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An Investigation of the Contextual and Psychological Factors that Affect Reading

A Case Study of Second Year Learners at Abderrahmane Ibn Aouf Secondary School in M'sila

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Dedication

To the dearest people to my heart

To my parents with love

To my sisters "Yasmina, Karima, Meriem"

To my brothers "Djamel, Abdedaim, Alaa eddine, Yacine chihab eddine"

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

To all my teachers

To my close friends

Acknowledgements

Abstract

Reading is a process that does not only depend on reading strategies and abilities but is affected by contextual and psychological factors. A number of learners are unable to grasp the meaning conveyed by reading texts because they are hindered by those factors, this study aimed to provide further proofs about the problem of reading comprehension in English as a Foreign Language for pupils at the secondary school. Therefore, it intended to investigate some contextual and psychological factors that were suspected of having an influence on the pupils' inability to comprehend written texts in English. We hypothesised that pupils' performance is actually weak because of contextual and psychological factors; the descriptive method was used to approach this issue through a case study. Data were collected from a sample of secondary school teachers (n= 6) and another one from learners (n=30) in Abderrahmane Ibn Aouf Secondary School in M'sila through two questionnaires. Data analysis showed that learners do really suffer from great problems in reading comprehension and the teachers' responses confirmed that psychological and contextual factors are among the ones influencing learners reading abilities. Thus, these sides need to be taken into consideration to enable learners to develop their reading competencies.

List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FL: Foreign Language

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

N: Number

RC: Reading Comprehension

SL: Second Language

%: Percentage

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General Introduction

1. Statement of the Problem

Learners in secondary schools are supposed to have certain skills which permit them to learn with more ease and less constraints. For example: understanding oral messages, reading simple passages and developing paragraphs. The reality proves that learners are still far for the required level of proficiency. Reading is a process that does not only depend on reading strategies and abilities but is affected by contextual and psychological factors. We have stated that most pupils do not read adequately given the fact that they lack enough knowledge about the basics of reading. In addition to that, they are not provided with the correct necessary guidance in the classroom. Psychological and contextual factors which operate negatively in worsening the situation are neglected in the process of teaching. We believe that learners struggle while reading; this is due to some inner forces such as: high anxiety, low motivation, lack of self-esteem is among the reasons which distinguish various levels of reading comprehension within the class.

2. Significance of the Study

This study is important in the educational field because it attempts to investigate and clarify a real problem in the Algerian school. In addition, it intends to provide solutions /suggestions which may help both teachers and learners in teaching and learning the reading skill. This can be reached if the formers give more attention to their roles and the learners' inner state and the latter can overcome their conflicts if they are provided with help.

3. Aim of the Study

The aim of this research is to shed light on the factors which are not widely suspected to influence the reading process but which we believe are responsible and have a great impact on the development of this skill. This study could help discover the reasons behind the weakness in reading in secondary schools. Many researchers concentrated in their studies on pedagogical and linguistic concerns, while fewer treated the psychological side.

4. Research Questions

What is reading?

What is reading comprehension?

What are the main reasons that cause the weakness in reading among secondary school pupils?

Can the learner's environment (teachers, peers) influence their improvement in reading?

Do the learner's inner state and conflicts influence to a certain degree their improvement in reading?

5. Hypothesis

We hypothesize that the students' performance in reading is actually weak because of psychological and contextual factors, in other words; if the psychological and contextual factors are not appropriate, then reading comprehension will be weak or disappointing.

6. Research Methodology Design

6.1. Choice of the Method

Reading comprehension has become a phenomenon that needs description and identification. The present work investigates a problem in the field of education; that is why; it falls into educational research. It is concerned with foreign language teaching and investigates some factors which hinder reading. The fact that there is no proposed treatment for this phenomenon, this research is descriptive.

6.2. Population and Sampling

The phenomenon of underachievement in reading in English is widely seen among situations of all levels and in M'sila secondary schools particularly. It is more prominent within second year literary streams because starting from this stage students are asked to answer activities which require more deep reading. The population is then, restricted to second year foreign language stream and comprises 30 pupils; the whole class (a single class) .The second category consists of 06 teachers of English during the academic year 2012/2013.

6.3. Data Gathering Tools

The research tools adopted in this research work are two questionnaires administered to both secondary school teachers and pupils. This research tool always proved to supply illuminating information though exhausting and time consuming, besides its ability to report true and serious data as it guarantees high levels of dixreteness and therefore reliability and objectivity. On the one hand, the teacher's questionnaire consists of Teacher's opinion about the level of reading comprehension of their learners, the type of errors they make and the problem they face, their willingness of reading and others would be of great help to us to find out whether all teachers meet the same hardships. On the other hand, the learners' questionnaire will enable us to have access to learners attitudes and feelings towards the reading skill, as well as, we could ensure that pupils answer all the questions and simply questionnaires all returned.

7. Structure of the Dissertation

The research is basically divided into three main chapters. The first two chapters constitute the literature survey. Chapter one is concerned with the theoretical issues about reading, its definition, models, and types. Then it deals with reading comprehension its definition, main theories, its components and reading comprehension in English as a foreign language. Chapter two is devoted to some contextual and psychological factors that we assume cause the weakness in reading comprehension, similarly to the role of the teacher and peers in the reading process. Psychological factors are those like anxiety, motivation, and self-esteem.

The last chapter of the field work is devoted to the analysis of the collected data by means of the teachers and learners questionnaires and to the conclusion and also the implications deduced from this research work.

Chapter One

Theoretical Issues of Reading and Reading Comprehension

Introduction

Reading is a cognitive psycholinguistic activity. Throughout this chapter, we will explore the nature of reading in order to get a clear insight through definitions, different types and models provided by researchers in the field. After that, we will move toward the goal of this chapter which is to review what is known about reading comprehension as a purpose of reading process. Furthermore, we will present reading comprehension theories namely: text based theories, reader based theories, theories based on meta-cognition, and its components. Then, we will end this chapter speaking about its levels and comprehension in foreign language.

1.1. Nature of Reading

The term "reading" has not been clearly defined up to date; it usually means dealing with language messages in a written form. Research on the nature of reading has been subject to a debate and is often described as "an incredibly confused and inclusive one" (smith, 1985, p. 5). The debate was between two theories: according to the first theory, they assumed that the ability to decode written words is the essential factor in the reading process. In other words, they relate reading just to learning how to read or what the superficial symbols represent. According to Davies (1995) reading is a matter of visual processing that involves eye-movement, perceptual span, letter shapes, etc.

While for the second theory, reading is a matter of understanding and getting meaning. It was Throndike (1971) who issued that reading is "understanding the meaning of the printed words" (326), relating reading by problem solving during which the reader resolve matters of meaning to a logical deduction and that good reader who can think clearly; in other words, understanding a passage is a mathematical operation that requires searching for the significance of printed words in order to getting meaning.

Finally, one can conclude that reading is not an isolated activity that takes place in some vacuum, it is not a cognitive operation of meaning extraction, but it is a complex activity of constructing meaning by means of visual aids. What happens is that "readers understand what they read because they are able to take the stimulus beyond its graphic representation and assign it to an appropriate group of concepts" (Clarke and Silberstein, 1979, p. 48). That means the readers achieve understanding just when they use all their senses and abilities related to the printed words in order to get and interpretate the message of the author or the text.

1.2. Definition of Reading

Reading is a complex system of deriving meaning from print that requires all of the following: an understanding of how speech sounds are related to decoding skills, fluency, vocabulary background knowledge, active comprehension strategies, and a motivation to read (McShane, 2005, p. 7), she defined reading as a hard task which needs all the key elements work to gather in order to define its content.

Many linguists are convinced that reading is a cognitive process which involves strategies. According to Williams (1984, p. 2) defines reading as "the process whereby one looks at and understands what has been written". He insists on the understanding because the understanding or the comprehension is the central point in reading. So we can say that Williams (*ibid.*) related the cognitive process of reading to the metacognitive act of understanding or comprehension. Widdowson views reading as: "not simply a matter of extracting information from the text, rather, it is one in which the reading activates a range of knowledge with the reader's mind that…may be refined and extracted by the new information supplied by the text"(1979, p. 56), according to him it is a kind of dialogue between the reader and the text; is not a matter of comprehension but a matter of interaction between the new information and the old one or the previous information that exists in the reader's mind before. So the first definition regards reading as a cognitive activity which implies a certain amount of thinking and mental abilities from the past of the reader, while the second definition regards reading as metacognitive activity which implies the reader's schemata to get meaning out and hence creates a kind of interaction between the reader and the text.

1.3. Models of Reading

There are various theories and models about the process of reading, relying on the decomposition of reading, theorists argue over bottom-up (letter to semantic) versus top down (Semantic to letter) approaches to reading.

1.3.1. The Bottom-up Model

The traditional view which holds that novice readers acquire a set of hierarchically ordered sub skills that sequentially build toward comprehension ability. Reading in this view is a matter of decoding printed words into sounds in order to build up a meaning and a sense of texts. Furthermore, this model refers to the view that reading as a process of

building letters into words, words into sentences, phrases and then proceeds to the overall meaning. According to Davies, the bottom up models are "Models of the reading process that describe the process as a sequences of discrete 'step' in which the direction of processing is from 'bottom level' features of text to 'higher level' that is, from the identification of letters to sounds, to words, to sentences, and finally to meaning and thinking" (1995, p. 169).

The primary concern of this model is the importance of decoding in the reading process, researchers of psychology described this model as being "data driven" and these data refer to letters and words, which are written on page, among them Gough according to him (1985) that the bottom up processing involves a series of steps the reader has to go through i.e. a series that involve moving from a step to another one, departing from recognizing the key features of every letter and then words, sentences until reaching the meaning of the text. According to this model, we deduce that the good reader who can decode the printed words simply because the comprehension of what is being read depends mainly on how well the decoding skill is being performed.

1.3.2. The Top-down Model

Unlike the bottom- up model, the top down model is a view, which assumes that a reader uses a prior knowledge and experience, as well as expectations in relation to the writer's message during, in order to process information. According to Davies the top down models are "predict that the processing sequence proceeds from prediction about meaning to attention to progressively smaller units, for example, letters, and visual features" (op.cit, p. 175). In other words, minimal attention is paid to letter- sound correspondences, and a great importance to the prior knowledge and expectations of the individual.

Top-down models are described to be "concept driven", that is to say, the experience of different ideas and concepts in the reader's mind or the prior knowledge that adds information to the text, As in Smith's words "the more already know, the less you need to find out" (1985, p. 15). So the guesses and the predictions that the reader gets engaged in that are based on his prior knowledge about the topic. According to this model, the good reader who knows how to use his/her experience and knowledge related to the text as a means in order to understand and make expectations.

1.3.3. The Interactive Model

There are models of reading where bottom up and top down processes work together to ensure the accurate and rapid processing of information. This model suggests that reading process in initiated by formulating hypotheses about meaning and by decoding letters and words. Rummh (1985) examines reading as an interactive process which includes various components from letter- level knowledge, letter cluster knowledge, lexical- level knowledge, syntactic- level knowledge, and semantic-level knowledge. Decoding skills are generally thought of as mainly involving the initial components while comprehension involves the higher level components. In other words, this model of reading involves aspects of automaticity that is, a reader becomes more proficient in decoding, and less attention is devoted to this skill so that more attention is freed to examine comprehension issues. According to Alderson (2000, p. 67) the reader is able to "synthesize a final hypothesis from the text from multiple knowledge sources interacting continuously and simultaneously", that means the reader makes his first hypothesis from the printed words and then he makes combination with his prior knowledge or what he knows about the topic before in order to get and develop a new knowledge.

1.4. Types of Reading

There are two types of reading according to the reader's point of view which are extensive and intensive reading, we will discuss them below:

1.4.1. Extensive Reading

Reading under any of its labels (extensive and intensive) is definitely beneficial for native speakers and second or foreign language learners. Extensive reading is to extend to activity beyond the boundaries of classroom. According to Alderson (*ibid.)* he defines extensive reading as being the reading of large amounts of material with the aim of getting an overall understanding of the fore mentioned material, the role of readers is to read and try to grasp the gist of what actually reading and forsaking the focus on the meaning of individual words and sentences. Harmer (2001, p. 210) enumerates the benefits of reading extensive as being pleasurable for the learners and improving their general language; and in to motivate learners to read, make learners more positive about it, improve their overall comprehension, give them a wider vocabulary, and created on them the reading habit, extensive reading is needed.

According to Nuttal (1982) considered that extensive reading is the best way of improving both vocabulary and reading skills, here is the responsibility of the teacher by guiding and leading learners to get the maximum benefit from reading and involving them in learning process to learn more. Some researchers associate extensive reading to quantity of material. Hafiz and Tudor (1989, p. 5) assume that this type of reading, being of a great pedagogical value, emphasizes the importance of learner's exposure to large quantities of meaningful and interesting material. In the long run, this would produce a beneficial effect on the learner's commend of the second or foreign language.

1.4.2. Intensive Reading

Intensive reading is an activity involving reading for details. Learners usually read the page a explore the meaning and to be acquainted with writing mechanisms, during this type of reading the learner gains text comprehension too, then will be able to form critical view and is, thus, able to state well-founded opinion about the content, the arguments, the language used, the message, the intention and the form of the text. Intensive reading focuses on details and analysis. For Nutell, it requires "the student pay great attention to the text, the aim of intensive reading is to arrive at a profound and detailed understanding of the text" (op.cit, p 23). Sometimes the pupils imagine the scene, the characters, the scenery surrounding them, and what they visualize becomes part of the meaning of the text. In intensive reading, it is not enough to understand the gist of the text; more detailed comprehension is necessary. That is why they read every word to understand everything. In other words, the learner is able to form a critical view and able to state well found about the content, the arguments, the language used, the message, the intention and the form of the text. To sum up, most researchers (Harmer and Nuttal) differentiate between extensive and intensive reading, asserting that extensive reading suggests reading at length, often for pleasure and leisurely way, while, intensive reading is more concentrated, and less relaxed, and often dedicated not so much to pleasure as to the achievement of a study goal.

1.5. Comprehension

Human beings attempts to comprehend what surrounds them and struggle to achieve that. They search harmony in the world; it means that everything should have sense. They stored the comprehended things in their memories to be used in the future to understand new things. It is crucial while understanding to take into consideration what we already know about the world as it is argued by Smith (2004, p. 379). He finds that comprehension

is a result of what we already know (the old information) with the new one in his head. Thus, comprehension is the state of being out of confusion and puzzling to get things clear with no misunderstanding. Anderson (1995) provides the idea that comprehension is analyzed into three stages. The first stage is concerned with perception. At this stage, the message being either talk or print is encoded. The second stage is called the parsing stage. At this point, what was encoded is turned into a mental map for all gained meanings. The final stage is termed the utilization stage. Here, what was acquired as new knowledge from sentences' meanings is used in understanding other things.

Comprehension is to take in information, and then try working it, and finally use it. The encoded message (written or heard) is received by the one who try to comprehend. Then, when he pays attention to the message automatically he takes it. The message moves toward the short memory after that some mental representation in his brain and finally the information move to long term memory. Here the person can remember it easily when he needs it just in this level we can say that person comprehend well; if he succeeds to proceed with new situations to be comprehended with no confusions contradictions his comprehension is realized; otherwise, the previously acquired meanings are just a set of misunderstanding to be reconfirmed.

