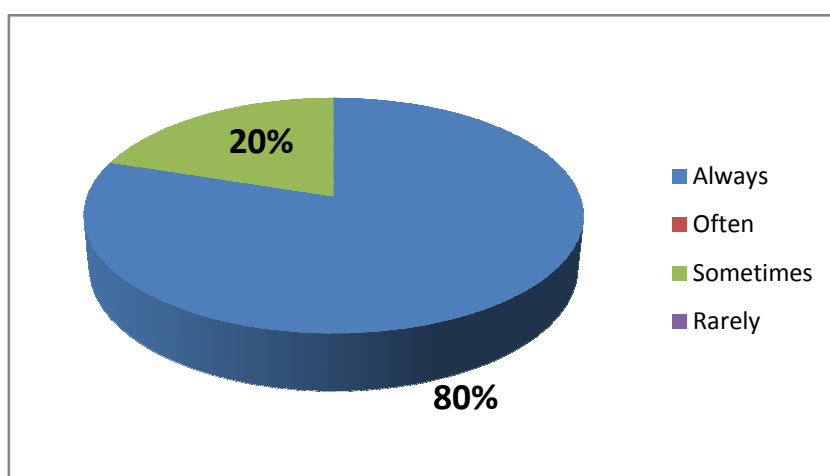
Figure 09: **Students' opinion about their teachers' frequency of introducing new vocabulary**

We can notice that the highest percentage of students (80%) claimed that their teachers always introduce new vocabulary during the course, so they can learn better and develop their learning skills. (20%) of the sample said that teachers sometimes deal with new vocabulary in each course.

Item 11: Teachers' vocabulary teaching techniques

Option	Number	Percentage
Through pictures	**0**	**0%**
Through videos	**0**	**0%**
Through examples / sentences on the board	**10**	**20%**
Through texts	**25**	**50%**
Through giving synonyms	**5**	**10%**
Through translating	**10**	**20%**
Total	**50**	**100%**

Table10: Teachers' vocabulary teaching techniques
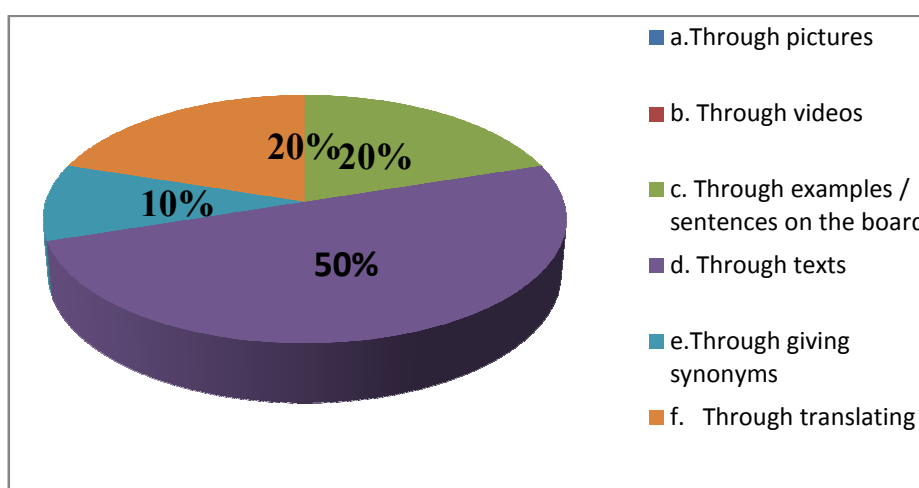
Figure 10: Teachers' vocabulary teaching techniques

The figure above indicates that half of respondents (50%) claimed that their teachers present new vocabulary through texts whereas other respondents (20%) stated that their teachers use examples and sentences on the board as a technique to introduce new lexis. (10%) said that new words and are taught through synonyms. The remaining respondents

(20%) affirmed that translation is the method used by their teachers to introduce new vocabulary.

Item 12: Students' opinion about the need for vocabulary mastery to enhance comprehension

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	40	80%
No	10	20%
Total	50	100%

Table11: Students' opinion about the need for vocabulary mastery to enhance comprehension
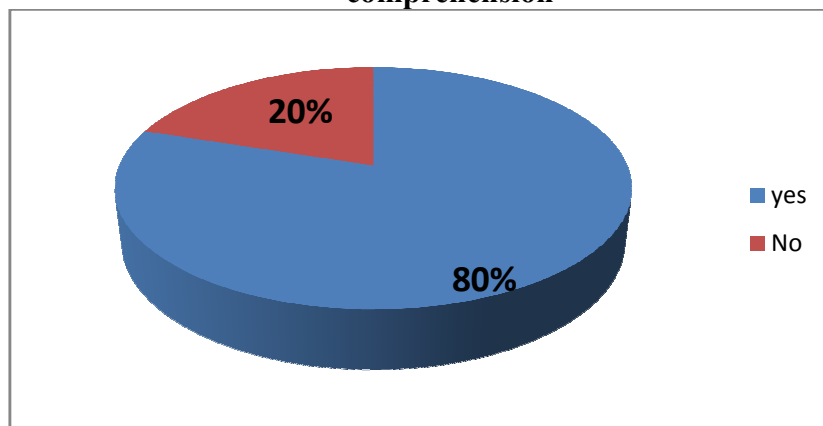
Figure 11: Students' opinion about the need for vocabulary mastery to enhance comprehension

This question came to discuss the learners' need of vocabulary in order to comprehend the text. The majority of the students (80%) affirmed that knowing all the meanings of vocabulary is necessary to understand the text; thus, they can guess the main ideas and answer the questions effectively. However, (20%) of respondents disagreed claiming that knowing just few (key) vocabulary is sufficient to get the main meaning of the text.

Item 13: Students' strategies to understand difficult words.

Option	Number	Percentage
Read again and try to guess the meaning from the context	10	20%
Ask the teacher about its meaning	8	16%
Ask a peer (classmate)	22	44%
Look to its meaning in the dictionary	10	20%
Total	50	100%

Table12: Students' strategies to understand difficult words.
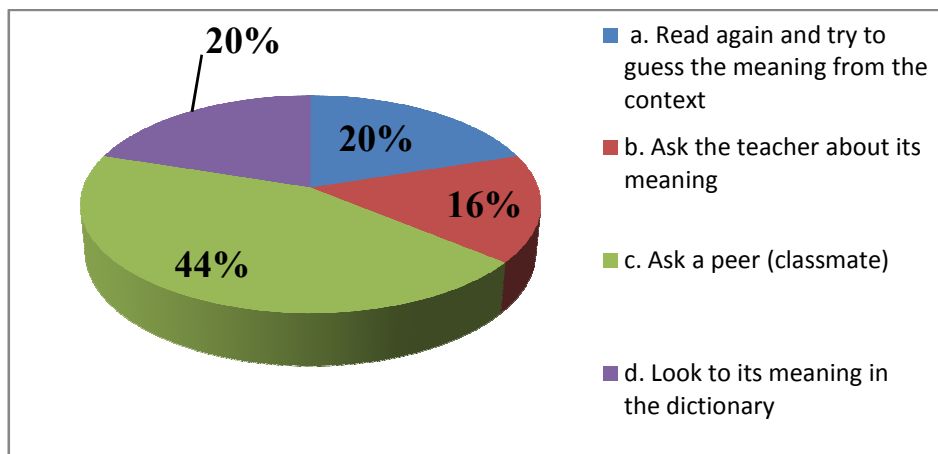
Figure12: Students' strategies to understand difficult words.

