University Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia of Jijel

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of English Language and Literature

Investigating the Use of Cognitive and Metacognitive

Strategies in Relation to EFL Learners' Reading

Comprehension Enhancement

The case of second year Master students at University

Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia of Jijel

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Candidate   **Supervisor**

Halima ALIOUCHE   **Fouzia BENNACER**

Board of examiners

Supervisor: Fouzia BENNACER   **University Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia of Jijel**

Chair person: Loubna KOUIRA   **University Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia of Jijel**

Examiner: Safia NAGHIZ   **University Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia of Jijel**

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Dedication

This humble piece of work is dedicated to my dear parents for their unconditional support, and the chance they gave me to prove and improve myself through all my walks of life.

Not to forget my loving sisters who have been considerate, understanding, and have graciously put up with the negligence that I have afflicted upon them all along the course of the study.

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Abstract

The essence of reading is to successfully comprehend what has been read. Hence, in order to ensure reading comprehension, the reader needs to employ strategies that would help him/her make sense of the read text. Accordingly, the present study seeks to investigate the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies and their relation to promote reading comprehension since the latter is of paramount importance in reading. It is hypothesized that if students employ cognitive and metacognitive strategies while reading, their reading comprehension will be improved. To test such a hypothesis, a questionnaire is designed and administered to all Master2 students studying English at University Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia of Jijel. The results, yielded from a population of 63 students, reveal key points with regard to the topic under investigation. Master2 students are found to use cognitive and metacognitive strategies frequently to cope with the problems faced while reading, and reach reading comprehension. Thus, this denotes that they view cognitive and metacognitive strategies as an effective tool which facilitates their reading comprehension since they report a frequent use of those strategies while reading. Therefore, the hypothesis is confirmed in the sense that students need to use cognitive and metacognitive strategies to enhance their reading comprehension.

List of Abbreviations

EFL   English as a Foreign Language

ESL   English as a Second Language

LLSs   Language Learning Strategies

LMD   Licence Master Doctorat

N   Number

RS   Reading Strategies

SILL   Strategy Inventory for Language Learning

SLL   Second Language Learning

SPSS   Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

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General Introduction

1. Statement of the Problem

Reading is one of the four language skills that students learning English as a foreign language (EFL learners) or as a second language (ESL learners) seek to develop, and get a high command of it due to its supreme importance. It is not only crucial as a language skill, but also as a language input for the enhancement of other skills. In the Algerian context, English is learnt as a foreign language ; it is used mainly for occupational purposes such as education. This denotes that English occupies a small room in the educational curriculum students are supposed to learn. Taking the Algerian EFL university-level students as an example within the current educational system or what is well known as LMD (Licence Master Doctorat) system, they are required to carry out their studies on their own. This system makes them more responsible because they have to work by themselves to improve their level of proficiency in English. Put it the way around, the LMD system helps university-level students to develop their autonomy and to become more conscious of the learning process which involves higher, and more demanding skills and tasks. Reading is, then, a fertile area to start the improvement since it serves as the basis for the development of other language skills. Nevertheless, based on the results obtained from a survey, the majority of EFL students reveal that they estimate their level of proficiency in reading as not satisfying since they have spent many years studying English. They feel so because they cannot effectively understand what has been read. To this point, a need for using techniques and strategies in order to be able to accomplish learning tasks purposefully such as writing a research paper after an intensive reading and overcome the learning barriers, is appealing. From among these language strategies that arouse the interest of many researchers in the field of reading and reading comprehension, strategies employed while reading (e.g., skimming and scanning) are

found to be helpful to ensure reading comprehension (Mcnamara, 2007). However, less common have been investigated with regard to the effectiveness and the usefulness of other types of strategies that involve more the cognition and what is beyond cognition that would help more students orchestrate and control the reading process such as cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Thus, here lies the significance of the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies.

2. Aim of the Study

The present study aims at investigating the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies of Algerian EFL students at University Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia of Jijel while they proceed with their reading as well as their strategy use. In other words, this study seeks to delve whether the students' use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies in reading is beneficial to reach reading comprehension.

3. Research Question(s)

The present study aims to answer the following research questions :

1. Do Algerian EFL students at University Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia of Jijel under investigation report a high frequency of use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies while reading ?

2. Is the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies a helpful tool, according to students, that contributes to their reading comprehension ?

4. Hypothesis

The essence of reading is to comprehend successfully what is meant by the text Hence, this study suggests the hypothesis that if Algerian EFL students at University Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia of Jijel employ cognitive and metacognitive strategies while reading, their reading comprehension can be enhanced.

5. Research Methodology

In order to get a reliable and valid comprehensible picture about the students' perceptions and attitudes towards the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies used by students while reading, a questionnaire is designed and adressed to Master2 students to elicit information about the cognitive and metacognitive strategies they use when they are involved in the reading activity.

6. The Structure of the Study

This study is divided into two main chapters : the first chapter will be devoted to review the relevant literature in which the issue under investigation is grounded. Besides, the study contains a chapter to present the practical part which aims at testing the earlier stated hypothesis about the usefulness of cognitive and metacognitive strategies in improving reading comprehension.

The first chapter is basically going to be subdivided into two sections. The first section is devoted to deal with Language Learning Strategies (LLSs). It provides a comprehensible overview about LLSs with an emphasis on cognitive and metacognitive strategies since they are to the core of the present study with a drawn reference to the relation between cognitive and metacognitive strategies and reading comprehension as an introduction to the second section that will be about reading comprehension.

The second chapter is devoted to present the field work of the present study. This chapter is further be composed of two sections. The first section is about the research design and methodology used in which detailed information is provided about the tool of research used to collect data. The latter is analysed and discussed in the second section in the field work chapter for the sake of being able to answer the research questions, and test what has been hypothesized so far.

7. Limitaions of the Study

Albeit data collection and analysis were conducted with great care to ensure validity and reliability, there are some limitations to consider. The first limitation to be addressed is time constraints. If more time was available, an experimental design would be adopted to examine the relationship between the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies and reading comprehension. There would be a controlled group and an experimental group and an experiment to test the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies they opt for, the appropriate way they can employ them so that they will be helpful and useful for them to deal with new situations, and more significantly cope with the challenges of those situations and ensure reading comprehension. Students would recieve a training on how they can effectively use cognitive and metacognitive strategies followed by a test to examine whether their awarness about the importance of using the cognitive and metacognitive strategies raised or not. So, the test would support what the questionnaire seeks to find out, and even it may add some other significant insights that the questionnaire did not cover.

One more backdraw of the present study is the number of the cognitive and metacognitive strategies included in the questionnaire. The latter cannot cover all the cognitive and metacognitive strategies because each student may opt for a cognitive or metacognitive strategy which is not or differently used by other students when they read a given literary passage or text. In addition, students are sometimes not aware of the fact that they are using cognitive and metacognitive strategies in doing the reading activity. Therefore, they cannot report the strategies they employ.

Another limitation to mention is the size of the population under investigation. If more time was available, the population would be enlarged to include other Algerian EFL students from other universities to be more representative to the broad Algerian EFL

context. However, one cannot overlook the validity of the results yielded from the

accurate, honestly provided answers of the students.

Chapter One : Literature Review

Section One

Cognitive and Metacognitive Strategies

Introduction

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Section One

Cognitive and Metacognitive Strategies

Introduction

There has been a remarkable change in the psychological theories. The field of

language education has witnessed an interesting shift in the last twenty years from the

behaviour theory, where learners were seen merely as recipients of knowledge, to the

cognitive theory in which the learner becomes the constructor of knowledge. Put it the

way around, there has been a great emphasis put on learning and learners rather than on

teaching and teachers. A great interest in how learners deal with the new information,

process it, understand it, remember it, and be able to retrieve it in order to use it in new

situations has grown. Accordingly, a deluge of research has been conducted on the

strategies learners employ all along the way of constructing knowledge, and how the use of

those strategies can yield to positive results with regard to their efficiency in their language

learning (Wenden and Rubin, 1987 ; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990 ; Chamot and O'Malley,

1994 ; Oxford, 1996, Cohen, 1998). This section provides some of the definitions for

LLSs, the characteristics of LLSs, their classifications as proposed by O'Malley and

Chamot (1985) and that of Oxford (1990). Cognitive and metacognitive strategies are also

tackled in details as they are the essential element of this section, followed by factors

affecting the LLSs choice, LLSs importance, and ways of assessing them. Dealing with

the nature of the relation between cognitive and metacognitive strategies and reading

comprehension is left to the end of this section.

 1.1. Language Learning Strategies (LLSs)

LLSs turned to be the primary concern of researchers in the field of education in the

sense that learners become more autonomous and responsible for their own learning.

Consequently, researchers delve into LLSs to look for deeper insights concerning the

nature of LLSs, and how learners use them in a way that reflects their independence in

learning. As well as, the way that LLSs would help them be effective and strategic

learners. Hence, a wide range of definitions of LLSs was provided by many researchers

each of which tackled them from his/her own perspective.

      1.1.1. Definition of language learning strategies. A great interest increased in

LLSs since the 1970's with the emergence of cognitive revolution. In order to understand

LLSs, let us first consider the basic term, strategy. The term strategy originates from the

ancient Greek word ''*strategia*'', which means the art of war. In a non-military setting, a

strategy has come to mean a plan, step, or conscious action directed toward attaining an

objective (Oxford, 1990, p. 7). It is not that easy to describe LLSs because there is no

unanimous consensus on their nature. So numerous definitions of LLSs were provided.

Learning strategies are techniques, approaches or deliberate actions that students take in

order to facilitate the learning and recall of both linguistic and content area information

(Chamot, 1987, p. 71). Cohen (1998) stated that ''second language learner strategies

encompass both second language learning and second language use strategies. Taken

together, they constitute the steps or actions consciously selected by learners either for the

learning of a second language, the use of it, or both'' (p. 5). In addition to Chamot and

Cohen, Oxford (1990) defined LLSs as ''specific actions taken by the learner to make

learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more

transferable to new situations''(p. 8). With the same vein, Wenden and Rubin (1987)

viewed LLSs in terms of ''behaviours learners engage in to learn and regulate the learning

of a second language'' (p. 6). Besides, O'Malley and Chamot (1990, p. 1) said that ''LLSs

are the special thoughts or behaviours that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn,

retain new information''.

As it can be noticed, a number of definitions of LLSs have been introduced, yet what is shared between those definitions is that LLSs are actions and techniques employed by learners and which are meant for solving problems learners may encounter. Hence, language learning will be more effective and successful.