1.6. Definition of Reading Comprehension

Any reader want to achieve his goal through the reading process while reading a text and extracting a meaning or understanding from any text. The writer decodes a message and directs it to a particular audience. If this audience does not get the writer's intended message, there will be no sense to the reading process and the writer will not achieve his goal to be read and understood and the reader will not get any benefit or knowledge. The centrality of understanding while reading was emphasized by Nuttal (1982, p. 22) when she states: "understanding is central to the process of reading". She explains that "understanding must be the focus of our teaching"; it means that someone who decodes the print words does not necessarily understand it; may be he/she spells the words correctly but they do not extract a clear meaning, here we can say the reading process is broken down because the comprehension is not achieved.

There is another view by Vaughn and Thompson (2004, p. 99) who agree that comprehension is not just to decode the printed words but also to take and use the previous knowledge and experiences to provide a new comprehension "reading comprehension is a

dynamic construction of meaning. This meaning is the result of the combination of the texts input, the readers prior knowledge". Discourse processing researchers define comprehension as the formation of an internally consistent mental representation of text; through impart the information from the text with the reader's prior knowledge. For example, The RAND Reading Research Group (Snow, 2002, p. 11) defines reading comprehension as the process of getting meaning out of the written language; it emphasizes the importance of three elements:

1. The Reader: who is doing the comprehension, including all the capacities, abilities, knowledge, experiences that a person brings to the act of reading;

2. The Text: what is to comprehend and; which include any printed text;

3. The Activity: in which comprehension is apart; it involves the purposes, processes, and consequences associated with the act of reading are included.

These three elements interwoven and influenced by the larger social and cultural context in which the reading occurs. Generally, we can conclude that the researchers are split between two groups; the first group who feels that comprehender's mental representation must match that intended by the author, and the second group who feels that any internally consistent representation is a sign of comprehension.

1.7. Theories of Reading Comprehension

Understanding is a very complicated process that entails many theories and definitions as does reading. Persson (1994, p. 14) indicates that comprehension has been defined through theories based on text structure, theories based on the reader, and theories based on meta-cognition.

1.7.1. Text –Based Theories

For the advocates of this theory, the criterion of successful comprehension is the organization of the text or the features of the text. According to Brown (1986) comprehension depends to a large extent on text characteristics. In addition, Persson op.cit gives some theories according to which the text is the basic holder of meaning as story grammar, case grammar, propositional analysis, cohesion and structural analysis of prose. From that they all claim that the structure or the organization of the text (causation, comparison, and description) is the key to understand the writer's ideas. In other words,

they ignored totally the reader (his abilities, cognitive capacities…) because they focus just on the text. If the latter is coherent and has a clear message then the comprehension is guaranteed. The weakness of this theory is that the comprehension does not require the familiarity with the language and text aspects, but does involve other factors like the reader. Consequently, the reader becomes the centre of interest that has led to new considerations and variables that affect comprehension.

1.7.2. Reader Based Theories

This theory insists on the reader as the heart or the active processor of the comprehension circle. According to Persson, Assumptions based on the reader's knowledge structure are called "schema theory". The later entails the knowledge of the world as whole to realize affective comprehension *(ibid.)*; knowledge that helps to interpretate and understands the world, comprehension occurs through bridging new situations and information in the text to those already existing in the brain. The limitation of this theory is the over reliance on the reader's previews knowledge and its ignorance of the text role. However, it is worth mentioning that comprehension is a "co-operative task that stands halfway between the text and the reader" (Nuttall, 1982, p. 10). Allen and Corder (1975) share the same view of as of Nuttall's, and further they argue understanding results from interaction between various features of the text, reader and context. Indeed, this combination of text and cognitive activities has led to new factors that may uncover some of the secrets of this complex process.

1.7.3. Theories Based on Meta-cognition

For the success of understanding, one has to know everything about the process of such a complicated activity. Persson (1994), a skilled reader is someone who is acquainted with printed words as well as with reading strategies. This is mainly as reading comprehension is both "search for meaning (on the page) and construction of meaning in the reader's brain" (ibid, 19). Snow (2003, p. 11) states that understanding is "the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language". This interpretation consists of three elements:

- The reader: who is doing the comprehension; here we include the abilities, knowledge, and experience that a person brings to the act of reading.
- The text: what is to be comprehended; it includes any printed material in which comprehension is a part.

- The activity: in which comprehension is a part; it involves the purpose, processes and consequences pertinent to the act of reading.

So, reading comprehension is a complex activity that involves three factors: the reader (his knowledge, abilities, and experiences), the text (grammar, organization, and structure) and the activity (purposes, processes, and consequences).

1.8. Components of Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension involves the following components to serve comprehension from break down:

1.8.1. Background knowledge

It is all the world knowledge that the reader brings to the act of reading. It includes School-based knowledge and personal knowledge, episodic (events), declarative (facts). Researchers have used one of two general approaches for investigating the relationship between background knowledge and reading comprehension. The First, is general background knowledge (or world knowledge) related to general reading comprehension, e.g., on an IQ test, (Harrison et al., 1995) .The second is background knowledge about a specific topic related to comprehension of a specific passage about that topic (Stevens, 1980). Not surprisingly, fewer researchers have used the former approach, since developing acceptable, representative tests of general knowledge is a difficult task. Besides, the researchers demonstrated that learners require a high level of back ground knowledge understanding to make inferences about the character's emotional states, reasoned that understanding mental states many facilitate comprehension because it leads to an awareness of the intentions of both the characters and the author. That means the reader who is familiar with the text's topic is likely to achieve comprehension and the reading process will be easier. Someone who engages in reading without knowing what he is reading about will not get the whole message of the text.

1.8.2. Inferencing

Inferencing is a means of combining information together within sentences in text, between sentences in text, or between prior knowledge and text. For example, in order to understand what the word "he" is referring to in a text, the reader must combine information in that sentence with information in a previous sentence that referred to a male. Readers also use inference processes to find out the meaning of an unknown

vocabulary word; sometimes when they face a new word they try to understand the whole meaning of the sentence to grasp the meaning of it. Likewise, readers constantly add information from background knowledge to what they read in order to understand it. However, readers are often not aware of these processes. One important distinction made in psychological literature is between on-line and off-line Inferences ones that are made only during later retrieval (Graesser et al., 1997).

On-line inferences (like those made during concurrent think-aloud protocols) may include those made automatically as well as those made deliberately, strategically, and effort fully. Off-line inferences (like those made when answering post-reading questions or during retrospective protocols) are always seen as deliberate, strategic, and effortful. On-line inferences are the ones of highest theoretical interest to psychologists, presumably because they represent the situation in most reading contexts. Off-line inferences are of great interest to educational psychologists, since school-related reading often includes reading passages followed by questions that require inferences. Summing up, inference is crucial in reading process because the authors do not always provide complete descriptions about the topic. However they often provide clues that readers can use to read between the lines, by making inferences that combine information in the text with their back ground knowledge.

1.8.3. Reading Strategies

A strategy is a plan developed by a reader to assist in comprehension and in thinking about the text; the reader refers to fellow given strategy when reading the word alone and when does not give a reader a sense of meaning of the text. Skilled readers use cognitive and metacognitive reading strategies such as determining objectives before reading, asking themselves questions and answering them while reading, summarizing, and reflecting on what they read. Reading Strategies help skilled readers understand better what they read. Readers are not necessarily aware of using these strategies, although they are able to verbalize many of them when asked to think aloud during reading, and are able to identify some of them on questionnaires. Some research suggests, however, that while good readers can accurately self-report strategies, poor readers have weaknesses in metacognitive processes that lead them to inaccurately self-report strategy use (Baker & Cerro, 2000).

Reading Strategies can be taught to learners who struggle with comprehension; this improves their understanding of texts. We deduce that strategies are tools used to analyze

text and by that the reader can overcome understanding problems. For example, the reader should look for how the material is organized focusing on chronological order, another example is that the reader should write down questions while reading and try to predict answers about to it. If the reader uses reading strategies then reading comprehension is developed.

1.8.4. Importance of Vocabulary

Vocabulary knowledge is important because it encompasses all the words we must know to access our background, express our ideas and communicate affectively and learn about new concepts. Student's word knowledge is linked strongly to academic success because students who have large vocabularies can understand new ideas and concepts more quickly than students with limited vocabularies. The high correlation in research literature of knowledge with reading comprehension indicates that if students do not adequately and steadily grow their vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension will be affected (Chall and Jacobs, 2003).

There are many aspects of word knowledge, most of which have received little attention from researchers. Nagy and Scott (2000) point out that knowledge about any single word is multidimensional (e.g., giving a definition, knowing the part of speech, being able to use the word correctly), incremental (not all-or-nothing), polysemous (many words have more than one meaning), interrelated (e.g., understanding a definition requires understanding other words in the definition), and heterogeneous (e.g., the knowledge one can have about function words, technical terms, and concrete nouns varies).

In addition to word knowledge, vocabulary knowledge includes knowing the meanings of affixes (prefixes and suffixes), understanding relationships between words, and strategies for figuring out new words. The majority of research on vocabulary and reading comprehension focuses on single meanings of words. As well as, vocabulary is crucial to reading comprehension and determines how well student will be able to comprehend the text they read in middle and high school. Comprehension is far more than recognizing words remembering their meaning. However, if a student does not know the meanings of sufficient proportion of the words in the text, comprehension is impossible.

1.8.5. Word Reading

word reading includes both a reader's sight words (stored in long-term memory) and word

attack skills. The latter include decoding, analogy, and morphological strategies (e.g., using prefixes and suffixes; Anderson et al., 1993). Measures of word reading often include real words and nonsense words or pseudo words (e.g., Blum or grame) that follow regular spelling-sound Patterns in English. Especially with older students, nonsense words are thought to reveal student's true word attack skills, since any real word could already be a sight word for the student. Word reading is distinct from vocabulary knowledge in that a reader may be able to read a word but not know its meaning, or may know the meaning of a word if it is spoken out loud but may not be able to pronounce the word in its written form.

1.9. Levels of Reading Comprehension

There is no one level of reading comprehension. A reader may stick to what the lines of a text may say. In this case, his main concern is the information stated on the surface. The reader may also search between the lines and even beyond the implicit information. Here, he is likely to make use of his previous experiences about the text's world and the world in general. He may also approach the text critically. That is to say, he works to provide his own point of view and evaluation of what he has read. For example, expressing appreciation or dislike for a literary piece of writing. Therefore, we can estimate that in the first case, the reader's comprehension is a superficial or rather a simple one. Whereas, in the second case, the reader's comprehension is a more elaborate one. Alderson (2000, p. 7) points also to the distinction between having the general idea of a text and having all the specific details.

Sometimes, the reader's purpose is to get just a general idea about the text. This is termed skimming. Or, he strives for the smallest details, and this is called scanning. Therefore, Comprehension is high or low, general or specific depending on how the reader approaches the text and on what he aims at while reading. Generally, high level involves semantic processing, which happens when encode the meaning. However, low level involves structural and phonemic recognition.

1.10. Reading Comprehension in a Foreign Language

Reading comprehension in a FL is different from reading in a L1. Benfakeh (2009) explains that certain reasons can be mentioned to explain such a situation: "Firstly, there is knowledge of the code and the fact certain combinations of items are more likely to occur. Secondly, there is knowledge of the topic. Finally, there is knowledge of the lexical,

syntactic and rhetorical devices that guides us in the comprehension of a written text as efficiently as possible". She gathered all the features of the text and the prior knowledge about the topic in to get the comprehension. On the other hand, Grabe (2005) thinks that understanding the nature of reading comprehension in a FL requires the understanding of certain issues among which the purpose of reading is one. The reader's purpose is a significant factor in determining the nature of reading in a FL. Davies (1995) suggests five categories of reading purpose:

1. Reading for pleasure: is one purpose of reading where people read not to look for information, but rather to enjoy.
2. Reading for a general impression: aims at gaining a general idea of the writer's point of view, having a global impression of the tone of a text, and deciding whether or not to read.
3. Reading for organizing reading and study: in this category, the reader identifies the important content of a text, answers specific questions, and decides which sections of the text to start with.
4. Reading for learning content or procedures: the reader tries to gain comprehension of a new concept, to get information from the text and to follow instruction.
5. Reading for language learning: the reader tries to interpret the text literally and morphologically, to learn new vocabulary, to identify useful structures or collocations and use the text as a model for writing.

On his stand, Marinak (1997, p. 3) suggests another classification in which three main purposes are distinguished:

1. Reading for literary experience: it involves reading literary works such as novels, short stories; poems, etc. This type of reading requires the reader's knowledge of the literary style used for every literary genre.
2. Reading for information: it includes reading articles in newspapers and magazines, and specialized books on particular topics. It requires the reader's awareness and interpretation of charts, footnotes, diagrams, subheading, and tables, etc.
3. Reading to perform a task: it involves reading bus or train schedules, television programmes, direction for games, recipes, etc. It requires the understanding of the purpose and structure of documents that guide the selection of the application of information.

In sum, reading in a foreign language is a specific situation which encompasses specific reasons and motives for reading that characterize a Foreign Language Reading.

Conclusion

Reading is not an isolated activity and is not a cognitive operation of meaning extraction, but it is a complex activity of constructing meaning from printed words. With different views of reading, it was hard to settle a clear and accurate definition. Reading comprehension as a goal of reading process is a complicated task too because it needs many elements work together. The reader must be aware by those elements and how they work in order to achieve comprehension and serve it from breakdown.

Chapter Two

Investigating some Contextual and Psychological Factors Affecting Reading Comprehension

Introduction

Reading in FL influences by many factors such as: anxiety, motives, interests classroom atmosphere, emotional problems because it is a highly synthetic process which needs many elements that work together in order to achieve comprehension. Throughout this chapter, we will divide the factors to: contextual and psychological factors, the contextual factors are concerning the teacher's role in reading instruction during intensive and extensive reading, In addition to, the impact of peer reading in promoting reading comprehension. As for the psychological factors, we will attempt to show the role of anxiety, motivation, and self esteem for the sake of giving new insights into the abstract part of the problem.

2.1. Contextual Factors

Learners at secondary schools will overcome their reading imperfections if we consider seriously their contextual conditions. The suitable role of the teacher in the subject, and the reliability of peer reading help learners a better performance in reading skill.

2.1.1. The Role of the Teacher

The teacher is a key element in the reading process, he needs to be proficient and his role is crucial to achieve comprehension by understanding how to help his learners to develop the sophisticated skills needed to read a text. The inadequate role of the teacher leads to under achievement in comprehension. It is why the teacher needs to have many roles.

2.1.1.1. The Teacher's Role in Intensive Reading

The teacher definitely plays many roles during the intensive reading session. Since he/she is the one who is supposed to implement or procure the reading material, she/he is to play no less than four main roles according to Harmer (2001, p. 213).So a teacher needs to be an organizer, observer, feedback organizer, and finally prompter. We can illustrate them as follows:

A. Organizer: the teacher should set the objectives, the pupils need to achieve through reading, the required time to finish this task and clear instructions to dispel confusion in the pupil's minds.

B. Observer: when the teacher ask pupils to read on their own, he needs to give them space to do so in a non threaten atmosphere having the necessary time and opportunity to answer thoroughly in the most comfortable way. During their reading, the teacher should keep an eye on his/her pupils' progress either individually or collectively.

C. Feedback organizer: when pupils have completed the task, the teacher can lead a feedback the session to verify the degree of achievement. The pupils are made to compare their answers for stance. Pupils should be made aware that their answers should be justified from the text they are reading. This would give us a clear idea about their failure or success in grasping the detailed reading.

D. Prompter: he also needs to play the role of prompter; this means that the teacher re-directs his/ her pupils to language features in that text. He/she should take a good care to the new text constructions and ambiguities and appease pupil's tension and eventually make them aware of issues of text structures which they had not come across previously.