It is commonly accepted that in order to learn a language, you have to know more vocabulary and master their meaning. Therefore, this question sought to know what strategies students use to find the meaning of difficult words. Most students (44%) confessed that when they find a difficult word, they ask their classmates. Others (40%) said that they repeat reading the passage until they guess the meaning whereas others (10 %) use the dictionary to check the significance of unfamiliar words. The rest of the sample (16%) prefers asking the teachers directly.

Item 14: Students' opinion about the effect of vocabulary acquisition on reading comprehension

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	50	100%
No	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Table 13: Students' opinion about the effect of vocabulary acquisition on reading comprehension
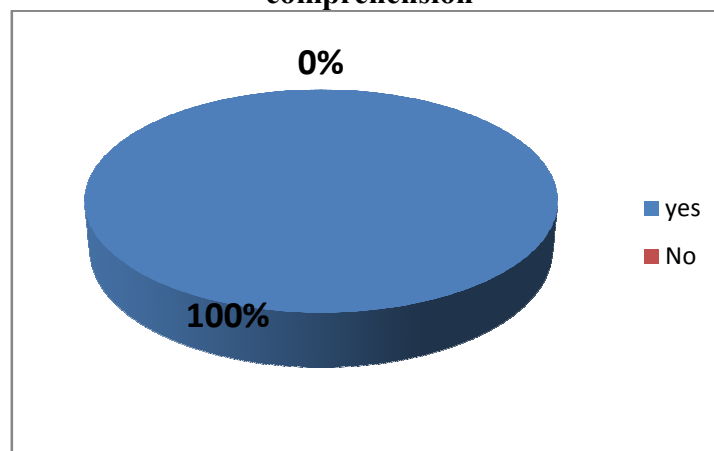
Figure 13: Students' opinion about the effect of vocabulary acquisition on reading comprehension

The results obtained confirm that vocabulary is an essential element in reading comprehension; indeed, its acquisition and mastery contribute to the enhancement of comprehension. In fact, all students' (100 %) agreement revealed that they consciously know the importance of vocabulary and its role in improving reading comprehension. Therefore, these results came to confirm the hypothesis of this research.

Item 14: Student view about the way teaching vocabulary improves reading comprehension

This open-ended question came to support the previous one (whether vocabulary improves comprehension or not). Indeed, it aimed to confirm the relationship between the

two variables (vocabulary teaching and reading comprehension; however, it aimed more to investigate students' awareness about the way the first variable affects/develops the other.

Students gave different answers. They are stated in the following points:

- We will become more familiar with them and master their use.

- We will memorize a limitless number of vocabularies when they read.

-We will get common knowledge of words.

- We will acquire new words.

- It will help us read and comprehend better.

- The more vocabulary students know, the better they can decode and understand what they read.

- Those who received a list of vocabulary to study performed significantly better in reading comprehension tests than those who relied on their background knowledge.

3.2. 5. Discussion and interpretation of results

First of all, the questionnaire comprised clear and precise questions aiming at confirming or rejecting our hypothesis; i.e., knowing whether vocabulary can be an effective factor to enhance reading comprehension or not. Students' answers were carefully recorded in tables and interpreted in graphs. Moreover, results revealed the following:

According to the answers obtained from the students' questionnaire, we can see that the informants (86%) are motivated to read. In addition to this, reading is considered as a significant factor that leads students to know new words, and students believe that the practice of reading is mostly for vocabulary gain and for informative ideas with a rate of (66%). Also, they consider vocabulary (76%) as an important aspect that leads to effectual writing. This implies that students are more aware of the role of vocabulary in enhancing their writing and reading skill. Moreover, we conclude that the students' reading

comprehension is hindered by a serious problem of students' lack of vocabulary stock with a rate of (40%). This can be interpreted by their deep need for effective steps of vocabulary learning, adequate techniques used by creative, and well trained teachers to teach new words. Also, teachers should highlight the importance of vocabulary strategy in developing the foreign language learners' target language; by raising the awareness towards it, nevertheless the students' confession reading extensively. This implies that teachers' responsibility to improve their students' language in general and vocabulary stock in particular, especially with first- year students. To conclude, the previous results obtained serve in proving our supposition and confirms the fact that vocabulary strategy is significant factor which help in enhancing the student's reading comprehension and to face up reading comprehension obstacles.

3.3. Teachers' questionnaire

3.3.1. Aims of the questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire was intended to investigate the teachers' opinions about vocabulary as an important factor to enhance reading comprehension. It also aimed at investigating the teachers' attitude and experience of how language is being taught and the problems being encountered in their teaching tasks.

3.3.2. Description of the questionnaire

The teacher's questionnaire was designed for teachers (of different modules) in the English section at the University of Biskra. The questions were divided into two types either closed questions, requiring teachers to choose "yes" or "no" answers, or to pick up the appropriate answer from a number of choices in addition to open-ended questions where teachers were requested to give explanations and justifications to their answers. The

teachers' questionnaire consisted of 16 questions divided into three main sections. These are described as follows.

Section one: general information

The first section aimed at collecting information about the sample. They were about identifying teachers' degree and experience in teaching English as well as the modules they have taught.

Section two: reading comprehension

The second section consists of five (05) questions. It sought information about the teachers' attitude and opinions about vocabulary teaching and its relationship with reading comprehension.

Section three: teaching vocabulary

This part is composed of eight (8) items attempting to obtain insights about the teachers' attitudes towards vocabulary, ending with an open question which aimed to address suggestions or comments concerning the effect of teaching vocabulary on improving EFL learners' reading comprehension.

3.3.3. Administration of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was distributed hand to hand to a sample of 6 teachers of different modules in the division of English at the University of Biskra. These respondents were available in different places including the teachers' room in the faculty. Some of the respondents filled in the questionnaire on the spot while other s gave back their answers back few days later.

3.3.4. Analysis of the questionnaire

Section one: Background information

Item 01: Teachers' experience in teaching English

Option	Number	Percentage
3-5 years	1	16%
5-7 years	2	34%
More than 7 years	3	50%
Total	6	100%

Table 14: Teachers' experience in teaching English
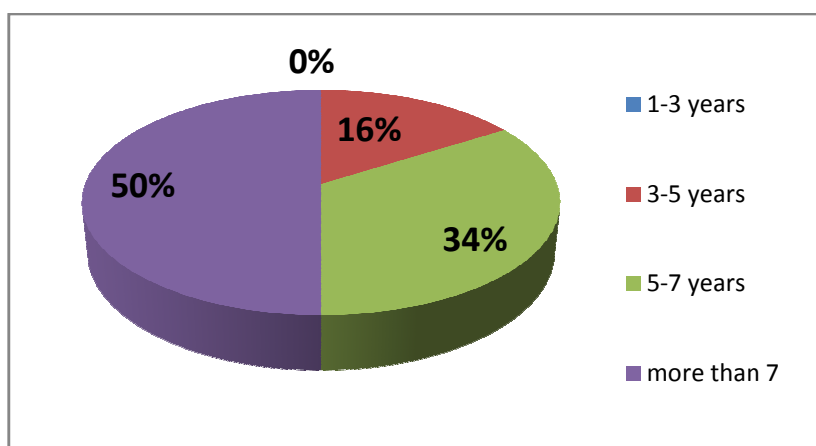
Figure 14: Teachers' experience in teaching English

It is noticed from table 14 and figure 14 that half of the teachers (50%) have been teaching English at university more than 7 years. Other teachers (34%) claimed to have an experience of 5 to 7 years whereas (16%) opted for 3 to 5 years.

These results show that our sample is fairly experienced and could provide us with valuable information about the topic under investigation.

Item 02: The modules that have taught by teachers

For this open-ended question, participants have been asked to enumerate the modules they have been teaching at university. The aim was to see which of these may have a direct

relation with teaching vocabulary and reading comprehension so as to assure helpful and valuable opinions and comments and to receive valid results.