1.1.2. Characteristics of language learning strategies. There are a number of characteristics agreed upon by researchers, albeit they defined LLSs differently. Oxford (1990) has listed twelve features of LLSs as follows :

-Contribute to the main goal, communicative competence

-Allow learners to become more self-directed

-Expand the role of teachers

-Are problem oriented

-Are specific actions taken by the learner

-Involve many aspects of the learner, not just the cognitive

-Support learning both directly and indirectly

-Are not always observable

-Are often conscious

-Can be taught

-Are flexible

-Are influenced by a variety of factors (Oxford, 1990, p. 9).

1.1.3. Classification of language learning strategies. Concerted effort has made in order to classify LLSs. Thus, many scholars have provided a different categorization of the strategies learners use. Nevertheless, O'Malley and Chamot's classification (1985) due to its relevance to the topic of investigation, and that of Oxford (1990), which is considered to be the most influential, are to be included here.

1.1.3.1. O'Malley and Chamot's classification (1985). O'Malley and Chamot (1985) have divided LLSs into three main categories, namely metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, and socio-affective strategies.

►*Metacognitive Strategies.* Strategies that are higher-order executive skills are the metacognitive strategies in the sense that they involve planning for learning, thinking about cognitive processes, and self-evaluating the production after the learning tasks have been completed. Self-management, delayed production, directed attention are examples of metacognitive strategies.

►*Cognitive Strategies.* Those strategies that are directly related to the task at hand are known as cognitive strategies. They involve a direct manipulation of the learning material, and it is said that cognitive strategies are more limited to specific tasks. Cognitive strategies include grouping, keyword, repetition, etc.

►*Socio-Affective Strategies.* Strategies of this type are strategies related to the social interaction with others and how to deal with breakdowns. Cooperative learning, interaction with native speakers, questions for clarification are good examples of socio-affective strategies.

1.1.3.2. Oxford's classification (1990). Oxford (1990) divided LLSs into two major categories : direct and indirect strategies, which are in turn subdivided into subcategories. She stated that ''Language learning strategies that directly involve the target language are called *direct strategies*. All direct strategies require mental processing of the language''(p.37). Memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies are the subcategories under the heading of the direct strategies.

A. Memory strategies. Strategies that are related to memory are used in order to process new information, store it into memory and retrieve it when is needed. Memory

strategies consist of : creating mental linkages, applying images and sounds, reviewing well, and employing action.

B. *Cognitive Strategies.* This type of strategies is used for linking new information to already existing one, analyse and classify it. Cognitive strategies involve handling the language learning. They include : practicing, recieving and sending messages, analysing and reasoning, and creating structure for input and output.

C. *Compensation Strategies.* Strategies that help learners to effectively use the language in speaking and writing, and enable them to fill knowledge gaps they may have are the compensation strategies. The latter are of two types : guessing intelligently, and overcoming limitations in speaking and writing. Oxford (1990) stated that compensation strategies are used by learners to cope with the breakdowns in speaking or writing.

Furthermore, Oxford (1990) said that "Other strategies, including metacognitive, affective, and social strategies, contribute indirectly but powerfully to learning. These are known as *indirect strategies*" (p. 12).

A. *Metacognitive Strategies.* Strategies of this type allow learners to control and be responsible for their learning. They are techniques used to control, manage, and self-evaluate the learner's learning. Selective attention, self-evaluation, monitoring, setting goals and objectives are examples of meatacognitive strategies.

B. *Affective Strategies.* Strategies enabling learners to control and manage their feelings, motivation in relation to learning are the affective strategies. For example, encouraging oneself, lowering anxiety, etc.

C. *Social Strategies.* Strategies that promote learning through interaction are known as social strategies. Since language is involved in learning and is a social phenomenon, social strategies are effective tools to use in order to facilitate interaction as

well as to practice the language. Asking questions for clarification, cooperating with native speakers are best examples of social strategies.

1.1.4. Cognitive and metacognitive strategies. Those types of LLSs (Cognitive and metacognitive strategies) dealt with so far were not emphasized. However, due to their significant relevance to the present study, more lines will be spent to thouroughly tackle cognitive and metacognitive strategies.

1.1.4.1. Cognitive strategies. Strategies that are the operations that learners deploy in order to understand what is presented by the linguistic system are the cognitive strategies.

O'Malley and Chamot (1990, p. 44) defined cognitive strategies as''operating directly on incoming information, manipulating it in ways that enhance learning''. In other words, cognitive strategies are related to specific and limited learning tasks, and involve a direct manipulation of the material to be learnt. Reading activities as an example, involve a variety of cognitive strategies like linking a new word to an already existing word stored in the memory, making summaries of the text, writing down the key points as well as the main ideas in order to understand well the text. Moreover, Chamot and Kupper (1989) stated that cognitive strategies are'' approaches in which learners work with and manipulate the task materials themselves, moving towards task completion'' (p. 14). Cognitive strategies, then, are strategies used by learners to perform a learning task, and that involve a direct interaction with the material.

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) in a study conducted in the USA, they proposed a number of items under the heading of cognitive strategies. They are :

 1. Repetition : imitating a language model, including overt practice and silent rehearsal.

 2. Resourcing : using target language reference materials.

3. Translation : using the first language as a base for understanding and/or producing the second language.

4. Grouping : reordering or reclassifying, and perhaps labeling the material to be learnt based on common attributes.

5. Note-taking : writing down the main idea, important points, outline, or summary of information presented orally or in writing.

6. Deduction : consciously applying rules to produce or understand the second language.

7. Recombination : constructing a meaningful sentence or large language sequence by combining known elements in a new way.

8. Imagery : relating new information to visual concepts in memory via familiar, easily retrievable visualizations, phrases, or locations.

9. Auditory representation : retention of the sound or a similar sound for a word, phrase, or longer language sequence.

10. Keyword : remembering a new word in the second language by :

   a-Identifying a familiar word in the first language that sounds like or otherwise resembles the new word.

   b-Generating easily recalled images of some relationship between the new word and the familiar word.

11. Contextualization : placing a word or a phrase in a meaningful language sequence.

12. Elaboration : relating new information to other concepts in memory.

13. Transfer : using previously acquired linguistic and/or conceptual knowledge to facilitate a new language learning task.

14. Inferencing : using available information to guess meanings of new items, predict outcomes, or fill in missing information (cited in Brown, 2000, pp. 125-126).

In the same line, Anderson (2003) proposed ten items to the cognitive strategies. They are as follows :

-Predicting the content of an upcoming passage or section of the text.

-Relying on grammar to help understand unfamiliar constructions and understanding the main idea to help comprehend the entire reading.

-Expanding vocabulary and grammar to increase reading speed.

-Guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words or phrases by using prior knowledge about English.

-Analysing theme, style, and connections to improve comprehension.

-Distinguishing between opinions and facts in reading.

-Breaking down larger phrases into smaller parts to help understand difficult passages.

-Linking the knowledge of the first language with words in English.

-Creating a map or drawing of related ideas to understand the relationship between words and ideas.

-Writing a short summary of what you read to help get the main idea.

Anderson's items related to cognitive strategies compared to that of O'Malley and Chamot (1990) provide more detailed information with regard to reading and reading comprehension.

     1.1.4.2. Metacognitive strategies. Strategies that involve thinking about the learning process and being aware of how to best learn are the metacognitive strategies. Before dealing with metacognitive strategies, let's first consider the basic term "*metacognition*".

     The term metacognition appeared in the work of Flavell (1978). He defined metacognition as ''knowledge that takes as its object or regulates any aspect of any cognitive behaviour'' (p. 58). That is to say, metacognition is meant for monitoring and

controlling cognitive strategies. According to Leahey and Harris (1997), metacognition is''the knowledge, awarness, and monitoring of one's own cognition'' (p. 221). In other words, metacognition can simply be put as the conscious awarness of one's cognition and the conscious regulation of one's own learning. Thus, metacognition involves two major types of knowledge : knowledge about one's own cognition, and knowledge about self-regulation of one's own learning. The former entails knowledge about self, task, and cognitive strategies whereas the latter involves knowledge about metacognitive strategies.

-Knowledge about self. Knowledge that refers to the readers' perception   of their reading abilities in addition to their background knowledge about what they are going to read is knowledge about self (Alderson, 2000 ; Kohonen et al., 2001).

-Knowledge about task. According to Wenden (1995), knowledge about task refers to what learners need to know about the purpose of a task, the task's demands, and the kind of the task.

-Knowledge about cognitive strategies. The reader's knowledge about the reading strategies that are likely to succeed in achieving specific goals in different cognitive undertakings refers to the knowledge about cognitive strategies

(Biehler & Snowman, 1993).

-Knowledge about metacognitive strategies. Knowledge that refers to the readers' knowledge about the executive processes they employ before, during, and after reading is knowledge about metacognitive strategies. Collins (1994) put it as :

It is not enough to be aware of one's understanding or failure to understand- a

learner must be able to self-regulate his or her reading process in order

to read for comprehension. The reader needs knowledge about meatcognitive

strategies. (p. 2)

As the quote indicated, the metacognitive strategies used in reading are not only concerned with being aware of the reading process, but also with how to successfully be able to construct meaning and comprehend what is read showing a high command of the metacognitive strategies as planning, monitoring, and self-evaluation. The reader needs to know how to successfully use a strategy and harmonize its use with other strategies.

Oxford (1990) defined metacognitive strategies as ''actions which go beyond purely cognitive devices, and which provide a way for learners to coordinate their own learning process'' (p. 136). Metacognitive strategies, hence, are essential for an effective planning and self-regulation of the language learning. Additionally, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) noted that metacognitive strategies are executive skills which involve knowledge about cognitive processes, regulation of cognition, self-management, planning for learning, and self-evaluation of the learner's performance. Likewise, Oxford and Crookall (1999, p. 404) viewed metacognitive strategies as behaviours for arranging, planning, monitoring, and evaluating one's learning.

As indicated from the aforementioned definitions, it can be concluded that metacognitive strategies involve planning for learning, monitoring, and self-evaluating after the learning tasks have been accomplished.

O'Malley and Chamot (1990) identified metacognitive strategies as follows :

1. Advance organizers : making a general but comprehensive preview of the organizing concept or principle in an anticipated learning activity.

2. Directed attention : deciding in advance to attend in general to a learning task and to ignore irrelevant distractors.

3. Selective attention : deciding in advance to attend to specific aspects of language input or situational details that will cue the retention of language input.

4. Self-management : understanding the conditions that help one learn, and arranging for the presence of those conditions.