2.1.1.2. The Teacher's Role in Extensive Reading

The teacher is a role model who also orients the learners to the goals of the program, explains the idea and the methodology, keeps records of what has been read, and guides learners in material selection and maximizing the effect of the problem. The teachers have to increase their pupils performance, one of their crucial roles of teachers is to show their pupils how to do something; so, here they have to show them how to practice extensive reading *(ibid.).* For example: providing pupils with brief notes about the author's life and works and his/her position in English literature. In this way, they will find themselves interested in reading the whole text with pleasure. Moreover they should make them aware about any language difficulties they may them.

As the teacher is the one who creates conditions under which the learners achieve certain goals, he/she has to persuade the pupils about the importance of extensive reading by encouraging them to be involved by choosing the material they are supposed to read. Once the pupils are prepared they will find reading enjoyable and interesting. They hopefully practice extensive reading with some enthusiasm and pleasure, which is the main goal of extensive reading.

In our country, the perception of the teacher's role in the learning process has not changed yet. He/she is expected to tightly dominate all the work. When dealing with

extensive reading, his role automatically changes. It is just to enable the pupils to read without too much help.

2.1.2. Peer Reading

The students who have lack of confidence, and related problem behaviors can turn away from reading. However, peer in reading can have a positive impact in all students, tutors tutees. Nugent (2001) notes that peer tutoring have been found to improve the reading ability of both the tutee and tutor. Thus the reading process should be regarded more from its social and contextual value for that reason it is strongly needed to create a fruitful atmosphere of interaction between learners.

Far away from the classical approaches that emphasize the role of the teacher. Today's classroom methodology witnesses a great shift to concentrate on the learner himself as a core element in the learning process. The principle can to be supposed by the adoption of the competency based approach to learning in language classroom. According to teachers responses this notion drove attention and concentration to individual v communal mood of classroom and its impact on learning operation. The reading comprehension as a goal of the reading process needs a growing appreciation for the value of peer, pupils learn from each other in same way they learn from teachers. This fact would undoubtedly raise their feelings of usefulness and mutual sense of reinforcement because the pupils receive immediate feedback on their ideas about the text (Onofrey & Theurer, 2007). We deduce that this makes pupils confident in reading and understanding the text.

Katz and Bohnan (2007, p. 40) gave their students a "confirm comprehension" bookmark to remind them to support their partner's reading. The text on the bookmark reads "word or wait?" count to three. Then ask, "Do you want me to give you a word, or do you want me to wait?"These bookmarks served as a reminder to each pupil that their job was to help their partner if he/she was struggling with the passage.

They also addressed peer reading and offered suggestions on how to obtain positive results. They note that partner reading requires pupils to rely less on the teacher and more on themselves. After the study the researchers developed role sets to assign to learners. For example: coworkers, fellow artists, teacher/student, and boss/employee were some of the role sets utilized. The pupils then began to fill the roles when peer reading. The role sets helped the researchers see patterns during peer reading that offered insights into how each

learner viewed him/her and his/her view of reading process. They found enjoyed reading and writing with each other, discussing the books, and role playing. The social interaction between peers had a positive impact on the researcher's classroom.

According to Fulk and king (2001, p. 51) in partner reading, the more proficient reader begins oral reading for five minutes and the less proficient reader performs as tutor, in this moment the later has heard the material read, and by that should have less difficulty now with the text. Then errors are pointed out the reading and the teacher points the misread word, if the reader cannot identify the word. The teacher provides it. Here they are receiving immediate corrective feedback.

Students use retelling activities to improve reading comprehension. Here, the pupils retell what they have read in two minutes. The tutor helps the reader by asking "what did you read first? Second?" then they switch roles. If the partners believe they put forth a good effort, there are points are awarded.

After that the reader state the main idea of the passage; gives a summary of the most important events of the passage then the pupils predict what is likely to happen next in the passage. After the text is read, they summarize the second half page *(ibid.)*.

To sum up, peer reading benefits all the students because they are listening and offering support when needed, and allows them to grasp unfamiliar vocabulary, new concepts, and text structures. This method provide an effective way to engage learners in reading instruction ,increase their comprehension and have additional benefits as learner's self esteem and improvement of social skills.

2.2. Psychological Factors

Reading is a highly synthetic process; it requires a great attention and concentration in order to understand what is read; that means the readers' memory should be in good status. Then comprehension takes place only when all these elements work together and a failure to comprehend may be due to any malfunctioning of one or more of them, reading is primarily a matter of comprehension and interpretation of meaning. It is influenced by many factors such as: anxiety, motivation, and self esteem.

2.2.1. Anxiety

Every one sometimes experiences anxiety in one form or another and in varying degrees. It involves a pattern of physiological and psychological reactions like feeling of stress and emotions.

Brown found that "anxiety is still unclear and not easy to define in simple sentence" (2000, p. 150); that means there is no agreement between researchers about it because it has many definitions and types. According to Scovel (1978, p. 134) "It is associated with feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self doubt, apprehension, or worry" as cited in (Brown, 2000, p. 151), according to them foreign language anxiety is feeling of worry and nervousness experienced by non native when learning or using a SL/FL. These feeling may interrupt the desire to develop any second language context whether associated with the productive skills of speaking and writing or the receptive skills of reading and listening (ibid).

There is a difference between "debilitating anxiety" which gets in the way and "facilitating anxiety" which actually helps pupil than might otherwise (Brown, 2000). It has been observed that anxiety does not necessarily inhibit performance but in some cases can actually promote it. For example, stress can be a good motivator that may keep a person alert and provide him with motivation (Scovel, 1978). But some kinds of stress can have devastating effects and can lead him to forget several things. This positive anxiety is called a facilitating anxiety, while negative anxiety is called debilitating one. In fact, the former helps to improve the progress of learning and performance. Debilitating anxiety, however, has a negative impact on student's motivation and hinders student's to produce their best.

The challenge here for teachers is not dependent upon just removing anxiety, but upon minimizing the sources of debilitating anxiety and optimizing the sources of facilitating anxiety so that learners can work with what we might call "relaxed concentration".

Scovel (*ibid*.) distinguishes between "trait anxiety" that is a relatively permanent personality feature, and "state anxiety" which is less stable. The researchers decided that the phenomenon of language classroom anxiety was as widespread as to identifiable type of state anxiety because it is considered as an obstacle and an interruption of individuals' emotional equilibrium. According to him, the main cause is the punishment of L1 from or

FL classroom and hence depriving learners of their normal means of communication, whether the communicative is to be oral or written.

The language learner loses ability to behave fully as normal people taking something away from their humanness. For example: learners in many times they know answers about oral or written activities but they forget it, the reason here may be the careless or the nervousness learners report that one of their major worries is that when forced to use the language they are learning, they constantly feel they are representing themselves badly, showing only some of their real abilities and personality, and therefore, only some of their real intelligence is reflected. This sort of anxiety will impact in the way they doing well, both in class and out of it, since it could inhibit the learner's use of the target language and this deprives him of the potential profit to be obtained from practicing what has been learned Scovel (1978) .
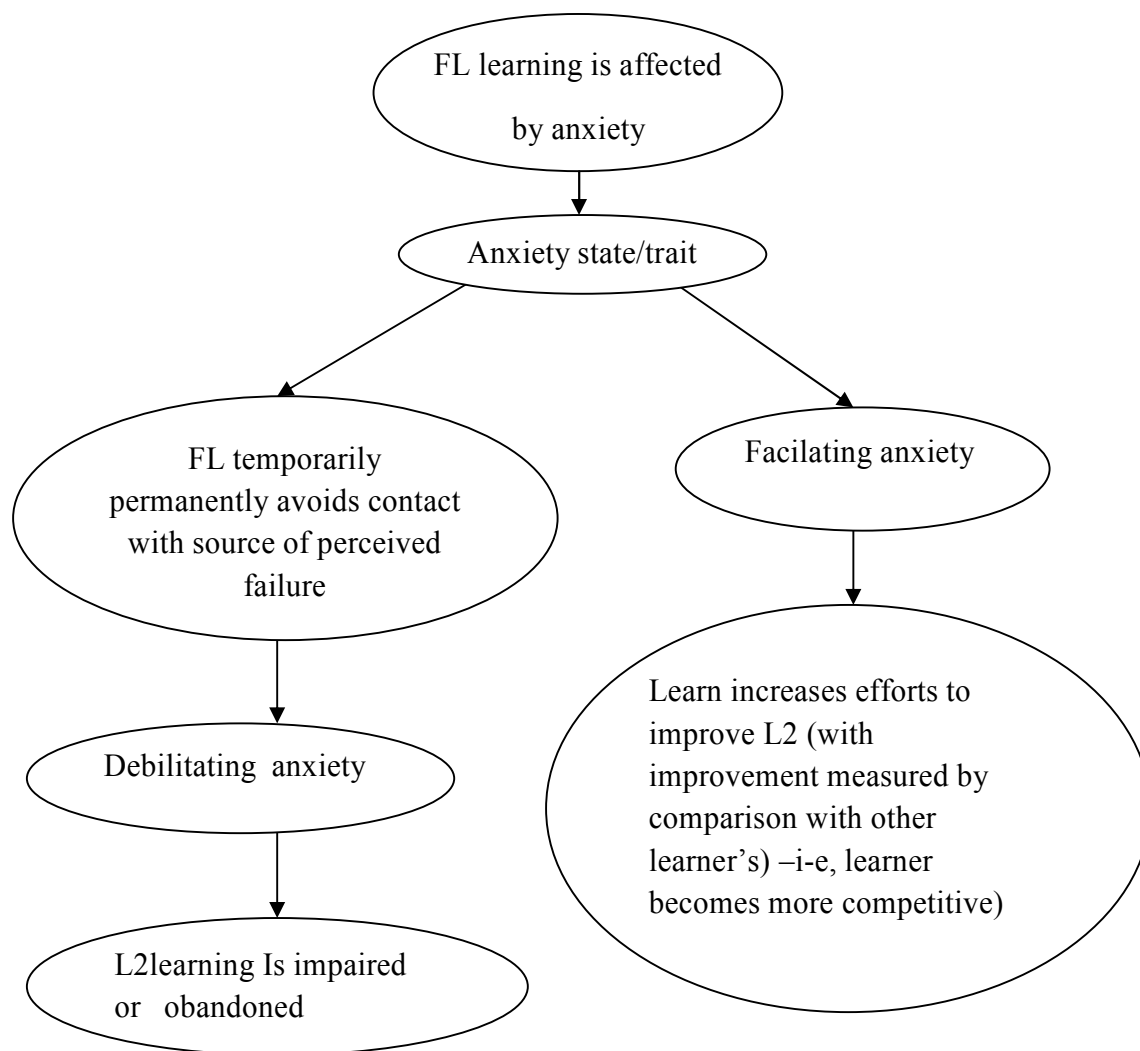
Diagram 2.1: Model of the Anxiety in the FL Learner (Baiely, 1983, as cited in Graoui, 2008, p. 95).

Baeily's model illustrates that in an environment where learners feel anxious or insecure, there are likely to be psychological barriers to communication. We understand, therefore, that within every language learners minds there obstacles that hinder them from involving in safe communicative, oral and written processes. Hence, manageable amounts of anxiety is said to be facilitator, thus motivating the learner to tackle the new learning task and gear him/her emotionally to confront it (Horwitz et al., 1986). Alarming, then would be the case when anxiety becomes unmanageable it is said to be debilitating, motivating the learning to flee from the new learning task and adopt an avoidance behavior. In Baeily's model, she focused on "state anxiety" because its situational nature according to particular event or act, but she less focused on "trait anxiety" because it is global and ambiguous.

Anxiety as being a basic human emotion as well as at unveiling the conditions related to it; the researchers tried to understand the nature of it. Anxiety has been found to affect an individual's performance and behavior in a variety of situations, anxiety affects the curiosity of students which in turn reduces the functioning of cognitive abilities and capacities like: logical thinking, keen observation and questioning…etc, and because of this comprehension as such is affected. In addition to, several studies have investigated the relation between anxiety and memory (Borkowski & Mann). The detrimental effect of anxiety has been generally demonstrated by these researches which ultimately affects the reading comprehension.

According to (Gardner & Macintyre 1993) found that anxiety was related negatively to reading comprehension, they studied that low anxiety level had better reading comprehension than those with a high anxiety level.

Generally, there are many effect of anxiety on each of the skills. In fact research by Mark ham and Darke (1991) posits that anxiety interferes with verbal tasks (e.g. reading comprehension) that make heavy demands on working memory. From that we can say that anxiety affects on cognitive tasks negatively because learner does not use all his cognitive abilities in this situation.

2.2.2. Motivation

Motivation is the most unconsciously used term, in the education field, as to measure learners achievement in classroom research has proved that motivation does matter in class

and that the most motivated learners are likely to be the most receptive ones. Gardner et al (1976) they state that learners with different types of motivation may display different patterns of interaction in the language classroom and different progress levels. In their study, they found that strongly motivated learners tend to spend more time working outside class (doing homework for example), and to participate more actively in class. Language classroom on motivation is divided to two types.

- **Integrative Motivation**

It characterizes learners who wish to learn in order to relate better to, and integrate with, the speakers of the target language, or quite simply the teacher of FL. These learners tend to be much more active in class, volunteering more, constantly progressing as they seek a native like product of language. They profit from teacher's commentary and find better solutions to stop over their weakness in every word or symbol the teacher uses as a remark on their performance.

- **Instrumental Motivation**

It characterizes learners who just want academic success or perhaps to get a job for which there is a language requirement. These learners are found to be more motivated to work in areas of language which they deem relative with their future educational.

In SL learning, motivation is the crucial force which determines whether a learner embarks on a task at all, how much energy he devotes to it, and how long he perseveres. It is a complex phenomenon and includes many components; the individuals drive, need of achievement and success, curiosity, and desire for stimulation and new experience. Little wood (1984) defines motivation as a combination between attitudes and affective states which influence on the learner's efforts that he/she make to learn a L2.

Integrative motivation, on the other hand, involves the choice of learning an FL because the learner is interested in the people and culture represented by the target language. To decide which of the two kinds L2 learning is due to, the view remains inconclusive, as both are needed.

In fact, learners who experience success in learning may become more motivated to learn. As for learners who are intrinsically motivated, the arousal and maintenance of curiosity depends on the learner's particular interests and the extent to which they feel personally involved in the learning activities. Essentially, motivation is a reward for the

learner's investment of time, energy and effort. It is related to why the pupil is there in the first place and what keeps him/her working. There are a lot of factors that bring pupils to the language learning situation, help them devote the necessary effort and attention to the skill and keep them there Ehrman (1996).

In most classroom setting, it is reasonable to assume that most students are instrumentally oriented (e.g. studying the L2 for particular reasons). It is thus important for teachers to promote and facilitate the development of intrinsic motivation, in other words, to persuade and demonstrate to students that through their own effort they can achieve excellence and autonomy in pursuit of their self selected goals (Brown, 2000).

In the case of reading comprehension, cultivating intrinsic motivation can take many forms. For example, if teachers persuade their student that extensive reading offers long term benefits for their levels, they can provide extrinsic motivation by engaging students in extensive reading as a part of a course. Students will consequently discover for themselves that reading is beneficial and enjoyable, adopting the habit of reading extensively (become intrinsically motivated to do so).

If we want to motivate our pupils to read, we must not impose on them what to read, and we must not ask them to read in a threatening atmosphere. For example, when pupils are asked to read a passage in order to summarize it orally in front of their classmates, they give too much importance to the necessary details rather than the general sense and value of the text. As higher motivation leads to higher understanding, we should make our pupils enjoy what they read by making a good introduction about the topic for example (from teachers responses).