Our participants have been teaching different modules in the English division. They reported various modules such as written expression, oral expression, grammar, theme and version, literary texts, linguistics, didactics, research methodology, phonetics, culture of language, ESP, and cognitive psychology.

In fact, almost all the modules cited have in common vocabulary teaching either in a direct or indirect way. They also rely on reading and aim to enhance learners' comprehension.

Therefore, these findings made us deduce that our sample is quite experienced in dealing with vocabulary teaching. This may assure precious opinions and interesting suggestions about our study.

Item 03: Teachers' academic degree

Option	Number	Percentage
Licence	**0**	**0%**
Master/Magister	**4**	**66%**
Doctorate	**2**	**34%**
Total	**6**	**100%**

Table 15: Teachers' academic degree
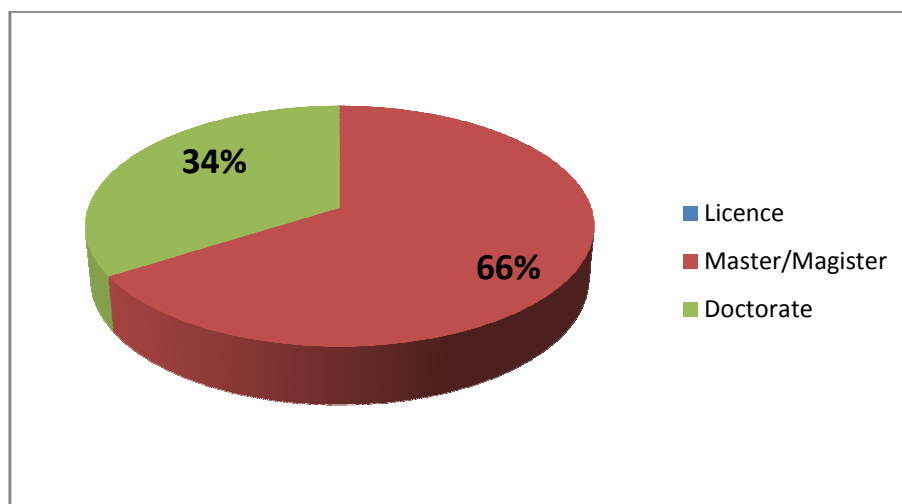
Figure 15: Teachers' academic degree

From what the table indicates, we found that among the six teachers constituting our sample four (4) of them have a Magister degree and two (2) have a doctorate degree. This confirms that our respondents are well qualified and experienced. Therefore, they may help us validate our hypothesis sating that teaching vocabulary improves EFL learners' reading comprehension.

Section Two: Reading comprehension

Item 01: Teachers' encouragement for learners' reading

Option	Number	Percentage
Usually	5	**84%**
Sometimes	1	**16%**
Rarely	0	**0%**
Never	0	**0%**
Total	6	**100%**

Table 16: **Teachers' encouragement for learners' reading**
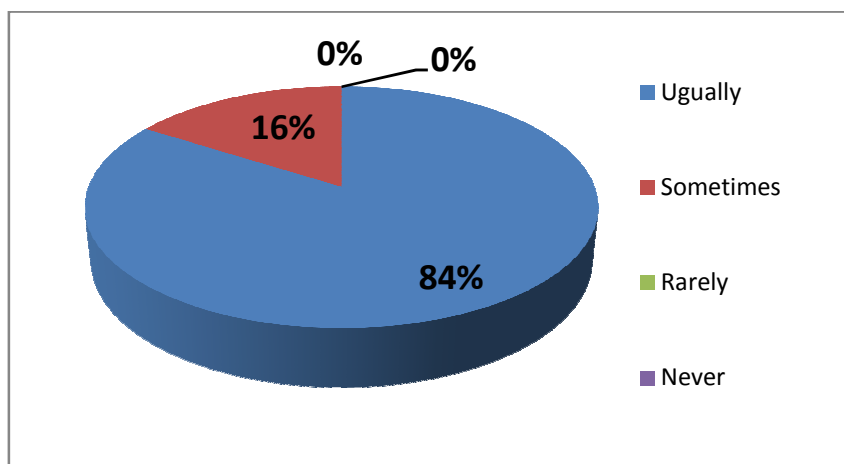
Figure 16: Teachers' encouragement for learners' reading

It is noticeable from the table above that all most teachers (83%) affirmed that they usually encourage their students to read. This strong step can be a positive factor to develop learners' level of English in general and their reading skill in particular. On the other hand, just one teacher (16%) reported that he/she sometimes encourages his/her students to read because he/she sees that the main objective is to explain the lesson and for students to understand the input.

Item 02: Teachers' use of reading sessions in class

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	6	100%
No	0	0%
Total	6	100%

Table17: Teachers' use of reading sessions in class
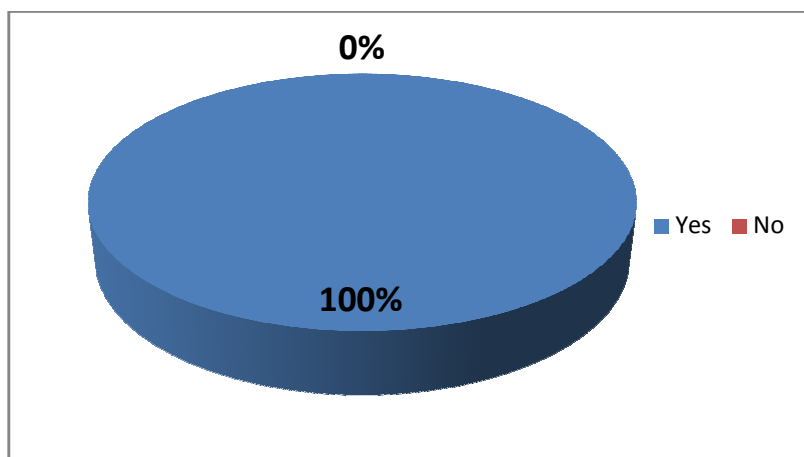
Figure17: Teachers' use of reading sessions in class

According to the findings obtained in the table above, teachers without exception (100%) affirmed that they organize reading sessions. Their objective is to help learners be active in their learning process and train to read to improve their abilities. In addition, they said that through implementing reading sessions, learners can know the meaning of many words and its correct writing. In short, students acquire new vocabulary.

We deduce that teachers are quite aware of the importance of reading as it helps develop all other learners' skills (listening, speaking, and writing). Moreover, reading improves vocabulary acquisition and, thus, reading comprehension.

Item 03: Teachers' evaluation of their students' level of reading comprehension

Option	Number	Percentage
Good	2	34%
Average	4	66%
Low	0	0%
Total	6	100%

Table 18: Teachers' evaluation of their students' level of reading comprehension
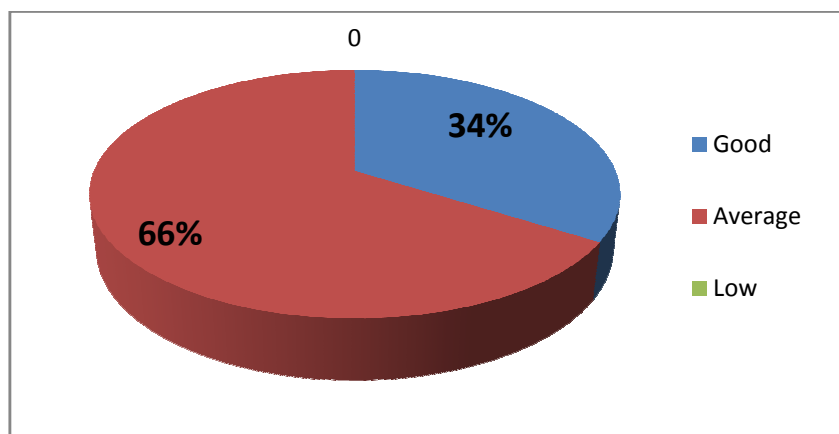
Figure 18: Teachers' evaluation of their students' level of reading comprehension

Teachers, here, were asked to describe their students' level in reading comprehension. From the table above, it seems that (4) teachers (66%) evaluate their students to have an average level in reading comprehension. However, (2) teachers (34%) believe that their students' level is good.