5. Functional planning : planning for and rehearsing linguistic components necessary to carry out an upcoming language task.

6.Self-monitoring : correcting one's speech for accuracy in pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, or for appropriateness related to the setting or to the people who are present.

7. Delayed production : consciously deciding to postpone speaking in order to learn initially through listening comprehension.

8. Self-evaluation : checking the outcomes of one's own language learning against an internal measure of completeness and accuracy (cited in Brown, 2000, p. 125).

1.1.5. Factors influencing the use of language learning strategies. All language learners use LLSs, although they use them differently in terms of their types, appropriateness, and frequency in order to accomplish the same learning task. The reason behind such a difference in LLSs' use can be traced back to a variety of factors which shape LLSs' use like age, gender, attitudes and beliefs, etc. In studies conducted by Cohen (1990) ; Ehrman and Oxford (1989) ; MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) ; and Reid (1987), a number of factors such as motivation, gender, learning style and previous experience, and personality type may have an effect on the choice of LLSs. However, only some of the factors are going to be dealt with here since thay are the most known and familiar ones.

1.1.5.1. Motivation. Highly motivated learners have a positive attitude toward learning. Motivated individuals are seen as goal directed, expend effort, persistents, are attentive, have desires (wants), exhibit positive affect, are aroused, have expectancies, demonstrate self-confidence (self-efficacy), and have reasons (Gardner, 2007, p. 10).

1.1.5.2. Gender. Females are found to be high users of LLSs compared to males. O'Malley (1985) showed that secondary school girls use different strategies from the strategies used by their male peers.

1.1.5.3. Age. The choice of LLSs is also affected by age (Bialystock, 1981 ; Gunning, 1997) in the sense that there is a difference in terms of LLSs'use between young learners and adult learners. The latter tend to use a different range of strategies that young learners may not use and vice versa.

1.1.5.4. Learning style. Language learning style has been deemed as another factor that affects LLSs'choice (Schmeck, 1988 ; Ely, 1989 ; Reid, 1995, 1998). Learners tend often to use LLSs that are likely to show their preferred learning style especially when they are allowed to learn on their favourite way without any kind of imposition by the learning environement.

1.1.5.5. Cultural background. Language learning strategy research (Bedell & Oxford, 1996 ; Gopal, 1999 ; Nordin-Eriksson, 1999) revealed that learners from different cultural origins tend to learn differently. Consequently, they opt for using different learning strategies in different occasions. For example, some cultures encourage the competitive sense in learning while in other cultures, cooperative learning is recommended. Therefore, learners originated from those different backgrounds will use different range of strategies.

1.1.6. The importance of language learning strategies. In general, LLSs are considered important elements for effective language learning. They are steps and actions taken by learners to manage and control their learning. Besides, LLSs are good indicators of the ways learners approach their learning tasks, how they effectively deal with obstacles faced during the process of learning. Furtheremore, LLSs provide teachers with key hints on how learners plan, learn, or remember the new information obtained from the learning

task they are working on. According to Holec (1981), LLSs are essential to foster

learners'autonomy in language learning. In other words, LLSs serve as a sound basis to

develop their independence in the learning process ; they are responsible for their learning.

In addition, research by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) showed that the accurate and

appropriate use of LLSs to accomplish a learning task will lead to success and yield to

positive results. When learners are aware of the available range of LLSs and the

appropriate way to use them, they are more likely to be successful compared to learners

who are not aware or may use them inappropriately. The same idea is expressed by

Fedderholdt (1997) who said that language learners who are able to use a wide variety of

LLSs appropriately can best enhance their language skills. Apart from that, LLSs

contribute to increase motivation for learning since the appropriate use of LLSs leads

learners to take charge of their own learning, and promote their achievement in language

learning. More precisely, metacognitive strategies as an example help learners orgainze

their time, monitor the learning task, and self-evaluate what has been achieved after the

task has been completed. Additionally, cognitive strategies make learners capable of

solving problems while learning using the new input gathered from the task at hand.

Socio-affective strategies permit learners to take part in society through interaction, and

cooperating with others by asking for example, native speakers to correct their

pronunciation. It can be concluded that using those strategies help learners to be

communicatively competent individuals.

     1.1.7. Assessing language learning strategies. Generally speaking, there are two

ways by which the use of LLSs can be identified. Either by observing learners or by

asking them how they use LLSs. Nonetheless, the majority of strategies are unobservable.

Accordingly, it is not easy to get inside the "*black box*" of the learner and find out what is

going on there (Grenfell & Harris, 1999, p. 54). Therefore, "*the self report procedures*" is

the only way to find out how learners deploy strategies

(Chamot, 2004, p. 15 ; 2005, p. 113). The self report procedures include : diaries, think-aloud protocols, interviews, and questionnaires.

  1.1.7.1. Diaries. "For collecting data over a considerable period of time, diaries are a useful tool" (Macaro, 2001, p. 45). Writing diaries, hence, helps learners to report their feelings, attitudes toward learning, their thoughts and beliefs, and the problems they face which may hinder them from being successful accomplishers of the learning task. By doing so, they provide a big picture for their development in the learning process over time.

  1.1.7.2. Think- aloud protocols. This tool is widely used for the elicitation of strategy use. They are obtained by asking participants to report verbally the LLSs used when they are engaged in a learning task. Participants are not asked to self-evaluate their behaviours as in introspection (Cohen, 1987). Graham (1997, p. 44) explained think-aloud protocols in her own words as "They might begin by simply externalizing thoughts going through their head, then make inferences about the processes involved and finally make an observation which would suggest an element of looking back on what they had done".

  1.1.7.3. Interviews. Using interviews is an excellent and productive way to find out how learners employ LLSs (Macaro, 2001, p. 56). In the interview, learners are asked to report the strategies they deploy while performing a language task, and how they proceed in the task to successfully accomplish it.

  1.1.7.4. Questionnaires. Another way to self report the use of LLSs is to use the questionnaire. It is considered the most employed and efficient procedure that serves better the aim of identifying which strategies learners use. Oxford (1990) has developed the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) to measure how learners self report

strategy use in both second and foreign language contexts. SILL is highly adopted in many

countries due to its reliability and validity.

1.1.8. Cognitive and meatcognitive strategies related to reading comprehension. In

the context of second language learning (SLL), a distinction can be made between

strategies that improve reading comprehension, and strategies that facilitate learning. The

former are what is known as reading strategies, and the latter, however, are the LLSs

explored so far. Some researchers classified LLSs on the basis of the skills they improve

into : reading, writing, speaking, and listening LLSs. Since the present study is interested

in reading skill as being an important part in the learning process, a relation between

cognitive and metacognitive strategies as types of LLSs and reading comprehension can be

made. Cognitive strategies, for example, integrate the new material with the background

knowledge and learners' use to acquire, learn, remember, recognize the material they are

reading. As far as metacognitive strategies are concerned, they are of interest not only for

what they indicate about the ways readers arrange their interaction with the text, but also

for how the use of strategies is related to effective reading comprehension. One of the

most important factors that needs to be emphasized while reading is the metacognitive

reading strategy awarness which is considered as a facilitator to maintain reading

comprehension and foster EFL learning (Mokharti & Reichard, 2002). Hence,

metacognitive reading strategy awarness is related to the knowledge about ourselves as

readers, what we are asked to do with the reading text, and the strategies that we employ to

perform the task (Baker & Brown, 1984 ; Singhal, 2000). According to Brown (1987),

metacognitive reading strategy awarness is usually composed of (1) declarative

knowledge, (2) procedural knowledge, (3) conditional knowledge. The first type of

knowledge refers to knowledge about oneself as a learner and about what factors can

influence one's performance   (Schraw, 1998). Procedural knowledge refers to

knowledge about how to do things. It is defined as knowledge about the execution of

procedural skills (Veenman, 2005). A high degree of procedural knowledge can allow

individuals to perform tasks more automatically. This is achieved through a large variety

of strategies that can be accessed more efficiently (Pressly et al., 1987). Concerning the

conditional knowledge, it refers to knowing when and why to use declarative and

procedural knowledge (Garner, 1990). It allows students to allocate their resources when

using strategies. This in turn allows the strategies to become more effective (Reynolds,

1992). Accordingly, cognitive and metacognitive strategies are closely related to reading

and reading comprehension.

Conclusion

From what is presented in the preceding lines, it can be concluded that LLSs is a

hot debatable issue since it provokes the sense of curiosity of many researchers who seek

to delve into how learners approach their learning process. In doing so, a significant shift

has been directed towards learners and learning. Each researcher tackled this issue from

his/her own perspective. Thus, there were no unanimous consensus in terms of the

definitions or classifications proposed for LLSs. The focus of this section was on the

cognitive and metacognitive strategies since they gain the lion's share in the topic under

investigation. Besides, the relation of cognitive and metacognitive strategies to reading

and reading comprehension, which will be dealt with next in the second section of this

chapter, was revealed.

<center>**Section Two**</center>

<center>**Reading Comprehension**</center>

1.2.1. Reading

 1.2.1.1. Definition of Reading

 1.2.1.2. Models Reading

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   B. Top-down Model

   C. Interactive Model

 1.2.1.3. Types of Reading

   A. Extensive Reading

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   A. Definition of Reading Strategies

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1.2.2. Reading Comprehension

 1.2.2.1. Definition of Reading Comprehension

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 1.2.2.4. Variability in Reading Comprehension

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Conclusion

Section Two

Reading and Reading Comprehension

Introduction

Reading is considered as an important language skill. It serves as the basis for the development of other language skills. Accordingly, many researchers and theorists in the domain of reading gave great attention to that skill and had shifted their scope of vision to view it as an active process rather than just being a passive activity as it was believed in the past years. Researchers seek to provide insightful views with regard to how EFL/ESL learners read the text and how they process it for the sake of constructing meaning. This section will be then devoted to investigate those issues dealing with reading in a first part, and how readers comprehend what they read in a second one. The reading part will deal with the different definitions of reading, the reading models, then in some lines types of reading will be mentioned depending on the reader's aims followed by the reading strategies which will be defined briefly with an inclusion of some of those strategies that readers use while they read to ensure reading comprehension. The latter is going to be the core of the second part in this chapter. The definition of reading comprehension will be provided first, followed by the schema theory, and then levels of reading comprehension based on the reader's interest and purposes. Factors affecting the effectiveness of reading comprehension will be dealt with by the end of the second part followed by a conclusion to the section.

1.2.1. Reading

Reading is considered as a means of communication and sharing of ideas, thoughts, opinions, etc. It is a complex process that requires an interaction between the reader and the written text in order to make sense of it and construct meaning.