It is obviously that variety is one of the most important factors in maintaining a high level of motivation and interest among learners. There are many things that can be done by the teacher which add variety to pupil's interest in reading; a thoughtful teacher has to vary the activities in the reading comprehension phase to avoid boredom.

Generally, we deduce that when pupils are not motivated to read any text, they stumble the right beginning at the first unfamiliar word and prefer to give up rather than going on reading. As these poor readers lack motivation to read and refuse to spend time improving their ability to read, they find it (reading) a laborious task to do.
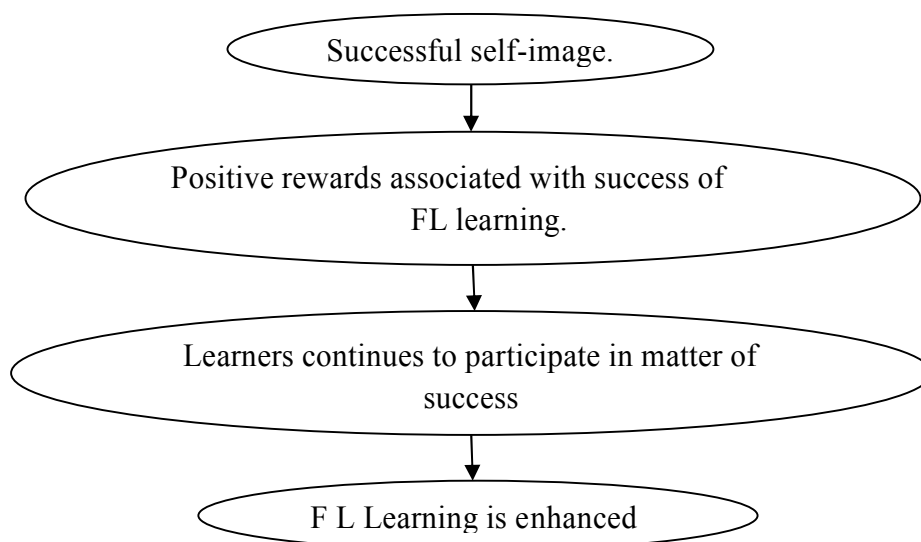

2.2.3. Self- Esteem

Brown (1990) defines "self esteem" as the wroth persons place upon themselves. He believes that people develop it from the accumulation of experiences they have with

themselves. The definition represents self esteem as being a self judgment of one's worth or value based on feelings of efficacy, a sense of interaction effectively with one's own environment.

According to Cohen and Hosnfeld (1981) language learning poses a threat to a person's self-esteem. In a classroom where all the other learners might be better than a given learner, there is a greet space for him to feel inferior as cited in (Graoui, 2008).

Hyede (1977) ascertains that there is a strong relationship between self esteem and linguistic performance. In her model, Hyede notes that it is necessary in the FL class for teachers to adopt positive and encouraging tones. Their praise counts much for the raise of their learner's self esteem and, hence, developing quantitatively and qualitatively their language production, Gais (1983) derives attention to the way teacher's remarks are discouraging, learners would mostly fearing engagement and stopping to concentrate and answer and they are do not notice their errors. Consequently, they develop such a low self esteem that hinders them every time they concentrate and comprehend well. Hyede also presents another face of the teacher/learner picture of self esteem. She argues that few comments on the learner's output can make them think positively of their work. Therefore, they would feel more confident to participate and to answer again as they imagine that intensive feedback and low marks are even more demoralizing.

Diagram 2.2: Model of Self-Esteem in the FL Learner (Hyede, 1977, as cited in Graoui, 2008, p. 95).

According to her model, she also presents another face of the teacher/learner picture of self esteem. She argues that few comments on the learner's output can make them think positively of their work. Therefore, they would feel more confident to participate and to

answer, they receive some kind of motivation which promote their desire forward until achieve success.

Research has demonstrated that a self confident, secure person is a more successful language learner (Dulay et al, 1982). This is based upon the suggestion that self confident people have the advantage of not fearing rejection and are therefore more likely to repeatedly put themselves in varied learning situations. High self esteem learners are less likely to suffer personal turmoil over mistakes than their more self self-conscious counter parts. Thus, learners who are willing to guess before knowing whether they are right, are likely to be less anxious in looking for opportunities to interact orally or through writing that requires real communication in the target language *(ibid.)*.

Since self efficacy is a state of system of believes and confidence level of oneself that he/she is able to perform a specific task (Bendura, 1977). That means Responsible learners feel confident about the tasks and confident arise the cognitive abilities of the learner, and use all his/her abilities during the instruction; and they attributed from their own effort, strategies and believe of their own ability to improve and recognize error as a part of learning process.

Finding in this area suggest that students who believe they are capable of performing academic tasks use more cognitive and meta-cognition strategies and persist longer than those who do not (Schunk and Rice, 1993). Reading self efficacy refers to individual's judgments or self-evaluation about their ability to do well or reading activities such as: reading a book, or reading a passage. Reading self esteem has been found to correlate positively with different measures of reading such as reading comprehension (*ibid.*).

From that we say low self esteem makes the learner uses just a part of his/her cognitive abilities or in some cases he/she couldn't concentrate during tasks; by that the learner loses gradually his/her confident and these situation make the learner fear engagement.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, we found that contextual and psychological factors influence on reading and the learning process, in general, there are true challenges for learners as well as teachers who want to increase the participatory level of individual pupils within language classroom. As these factors could define a pupil's success/failure in producing FL, As a consequence of this chapter the inadequate role of teacher and peer have a part of responsibility to hold failure of learner in reading process. The psychological factors such as high anxiety, low motivation, and lack self-esteem are responsible on underachievement on the reading skill; because the affective side of the learner reflect negatively on the learner's cognitive abilities. Hence, it is not enough to consider the learner's linguistic abilities and neglect the different contextual or psychological data in the sense that they represent extremities for the equation of the learning linguistic communicative production. Finally, reading needs all those elements work together in order to achieve comprehension.

Chapter Three

Analysis of the Learners' and the Teachers' Questionnaires

Introduction

The principal aim of this research is to investigate the contextual and psychological factors that affect reading comprehension. We administered two main questionnaires: one for learners and the other one for teachers.

It is important in this research to give learners the opportunity to express their own idea concerning the effects of some contextual and psychological factors on their reading comprehension, because they are the core element in this research, their feelings and attitudes toward the reading skills are very crucial to test the hypothesis formulated in this research. Learners' questionnaire was designed to investigate the impact of psychological and contextual factors on reading comprehension of second year foreign language stream in the secondary school of Abderrahmane Ibn Aouf in M'sila.

According to the principle aim of this research, teachers' opinions and observations about level of reading comprehension of their pupils is very important, in addition to their opinions about the problems that pupils faced during reading, and their willingness to read. Others would be of great help to us to see whether all teachers meet the same hardships. 06 questionnaires were handed and returned, therefore, 06 participants represents our sample.

3.1 Analysis of the Learners' Questionnaire

3 1.1 Description of the Questionnaire

For the present research we have administered a questionnaire of 18 items to pupils. These items were developed to explore the attitudes of second year pupils in the secondary school towards the reading skill to investigate their comprehension. The Learners' questionnaire was administered to a single class (the whole population) of 30 pupils of foreign language stream, participants as the total number of the population in Abderrahmane Ibn Aouf secondary school.

This questionnaire consists of 18 items which are arranged in a logical way. They are either close-ended questions requiring from the pupils to choose 'yes' or 'no' answers, or to pick up the appropriate answer from a number of choices or open questions requiring from them to give their own answers and justify them.

3.1.2 Interpretation of the Results

Section One: Background Information

Item One: Specify your gender

   a. Female
   b. Male

Option	N	%
a	20	66.67
b	10	33.33
Total	30	100

Table 3.1: pupils' Gender
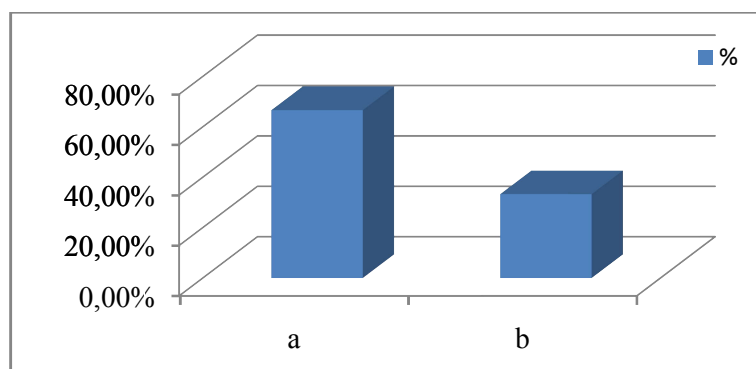
Figure 3.1: pupils' Gender

As shown in the table, females (66.67%) are about twice the number of males (33.33%). That may be due to the fact that females are more interested to study foreign languages than males who often choose to carry on scientific studies.

Item Two: Is your level in English
   a. Good
   b. Average
   c. Less then
   d. I do not know

Option	N	%
a	08	26.67
b	12	40
c	08	26.67
d	02	6.66
Total	30	100

Table 3.2: pupils' Level in English
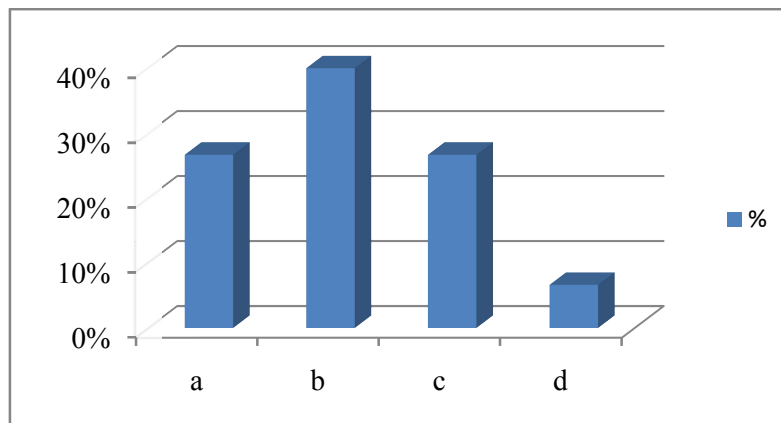
Figure 3.2: pupils' Level in English

We can notice that the highest percentage of pupils (40%) claims that their level in English is average. Others (26.67%) show that they are good in English. Others (26.67%) say that they are less than average. The least percentage (6.66%) of pupils shows that they do not know their level at all. The majority of pupils say that their level in English is between average and good and the current level allows us to relay on it in investigating this study.

Section Two: Importance of Reading

Item Three: Rank the following skills in terms of difficulty

Listening –Speaking-Reading – Writing

ranking the following skills	most difficulty	second in difficulty	third in difficulty	least difficulty
listening				13.33%
speaking	40%			
reading			20%	
writing		26.67%		

Tables 3.3: Pupils' Classification of Language Four Skills

35
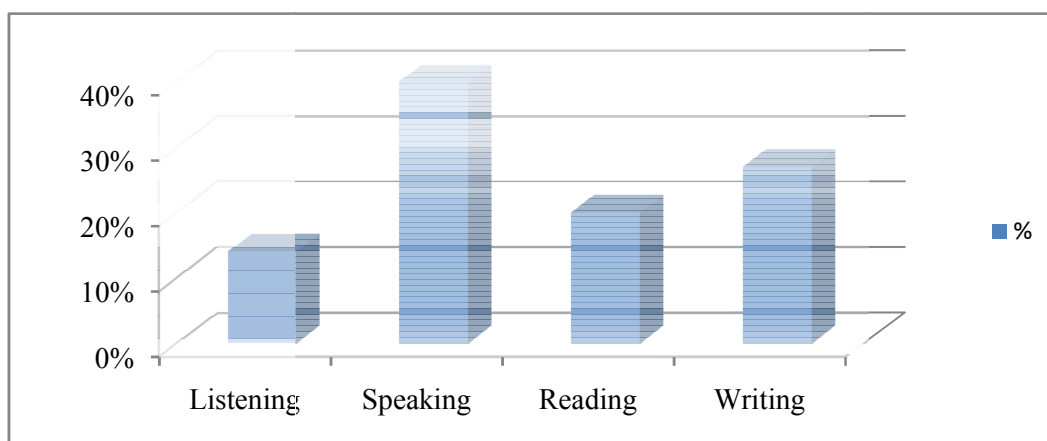
Figure 3.3: Pupils' Classification of Language Four Skills

The question above aims to check the pupils' attitude towards the skill in investigated in this study. The ranking shows that the most difficult skill is speaking (40%), then the second one is writing (26.67%) and the third one is reading (20%), the least difficult is listening (13.33%). The results show that pupils think the most difficult skills are speaking and writing because in their consideration when the learners master the productive skills they get the language. However, they think that reading and listening are less difficult.

Item Four: What does reading mean to you?

  a) A way to acquire new vocabulary

  b) A way to show your background knowledge

  c) A way to be a good reader

  d) A way to get grade and succeed at school

Option	N	%
a	06	20
b	01	3.33
c	04	13.33
d	19	63.33
Total	20	100

Table 3.4: Pupils' Evaluation Reading Meaning
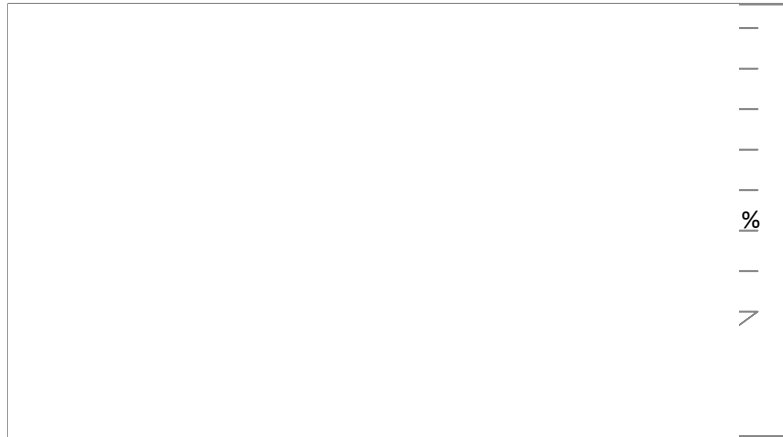
Figure 3.4: Pupils' Evaluation Reading Meaning

It is necessary for the pupil to determine his goal in order to build the required ability to realize it. A lot of participants said that it is a way to get a good grade and succeed at school (63.33%); which means that school attainment represents serious factor, by which teachers may raise their pupils' level of reading. Then, it is followed by reading as a way to get new vocabulary (20%). A few said a way to be a good reader (13.33%). The least percentage (3.33%) of pupils shows that reading is a way to show their background knowledge.