In general, students' level is acceptable in terms of reading comprehension, so they do not seem to have hard difficulties with this skill according to their teachers'. However, those who were designated as having an average level seem to face some difficulties. We will try to identify them in the next question.

Item 04: Teachers' view about the causes of students' failure in reading comprehension

Option	Number	Percentage
a. The difficulty of the reading task(s)	**0**	**0%**
b. The Difficulty of lexical items	**1**	**16%**
c. The nature (genre) of the reading material	**2**	**34%**
d. The students' weak vocabulary background	**3**	**50%**
Total	**6**	**100%**

Table 19: Teachers' view about the causes of students' failure in reading comprehension
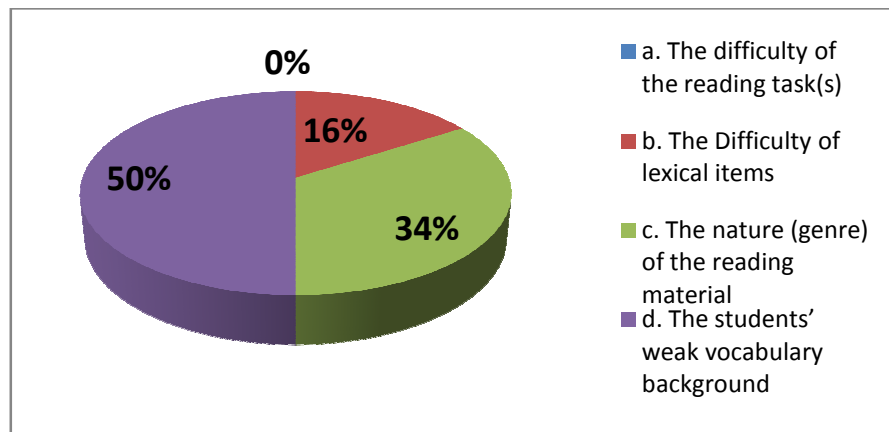
Figure 19: Teachers' view about the causes of students' failure in reading comprehension

This question sought to explain students' average level in reading comprehension and tried to identify the causes behind students' difficulties.

(50%) of the questioned teachers affirmed that their students' failure to comprehend a text is due to the weak vocabulary background. Indeed, students do not have the needed vocabulary storage to understand a reading text/book, etc. On the other hand, (34%) of the sample opted for "The nature (genre) of the reading material' as being, probably, difficult or not interesting. Finally, (16%) said that the difficulty of lexical items in text makes it hard for students to grasp completely its meaning.

Some teachers added other reasons to students' difficulty of comprehension in reading by referring to their poor level, lack of intensive and extensive reading, lack / loss of concentration, and the lack of exposure to the target language.

Item 05: Teachers' explanation of difficult words in reading sessions

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	6	100%
No	0	0%
Total	6	100%

Table 20: Teachers' explanation of difficult words in reading sessions

100%
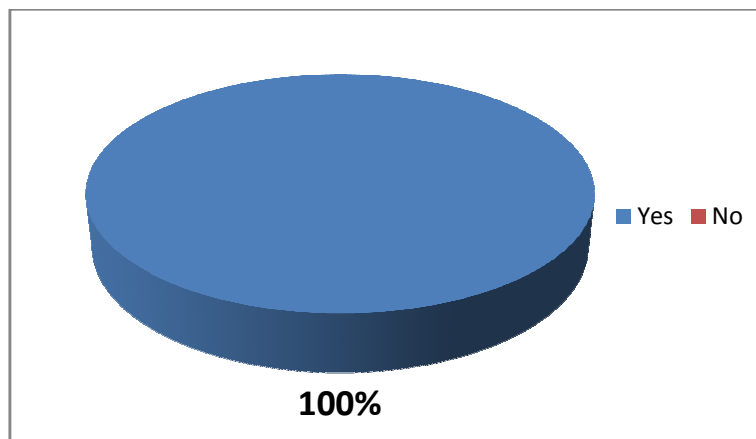
Figure 20: Teachers' explanation of difficult words in reading sessions

For this question, the whole sample (100%) asserted to explain the meaning of new and difficult words present in the text that students are reading in class. This is done to facilitate the comprehension and to improve vocabulary acquisition.

For the second part of the question, teachers were asked about the time of the reading session during which this explanation is done. Their answers were recorded in table 21.

Option	Number	Percentage
a. Before reading	1	16%
b. During reading	3	50%
c. After reading	2	34%
Total	6	100%

Table 21: Teachers' time of explaining the difficult words in reading
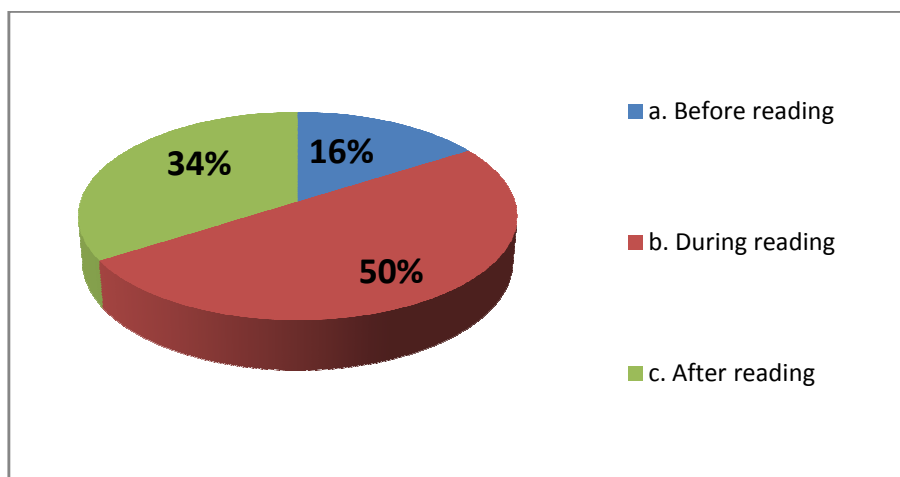
Figure 21: Teachers' time of explaining the difficult words in reading

According to this table, the majority of the teachers (50%) claimed that they explain difficult words during reading in order to gain time and at the same time students will not be confused about the words used in the text. In addition, (34%) reported that they explain after reading in order to give students time to test their vocabulary knowledge and to train them to learn. (16%) of the sample, however, introduce the difficult words of the text to be dealt with before reading in order to give learners the main idea of the text and the general view about the topic.

In fact, strategies to explain difficult words differ between doing it before, during, or at the end of the reading as the teachers' objectives differ, too. Indeed, some teachers intend to introduce their students to the general topic and explain new and difficult words to avoid anxiety and confusion while others do it during the process of reading to facilitate comprehension. The most common strategy is to provide clarity and explanation ant the end of the reading process in order to challenge students' critical thinking skill and develop their vocabulary learning.