1.2.1.1. Definition of reading. Many researchers have demonstrated the complexity of the reading process by providing a variety of definitions. Gates (1949, p. 3) stated that reading is "a complex organization of patterns of higher mental processes...[that]…can and should embrace all types of thinking, evaluating, judging, imagining, reasoning, and problem solving". Highlighting the complexity of reading, Pang et al. (2003) defined reading as "a complex activity that involves both perception and thought" (p. 6). Reading is then an interactive process in which the reader actively interacts with the text based on his/her prior knowledge, experiences, attitudes he/she has in order to extract the meaning. It requires creativity and thoughtful analysis trying to make sense of what has been read. Davis (1995, p. 1) asserted that "reading is a private mental process which involves the reader in trying to follow up and respond to a message who is physically absent". This implies that in order for the reader to get the meaning across, he/she needs to develop a range of strategies such as inferencing the meaning from context, predicting, etc. Such used strategies help readers understand what is between lines and gain information from the text. Goodman (1988) stated that :

> Reading is a receptive language process, it is a psycholinguistic process in that it starts with a linguistic surface representation encoded by the writer, and ends with meaning which the reader construct. Thus, there is an essential interaction between language and thought, the writer encodes thought as language and the reader decodes language to thought. (p. 13)

It can be simply deduced, from the quotation above, that reading is a mental process that involves an active participation on the part of the reader in the sense that the reader is expected to decode what the writer of the text encodes. That is to say, based on the words, sentences, etc which represent language, the reader critically analyses the language used by the writer and then transforms it to thought.

However, there are some scholars who proposed a simple view of reading saying that

reading consists of two components, one that makes readers recognize language through

the linguistic representation, and a second component that helps them comprehend and

understand the intended meaning. Fries (1962) is one of those who viewed reading as

simple saying that knowing the code of language in terms of vocabulary and syntax used

while reading does not necessarily mean that the reader understands what he/she reads.

Therefore, the reader cannot transfer language to thought.

     1.2.1.2. Models of reading. With regard to the reading process, reading models

emerge for the sake of finding out how readers process information when they read the

written text. i.e., these models shed light on how readers derive meaning from the print

being read. There are three influential reading models : Bottom-up model, Top-down

model, and Interactive model.

     *A. **Bottom-up model.*** Reading as viewed by the bottom-up model refers to the

series of operation that the reader performs when decoding the print from written symbols

to their corresponded aural representation. This model is based on the view that reading is

a process whereby the meaning of the text is built up starting from letters to words to

sentences to paragraphs until all what is written turned to be meaningful. Simply put, the

reader in the bottom-up model starts gradually to combine smaller units into longer units

moving from the bottom to the top. By the end, the comprehension takes place after

vocalizing every bit of the text elements (Orasanu & Penney, 1986, p. 1). Within the same

stream, according to Davis (1995), the bottom-up models are "Models of the reading

process that describe the process as a sequence of discrete ′steps′, in which the direction of

processing is from ′bottom-level′ features of text to ′higher levels′, that is, from the

identification of letters to sounds, to words, to sentences and finally to meaning and

thinking" (p. 169). Gough (1972), a figure among those who encouraged the bottom-up

model, asserted that the reader in the bottom-up model processes letters and words

presented in the text progressively and in a systematic way in order to construct a complete

meaning of the print. Allington (1991), emphasizing the importance of the decoding

process the readers use in order to make sense of the text, stated that "All readers must

acquire automatic and proficient strategies for the integrative use of the multiple cue

sources available in written text" (p. 372). That is to say, readers need to develop effective

strategies so that they can successfully decode the elements of the text and get a full

understanding of the script. However, this model has been criticized because of its

over- reliance on the structure of every single component of the text. Accordingly, another

model is proposed.

   B. Top-down model. According to Davis (1995, p. 175), top-down models in

contrast to bottom-up models "predict that the processing sequence proceeds from

predictions about meaning to attention to progressively smaller units, for example, letters,

visual features". In other words, the focus has shifted from the letter-sound

correspondence to what the reader brings to the process of reading in terms of the

background knowledge he/she may activate in order to infer the meaning of the text as a

whole. The top-down models are deemed to be "*concept driven*". This means that the

ideas and thoughts the reader generates while doing reading help him/her to construct

meaning. The reader in this model uses his previous experience as well as his/her

expectation in order to interpret the writer's intentions that lie between lines. The top-

down model stresses the reader's interaction with the text as he/she is considered as a

creator of the meaning rather than just be a word for word translator that seeks to extract

meaning from every element of the text. Emphasizing this view, Goodman (1968, p. 126)

described reading in the top-down model as "a psycholinguistic guessing game in which

the reader makes predictions and then samples just enough of the text to inform these

predictions". The reader uses his/her schemata or background knowledge to guess the meaning of the text ; then when he/she proceeds with the reading process, he/she confirms or rejects what has been hypothesized earlier about the content after going through the text. This model contributes to a good analysis of the reading process since it focuses on the reader's interaction with text based on what he/she brings to that process and which helps foster comprehension of the text. However, opponents of the top-down model claim that this model puts an overemphasis on the prediction the reader makes based on the prior knowledge neglecting then the decoding processes. As a result, a need for another model to approach reading has grown.

  C. Interactive model. This model is an amalgamation of both the bottom-up and the top-down models. According to Rumelhart (1977), who came up with this model, reading is an interactive process which involves perceptual and cognitive processes. The interactive model (Rumelhart, 1977 ; Stanovich, 1980) emphasized what the readers bring with them to the process as well as what they find in the text in terms of the orthography of the text. Grabe (1988) stated that the reader in the interactive model of reading can opt for a variety of skills that permit him/her to process and interpret the meaning of the text. Hence, the reader makes use of both his/her shemata or background knowledge as well as the orthographic knowledge to facilitate word recognition, and therefore make sense of what has been read. Stanovich (1980) introduced an interactive-compensatory model. As its name implies, it added a feature to what Rumelhart (1977) proposed as an interactive model saying that weaknesses in a process can be compensated. Stanovich (1980, p. 63) put it as "Interactive models assume that a pattern is synthesized based on information provided simultaneously from several knowledge sources. The compensatory assumption states that a deficit in any knowledge source results in a heavier reliance on other knowledge sources, regardless of their level in the processing hierarchy". Simply put, a

reader may rely on the grapho-phonemic or letter-sound correspondence to decode

unfamiliar words encountered while reading rather than using his/her prior knowledge

since he/she has not enough schemata to make a prediction of the word's meaning. Thus,

the reader employs his/her strengths in decoding process to compensate his/her weaknesses

in making an accurate prediction which is based on the reader's background knowledge in

order to facilitate comprehension.

1.2.1.3. Types of reading. Reading varies according to the reader's purposes, the

nature of the text, and the pace of reading. Reading types are behaviours readers adjust

based on the factors above while they are doing the reading activity. Reading can be silent

or aloud according to what is intended to work on in the process of reading. For example,

the reader chooses to read silently because he/she wants to concentrate more on getting the

gist of the text. Another reader may opt for aloud reading to try the pronunciation of words

and test his/her reading speed. However, the most common reading types are extensive

reading and intensive reading.

A. Extensive reading. Day (1993, p. 19) defined extensive reading as " The

teaching of reading through reading... there is no overt focus on teaching reading. Rather,

it is assumed that the best way for students to learn to read is by reading a great deal of

comprehensible material". For Brown (1989), extensive reading "[occurs] when students

read large amounts of high interest material, usually out of class, concentrating on meaning

′reading for gist′ and skipping unknown words" (p. 68). Based on the aforementioned

definitions, the focus is on the amount of materials read including books, articles, novels,

excerpts of all what is in a written form. Readers seek for a global comprehension of the

gist rather than looking for specific details. Another key feature in the extensive reading is

that readers when they read, they aim at getting a global comprehension of what has been

read in a relaxed manner. That is, readers can guarantee their enthusiasm since they read

everything they are interested in. Additionally, it is a good opportunity for them to reinforce their fluency in reading skill. Furthermore, extensive reading is considered as very useful for promoting the reader's vocabulary stock, automatic word identification and knowledge of the language and world in general (Harmer, 1991, p. 135).

      B. Intensive reading. This type of reading requires a thourough reading of the text paying great attention to the minimum details. This is why is sometimes called ′narrow reading′. Intensive reading aims at helping readers to get the full comprehension of the text with the contribution of the instructors usually teachers ; it is often directed to realize the set objectives in a syllabus. A definition of intensive reading has been proposed as "to take a text, study it line by line, referring at every moment to our dictionary and our grammar, comparing, analysing, translating, and retaining every expression that it contains" (Day & Bamford, 1998, p. 5). In other words, in the intensive reading, readers are required to carefully analyse the text at hand in terms of :

-Vocabulary : readers need to consult the dictionary whenever they come across unfamiliar words in order to check their meanings and the appropriate context which are more suitable to be placed in. In this case, the reader enriches his/her bank of vocabulary more efficiently and can memorize the words better.

-Grammar : the reader through intensive reading can analyze the rules and the relationships that exist between the elements of the text. For example, the reader can make sense of the text from the tense used in the text.

-Syntax : at this level, the reader in his/her way of analysis, he/she focuses the attention on the sentence in terms of the ponctuation, the transitional words that link the sentenses to form the whole text.

-Discourse : the focus here is on the paragraphs in order to check the smooth flow of ideas from one paragraph to another taking into consideration the cohesive devices as well.

In getting the meaning of the unknown words, readers tend to use techniques that would help them understand the real intended meaning of the words they find difficult.

1.2.1.4. Reading strategies. Reading strategies (RS) gained great attention of many researchers who seek to know more about how learners process the text, and how they overcome the obstacles that may face while reading. RS, hence, are important tools that would help readers reach reading comprehension.

A. Definition of reading strategies. RS were viewed differently. Consequently, many researchers provided various definitions of RS as they were tackled from a variety of perspectives. Jimenez et al. (1996) suggested that in the context of reading comprehension, strategies can be defined as deliberate actions taken by the readers for the comprehension to take place and be fostered. Cohen (1986) expressed the same idea viewing the RS as a conscious mental process whereby the reader went through to accomplish certain reading tasks. In addition, Macnamara (2007, p. 6) explained a reading comprehension strategy as "a cognitive or behavioural action that is enacted under particular contextual conditions, with the goal of improving some aspect of comprehension". That is to say, RS refer to the different cognitive or behavioural actions that readers use in particular situations for the purpose of establishing reading comprehension.