Item Five: How often do you engage in reading in class?

a) Once a week

b) More

c) Less

Option	N	%
a	09	30
b	05	16.66
c	16	53.33
Total	**30**	**100**

Table 3.5: Pupils' Frequency of Engagement in Reading Activities
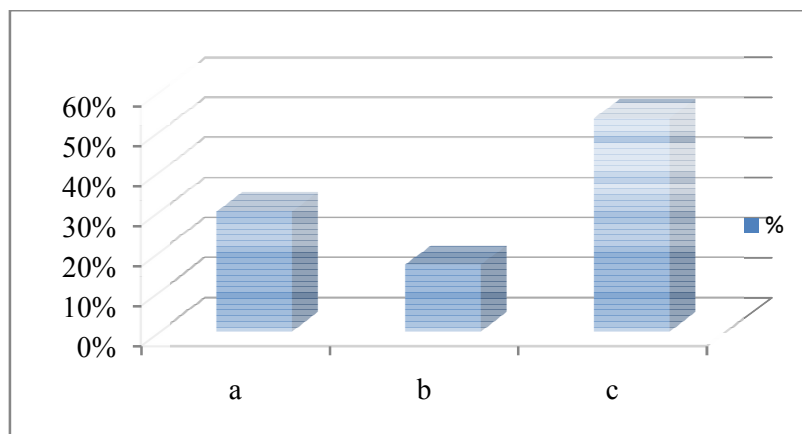
Figure 3.5: Pupils' Frequency of Engagement in Reading Activities

The table above shows that most pupils (53.33%) read and do activities less than once a week, then others (09) respondents (30%) once a week, followed by the least percentage (16.66%) who said that they engage more than once. In fact this item adds the dangerous effect teachers do have on the willingness of their pupils to engage in. The pupils who said "less" refer that to hate of reading and lack of vocabulary; others said they do not care at all. The pupils who said more justify that by their desire to get good grades.

Section Three: Contextual and Psychological Factors

Item Six: Does your teacher help you while reading?

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes

Option	N	%
Yes	08	26.67
No	20	66.67
Sometimes	02	6.66
Total	**30**	**100**

Table 3.6: Teachers' Help during Pupils Reading
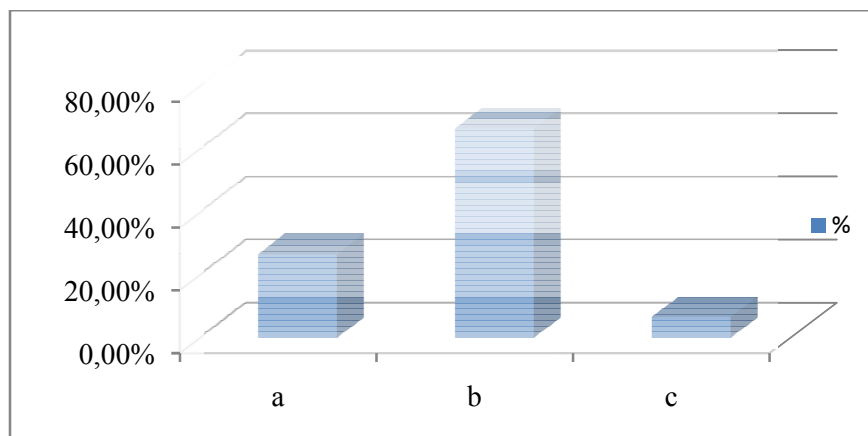
Figure 3.6: Teachers' Help during Pupils Reading

This item aims at inferring from pupil's view the actual role the teachers play in classroom during the process. In table above (66.66%) being pupils who admit that their teachers are helpless. Then others (26.66%) said they help them during the reading process, the least percentage (6.66%) said sometimes. The pupil's comments are: "reading sessions for teachers taking some rest", others said "during reading teachers leave the classroom", others reported "we never read and do activities in the classroom", these views show the sensitive role of the teacher we dealt with in this research and how his deficiency can led to an outstanding failure in reading, while others said that their teachers walk around, check and help providing them with feedback. A very small group referred to teachers' class organization during group and pair work.

Item Seven: Are you satisfied with the teacher's role during reading?

- Yes
- No

Option	N	%
Yes	10	33.33
No	20	66.67
Total	**30**	**100**

Table 3.7: Pupils' Satisfaction with the Teachers' Role
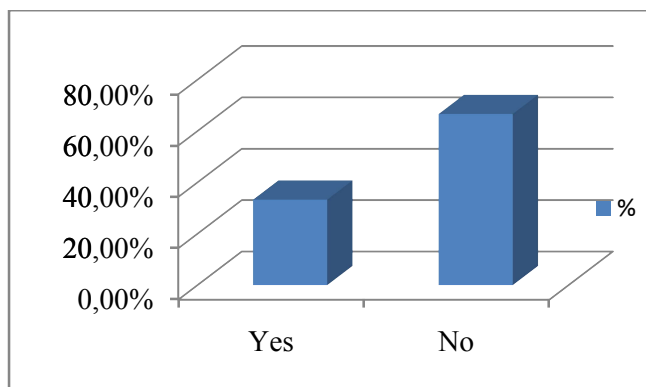
Figure 3.7: Pupils' Satisfaction with the Teachers' Role

This item serves as a confirmation measure to the preceding one. As was expected, the answers were not contradicting. (66.67%) showed dissatisfaction of the teacher's role, while the rest (19%), and were against the first attitude. As a result we can touch from this item that learners are aware of the decisive role of teacher in reading process.

Item Eight: Do you take into consideration your teachers remarks on your reading?

- Yes
- No

Option	N	%
Yes	08	26.66
No	22	73.33
Total	**30**	**100**

Table 3.8: Pupils' Evaluation of Following Teacher Remarks

Teacher's feedback is of immense educational and psychological impact on learner's reading. The results show that (26.66%) of the pupils said "yes", they take teacher's remarks into consideration, which reflects the sensitive impact of teacher's feedback has on the willingness of the pupils to read. The others (73.33%) who do not take into consideration their teacher's remarks that reflect a lack of interest in the matter caused by the neglect of feedback on the part of teachers.
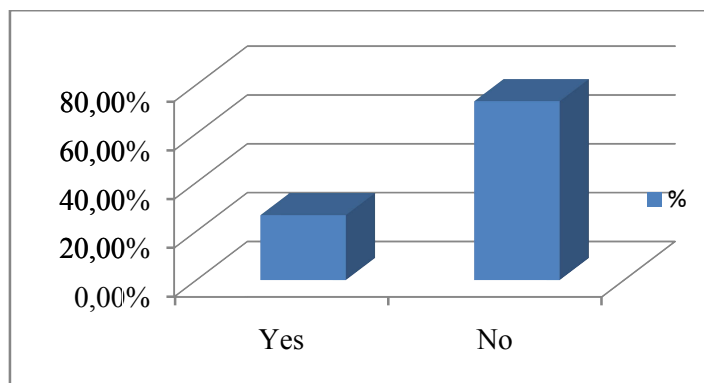
Figure 3.8: Pupils' Evaluation of Following Teacher Remarks

Item Nine: Do you like working with partner in reading?

- Yes
- No

Option	N	%
Yes	19	63.33
No	11	36.67
Total	30	100

Table 3.9: Pupils' Attitudes toward Peer Reading
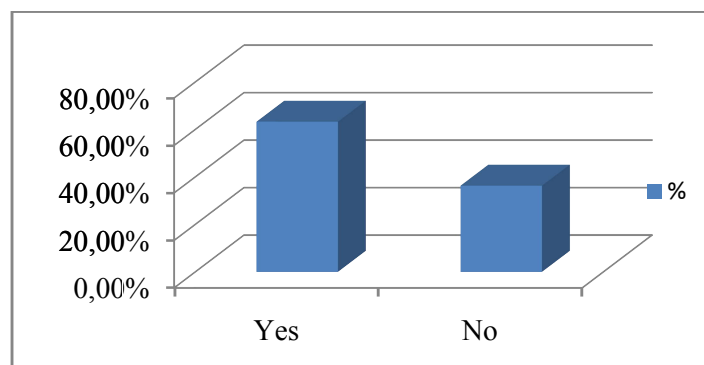
Figure 3.9: Pupils' Attitudes toward Peer Reading

The table above shows that most pupils (19) or (63.33%) they like working with partners, the others (36.67%) response was negative; as a result, we find that the pupils like and prefer working with each other in reading.

Item Ten: Which one you prefer to ask

- Your teacher
- Your partner

Option	N	%
Your teacher	08	26.67
Your partner	22	73.33
Total	**30**	**100**

Table 3.10: The Pupils' Attitudes toward Their Partners
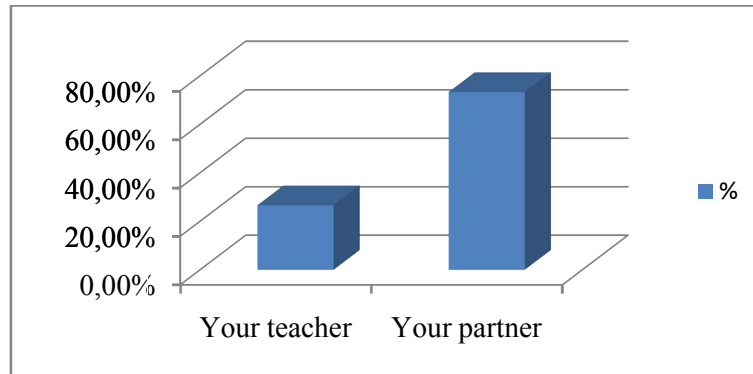
Figure 3.10: The Pupils' Attitudes toward Their partners

The majority of pupils (73.33%) claimed that they prefer to ask their partners. The others (26.67%) answered negatively; they prefer to ask their teacher. This reveals the fact the majority of pupils prefer to ask their partner rather than their teacher; The reason behind that may due to learners find that learner-learner interaction is the best and the easiest way to ask freely without any embarrassment, this supports the role of peer reading as stated earlier.

Item Eleven: Do you learn more when you work with your partner?

- Yes
- No

Option	N	%
Yes	25	83.33
No	05	16.67
Total	**30**	**100**

Table 3.11: Pupils' Evaluation about Partner Reading
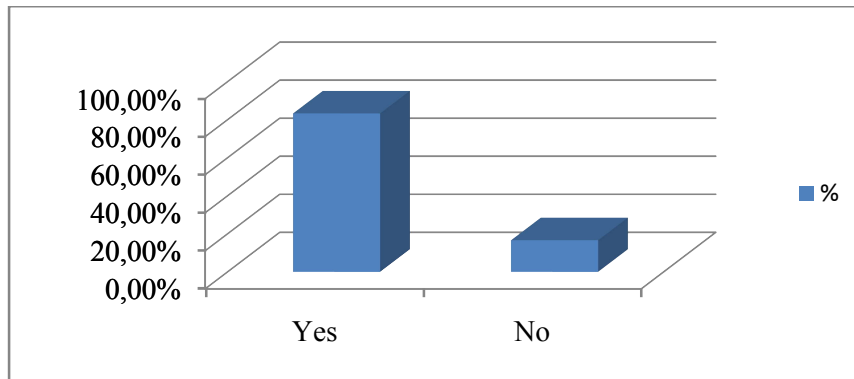
Figure 3.11: Pupils' Evaluation about Partner Reading

From the results obtained in the table above, we notice that the majority of pupils (83.33%) learn more when they work with partners and that support our idea of the benefit of peer reading. As we said before they ask each other freely because their feelings of social interaction, they enjoy reacting with each other and feel less inhibited.

Item Twelve: Feeling anxious while reading hinders me from doing well

a) Always

b) Often

c) Sometimes

d) Rarely

e) Never

Option	N	%
a	21	70
b	03	10
c	05	16.67
d	00	00
e	01	3.33
Total	30	100

Table 3.12: Pupils' Evaluation Anxiety Effect
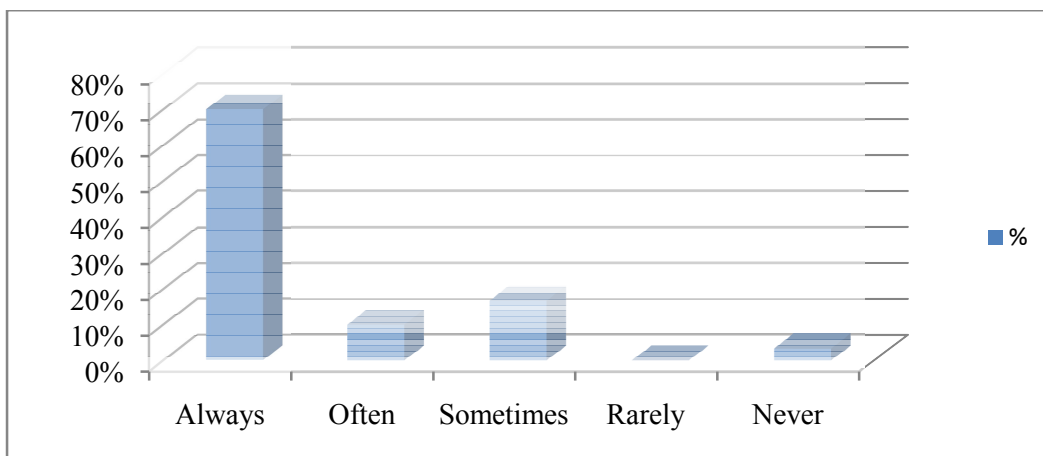
Figure 3.12: Pupils' Evaluation Anxiety Effect

The table above shows that the vast majority of pupils (70%) think that nervousness always hinders them from doing well while reading and (16.67%) claim that sometimes nervousness hinders them while reading. Following by (10%) who said "often" only one pupil (3.33%) said "never". From the interpretation we can say that nervousness or "anxiety" is a real obstacle while reading because it reduces the cognitive abilities of the learner.

Item Thirteen: When I am not sure whether I understand what I am reading in English,

        I get upset

a) Never

b) Hardly

c) Sometimes

d) Always

Option	N	%
a	00	00
b	00	00
c	08	26.67
d	22	73.33
Total	30	100

Table 3.13: Pupils' Evaluation of Lack Confidence

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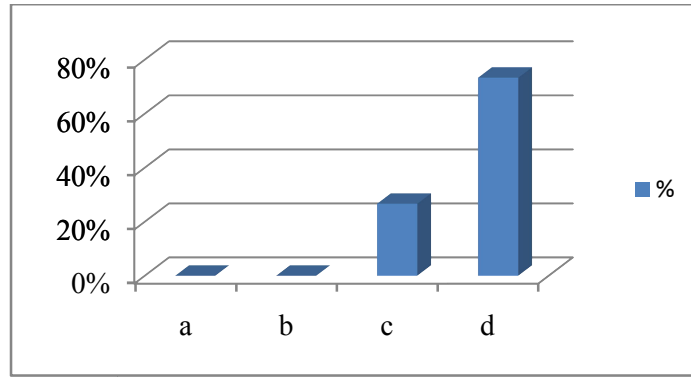
Figure 3.13: Pupils' Evaluation of Lack Confidence

The large majority of pupils (73.33%) claim that they always get upset when they failure in understanding. On the other hand only (26.67%) said "sometimes". These feelings of worry as a result of lack confidence hinder learners from doing well because it is decrease the cognitive abilities of them.

Item Fourteen: I need to be confident in myself to read well

- Yes
- No
- Sometimes

Option	N	%
Yes	15	50
No	10	33.33
Sometimes	05	16.66
Total	**30**	**100**

Table 3.14: Pupils' Self Confidence during Reading
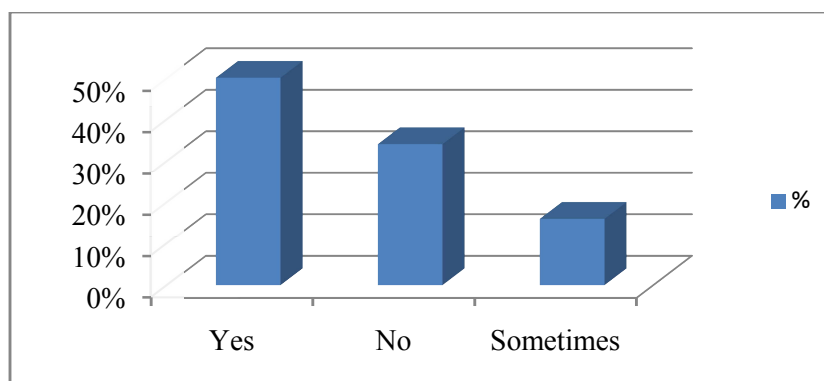
Figure 3.14: Pupils' Self Confidence during Reading

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From the table above shows that (50%) being who need to be confident to read, while (33, 33%) claim they do not need self confidence to read well and only (16.661) said "sometimes". This item provides another proof to the importance of self confidence in reading.