Section Three: Teaching Vocabulary

Item 06: Teachers' frequency of introducing new vocabulary in class

Option	Number	Percentage
Usually	5	84%
Sometimes	1	16%
Rarely	0	0%
Never	0	0%
Total	6	100%

Table 22: Teachers' frequency of introducing new vocabulary in class
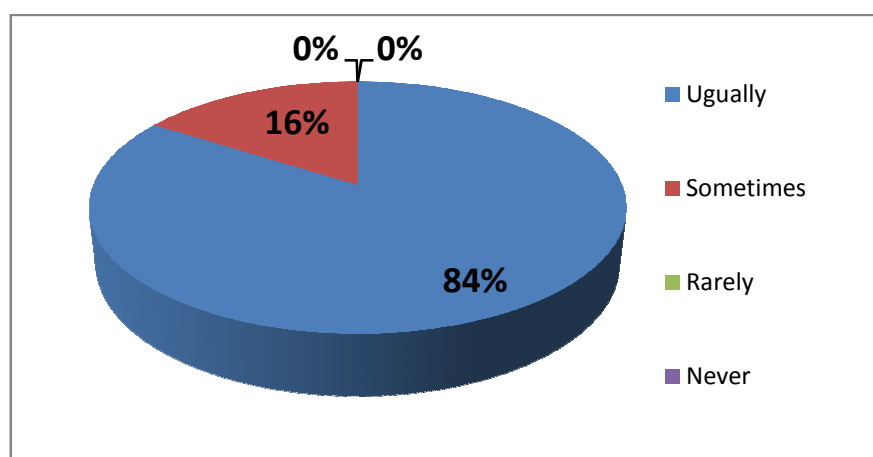
Figure 22: Teachers' frequency of introducing new vocabulary in class

This question aimed to see how often teachers present new vocabulary in class to enlarge students' storage. As results show in the table above, a significant majority of teachers (84%) affirmed that they usually introduce new words in order to train their learners to get large background about the foreign language and to build their knowledge. On the Other hand, a minority 16% confessed that they sometimes present new vocabulary in class because time is not sufficient.

These results show that teachers are aware about the importance of teaching vocabulary to improve students' background and develop all their skill

Item 07: Teachers' strategies in teaching vocabulary

Option	Number	Percentage
a. Translation	1	16%
b. Pictures	0	0%
c. Definition	2	34%
d. Word in context	0	0%
e. Synonym and opposite	3	50%
Total	6	100%

Table 23: Teachers' strategies in teaching vocabulary
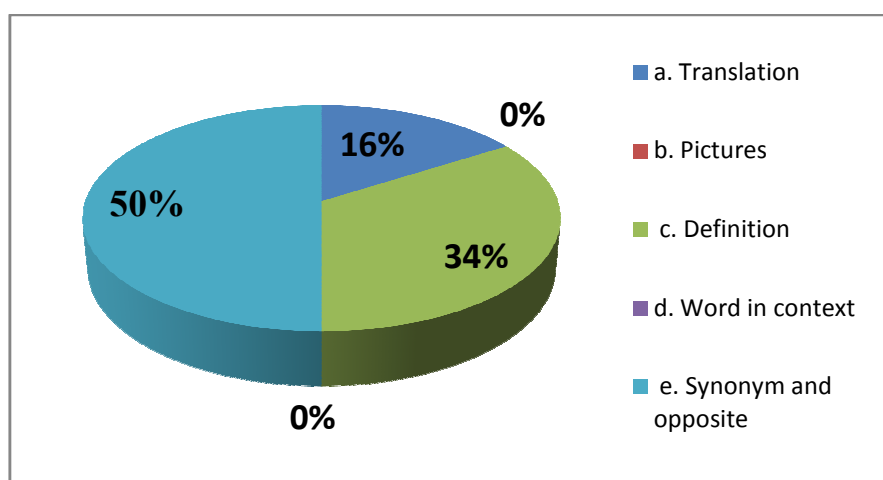
Figure 23: Teachers' strategies in teaching vocabulary

The aim of this question was to identify what strategies/techniques use to teach vocabulary in class. Some strategies were proposed for teachers to choose among or to add others.

The obtained results indicate that the majority of the questioned teachers (50%) use synonyms and opposites as a strategy to present and explain new vocabulary while (34%) reported that they define the new terms and concepts for learners to get and learn their meaning. One teacher (16%), however, opted for 'translation' as an effective strategy to teach new vocabulary. Moreover, some teachers declared that they use other techniques; they mentioned the use of symbols, translating the words using the original language (Arabic), using multi meaning words, or using homonyms.

Item 08: Teachers' perception of their students' difficulties with vocabulary mastery

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	6	100%
No	0	0%
Total	6	100%

Table 24: Teachers' perception of their students' difficulties with vocabulary mastery
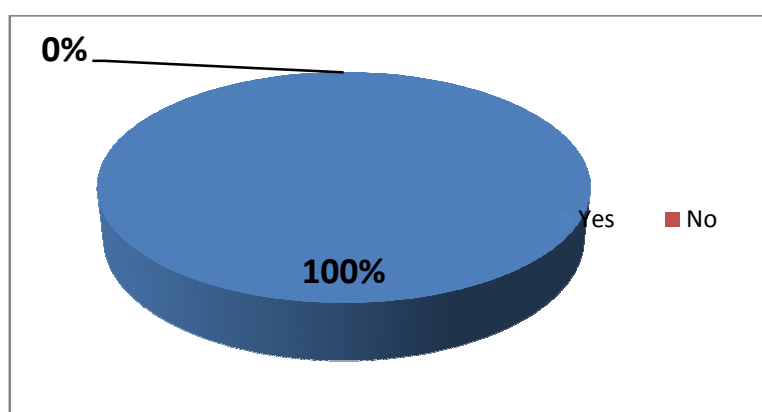
Figure 24: Teachers' perception of their students' difficulties with vocabulary mastery

All (100%) of the questioned teachers had the same opinion about the fact that first year students face difficulties with vocabulary mastery in their learning. Thus, students are not able to understand the meaning of the text.

This confirmation should be taken seriously into consideration by teachers who should find appropriate strategies to help students overcome these difficulties and foster their vocabulary acquisition process.

Item 09: Teachers' opinion of the type of vocabulary students find difficult

Option	Number	Percentage
a. Scientific words	2	33%
b. Abstract words	2	33%
c. Compound words	1	17%
d. Idioms/ slangs	1	17%
Total	6	100%

Table 25: Teachers' opinion of the type of vocabulary students find difficult
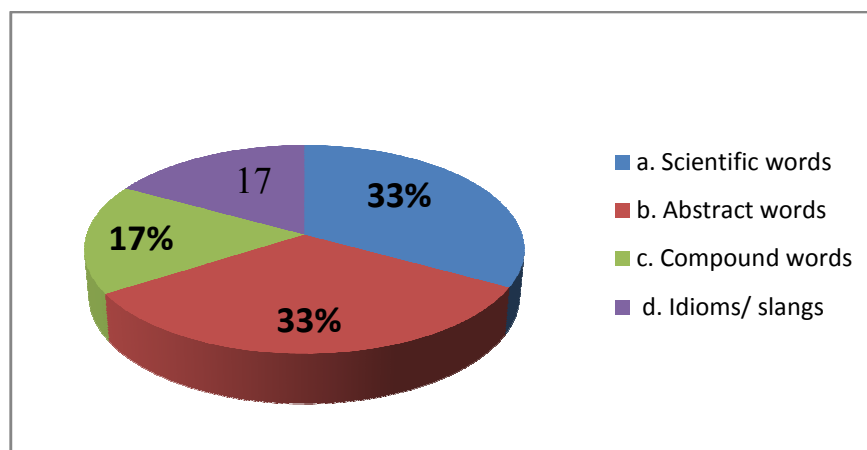
Figure 25: **Teachers' opinion of the type of vocabulary students find difficult**

We asked this question to shed the light on the type of vocabulary students have the most difficulties with. The purpose was to see the teachers' awareness of their learners' weaknesses and needs in order to use appropriate strategies to overcome the problem.