B. Some reading strategies. Oxford (1990) suggested six RS extracted from the learning strategies. They are as follows : predicting, skimming, scanning, inferencing, guessing the word meaning, and self-monitoring. They are deemed useful strategies that help readers achieve successful reading.

►*Predicting.* The majority of researchers as well as psychologists stressed the usefulness of predicting and considered it as an effective technique to promote reading comprehension. Predicting implies activating the prior knowledge that readers have and

relate it to what is found in the text (Greenall & Swan, 1988). Before reading any written document, readers subconsciously look backward for what they know about the text's topic, and how best they will benefit from it when they actually start reading the text.

►*Skimming.* One of the emploed technique readers opt for in doing reading is skimming. The latter means to glance the text quickly for the purpose of having a general overview of the organizational pattern used and extracting the gist of the whole passage as well as the main idea of each paragraph of the text at hand (Grellet, 1981).

►*Scanning.* Similarly to skimming, scanning involves taking a quick look over the text. However, it is more focused in the sense that the reader aims at finding out specific information, idea, or minor details that are relevant to his/her interest and needs.

►*Inferencing.* Making an inference is an important strategy that helps readers reach comprehension in the text. According to Kristin et al. (2009), inferencing includes the following : (1) Pronoun reference (Knowing what a pronoun in a sentence refers back to) (2) Forming hypothesis about what is coming next in the text (3) Guessing the meanings of unknown words or phrases (4) Forming impressions about character motives and behaviours across multiple locations in text (5) Knowing the subtle connections of words as they are used in particular contexts (6) Understanding cause-effect relationships of events mentioned at different times in a text (7) Drawing upon background knowledge in to fill in gaps within a text.

►*Guessing word meaning.* Another valuable technique that is mostly used by readers when they get stuck is guessing. It is then an effective way to cope with the obstacles encountered while reading, and reach reading comprehension by drawing an educated inference of the meaning of the unfamiliar word based on the surrounded context. Smith (1971) stressed this idea stating that it is better to refer to the surrounding

environment to guess the meaning of the unknown word than just consulting the dictionary

to identify its meaning.

►*Self-monitoring.* The strategy which implies that readers are aware of their

reading is self-monitoring strategy. Readers are self-directed and can manage successfully

the process of reading in the sense that they show awarness of how and when to use the RS

to solve the problems they may face for a better reading comprehension (Kern, 1988).

1.2.2. Reading Comprehension

The aim behind reading a text is to ensure comprehension and construct meaning

from what has been read. Comprehension, therefore, is the essence of reading in the sense

that reading becomes pointless and daunting when readers fail to get the text's message.

1.2.2.1. Definition of reading comprehension. The process in which the reader

interacts with the text digging deeper to extract the writer's message relying on what

he/she already knows about the topic or the subject of the text at hand is what is known as

reading comprehension. The latter, therefore, is not only a matter of getting the meaning

across, but also it is a matter of how readers activate their previous knowledge in their way

of analysis of the text to create the meaning encoded by the writer and aimed to be decoded

by them (the readers). Reading comprehension is a subject of hotted debate because a

number of different definitions has been introduced in the field. Wray (2004) identified

reading comprehension as follows :

Understating in reading is exactly like this. It is not simply a question of guetting

meaning from what is on the page. When you read, you supply a good deal of the

meaning to the page. The process is an interactive one, with resultant learning

being a combination of your previous ideas with new ones encountered in this text.

(p. 14)

Wray (2004) viewed reading comprehension as an interactive process ; a combination of what is provided in the text, and what the reader brings in terms of the previous knowledge he/she has on the topic of the text. Grelett (1981) agreed with this idea saying that the prior knowledge brought by the reader to the print is of paramount importance in the sense that it helps the reader create the meaning and gain a full understanding of the text without focusing more on the text's word for word isolated meaning. Snow (2002) proposed another definition for reading comprehension claiming that it is" The process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language ; it consists of three elements: the reader, the text and the activity or purpose for reading" (p. 7).

     2.2.2. Schema theory of reading and reading comprehension. It is worth mentioning that using the reader's background knowledge helps readers understand the new input presented in the text. The significance of the background knowledge used by readers while reading is grounded in the so called "*schema theory*". According to Rumelhart (1980), schema theory is an explanation of how readers use their background knowledge to understand what is intended in the text. Let's first clarify more what is meant by the background knowledge. The latter refers to what the reader knows before he/she intends to know more. It refers to the body of information that the reader has as a stock in his/her mind, and it is accumulated each time whenever the reader comes across new information. The term background knowledge is often referred to as prior knowledge, previous knowledge, pre-existing knowledge, schematic knowledge, and already aquired knowledge. As it is mentioned earlier, the pre-existing knowledge is an important aspect which contributes to reading comprehension of the text. Based on this idea is the tenet of the schema theory which suggests that the text in itself does not convey meaning, but rather it directs readers to how best they should construct meaning by using their schematic

knowledge. Alderson (2000, p. 17) defined schemas as "Networks of information stored in the brain which act as filters for incoming information". In his precised and brief definition, he viewed the schema as mental information stored in the brain and which helps deal with the new information detected by the brain, interpret it and then store it. Thus, comprehension occurs. Another definition of schema is proposed by Widdowson (1983, p. 34) who stated that schemas are "the cognitive constructs which allow for the organization of information in long-term memory". In short, schema theorists viewed schemas as "*abstract knowledge structures*" that are organized and stored in the long-term memory. They help readers make association with what they have already in mind in terms of knowledge, experiences, attitudes, beliefs, etc as well as what they encounter in the text for the purpose of successfully interpreting the writer's intentions and make sense of the text. Accordingly, this knowledge, coupled with the ability to make linguistic predictions, determines the expectations the reader will develop as he/she reads. The skill in reading depends on the efficient interaction between the linguistic knowledge and knowledge of the world (Clarke & Silberstein, 1977, pp. 136-137).

      1.2.2.3. Levels of reading comprehension. Reading comprehension depends on how the reader approaches the text as well as his/her purpose behind doing the reading activity. In order to draw more attention to this important issue, three-level taxonomy of reading comprehension had been proposed by Clymer (as cited in Brassell & Rasinski, 2008). They are : literal comprehension, inferential comprehension, and critical or evaluative comprehension. Literal comprehension as its name implies refers to what the reader finds in the lines of the text. This level of comprehension is said to be the simplest since it does not require much concentration or a deep analysis of what the text presents on the part of the reader. The reader sticks to what the linguistic elements of the text dictactes. Put it the way around, the reader looks for the information at the surface level of

the text. In the inferential comprehension, however, the reader goes beyond what is

obvious at the surface to what is between lines. The reader here is expected to find out the

intended meaning of the text making use of his/her previous knowledge of the world,

his/her past experiences, etc. Thus, the reader can infer new information or upcoming

events. At this level of comprehension, the reader needs to be more competent and

sophisticated in order to be able to successfully arrive at the text's message unlike in the

literal comprehension. The critical comprehension involves a thourough analysis raising

critical judgements about what is provided in the print. The reader at this level voices

his/her own point of view and provides an evaluation of what he/she has read. As a result,

the reader needs to have a good sense of critical thinking in order to successfully evaluate

the read text.

   1.2.2.4. Variability in reading comprehension. Reading comprehension is

admittedly an interactive process that involves an active participation on the part of the

reader with the text depending on an activity within a given context. Therefore, for the

reading comprehension to be established, the fusion of: the text, the reader, the activity,

and the context is necessary.

   A. Variability in text. The text is one of the factors affecting reading

comprehension. A text is defined by Davies (1995, p. 194) as "a coherent piece of writing

exhibiting both structure and texture, assignable to a single author or collaborating authors,

with clearly defined boundaries making the beginning and end of the writing".

The text, therefore, can be of various types depending on the content it carries and writer's

intentions. Vocabulary, syntax, cohesive markers, etc are important to look at while

approaching a text for comprehension.

   ►*Text type.* As it is mentioned before, the text type depends on the content it

holds. Awarness of the text type contributes to a large extent to the comprehension of the

text. Readers need to be aware of the different characteristics of the text they are engaged

in in terms of the sentense structure and the vocabulary choice. Davies (1995, pp. 83-88)

argued that a text is described according to its rhetorical function. Generally speaking,

there are two types of texts : narrative and expository texts. As far as the former is

concerned, Rumelhart (1980, p. 313) introduced the term "*story grammars*" claiming that

these story grammars are helpful in understanding a big part of the told story by being

aware of its features as the characters, the setting, the plot, etc. In addition to be aware of

the features of the narrative text, the reader needs to be conscious of the boundaries that

bound the expository text as well. The latter implies the goal of the writer behind

presenting the information. The expository text is considered as being more complicated

compared to the narrative text since it is mainly associated with history and science. In

such texts, the writer selects a more complicated vocabulary with technical terms. Hence,

it is quite difficult for the reader to completely understand the text. The reader, therefore,

needs to practice going through such genres of texts in order to develop a high command of

the vocabulary used, identifying the characteristics of the text, and building meaning of

what is behind the exposition of given information.

►*Vocabulary.* A crucial element in the text analysis is the vocabulary. It affects

reading comprehension in both a positive and negative way. The reader may face

problems understanding the text's meaning because of the complicated nature of the

vocabulary used in the text. In some cases, the reader cannot figure out the meaning of the

difficult word even if he/she focuses on the surrounding context in which the word is used.

As a final solution, he/she consults the dictionary to check its meaning. Admittedly, the

reader gets confused on how to clarify the meaning of unfamiliar words when there is no

way to skip them. Hence, reading comprehension is impeded. On the other hand, reading

comprehension can be fostered simply because the reader finds the range of vocabulary

used easy to understand, and can be quickly inferred from the context. In such an instance, the reader can successfully make sense of the text as a whole and comprehend what is meant by the text. Emphasizing the importance of vocabulary, Coady and Huckin (1975, p. 20) maintained that comprehension is ensured by the coverage of the text's lexis.

►*Coherence and Cohesion.* In addition to the text type and vocabulary, coherence and cohesion are said to be other factors that influence reading comprehension. Coherence means that the reader is able to feel the smooth flow of ideas from one paragraph to another in the sense that the reader can follow the writer's train of thoughts without a break that would lead to a misunderstanding or confusion. Cohesion is another aspect that affects to a large extent reading comprehension. Davies (1995, p. 101) viewed cohesion as different possibilities or ways to draw relationships and connections between words and sentences in order to form a well linked and structured comprehensible body. When the reader interacts with a cohesive text, he/she can successfully see what refers to what. Cohesion is a useful tool that facilitates reading. Yun (1993, p. 13) shed light on the contribution of cohesion to reading saying that "it provides the basis for making predictions and building expectations. The continuity expressed by cohesion constitutes the context that provides the basis for making predictions and building expectations in reading". Accordingly, any possibility of confusion or misinterpretation fades away and even the reading speed will be maximized. It is worth mentioning here that cohesion and coherence go hand in hand and any lack in terms of cohesion will definitely have a negative effect on the coherence of the text.