Item Fifteen: It embarrasses me to volunteer to read and answer activities

    a) Very often

    b) Sometimes

    c) Rarely

    d) Never

Option	N	%
a	17	56.67
b	09	30
c	02	6.66
d	02	6.66
Total	30	100

Table 3.15: Pupils' Evaluation of Embarrassment
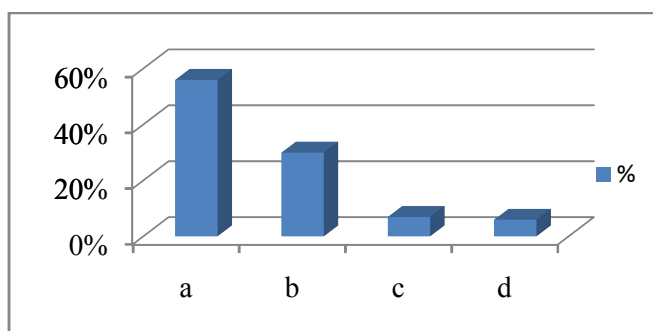
Figure 3.15: Pupils' Evaluation of Embarrassment

As shown in the table,(56.67%) of the pupil's very are often embarrassed to volunteer while reading and activities, then (30%) said sometimes we get embarrassed, while(2%) of pupils said "rarely" and the same percentage from "never". This may be due to the fact that they have low self esteem and low motivation too.

Item Sixteen: Tick in front the right idea. Do you fear engagement in classroom because of?

    a) Teachers remarks discouraging you

    b) Your classmates better then you

    c) Do not care and interest about the subject

d) You think you will not do well in reading

Option	N	%
a	18	60
b	10	33.33
c	00	00
d	02	6.67
Total	30	100

Table 3.16: Pupils' Reasons behind Fear Engagement
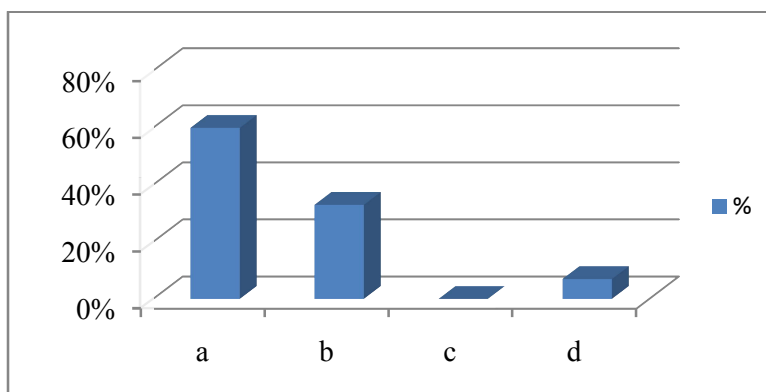
Figure 3.16: Pupils' Reasons behind Fear Engagement

It is obvious from the table above that most of pupils (60%) state they fear engagement because of their teachers' remarks discouraging them, which reflect the powerful impact of teachers' words. Others (33.33%) return their fear because of the level of their classmates; they keep thinking that other pupil better than, that may due to the sensitive age, as adolescents, and it is psychological implications of competitiveness, shyness and jealousy. The least percentage (6.67%) think will not do well in reading; this may be due to the lack of self esteem and they fear rejection of their answers.

Item Seventeen: Your reading problems are due to:

  a) Vocabulary
  b) Teachers' role
  c) Lack of motivation to read
  d) Fear of bad comments from the teacher

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Option	N	%
a	02	6.66
b	10	33.33
c	07	23
d	11	36.67
Total	30	100

Table 3.17: Pupils' Reasons behind Reading Problems
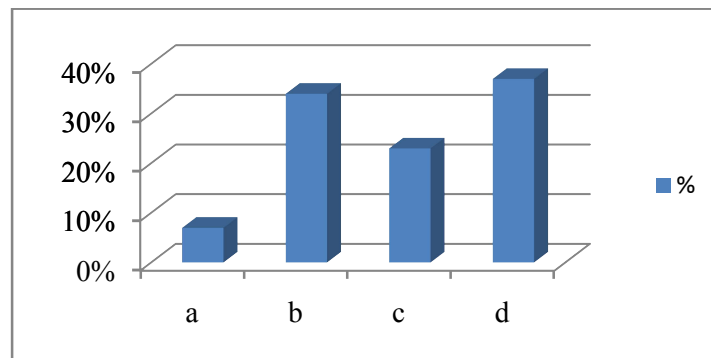
Figure 3.17: Pupils' Reasons behind Reading Problems

The table above illustrates that the majority of the pupils (36.67%) find that reading problems are due to fear of bad comments from the teacher; it proves that teachers' words do have a powerful psychological impact on the pupils' willingness to read. Right after the teachers' role (33.33%) and that another prove to the inadequate role of teachers during reading process. Then they expressed the great impact of motivation on their reading with (23%). Finally just two learners refer their problems to vocabulary.

Item Eighteen: What is in your opinion about the best way to improve your reading?

The learners' suggestions are as follows:

- The teachers must help us during reading;
- They should accept our answers and they do not tell us "No, you are wrong" because this word destroyed us;
- They should not correct every word while reading;
- Related English books according to our age and level;
- Teachers must give us a necessary time to answer;
- They should encouraging us by retelling short stories;
- Let us work together or with pairs;
- Give us extra marks when we volunteered in class.

3.2 Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire
 3.2.1 Description of the Questionnaire

Teachers' questionnaire consists of (20) questions. It was administered to (06) teachers as the whole total number of the whole population. The questions are either close-ended questions requiring from teachers to choose "Yes" or "No" answers, or to pick up the appropriate answer from a number of choices or open questions and give their own answers and justify.

3.3.2 Interpretation of the Results

Section One: Background Information

Item One: Specify your gender

    a) Male

    b) Female

Option	N	%
a	02	33.33
b	04	66.66
Total	**06**	**100**

Table 3.18: Teachers' Gender
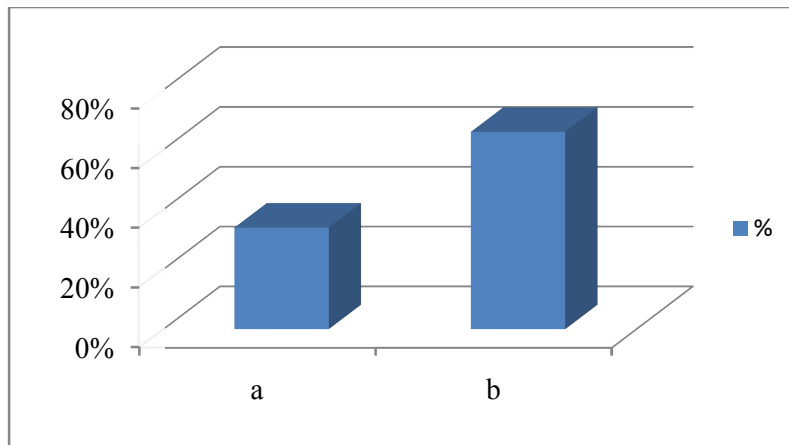
Figure 3.18: Teachers' Gender

As show in the table illustrates that (66.66%) female whereas the remaining respondents (33.33%) are males. Females' gender is about two times the number of males.

Item Two: Degree(s) held:

    a) BA(License)

    b) MA(Master/Magister)

Option	N	%
a	05	83.33
b	01	16.66
Total	06	100

Table 3.19: Teachers' Degree
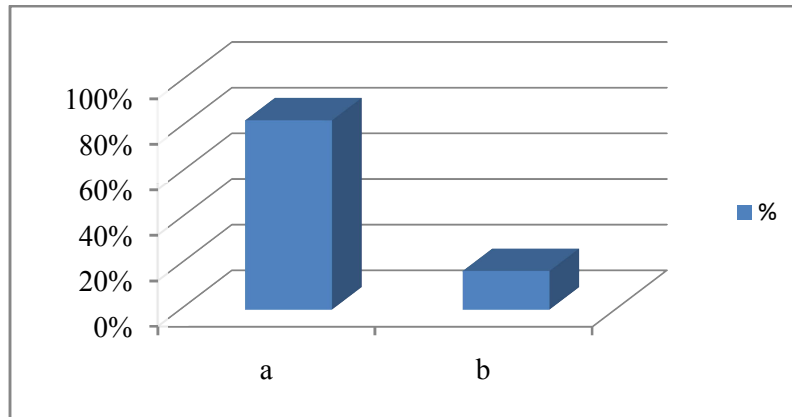
Figure 3.19: Teachers' Degree

The majority of teachers (83.33%) have BA (License) degree, while about (16.66%) have MA (Magister).

Item Three: How long have you been teaching English?

Years	N	%
1-5	02	33.33
10-15	03	50
15-20	01	16.66
Total	06	100

Table 3.20: Teaching Experience of English
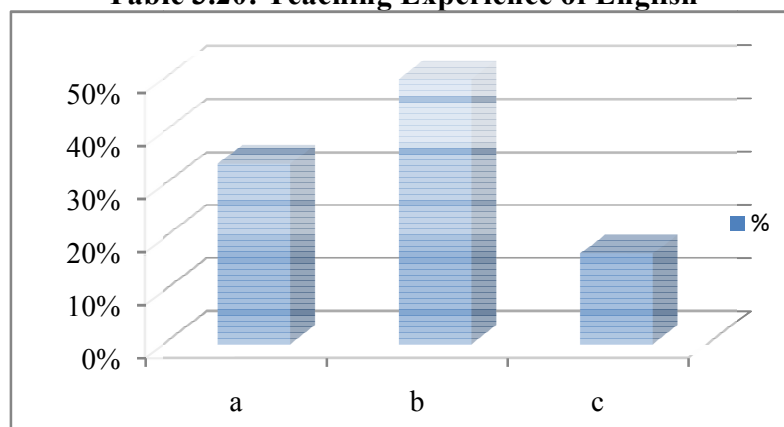
Figure 3.20: Teaching Experience of English

One can notice from the results shown above that four teachers have a long teaching experience in teaching English since they have spent from 10-20 years. However two teachers have a short experience in teaching English. Behind this item we need to know whether those teachers have an experience in teaching English or not.

Section Two: Reading and Reading Comprehension

Item Four: What is reading?

We have tried to check here whether teachers are aware of this notion and the whole frame work in which their pupils operate when dealing with reading activities, the teachers comments are as follows:

- Reading is a multifaceted process involving word recognition, comprehension, fluency and motivation. (02 teachers)
- Reading is one of the most important receptive interpretive skills it gives the way for teaching other productive skills. (01 teacher)
- Reading is making meaning from print.
- Reading is a complex cognitive process of decoding symbols in order to construct or derive meaning (reading comprehension), and it is also a means of language acquisition.

Item Five: Skills ranking: rank the following skills according to their importance to you:

a) Speaking
b) Reading
c) Listening
d) Writing

Ranking the skills	most important	second in important	third in important	least important
Speaking			20%	
Reading		30%		
Listening	35%			
Writing				15%

Table 3.21: Teachers' Classification of Language Four Skills
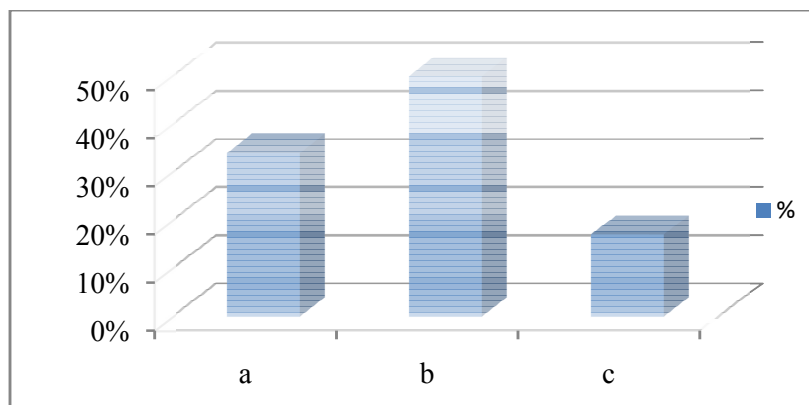
Figure 3.21: Teachers' Classification of Language Four Skills

The table above illustrates that the teachers give more importance to receptive skills; firstly listening (35%) following by reading (30%), then speaking skill (20%) and finally writing skill (15%). This fact is may be due to that the receptive skills provide the learner with data and comprehensible input to build his/her knowledge; it means in this stage the learner needs sources of language that is why teachers give them much importance.

Item Six: learner's general level in reading comprehension is:

a) Good

b) Average

c) Bad

Option	N	%
a	00	00
b	03	50
c	03	50
Total	06	100

Table 3.22: pupils' General Level in Reading
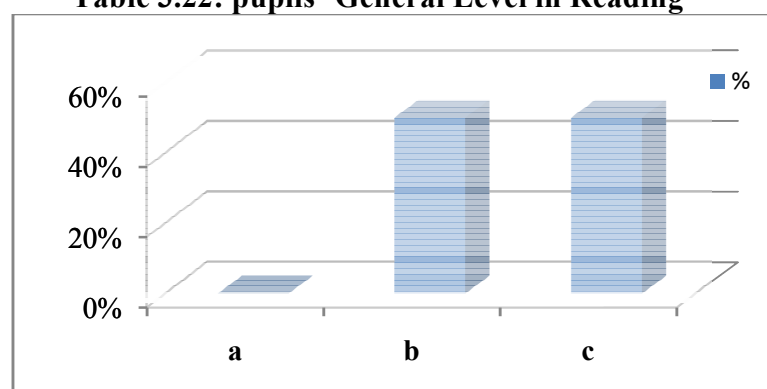
Figure 3.22: pupils' General Level in Reading

The table above illustrates that (50%) of the pupils their level in reading comprehension is average, while the others (50%) are bad. From this result we can deduce the week level of pupils in reading.

Item Seven: Which of these aspects do you focus on in reading instruction?

a) The pronunciation

b) The most important ideas

c) Vocabulary

d) Getting the overall meaning

Option	N	%
a	02	33.33
b	02	33.33
c	04	66.67
d	05	83.33

Table 3.23: Teachers' View of Some Aspects They Focus on
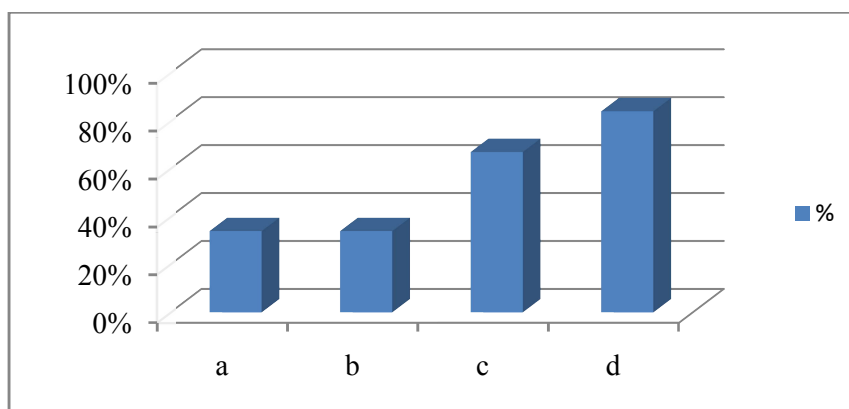
Figure 3.23: Teachers' View of Some Aspects They Focus on

The responses differ from a teacher to another, but they agree on the choice "d" (83.33%) that means the teachers focus on the overall meaning, then "c" (66.67%) of the teachers gives a great attention to vocabulary, followed by the choices "b" and "a" (33.33%) here the teachers give less attention to the most important ideas and pronunciation.