Scientific and abstract vocabularies have been revealed to be the two types students have most difficult to understand and to learn. On the other hand, 17 % of the sample

pointed to compound words as being difficult to master by their students while the same portion said that idioms and slangs are the most difficult types of vocabulary to deal with.

We can explain those finding as these vocabularies are rarely used and practiced by students in class. They may be even rarely dealt by the teacher him/herself who would rather rely on other types of words that suit the purpose of the course and the lesson.

Item 10: Teachers' methods in explaining difficult words

Option	Number	Percentage
a. Give the meaning directly and systematically.	0	0%
b. Ask learners to guess the meaning from the context.	3	50%
c. Ask them to check in the dictionary.	3	50%
d. Ask them to discuss it with a peer.	0	0%
Total	6	100%

Table 26: Teachers' methods in explaining difficult words
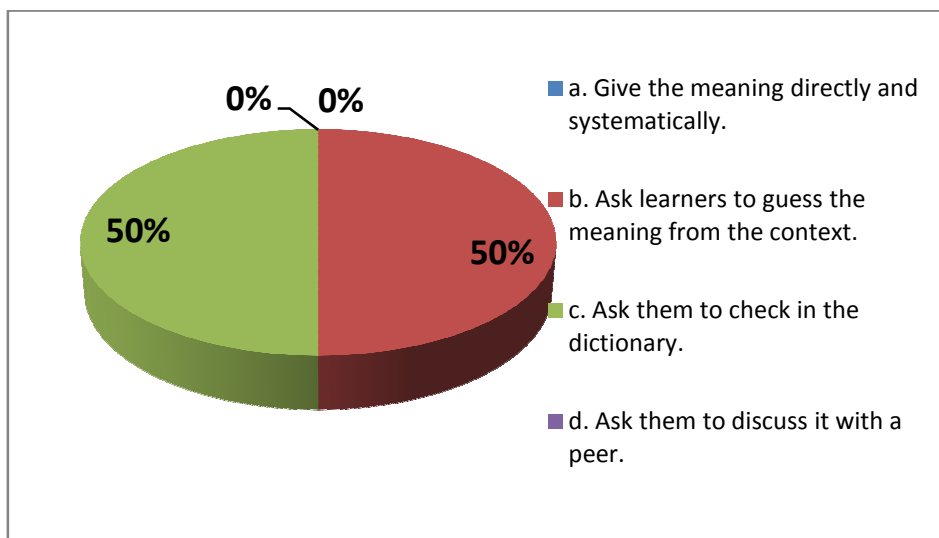
Figure 26: Teachers' methods in explaining difficult words

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According to table 26 and graph 26, we can say that half of EFL teachers (50%) composing our sample ask learners to guess the meaning of words from the context as a technique to explain them. Thus, students are encouraged to work autonomously and would rely on their own capacities of thinking critically. On the other hand, the other half of the sample (50%) reported that they ask students to check in the dictionary in order not to waste time and understand the right meaning by themselves.

It has been noticed that no teacher explain and define systematically and directly the difficult vocabulary but rather let learners think about and rely on their own abilities to solve problems. These techniques encourage learner centeredness and autonomy as well as they develop students' critical thinking skills.

Item 11: Teachers' opinion about students' difficulty to understand vocabulary and its impact on their reading comprehension

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	6	100%
No	0	0%
Total	6	100%

Table 27: Teachers' opinion about students' difficulty to understand vocabulary and its impact on their reading comprehension
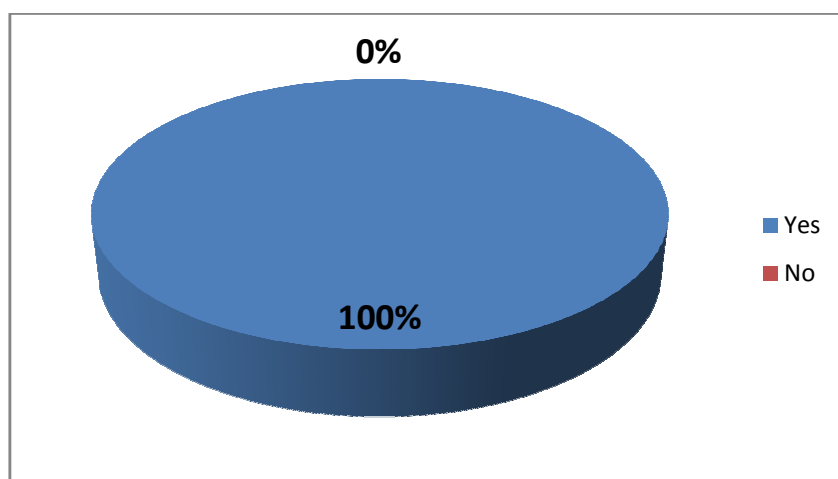
Figure 27: **Teachers' opinion about students' difficulty to understand vocabulary and its impact on their reading comprehension**

(100%) of participants affirmed that their learners cannot understand the written material unless they have a rich background in vocabulary. More precisely, all teachers asserted that when students face difficulties to understand some words/expressions in a text, this will affect negatively their comprehension of the whole material.

All the teachers justified their answers by saying that learners who have been diagnosed of vocabulary paucity certainly have problems of decoding words and in a dire need to comprehend the written material. In addition, vocabulary strategy is one of the most important approaches that push learners to be motivated and read effectively to get the hidden meaning. This may change students' attitude towards reading comprehension and reduce their difficulties since the large exposure to reading in a long duration enables them to meet enormous range of words, in which they will have vocabulary stock in particular and reading comprehension in general.

Item 12: Teachers' opinion about the effect of teaching vocabulary on improving students' reading comprehension

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	6	100%
No	0	0%
Total	6	100%

Table 28: Teachers' opinion about the effect of teaching vocabulary on improving students' reading comprehension
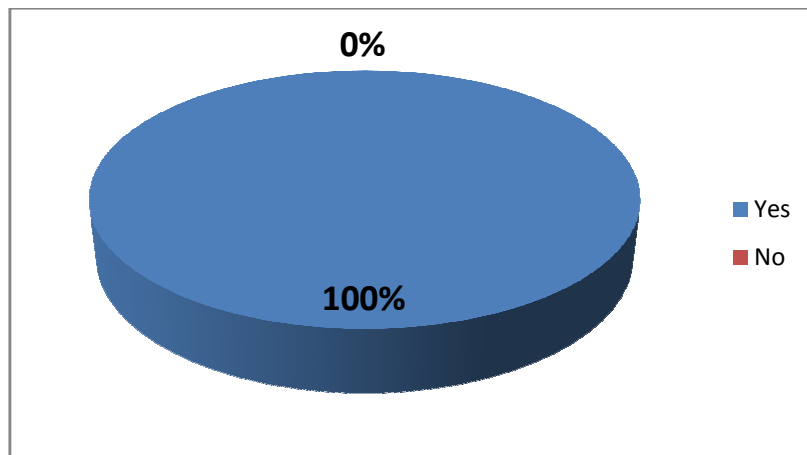
Figure 28: **Teachers' opinion about the effect of teaching vocabulary on improving students' reading comprehension**

This question aimed to point directly our topic under investigation and to try to confirm our hypothesis which assumes that teaching vocabulary improves EFL learners' reading comprehension.

According to the obtained results, all respondents without exception (100%) affirmed that vocabulary teaching contributes to the improvement of students' reading comprehension because teaching vocabulary is considered as an important component of teaching a foreign language. Therefore, all teachers showed their agreement with the statement and confirmed our hypothesis.

Item 13: Teachers' suggestions or comments concerning the effect of teaching vocabulary in improving reading comprehension please indicate them.