B. *Variability in readers.* Factors related to readers take the lion's share in the work of the reading theorists. Among the factors to be considered here are : the reader's interest level in the text, the purpose of reading, the reader's language proficiency, and the knowledge of the topic.

►*Reader's interest level in the text.* The reader who is more interested in reading a given printed document is more likely to understand what is presented in it. The reader gets more involved in the text to the extent that he/she gets sunk in its lines due to the attractive text's style, language being used with its aesthetic use of vocabulary. The reader, therefore, keeps reading following the extraordinary flow of ideas until he/she ends up the text in a very short amount of time and with a great enthusiasm deep inside. Widdowson (1978, p. 80) emphasized the importance of maintaining the reader's interest and motivation in the text. He argued that readers usually attend to what is related to their likes and interest, and that they do not worry about texts which do not arose their curiosity and motivation. The highly motivated readers are able to read the text about more than once in order to get a deep comprehension.

►*Purpose of reading.* The reader reads the text for different purposes and intentions. Those purposes and aims affect the way the reader treats the text which in turn would affect his/her level of comprehension. The reader may indulge in reading a printed text for pleasure. As a result, he/she is not going to focalize his/her attention on every word in the text to get detailed information, rather he/she seeks to get the overall idea of the text without digging deeper in it. It is worth mentioning that reading for pleasure is one case of extensive reading in which the reader gets some knowledge in a relaxed manner to reinforce his/her fluency or speed in reading. However, the reader may opt for intensive reading in which a more-focused attention and effort are directed toward getting a much deeper knowledge about the text standing up on every particular information and on what is presented in the text's lines. The reader in this case aims at gaining knowledge to the last drop. Thus, the reader needs to set a clear purpose before reading a given text (be it for pleasure, or for a detailed comprehension), otherwise the reading process will be useless and pointless because the reader will get lost and ends up with no achievement

(Wallace, 1980, p. 9). Moreover, he/she will lose his/her enjoyment in reading simply because he/she has no direction. It is important to note that the reader's purposes in reading are "not static: we may return to a text and make quite different meanings with it on each occasion." (Chandler, 1995, p. 13)

►*Reader's language proficiency.* One more factor that has an effect on the reading comprehension is the reader's language proficiency. The reader who has a good command of his/her language, and has a rich bank of the vocabulary is more likely to comprehend well what is presented in the print (Duke & Pearson, 2002, p. 218). Generally speaking, readers who know about the cohesive devices used to organize the text, master the syntax and the syntactic rules can easily process the text and comprehend it very well. Therefore, mastering the linguistic structure of the text serves as a stimulus to extract meaning and anticipate the text's message. So, reading comprehension may be impeded as a result of readers' low proficiency in the language.

►*Knowledge of the topic.* Having knowledge before reading the text is an advantage for a better and quick understanding of the text's message. Readers who possess previous knowledge about what they are going to read find it easy to process the text (Stanovich et al., 1996, p. 16). They do not take much time looking for the meaning of each part in the text. They simply connect what they have already stored in their memory with what they find in the text, hence, reading comprehension can take place.

C. Variability in activity. Snow (2002, p. 26) described "*activity*" as the performance acted by the reader to achieve a goal employing some of the strategies. Snow (2002) identified two types of purposes the reader aims at gaining : internal and external focusing more on the role both of them play in the variability in activity which is considered as an additional factor that would affect reading comprehension. In terms of internal purposes, the reader is the creator and controller of his/her own goals. He/she is

required to read a variety of sources be they books, journals, stories, etc for the sake of

indulging in reading as well as grasping a new body of knowledge. Apart from

self-initiated goals, external objectives make the reader more likely to react or take a step

based on what has been read. It follows that, the reader is asked to accomplish a learning

task or respond to questions generally asked by the teacher. This is why activity is also

referred to as ′instruction′. In doing so, the reader tends to use strategies that would help

him/her get the meaning across. The pre-determined goals set before together with the

operations performed by the reader lead to "*comprehension consequences*". The latter

refer to the changes in the reader's behaviours that can be noticed immediately or

perceived later on. Therefore, great attention needs to be paid to activity and variability in

it for the purpose of producing more strategic readers who seek to effectively comprehend

the text based on their own pre-set goals.

     D. Variability in context. Context also influences reading comprehension. It refers

to the environment which bounds the reading process as a whole in terms of the text, the

reader, and the activity. Snow (2002, p. 16) gave credit to the role of the family, friends,

neighbours, etc maintaining that interaction ′with more expert peers and adults′ contributes

to produce well educated individuals. She considered the transmission of knowledge

through interaction as ′cultural and historical activities′. She went further explaining that

the economic and socio-cultural environments are composed of five constituents : who the

reader is, how, when, where, and why he/she is going to read (as cited in Chouaf, 2009, p.

36).

Conclusion

     This section tackled reading and reading comprehension starting first by reading

which is viewed as an important language skill that permits learners to successfully

interpret the writer's message in the text. Basically, there are three models of reading : the

bottom-up, the top-down, and the interactive model. The latter is considered as a

combination of the two remaining models. Besides, this section mentioned types of

reading that readers tend to adopt depending on their aim of reading as well as the reading

strategies readers use such as predicting, guessing, inferencing, etc in order to understand

well the text at hand and cope with the difficulties they may encounter while reading. In

addition to reading, reading comprehension gained enough space to be dealt with in terms

of what is meant by reading comprehension, how reading and reading comprehension are

traced back to the schema theory, the levels of reading comprehension, and how the

readers approach the text in relation to their goals. Finally, factors affecting reading

comprehension were left to the end of this section.   It is noteworthy that after presenting

the theoretical chapter with its two sections presented so far, the next chapter will be

devoted to present the field work of the present study.

Chapter Two : The Field Work

Section One

Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

2.1.1. Research Methodology

2.1.2. Population

2.1.3. Data Collection Instrument

 2.1.3.1. Description of the Questionnaire

 2.1.3.2. Administration of the Questionnaire

2.1.4. Data Analysis Method

Conclusion

Section One

Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

Reading is a supreme skill that helps learners broaden their scope of knowledge. In general, language learners aim at understanding the written material they read. In doing so, they tend to employ a set of strategies that would help them reach reading comprehension which is considered as the essence of reading. A whole chapter was devoted to review the related literature with a first section dealing with cognitive and metacognitive strategies, and a second section to tackle reading comprehension. The next step is to present the practical field work which aims at investigating students' views and attitudes towards the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies as well as how this contributes to reading comprehension. The first section of the practical part is left to present the research methodology adopted for the sake of investigating the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies and its relation to reading comprehension enhancement. It included a full description of the research instrument used in collecting data, and the procedure followed to administer it. This section provided information about the target population of this study as well.

2.1.1. Research Methodology

O'Malley and Chamot's classification (1985) of cognitive and metacognitive strategies is going to be emphasized in this study because their classification is more likely to be close to the present study. Only cognitive and metacognitive strategies will be investigated while the socio-affective strategies will be neglected since they are not as close to reading comprehension as cognitive and metacognitive strategies.

This research is a descriptive investigation since it aims at investigating whether university-level Master2 students studying English at University Mohamed Seddik Ben

Yahia of Jijel use cognitive and metacognitive strategies while doing reading, and how this would enhance their reading comprehension since the latter is of paramount importance for them in the process of writing a research paper as a best example of the learning tasks they are required to accomplish. This study sheds light on how the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies can help Master2 students overcome the problems they face and reach reading comprehension more effectively for a better performance in their learning tasks. This piece of research is quantitative in the sense that almost all the questions are asked to investigate the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies. In addition, the results will be presented in the form of numbers only with no complex statistical formulas because the present study is merely a descriptive investigation. Additionally, it is quantitative because, generally speaking, in the positivist approach there is a hypothesis which needs to be tested, and this study seeks to confirm or reject the hypothesis that if students frequently use cognitive and metacognitive strategies, they will be able to enhance their reading comprehension. As a result, the qualitative approach (interpretivist approach) is not selected since it does not have a hypothesis in the first place to be tested.

2.1.2. Population

Master2 students at University Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia of Jijel studying Language Sciences at the department of English were selected as the target population for the study. The reason behind selecting Master2 students and not first or second or third or Master1 students is the fact that they have to submit a research paper in partial fulfilments of the requirements for the Master Degree by the end of the year. In doing so, they are required to intensively read different large amount of written materials of various kinds and from different sources, and most importantly, they have to comprehend what has been read in order to be able to report what was given in the read text. Therefore, comprehension is crucial in the organization of ideas and in the process of writing a

successful worthy research paper. Master2 students are not able to paraphrase or summarize ideas or key information unless they comprehend well what they read with the help of strategy use, and hence successfuly write what is necessary to be written or included in their research paper. The study took all Master2 students as the subjects with a total number of sixty three (63) students without including the conductor of this piece of research.

2.1.3. Data Collection Instrument

In order to test the earlier stated hypothesis, and provide appropriate answers to the posed questions with regard to whether cognitive and metacognitive strategies help learners with their reading comprehension, a questionnaire was designed and distributed to students. The reason behind selecting the questionnaire and not an interview is that the former is more practical, can be distributed to a large number of participants, and takes less time to analyse and interpret the data since the research is small in scope as well as the time devoted to conduct the study is limited. Unlikely, the interview needs more effort and time to analyse the interviewee's answers. Observation as a way of collecting data, was not also used because it is almost impossible to observe the students' behaviour towards the cognitive and metacognitive strategies. However, the questionnaire can provoke students to reveal most of the time subconsciously their attitudes toward the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies. So, a wide range of information can be obtained. In the same vein, diaries and think-aloud protocols as ways to assess learning strategies (mentioned earlier in the literature) were not adopted simply because asking students to keep track of the way they use strategies while reading may produce preconceptions that this is precisely what they should be doing. Therefore, there is a risk of being interventionist (Macaro, 2001, p. 45). Regarding the think-aloud protocol, this study was not based on eliciting information using this tool because it is time consuming and it is

considered as the most time consuming data collection tool. Additionally, thinking-aloud

may be an alien activity for the students who are normally introspective in the sense that

they may require demonstration of what they need to do. In doing so, they may infer that

they should select certain strategies to deploy. Thus, their responses can be biased

(Macaro, 2001, pp. 62-66). Accordingly, only the questionnaire is used in this study. The

reason behind addressing the questionnaire only to students is because teachers at

University Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia of Jijel do not teach students how to effectively

and appropriately employ the strategies as a part of the curriculum supposed to be taught.