Item Eight: While reading in classroom, your pupils are:

• Motivated

• Reluctant

Option	N	%
Motivated	01	16.67
Reluctant	05	83.83
Total	06	100

Table 3.24: Pupils' Level of Motivation
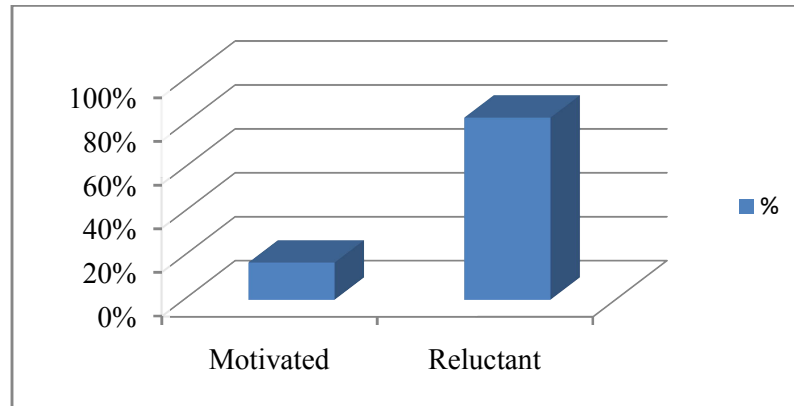
Figure 3.24: Pupils' Level of Motivation

This item aims at inferring from teachers' responses whether the observed phenomenon of the students' reluctance to read exists within all classrooms. It seems from the answers that teachers spent no single effort taking this decision. The least percentage (16.67%) is motivated. while the most responses (83.33%) are reluctant; this proves that the majority of the pupils are plainly de-motivated.

Item Nine: To what extent do your pupils master the reading skills?

1. 20%
2. 50%
3. 80%

Option	N	%
20%	01	16.67
50%	05	83.33
80%	00	00
Total	06	100

Table 3.25: Teachers' Evaluation of Pupils Reading Skills
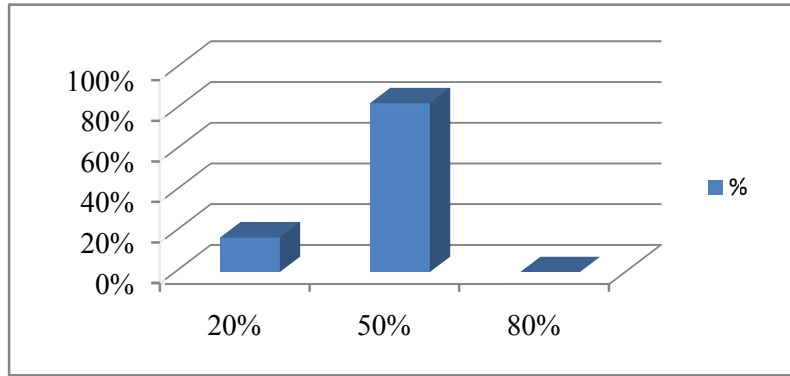
Figure 3.25: Teachers' Evaluation of Pupils Reading Skills

No one can deny that the reading skills are of core importance for the written message to be comprehensible. According to the results, the majority of the teachers (83.33%) said that their pupils master about (50%) from the reading skills. While just one choose "20%". From this item we deduce the acceptable level of pupils in mastering reading skills.

Section Three: Contextual and Psychological Factors

Item Ten: Do you adopt any strategy or approach to teach reading?

- Yes
- No

Option	N	%
Yes	02	33.33
No	04	66.67
Total	06	100

Table 3.26: Teachers' Having Methods
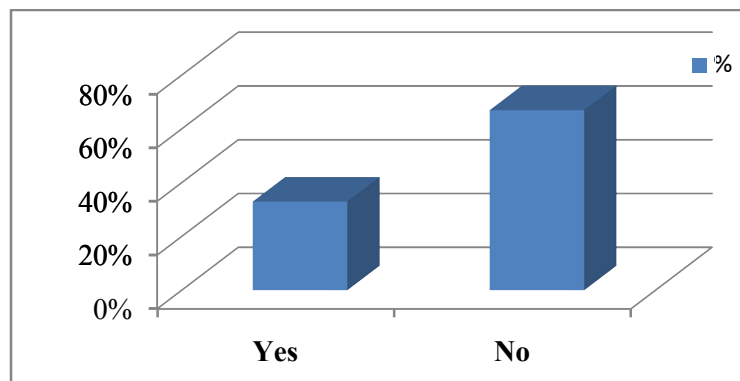
Figure 3.26: Teachers' Having Methods

The table above shows that, it is rather considerable percentage, (66.67%) being teachers who do not use any approach or strategy in reading process, while (33.33%) adopt an approach. Logically, one would wonder if the teachers are not aware about the current

methods and approaches to apply to their classroom operation. So, what is their actual role?

The teachers who said "Yes" their comments are as follows:

- Reading for a purpose. Before reading, pupils are always asked to read to do some activities about the reading passage. (01teacher)
- Comprehension monitoring (pre-reading / while reading/ post reading). (01 teacher)

Item Eleven: Do you try to establish a relaxed atmosphere in the class?

Option	N	%
Yes	02	33.33
Sometimes	01	16.67
Rarely	03	50
Never	00	00
Total	**06**	**100**

Table 3.27: Teachers' Evaluation of Establishing Relaxed Atmosphere
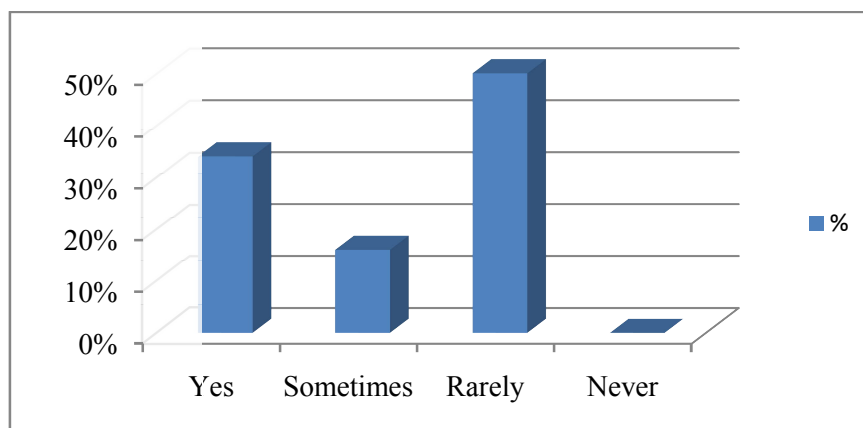
Figure 3.27: Teachers' Evaluation of Establishing Relaxed Atmosphere

The great majority of the teachers (50%) declared that they rarely try to establish a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom, and others (16.67%) said "sometimes". this is due to the fact that if they try to do so, but they will be faced by the problem of discipline because the large number of pupils per class. However, the percentage (33.33%) who said "Yes" tries to establish a relaxed atmosphere in the class. This type of atmosphere is an important affective factor in learning because it contributes to eliminate anxiety and to create motivation in pupils.

Item Twelve: What is your role during reading process?

The teachers' responses are as follows:

- Focusing on key words and correcting some mispronunciation words. (04 teachers)
- A model sample of pronunciation for pupils. (01 teacher)
- Guiding and helping learners to understand the meaning from contexts. (02 teachers)
- My role as a guide and mediator between the learner and knowledge, and encourage the learner throughout the process of reading. (01teacher)

From that we can get more proofs that the majority of the teachers behave randomly and unstructurally, it is why we can explain to a far extent the failure in teaching reading.

Item Thirteen: How do your pupils' comments affect them classmates?

- Positively
- Negatively

Option	N	%
Positively	00	00
Negatively	06	100
Total	**06**	**100**

Table 3.28: Teachers' Evaluation of Classmates' Comment
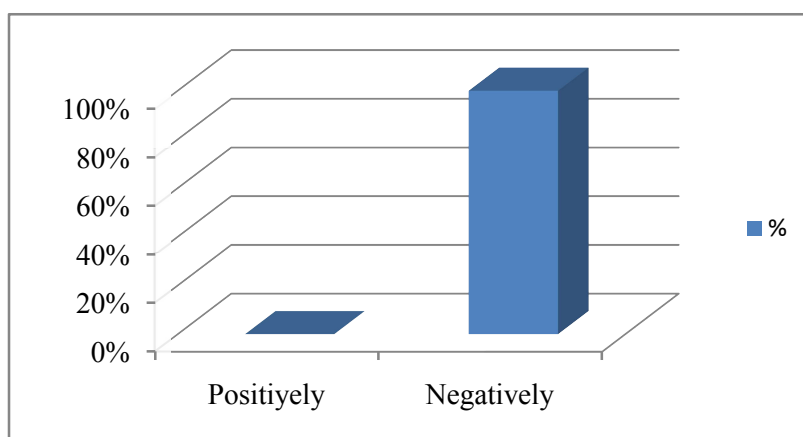
Figure 3.28: Teachers' Evaluation of Classmates' Comment

No one could deny the sensitive role peers exert on each other, but more dangerous is the fact that teachers may not be aware of those conflicts which can create serious obstacles in the whole learning process. The current item serves at testing teachers' consideration of the fact.

No far from our attitude, all the teachers went for the second choice (Negatively). Their comments are as follows (just 03teachers justify their answers):

- Being adolescents, the pupils are very sensitive concerning peer comment that does them more harm than good. (02teachers)
- Students' remarks tend to be more subjective.(01 teacher)

Item Fourteen: Do you value about the value of peer reading?

a) Yes

b) No

Option	N	%
Yes	05	83.33
No	00	00
No answer	01	16.67
Total	**06**	**100**

Table 3.29: Teachers' Opinion about Peer Reading
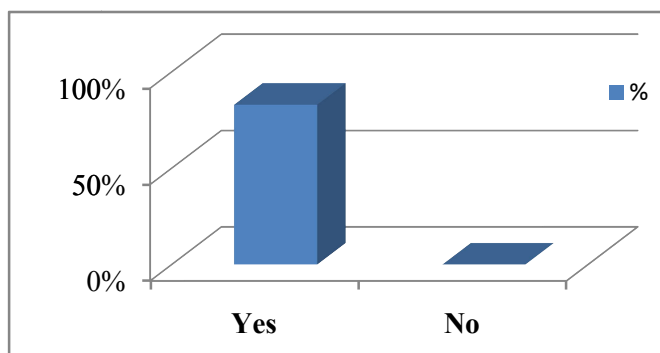
Figure 3.29: Teachers' Opinion about Peer Reading

The table above illustrates that the majority of the teachers (83%) answered positively. While no one answered negatively, which means the teachers are very aware about benefits of peer reading in developing pupils' level. The teachers specify its characters as follows:

- Peer reading promotes a positive attitude to reading and provide learners with leadership skill.
- It is something good and beneficial for week pupils.

Item Fifteen: Do you often apply peer reading when teaching reading?

- Yes
- No

Option	N	%
Yes	02	33.33
No	04	66.67
Total	06	100

Table 3.30: Teachers' Application of Peer Reading
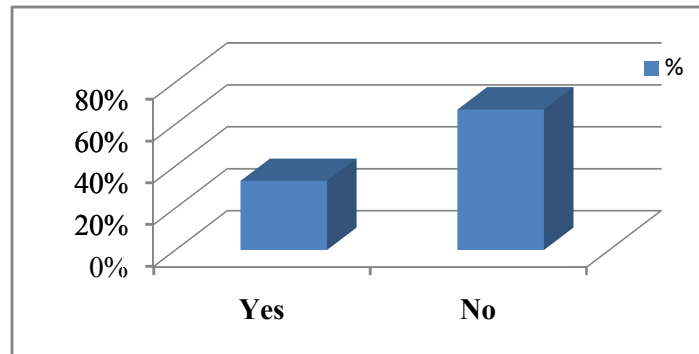
Figure 3.30: Teachers' Application of Peer Reading

The table above illustrates that the least percentage (33.33%) is the responses of teachers who said "Yes" they often apply peer reading because it develops reading confidence with a trusted peer, helps learners work together, encourages cooperation, and supports peer assisted learning. However, the majority of teachers' responses by that "No" and some of them said: peer reading takes much time and the curriculum is very long.

Item Sixteen: What do you do to make de-motivated or silent pupil participate in class?

The teachers' responses are as follows:

- First of all, we should love our pupils and our work, and then encourage them and make them feel that they are all able to do what good pupils can.
- We can help de-motivated pupil by using visual aids, videos, and the current curriculum should be shortened.
- Proving occasions for mutual and free communication, give him/her the chance to interact with him/her classmates, this means there is a necessity of creating a certain degree of extroversion in introverts which should parallel the creation of some introversion in extroverts.
- Asking those easy questions, accept their answers, check and help them.

Item Seventeen: Tick in front of the right idea:

a) When you make a good introduction that motivate learners to read

b) Mispronunciation de-motivate learners to read

c) Encouraging comments motivate learners to read

Option	N	%
a	03	50
b	03	50
c	05	83.33

Table3.31: Teachers' Opinion about Reasons of Motivation
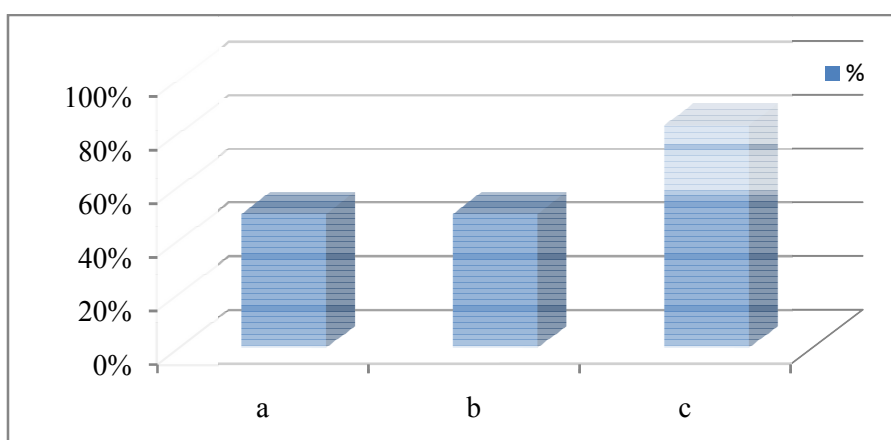
Figure 3.31: Teachers' Opinion about Reasons of Motivation

The table above illustrates that the majority of teachers (83.33%); they said their encouraging comments motivate the pupils, which means the teachers' comments have a great impact on the learners by that we can say it is as corner stone in motivation process. The choices "a" and "b" have the same percentage (50%); according to results when teachers make a good introduction to the text that motivate pupils to read and achieve activities.The teachers agree on mispronunciation de-motivate pupils to read.

Item Eighteen: Do you think that high anxiety inhibits reading?