For this last part of the questionnaire, teachers were invited to add any comment, suggestion or advice concerning the topic as a whole. Different comments were given:

- Vocabulary is certainly an effective component in FL mastery.

- More time and space should be given to teaching English as a foreign language programs.

- Different techniques and strategies are available and used by teachers in teaching vocabulary.

- Students should be encouraged to read (especially novels, short stories).

- Vocabulary, because it is a serious issue in teaching languages, must be given more attention.

- Reading is the first source of vocabulary. It helps students to understand a reading passage by grasping its meaning rapidly.

- Reading can introduce EFL learners to a wide range of vocabulary in context and students become familiar with a variety of vocabulary in different contexts.

- Vocabulary enriches the learner's lexical repertoire and provides him or her with systematic strategies to cope with any register.

- Vocabulary is crucial to the improvement of the reading skill.

- It helps pupils to grasp new words that would permit them to be strong and confident language learners.

3.3.5. Summary of results

The results obtained from the analysis of the students' and the teachers' questionnaires demonstrate the most pertinent points that have been stated in this research. After analyzing teachers' answers, we concluded the following:

It was obvious that most of teachers are experienced and have a high educational which make their answers dependable. Moreover, it has been noticed that the majority of them

consider vocabulary as a very essential part in teaching. Also, they them encourage their students to read in order to extract ideas or to rewrite paragraphs. Furthermore, teachers showed a positive attitude towards introducing reading sessions claiming that students' level in reading comprehension is average. In addition, all teachers seemed to be aware of the need to explain difficult words to their students because this may help them develop their language. Besides, they reported to use different strategies to introduce and explain new words such as translation, words in context and synonyms.

Concerning teaching vocabulary, all of them informed us that vocabulary is their major concern; it is probably due to students' need to learn more words to express themselves whether in writing or speaking. The teachers also expressed their awareness about their students' difficulties with vocabulary mastery. Hence, they insisted on the fact that they introduce new words in every lesson because they know that teaching vocabulary contributes to the improvement of students' reading comprehension.

In addition, the results obtained from the analysis of the students' questionnaire demonstrated the most pertinent points that have been stated in this research. The students' questionnaire results revealed the following facts: first- year LMD students have a serious problem towards reading comprehension. This fact surely caused vocabulary knowledge's paucity. Nevertheless, we inferred that first- year EFL learners like to have a vocabulary stock, but they are not aware about its benefits and definitely have no idea about what vocabulary learning implies. In addition to this, the findings of this questionnaire revealed students' lack of reading comprehension is due to vocabulary gap and insufficient strategies for teaching vocabulary. This indicates that vocabulary strategies might be required to fill the gap of reading comprehension.

All in all, both teachers and learners are aware the effectiveness of vocabulary as strategy that improves the students' target language generally and reading comprehension particularly.

Conclusion

This chapter was dedicated to the field work. It analyzed both data gathering tools (the teachers' interview and the students' questionnaire) and interpreted the results.

All in all, one can say that students show a high awareness about the value of vocabulary that leads them to practice the language which has a great impact on the development of reading comprehension. This means that there is a positive relationship between vocabulary and students' reading comprehension. On the other hand, the analysis of the teachers' questionnaire also affirms that they show strong agreement with what we have assumed in our piece of research. Moreover, vocabulary is one way of facilitating learning and teaching process according to many years of research and practical application by hundreds of thousands of teachers, now exist for virtually every imaginable instructional purpose. Furthermore, we now know a great deal about the effects of vocabulary on students and the conditions necessary for rising vocabulary knowledge, especially for teaching reading comprehension. Consequently, students and teachers' questionnaires results have been affirmed.

General Conclusion

Enhancing reading comprehension for foreign language learners is a difficult task in the teaching process. It requires directing the teachers' attention towards a significant affective factor namely 'vocabulary' and the role it plays in boosting students to comprehend better text. The present study has dealt with the strong relationship that exists between vocabulary and reading comprehension. The main concern in our research was to investigate whether teaching vocabulary helps students to understand better or not. The present study was composed of three chapters. The first one was an overview of reading comprehension, its main characteristics, and its vital role in the learning process in general and for developing the reading skill in particular. The second chapter investigated vocabulary; it highlighted some definitions and a set of vocabulary strategies that help learners come over the deficiencies they face in their reading comprehension. Then, it focused on the relationship between vocabulary and reading comprehension. Finally, the third chapter was devoted to the analysis of the data obtained from the students' and the teachers' questionnaire. As a matter of fact, vocabulary has been proved to be a crucial element that helps learners their difficulties in reading comprehension. This was confirmed after the analysis of the questionnaire of both first year LMD students and teachers. The discussion of the students' questionnaire results demonstrated that the majority of students show a great deal of interest and willingness to participate in reading tasks in classes for the sake of improving and developing their reading comprehension. Vocabulary gets learners engaged in the various activities and take pleasure in doing. As a result, vocabulary has a great impact on them to have the chance to achieve reading comprehension better than others since they are interested to learn and show motivation and willingness to participate. This provides them with more opportunities to practice the language and use it. The results obtained from the analysis of the teachers' questionnaire

showed that teachers are aware of the value of vocabulary in fighting students' reluctance to comprehend by providing them with opportunities to read and get the meaning. Thus, we believe learners will be motivated to read out their thoughts and develop their reading comprehension.

To conclude, we can say that our results questions have been answered and the reaserch hypothesis has been confirmed.

Recommendations and Suggestions

Vocabulary is surely a fundamental basis that makes up a language; therefore, our case study aims at shed the light on the impact of vocabulary as a strategy to enhance EFL learners' reading comprehension. Therefore in our present study, we suggested that in order to develop students' reading comprehension, it is quite important to focus in enriching students' competency in English vocabulary for learning better the language as well as varying and investigating activities in order to enlarge their vocabulary stock. Teachers should focus more on students' vocabulary difficulties which could hinder their progression in learning English.

✓ They should play the role of guider and controller who encourage them to take part in their lectures.

✓

✓ Teachers must make sure that their students enrich their vocabulary; for that, students should practice more activities in vocabulary course. This will help them to increase their ability to comprehend better.

✓ Teachers should organize time for reading sessions.

✓ They have to motivate learners to read more in order to comprehend more.

✓ Teachers have to prepare different vocabulary tasks that help learners to improve their proficiency in English vocabulary.

✓ Through reading, students are expected to obtain a large recognition of words

✓ Reading should be considered as an essential element. It should receive more consideration through designing reading sessions in the curriculum, paving the way more to teach the language for the learners.

✓ Teachers should suggest easy and interesting written materials for their students in order to encourage them to read.

✓ Teachers have to invite their students to speak more by encourage them during the oral course.

✓ Teachers must give the chance to their students to give their opinion and practice the language.

All in all, Teachers' cannot take all the responsibility alone; they need the help of the administration and even from their students. As a result, it would be a useful step if both teachers and administration work together to help students learn better during the course. For example, teachers help in preparing effective lessons in vocabulary and reading and controlling students and classrooms. Furthermore, the university administration can help in providing useful tools and different materials. Finally, the students' role is to respect the teachers' procedures and be motivated for better learning and teaching.

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Appendices

The People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of Foreign Languages

Branch of English

Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

You are kindly invited to fill in the following questionnaire as a part of a master dissertation entitled « The Effect of Teaching Vocabulary on Improving Reading Comprehension of English as a Foreign Language » .

Your answers and opinions will help us to accomplish this research project.

Please put a tick (√) for the appropriate choice or full answer whenever it is necessary.