They do not raise their awarness of the appropriate matching between the language tasks

and the more suitable strategies. As a result, teachers may not be sure about the strategies

their students use while doing the reading activity. In other words, their answers will be

merely educated guesses that may be not highly reliable to enrich the present study.

        2.1.3.1. Description of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was addressed to

Master2 students in order to elicit information about their perceptions, attitudes, opinions

with regard to the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies and its relation to their

reading comprehension improvement. The students' questionnaire was designed for the

purpose of knowing how Master2 students employ the full range of cognitive and

metacognitive strategies available at their disposal, so that they can comprehend and make

sense of what they have read for a better performance in their learning tasks.

The questionnaire used in this study is made up of two types of questions, which are :

1. **Closed Questions :** Questions such these which are mostly asked in this questionnaire,

   require informants to select appropriate answers to them from pre-determined answers.

   Examples of these questions include yes/no questions, and questions that ask respondents

   to tick an answer from a set of pre-determined answers. Sometimes these questions are

   followed by other questions such as ′why′ or ′how′ in order to obtain more complete

answers from the participants. It can be said that these questions provoke respondents to provide justification for selecting a given answer. In other words, respondents are asked to give an explanation of some kind on why they agree with a given statement as an example.

2. **Opened Questions :** Questions of this type make the respondents feel free to answer the questions on their own. These questions leave a large room for the informants to self-produce their answers using their own words. This, will give the researcher a chance to know more about the respondents' attitudes and perspectives, etc. Since they are given enough space and freedom to express themselves more, large doors are opened for their imagination to flow.

The questionnaire is made up of 30 questions for the aim of gathering information about the students' attitudes toward the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies in doing a reading activity, and its relation to the efficiency in reading comprehension. The questionnaire started with questions about the reading skill in general as the first section : whether students find reading interesting or not, how much they read, what they expect from the text, the extent to which they understand all what is in the text. In addition, the questionnaire contained a second section which dealt with the extent to which the background knowledge affects the students' reading comprehension. Simply put, this section mainly emphasized the problems encountered while reading which would prevent students from getting a full picture of the whole text. The questionnaire reached the third section which investigated the cognitive and metacognitive strategies students use that would facilitate reading comprehension. The questions, consequently, were categorized as follows :

-General information about the reading skill : questions 1-4

-Problems and factors affecting reading comprehension : questions 5-9

- The use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies: questions 10-30

The questionnaire contained twenty (20) questions without providing an overt categorization of them under the cognitive and metacognitive headings as such. The cognitive strategies included in the questionnaire were : inferencing (questions 16, 17, 18), note-taking (question 19), key word method (question20), deduction (question 21), and imagery (question 23). In addition to the cognitive strategies, the questionniare included some of the metacognitive strategies as : functional planning (questions 11, 12), directed attention (questions 14, 15), self-management (questions 25, 27), self-monitoring (question 22), and self-evaluation (questions 13, 24, 26, 29). Questions 10 and 30 were general questions about the strategies that would help readers cope with the difficult reading situations to comprehend the text better. The selection of those particular strategies did not occur at random. The reason behind such a choice is that the selected strategies are the most related strategies to reading, and are representative strategies of both categories of cognitive and metacognitive strategies used while reading. Even within the categories of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, the strategies included in the questionnaire as such occured on purpose because they cover almost all what is necessary to be done in doing the reading activity. This is why for example, other cognitive strategies as recombination, grouping, resourcing, repetition are not included in the questionnaire because they are not as closely related to process reading as other cognitive strategies included in the questionnaire. Besides, their role can be played by the strategies being used in the questionnaire. It is worth mentioning here that the questions about the cognitive and metacognitive strategies were extracted from that of Phakiti (2003) with some made adjustments with reference to O'Malley and Chamot's classification (1985) of LLSs in order to meet the objectives of the present study.

2.1.3.2. Administration of the questionnaire. The students' questionnaire was administered to sixty three (63) Master2 students studying Language Sciences at the

department of English at the University Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia of Jijel. Six of them were males and the remaining were all females. The questionnaire was distributed to students in the second semester of the academic year 2014-2015. Precisely, it was delivered to Master2 students on Sunday the third of May. Since Master2 students had no classes in the second semester and were busy finishing their dissertations, it was not that easy to distribute the questionnaire to all Master2 students at once. The majority of students were present on the day of distribution because they were with their supervisors. After distributing the questionnaire, students are asked to answer frankly the questions since their answers will be anonymous. They were given sufficient time to go through all the questions which they find no problem to understand. Twenty eight (28) students out of 63 filled in the questionniare on the spot and gave it back on the same day. Ninteen (19) students took the questionnaire at home because they were busy when it was given to them. Only fourteen (14) students gave the questionnaire back on the following day. It is noteworthy that sixteen (16) of the Master2 students were residents and cannot be reached. Consequently, the questionnaire was sent to them via facebook to fill in, and they sent it back after two days.

2.1.4. Data Analysis Method

The data gathered from the questionnaire were analysed manually without using any kind of softwares like SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) or Excel. The reason behind this is that the questions did not include agree/disagree statements that are generally analysed using SPSS. Likewise, Excel was not opted for because the results are going to be only in the form of numbers presented in tables since it is merely a descriptive study with no need to provide exact graphs, bar charts, etc to make any kind of comparison between the results obtained which can be best provided by Excel.

Conclusion

This section provided a brief description of the methodology used in this study, the instrument used which is the questionnaire to collect data with reference to what was included in it and how it was administered to the respondents. Moreover, a description of the target population was presented in this section. The students' answers were served as the basis for the next section that will analyse carefully the results obtained seeking to answer the earlier asked research questions and test what was hypothesized so far. The next section of this chapter will be devoted to discuss what is revealed by the results obtained from the questionnaire completed by Master2 students with regard to the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, and its contribution to reading comprehension.

Section Two

Data Analysis and Discussion

Introduction

2.2.1. Data Presentation and Analysis

2.2.2. Summary of the Results

2.2.3. The Report

Conclusion

Section Two

Data Analysis and Discussion

Introduction

So far, the first section of the field work chapter was devoted to describe the research design and methodology used to collect data. This section is left to thouroughly analyse and discuss the students' answers for the sake of being able to test what was hypothesized so far.

2.2.1. Data Presentation and Analysis

Students' responses for the questionnaire are categorized under the following headings :

Section one : General Information about the Reading Skill

The questions asked in this section aim at finding out how Master2 students view reading, their level at reading, the frequency of reading, and their aims of reading. They are general questions that seek to gather general information about reading from one side, and preparing students for what is coming next in the questionnaire from another. This section contains four questions analysed as follows :

Question 1 : Do you find reading an interesting activity?

Table 1

Students' Interest in Reading

Options	Number of Students (N)
Yes	56
No	2
Total	58

As indicated in the table above, almost all students find reading an interesting activity, may be because it is a crucial skill that they need, and that would help them in their learning process. As a rule of thumb, all what is needed is interesting. Hence, Master2 students are interested in reading simply because they need reading to accomplish a learning task, and a best example is to read to be able to write a good research paper by the end of the year.

Question 2 : How often do you read in English?

Table 2

Frequency of Students' Reading

Options	N
Never	/
Rarely	5
Sometimes	37
Usually	14
Always	2
Total	58

The majority of Master2 students are found not to read frequently. Students who read sometimes are as more than twice as those who read usually. It may indicate that students do not have that habit of reading on daily basis, albeit they show a great interest in reading activity (as illustrated in table1). This may be because they read only to accomplish a learning task, and once that task is completed they read no more.

Question 3 : What is your aim behind reading a written text ?

    a. **Pleasure**

    b. **Look for information**

    c. **Enlarge the scope of knowledge about a given topic**

    d. **Accomplish a learning task**

Table 3

Students' Aim behind Reading

Options	N
a	32
b	28
c	35
d	12
Total	107

The table shows that reading to enlarge the scope of knowledge about a topic of interest is the aim of 35 students. However, feeling pleased when reading as reported by 32 students does not reflect the ratio of pleasure to reading frequency indicated earlier here. It seems that students tend to get more knowledge about a subject matter by reading materials for the sake of taking part in the learning process since they are required to be knowledgeable in the topics they seek to elaborate as their Master research paper.

Question 4 : To what extent do you understand what has been read ?

Table 4

The Extent of Students' Understanding of the Read Text

Options	N
Not at all	/
Minimally	1
Somewhat	46
Extensively	11
Total	58

This item information sheds light on the respondents' degree of understanding when they read. As indicated in the table above, the vast majority of students understand the read text somewhat. It seems that students find some problems when they read a given literary written document that prevent them from comprehending what they read.

Section Two : Problems and Factors Affecting Reading Comprehension

Questions in this section seek to delve more into the problems that students may face all along the way of reading. Moreover, the factors that may affect the construction of knowledge from what has been read and understood.

Question 5 : To what extent does the background knoweledge about the text's topic affect your understanding of the read text ?

Table 5

The Background Knowledge as a Factor Influencing Reading Comprehension

Options	N
Not at all	/
Minimally	3
Somewhat	19
Extensively	36
Total	58

This question aims at finding out the extent to which the background knowledge students have from previous situations affects their reading comprehension.

As shown in the table above, more than half of the population (36 students out of 58) reveals that the previous knowledge extensively affects their understanding. Students may consider the prior knowledge as the basis to deal with the new reading encountered situation. It seems, then, that students believe they are assisted very much by using the background knowledge they have from previous learning experiences to make the reading activity easier.

Question 6 : What do you think are the problems that may prevent you from comprehending well the read text ?

Table 6

Possible Students' Problems Impeding Reading Comprehension

Options	N
Lack of knowledge about the topic	36
Difficult vocabulary being used	28
The genre of the text	10
The complex language being used	6
The length of the text	1
Total	81

This question is asked for the sake of provoking students to direct their attention to what their problems are when they read, so they can reveal them.

All respondents answered this question except two students. Those who answered, provide a range of possible faced problems presented in the table above.