- Yes

- No

Option	N	%
Yes	06	100
No	00	00
Option	06	100

Table 3.32: Teachers' Opinion about Anxiety Effects
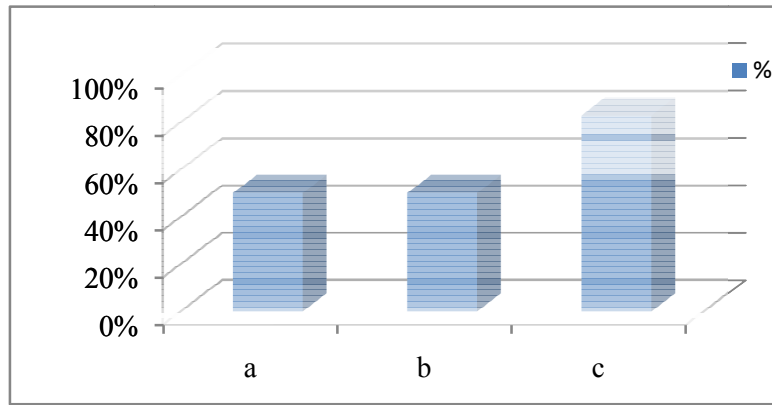
Figure 3.32: Teachers' Opinion about Anxiety Effects

The results in the table above reveal that all of the teachers (100%) agree about the fact that anxiety inhibits pupils' progress in reading; it is considered by many teachers as a hindrance to all the learning operation. From this item we know the dangerous role of anxiety.

Item Nineteen: rank the following factors in terms of responsibility for leaner's weakness in reading, from (1-6) (6 is the most responsible)

1. Vocabulary
2. Word recognition
3. Teacher's role
4. Lack of interest in English reading
5. Lack of motivation on the part of learners to read
6. Fear of bad comment from teachers
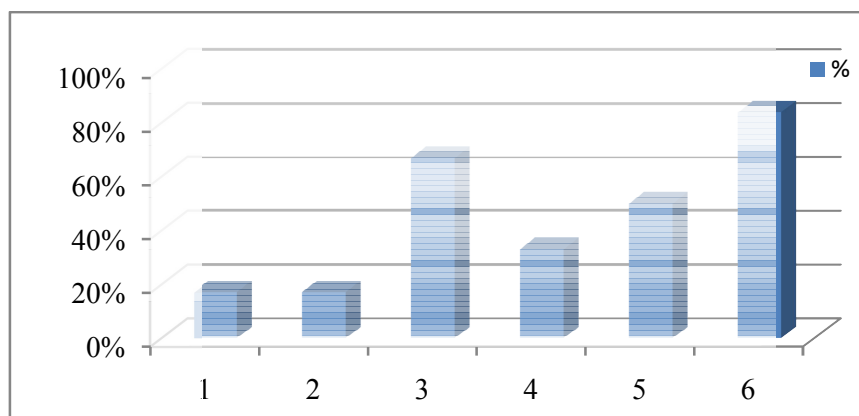
**Figure 3.33: Teachers' Evaluation of the Reading
Weakness Factors**

The factors in item nineteen are believed to be real handicaps for the reading process; the goal of this item is to find the most dangerous ones, according to teachers. The graph shows that there are five teachers who agree on that "fear of bad comment from teachers" (83.33%) this means that teachers' words have a great psychological influence on the pupils' willingness to read and it is responsible from their weakness in the skill. Then there is a clear sensitivity of the teacher's role (66.66%). Motivation (50%) is believed to exert a strong influence on learners' willingness. Furthermore, the lack of interest in reading (33.33%) can be the cause of the weakness. Finally, vocabulary and word recognition were near to excluded by the respondents who seem to reject them from the list of major handicaps in reading process.

Item Twenty: What do you suggest as far as the problem of reading comprehension is concerned?

The teachers' suggestions were as follows:

- Encouraging pupils to read not only in classrooms but also at home and libraries;
- Using dictionaries;
- Preparing (reading texts at home) before coming to the classroom;
- Explaining some difficult words at home;
- Set a plan for reading with a chosen questions to motivate them;
- Using audio-visual supports;
- Taking a part in activities of simulation like free communication and interchangeable ideas between the teacher and the learner, activity of role play, activity of co-operation lucid;
- Using activities of interaction and integration;
- Using strategies of breakdown service(mimes, gestures, jokes);
- Using a useful and functional language stimulate the curiosity of reading;
- Center the methods on the learner and see him like the first person in charge for his learning.

Conclusion

The data collected from the questionnaire administered to second year foreign language stream pupils aimed to investigate the great impact of some contextual and psychological factors on pupils reading comprehension. We can say that pupils do really suffer from great problems in reading; they have weaknesses due to some contextual and psychological factors; thus, we can say that the results are in the direction of our hypothesis. We intended to check throughout this research that there is impact of the various contextual and psychological factors in their responses.

The data collected from the questionnaire administrated to teachers of secondary school reveal that some teachers agree with us about the great impact of some contextual and psychological factors that have a negative impact on reading. Besides, the inadequate role of the teacher is also another important factor because most of them behave randomly in classrooms during the reading process. Therefore, teachers' behavior may inverse the whole equation; equally, we have to note that giving importance to pupils' needs and preferences triggers their motivation to read. Therefore, teachers need to pay more attention to motivation which is a decisive factor in pupils' reading comprehension.

General Conclusion and Pedagogical Implications

This study has provided an overview on the theoretical issues about reading and the principals underlying the theory of teaching reading from which it is concluded that reading is not an isolated activity and it is not a cognitive operation of meaning extraction, but it is a complex activity that requires a high cognitive effort, attention, concentration, recognition of separate words and phrases in order to achieve comprehension. This complexity of reading was discussed when we mentioned the various definitions of reading and their models. We also analysed the meaning of reading comprehension as a goal of reading process and its components that serves the meaning from breakdown.

As we mentioned reading is a highly syntactic process which takes place only when all these elements work together in order to achieve comprehension and a failure to comprehend may be due to any malfunctioning of one or more of them. This research revealed that this weakness is partly due to the effects of contextual and psychological factors starting from the belief that they are strongly needed for their complementarily in order to guarantee successful reading in the classrooms. Thus, we conclude that it is more suitable for teachers and learners, as well, to take into account the causes responsible for this problem given their sensitive interrelatedness and equal value.

The data collected from the questionnaires of both teachers and learners allowed us to analyse the situation and to confirm the pupils' weak level in reading assumed in this research. Pupils' weakness in reading is due to the teachers' role in the whole process as his behavior determines consistently the success or failure in reading. Besides, they neglect the role of peer in reading process. Furthermore, a thourough treatment for the problem implies the careful reference to the pupil's mental powers such as: motivation, self-esteem and anxiety given their outstanding effect on every human thought and behavior. As a matter of fact, the learners seem not be assisted in order to overcome their reading problems. Worse would be then, the teachers' ability to treat this weakness if they are not convinced to change positively their behavior and thought.

As far as the problem of reading in English is concerned, we do recognize that it is not easy for the pupils to overcome their weakness which become a constant habit throughout schools. The reasons which prevent them from improving their levels in reading are multiple and deeply rooted within their contexts and inside themselves, too. But, it is no

way saying that there are no solutions since we come to diagnose the illness. After the completion of this research work, we come to recognize that some points are of most value and deserve to be reconsidered again. The aim of these suggestions is to draw teachers' attention that the issue of the pupils' underachievement in reading like any other problem could be solved, or at least be partly treated. We do strongly believed that there is no best way to teach, but remain convinced that when the efforts are collaboratively made, teachers can do much. We can summarize the implications as follows:

- Teachers need to take into account their pupils' preferences and abilities to trigger their willingness to read.
- Reading is a process that requires the active presence of the teacher; during reading, the teachers' roles in observing, organizing, prompting, and modeling are of core importance for the process.
- Pupils should be made aware of the importance of reading, out of being a way to get grades, in order to create in them a long term desire to improve their reading abilities.
- Learners' feelings and the affective side contributes in their improvement in reading.
- Teachers need to create an appreciable classroom atmosphere in order to reduce anxiety and create feeling of comfortable and enjoyment among pupils.
- Weak readers among pupils should be encouraged to do better by adopting the value of peer in reading "peer reading", and consider their weak levels as basis for better works in an attempt to free them from the self esteem complex.
- Reading is a process based on the combination of number of factors that the teacher in association in order to help pupils achieve high level of comprehension. These factors relate to contextual and psychological areas.

Both teachers and learners are evolving in conditions which are not appropriate to FL learning. Pupil's initial level in English and sensitive age too added to their numbers in each class leave few possibilities to correct learning. To teachers, this situation requires teachers to double roles, which they assert they can not ensure now. If the work conditions were better, teachers believe they could help pupils reach better achievements. Teaching reading regarding the linguistic aspect only is not fitting. More efficient would be the matching of all the important variables to teach good habits.

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Appendices

Appendix One: The Learners' Questionnaire

Appendix Two: The Teachers' Questionnaire

Appendix One
The Learner's Questionnaire

Dear pupils

This questionnaire is an attempt for gathering information needed for the accomplishment of a master dissertation. We direct this questionnaire in order to investigate the negative impact of some contextual and psychological factors which are responsible for underachievement in reading comprehension. We would be very grateful if you could help us accomplishing our research in filling in the questionnaire.

Thank for your collaboration

Section One: Background Information

1. Specify your gender
   a. Female ⬭
   b. Male ⬭
2. Is your level in English
   a. Good ⬭
   b. Average ⬭
   c. Less than average ⬭
   d. I don't know ⬭

Section Two: the Importance of Reading

3. Rank the following skills in terms of difficulty

Listening	reading	speaking	writing

4. What does reading mean to you?
   - A way to acquire new vocabulary ⬭
   - A way to show your background knowledge ⬭
   - A way to be a good reader ⬭
   - A way to get grade and succeed at school ⬭
5. How often do you engage in reading in class?

   - Once a week ⬭
   - More ⬭
   - less ⬭

If more or less, please specify

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Section Three: Contextual and Psychological Factors

6. Does your teacher help you while you read?
       Yes 〇   No 〇   Sometimes 〇

7. Are you satisfied with the teachers' role during reading?
       Yes 〇   No 〇

8. Do you take into consideration your teacher's remarks on your reading?
       Yes 〇   No 〇

9. Do you like working with partner in reading?
       Yes 〇   No 〇

10. Which one do you prefer to ask
    - Your teacher 〇
    - Your partner 〇

11. Do you learn more when you work with your partner?
       Yes 〇   No 〇

12. Feeling anxious while reading hinders me from doing well
    a. Always 〇
    b. Often 〇
    c. Sometimes 〇
    d. Rarely 〇
    e. Never 〇

13. when I am not sure whether I understand what I am reading in English, I get upset
    a. Never 〇
    b. Hardly ever 〇
    c. Sometimes 〇
    d. Always 〇

14. I need to be confident in myself to read well?
       Yes 〇   No 〇   Sometimes 〇

15. It embarrasses me to volunteer to read and answer activities
    - Very often 〇
    - Sometimes 〇
    - Rarely 〇
    - Never 〇

16. Tick in front the right idea. Do you fear engagement in classroom because of?
    - Teacher's remarks discouraging you 〇
    - Your classmates better then you 〇
    - Do not care and interest about the subject 〇
    - You think you will not do well in reading 〇

17. Your reading problems are due to
    a) Vocabulary 〇
    b) Teacher's role 〇
    c) Lack of motivation to read 〇
    d) Fear of bad comments from teacher the teacher 〇

18. What is in your opinion about the best way to improve your reading?
    ……………………………………………………………………………………………………
    ……………………………………………………………………………………………………
    ……………………………………

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Appendix Two

The Teachers' Questionnaire

Investigation of Contextual and Psychological Factors that Affect Reading

Comprehension of FLL.

Dear teachers,

    This questionnaire is an attempt to gather information needed for the investigation of contextual and psychological factors that affect reading comprehension. We seek to shed some light on teacher's observations and opinions about the level of reading comprehension and the type of errors they make and the problem they face. We would be very grateful if you could help us in our research for the master's degree in sciences of language.

    Please, put a cross to indicate your chosen answer and specify your option when needed.

Thank you in advance for your collaboration.

Section One: Background Information

1. Specify your gender:
   a) Male   ⬭
   b) Female   ⬭
2. degree(s) held:
   a) BA (License)   ⬭
   b) MA (Master/Magister).   ⬭
3. How long have you been teaching English?
………………………………………………………………

Section Two: Reading and Reading Comprehension
4. What is Reading?
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………………………………………………………………………………… ………
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5. Skills ranking:
   Rank the flowing skills according to their importance to you:
   1) Speaking   ⬭
   2) Reading   ⬭
   3) Listening   ⬭
   4) Writing   ⬭
6. Your learners' general level in reading comprehension is:
   Good   ⬭   Average   ⬭   Bad   ⬭

7. Which of these aspects do you focus on in reading instruction:

- The pronunciation
- The most important ideas
- vocabulary
- Getting the overall meaning

8. While reading in classroom, your pupils are:
- Motivated
- Reluctant

If reluctant, why?

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9. To what extent do your pupils master the reading skills?

20%   50%   80%

What do you focus on during reading process?

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Section Three: Contextual and Psychological Factors

10. Do you adopt any strategy or approach to teach reading?

Yes   No

11. Do you try to establish a relaxed atmosphere in the class?

- Yes
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

12. What is your role during the reading process?

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13. How do classmates comment affect learners reading?

Positively   Negatively

Why?.. ....
....
....

14. Do you value about the value of peer reading?

a) yes

b) No

If yes, could you specify some of its characters?

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15. Do you often apply peer reading when teaching reading?
- Yes
- No

Justify your answer

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16. What do you do to make de-motivated or silent pupil participate in class?

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17. Tick in front of the right idea:

- When you make a good introduction that motivate learners to read ⬭
- mispronunciation de-motivate learners to read ⬭
- Encouraging comments motivate learners to read ⬭

18. Do you think that high anxiety inhibits reading?
- Yes ⬭
- No ⬭

19. Rank the following factors in terms of responsibility for learner's weakness in reading, from (1-6) (6 is the most responsible)
1- Vocabulary ⬭
2- Word recognition ⬭
3- Teacher's role ⬭
4- Lack of interest in English reading ⬭
5- Lack of motivation on the part of learners to read ⬭
6- Fear of bad comment from teachers ⬭

20. What you suggest as far as the problem of reading comprehension is concerned?

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<div align="right">Thank you for your collaboration</div>

ملخص

يهدف هذا البحث إلى تسليط الضوء و دراسة الأسباب و العوامل المؤدية إلى ضعف الفهم القرائي لتلاميذ المرحلة الثانوية الذين يدرسون الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.و لقد حصرنا في بحثنا هذا هذه العوامل في عوامل سيكولوجية (نفسية): كالقلق‬ عدم الثقة بالنفس‬ و قلة التحفيز. و عوامل في سياق المتعلّم و المتمثّلة في ما يتعلّق بداخل القسم: كالدّ ور الغير كافي للأستاذ خلال حصص القراءة‬ و عدم الاستفادة من عنصر الشريك أو الزميل فيما يسمّى بالقراءة المشتركة. حققت الدّراسة الميدانية لهذا البحث حيث تضمنت 30 تلميذ في مستوى السنة الثانية لغات أجنبية‬ و النتائج المحصّل عليها من البحث الميداني تشير إلى التأثير السّلبي لهذه العوامل على فهم التلاميذ للنصوص المكتوبة‬ فهذه العوامل أثّرت بشكل مباشر على قُدُراتهم و إمكانياتهم العقلية‬ و أدّت النتائج المستقاة من هذا البحث إلى تقديم بعض الاقتراحات التي قد تكون ذات منفعة للمدرّسين بُغيَة تحسين الفهم القرائي و بالتالي الوصول إلى قِراءة فعّالة .