Thank you for your cooperation

Section One: General Information

1. How do you consider your level in English?

   a-Very good ☐   b-Good ☐   c-Average ☐   d-Poor ☐

2. Was your choice to study English :

   a- Personal ☐   b-Imposed ☐

Section Two: Reading Comprehension

3. How much do you like reading?

   a. A lot ☐   b. A little☐   c. Not at all ☐

4. How often do you read in English (outside the classroom)?

a. Frequently ☐   b. Sometimes ☐   c. Rarely ☐   d. Never☐

5. How often do you have reading sessions in class ?

a. Frequently ☐   b. Sometimes ☐   c. Rarely ☐   d. Never☐

6. In general, when reading a written text / book do you find it :

a. Easy to understand / comprehend   ☐

b. Difficult to understand / comprehend ☐

c. Somehow difficult   ☐

7. In case you have difficulties to understand the text , is it because of :

a. Difficult vocabulary   ☐

b. Intended meaning (the meaning is not clear; you have to read between lines) ☐

c. The use of idioms / slangs/ metaphors (you do not know their meaning/use) ☐

e. other reason(s): …………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………...

8. What are the reading strategies that enable you to achieve comprehension in reading ?

a. Predicting   ☐

b. Skimming   ☐

c. Scanning   ☐

d. Inferring   ☐

e. Guessing the meaning of unfamiliar word   ☐

f. Self monitoring   ☐

Explain why ? …………………………………………………………...

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

9. In your opinion, how can your teacher help you to understand a text?

………………………………………………………………………………………….

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

Section Three: Teaching Vocabulary

10. How often does your teacher introduce new vocabulary in class ?

　a. Always ☐　　　b. Often ☐　　　c. Sometimes ☐　　　d. Rarely ☐

11. How does your teacher present new vocabulary in class?

　a. Through pictures　　　　　　　　　☐

　b. Through videos　　　　　　　　　☐

　c. Through examples / sentences on the board ☐

　d. Through texts　　　　　　　　　☐

　e.　Through giving synonyms　　　　☐

　f.　Through translating　　　　　　☐

　　Other ways: …………………………………………………………

12. When reading, do you think it is necessary to understand all the vocabulary in order to comprehend the whole text?

　a. Yes　☐　　　　　　　b. No ☐

-Please explain: …………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………..

13. When you encounter difficult words while reading, do you :

　a. Read again and try to guess the meaning from the context ☐

　b. Ask the teacher about its meaning　　　　　　　　☐

　c. Ask a peer (classmate)　　　　　　　　　　　　☐

　d. Look to its meaning in the dictionary　　　　　　☐

14. Do you think that teaching vocabulary improves your reading comprehension ?

　a.　Yes　☐　　　　　　　b. No　☐

15. How can teaching vocabulary improve/develop your reading comprehension ?

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

Thank you for your participation.

The People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of Foreign Languages

Branch of English

Teachers' questionnaire

Dear Teacher,

   You are kindly invited to fill in the following questionnaire as part of a master dissertation entitled « The Effect of Teaching Vocabulary on Improving Reading Comprehension of English as a Foreign Language ».

Your answers and opinions will be a great help to accomplish this research project .

   Please put a tick (√) for the appropriate choice or full answer whenever it is necessary .

                                                    Thank you for your collaboration .

Section One: General Information

1. How long have you been teaching English ?

………….years

2. What are the modules that you have taught during this period?

………………………………………………………………………………….

3. What degree do you have?

   a. License ☐

   b. Magister/ Master ☐

   d. Doctorate ☐

Section Two: Overview of Reading and Reading Comprehension

3. How often do you encourage your students to read ?

    a. Usually   ☐

    b. Sometimes ☐

    c. Rarely   ☐

    d. Never   ☐

4. Do you introduce reading sessions in the module(s) you teach?

    a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

- please explain why or why not:

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

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

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

………………………………………………………………………………………

5. How do you find the level of your students' reading comprehension skill?

    a. Good ☐   b. average ☐   c. low ☐

6. Do you think that some students' failure in reading comprehension is due to:

    a. The difficulty of the reading task(s) ☐

    b. The Difficulty of lexical items   ☐

    c. The nature (genre) of the reading material ☐

    d. The students' weak vocabulary background ☐

    e. other(s): …………………………………………………………………………

    ………………………………………………………………………………………

7. While dealing with reading in class, do you explain the difficult words in the text?

    a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

- If "Yes", is this done:

a. Before reading ☐   b. During reading ☐   c. After reading ☐

- please explain: …………………………………………………………………………………………
……
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

Section Three: Teaching Vocabulary

8. How often do you present new words in class ?

a. Usually   ☐

b. Sometimes   ☐

c. Rarely ☐

d. Never   ☐

- please explain:
……
…………………………………………………………………………………………………

10. When you teach new vocabulary, what strategy do you use ?

a. Translation   ☐

b. Pictures   ☐

c. Definition   ☐

d. Word in context   ☐

e. Synonym and opposite   ☐

f. Other:……………………………………………………………………………..

11. Do your learners have difficulties with vocabulary mastery ?

a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

12. What type of vocabulary items learners find the most difficulties with ?

a. Scientific words☐

b. Abstract words ☐

c. Compound words ☐

d. Idioms/ slangs ☐

e. Other: ……………………………………………………………………………

13. When students cannot understand some vocabulary in a text, do you?

a. Give the meaning directly and systematically. ☐

b. Ask learners to guess the meaning from the context. ☐

c. Ask them to check in the dictionary. ☐

d. Ask them to discuss it with a peer. ☐

e. Other: …………………………………………………………………………

- Please explain your choice: …………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………….

…………………………………………………………………………………………….

14. Do you think that students' difficulty with understanding vocabulary affects their reading comprehension skill?

a. Yes   ☐   b. No ☐

- Please explain how: …………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………...

……………………………………………………………………………………………

15. Does teaching vocabulary contribute to the improvement of students' reading comprehension?

a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

- If "Yes", explain how

………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………..

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………………………………………………………………………………………………

16. If you have further suggestions or comments concerning the effect of teaching vocabulary in improving reading comprehension, please indicate them.

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

....

We thank you for your participation in filling this questionnaire.

Résumé

La présente dissertation traite le rôle de la connaissance du développement des apprenants de l'anglais en tant que langue étrangère pour la maîtrise de la lecture an département d'anglais de l'Université Mohammed Khaider Biskra durant l'année scolaire 2018/2019.

Au début de notre recherche, nous avions supposé que si les professeures d'anglais expliquaient efficacement la signification de vocabulaire, ils pourraient aider les étudiants à développer leur compréhension à la lecture. L'enseignant devait jouer son véritable rôle pour interagir avec les étudiants. Ils sont conscients de l'importance capitale du vocabulaire dans le développement des compétences en lecture. Ne les défier pas de les encourager à les développer. Pour nous tester que l'hypothèse est correcte, nous avons effectué une recherche par groupe d'étudiants de première année (LMD). Afin de recueillir des information pour cette étude descriptive, des questionnaires on été distribués sur des étudiants en première année anglais (LMD) (Un échantillon de 50 étudiants arbitrairement choisis) et 6 enseignants de divers modules. L'objectif de cette étude es l'importance du vocabulaire dans le développement des compétence verbales pendant les quotas étudiants.

Ce travaille contient deux partie, la première partie contient la définition de la lecture on les termes du concept, la deuxième partie contient le vocabulaire et les difficultés rencontrées par l'étudiant lors de l'apprentissage de la recherche et comprend une analyse détaillée du questionnaire que nous avons distribué aux étudiants de première année. Et les enseignants de la langue anglaise et nous avons obtenu au travers de nos recherches que le vocabulaire joue un rôle important en aidant les étudiants à développer leurs compétences en lecture et en réduisant les difficultés.