The answers tabulated above reveal that students report different problems they face when they read. However, the peaked reported problem is the lack of the sufficient knowledge about the text's topic. Those who consider the lack of knowledge a major problem for them, may believe that it is the source for not comprehending well the text. Among the students' answers, 28 students reveal that the use of difficult vocabulary-be it technical terms specific to certain domains or unfamiliar words not easy to guess their meaning- affects highly their reading comprehension.

Question 7 : Do you think your level at reading has an effect on reading comprehension ?

Table 7

Students' Level at Reading as a Factor Affecting Reading Comprehension

Options	N
Yes	51
No	6
No answer	1
Total	58

The majority of students declare that their level in reading affects their reading comprehension. They may hold the view that being good, average, or weak readers would admittedly affect the overall understanding of the text in the sense that it is very important for them to have the required skills to indulge in the reading activity, and to face the expected challenges the text at hand may offer.

Question 8 : To what extent does the type of the text you tackle impede the reading comprehension ?

Table 8

The Text Type as a Factor Affecting Reading Comprehension

Options	N
Not at all	/
Minimally	3
Somewhat	19
Extensively	36
Total	58

The answers yielded from this item question reveal that half of the population (29 students) states that the genre of the text affects somewhat their level of reading comprehension. This may lead to assume that there are other factors that may extensively influence comprehension of what has been read.

Question 9 : Which of the following is more likely to affect reading comprehension ?

    a. **The nature of the text**

    b. **The nature of the reader**

    c. **The nature of the reading activity**

    d. **The strategies being used to process reading**

Table 9

Other Factors Affecting Reading Comprehension

Options	N
a	48
b	7
c	2
d	27
Total	84

To maintain the previous idea, students are asked to choose from a set of factors the one that has a strong effect on their reading comprehension. Actually those factors (the three first ones) are proven in the literature to exert an effect on reading comprehension. Students provide more than one factor. Their responses are tabulated above.

The majority of students choose more than one factor which entails the complexity of reading comprehension issue. The results obtained denote that the nature of the text in terms of which type it is, the language and style used, the vocabulary items included, etc is

the common shared factor between 48 students and would strongly affect their reading

comprehension. This idea is reinforced when referring back to table 6 where more than

half of the population faces problems while reading related to the text nature. This means

that students may believe that the inability to comprehend what has been read is attributed

to the nature of the text rather than just to reader's nature or activity. In fact, students need

to be informed that those two factors do influence the reading comprehension as shown in

the literature.

Question 10 : If you get stuck while reading, what strategies are you going to use in

order to keep reading ?

Table 10

Students' Strategies to Keep Reading

Options	N
Use a dictionary	30
Re-read	13
Use previous knowledge	3
Underline key words	5
Rely on context	18
Translating	2
Keep reading	7
Total	78

The reason behind including this question is to introduce students to what is going

to be tackled next from one side, and to let them focus more on the set of strategies they

use when they read from another. So, they can provide answers about the strategies being

selected from their repertoires.

The table shows a range of strategies used as suggested by students for the sake of proceeding with their reading. The majority of students tend to consult a dictionary to look for the meaning of an unknown word which makes stutents get stuck because they do not know its meaning. 18 students rely on context to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words. May be referring back to the dictionary comes as a last solution for the problem when guessing from context and reading the text several times do not work for them. This is why using the dictionary is the most used strategy. Using previous knowledge, underlining key words, translating come last in the list of strategies used to carry on reading.

Section Three : The Use of Cognitive and Metacognitive Strategies

Question 11 : How often do you plan what to read before you start reading ?

Table 11

Frequency of Students' Planning before Reading

Options	N
Never	/
Rarely	4
Sometimes	16
Usually	24
Always	14
Total	58

This question seeks to identify whether students do often plan what to read before they actually start reading. Simply put, whether students read for the sake of reading or they read because they have some objectives behind their reading which they want to fulfil.

The answers tabulated above indicate that most of students plan what to read before they get involved in the reading process of any kind, followed by sometimes and then

always. The results obtained denote that students may find planning helpful in order to

comprehend better what has been read.

Question 12 : Is planning helpful to you in relation to reading comprehension ?

Table 12

Ways of Planning Contribution to Reading Comprehension

Options	N
Saves time	4
Keeps interest	3
Makes the task easier	7
Specifies the area of reading	12
Identifies what strategies to use	2
Accelerates reading comprehension	9
Helps activating the background knowledge	11
Total	37

This item question aims at finding out whether students consider planning as a

useful strategy that contributes to reading comprehension. The question requires students

to provide a justification for why they view planning helpful to comprehend better the text.

Thus, students can reveal the ways in which planning is a useful strategy for them.

The answers obtained indicate that 40 students agree that planning is effective to

achieve reading comprehension against those who claim that it is not so helpful for getting

a clear image about the text. Considering the follow-up question : if yes, in what ways ?,

37 students out of 40 students who say yes answered this question. The answers vary as

students' attitudes toward planning differ. They are listed in the table above.

The answers yielded from this item question reveal that planning is considered as helpful because mainly it limits the scope of reading to what is relevant and suitable to the plan set beforehand. Apart from that, 11 students claim that planning contributes to the activation of the prior knowledge which deems to be of supreme importance to foster reading comprehension. The latter is another way in which 9 students hold the idea that planning speeds up reading comprehension.

Question 13 : How often do you evaluate whether you successfully fulfil your plan

Table 13

Students' Evaluation of the Fulfilment of their Plan

Options	N
Never	16
Rarely	12
Sometimes	18
Usually	6
Always	4
No answer	2
Total	58

This item question is asked to find out whether students check the fulfilment of their pre-set plans after they have completed reading. That is, to see if they can direct their learning to meet what they have planned in mind beforehand.

The table shows that the number of students who respectively reveal that they never, rarely, or sometimes check if they successfully fulfil their plan is approximately the same. It seems, then, that students do not always refer back to their plan and see if they realize it effectively.

Question 14 : How often are you aware of what your reading needs are?

Table 14

Students' Awareness about their Reading Needs

Options	N
Never	3
Rarely	8
Sometimes	25
Usually	14
Always	2
No answer	6
Total	58

This question is posed to provide more information about whether students have enough knowledge about what is to be done before getting involved in reading.

The common shared reaction among the majority of students (25 students) is that they sometimes know what is required to be done, followed by the option usually. This may reveal that students may not be largely aware of their needs.

Question 15 : To what extent are you aware of how to get your reading needs while reading a given text ?

Table 15

Students' Awarness of their Reading Needs Attainment

Options	N
Not at all	1
Minimally	8
Somewhat	31
Extensively	18
Total	58

To maintain the previous idea, this question is asked. That is, to identify the extent to which students are able to percieve their reading needs, and resort to satisfying those needs.

The answers tabulated above reveal that the majority of students claim that they are somewhat aware of how to get their needs. It seems that students cannot make a clear-cut difference between what is needed and what is merely a distractor.

Question 16 : How often do you focus on the context to understand the difficult words ?

Table 16

Frequency of the Inferencing Strategy Use

Options	N
Never	/
Rarely	/
Sometimes	6
Usually	26
Always	25
No answer	1
Total	58

This item question sheds light on whether students frequently opt for the inferencing strategy to deal with unfamiliar or difficult words to understand.

As indicated from the tabulated answers above, 26 students reveal that they usually infer from context to deal with the difficult words. Moreover, 25 students reveal that relying on the context is always used. However, only one student did not answer this question. It may be assumed that students frequently rely on the context to infer the meaning of unknown words due to its usefulness in reducing confusion and avoiding misinterpretation of what is presented in the text. In addition, inferencing saves time compared with using the dictionary, and helps learners to avoid distractors that may occur using the latter.

Question 17 : Do you think that relying on the context while reading can facilitate reading comprehension ?

Table 17

Inferencing as a Facilitator of Reading Comprehension

Options	N
Yes	57
No	1
Total	58

This question is asked to support what the previous question aims at finding out. In other words, this question seeks to know whether students find relying on context helpful to fulfil the gaps created by the difficult words.

All students except one believe that relying on context to cope with the problems caused by the difficult words is a facilitator to establish reading comprehension. It may indicate that they consider the context a multifacet tool that contributes to reading comprehension in many ways.

Question 18 : How does inferring from context contribute to reading comprehension ?

Table 18

Ways of Context Contribution to Reading Comprehension

Options	N
Helps understand the difficult words	37
Keeps the interest in the text	2
Develops the skill of guessing	3
Makes the text more realistic	1
Helps transfer the word meaning to other contexts	3
Total	46

The reason behind asking such a question is to give students an opportunity to freely reveal the ways in which they perceive the effectiveness of the context in reading. Those ways are tabulated above.

Concerning this item question, there is a variety of suggestions with regard to the ways students consider context as a helpful tool to improve reading comprehension. However, more than half of the population (37 students) reveals that the best way, in which context contributes to reading comprehension, is that it helps understand the meaning of the problematic words.

Question 19 : How often do you take notes whenever you come across a useful piece of information ?

Table 19

Frequency of the Note-taking Strategy Use

Options	N
Never	/
Rarely	4
Sometimes	16
Usually	24
Always	14
Total	58

This question aims at finding out whether students frequently use this cognitive strategy (note- taking strategy) all along the way of reading a given text.

The results obtained denote that 24 students usually use note-taking strategy for the sake of writing down what is important to them. It seems that they believe reaching reading comprehension is attributed to the use of this strategy. In addition, note-taking is considered very helpful in the sense that students select and adhere to all what is related to their interest and needs. Taking notes enables students to keep what they are looking for at the same time as they read. Thus, they will end up with the sufficient luggage necessary to get a full picture of what has been read since all what is important to them is jotted down.

Question 20 : While reading, how often do you underline key terms or main ideas that will help you increase your understanding ?

Table 20

Frequency of the Key-word Strategy Use

Options	N
Never	1
Rarely	5
Sometimes	13
Usually	17
Always	22
Total	58

This item question seeks to investigate whether students first use this strategy so often, and second based on it whether students can detect the key words or ideas that would make the whole text meaningful to them.

The answers tabulated above denote that the majority of students employ this strategy always, followed by 17 students reveal that they use it usually. It seems that this strategy is highly effective in getting the meaning across. Students while reading are, then, aware of its effectiveness in enhancing their reading comprehension. Students can differentiate between the important points and the most important ones that are the heart of the text they get involved in. Therefore, they can decode the text's message successfully by focusing on those key words.

Question 21 : How often do you analyse what is included in the text you read to reach comprehensible conclusions about it ?

Table 21

Frequency of the Deduction Strategy Use

Options	N
Never	/
Rarely	5
Sometimes	15
Usually	24
Always	14
Total	58

This question seeks to find out how often students deploy the deduction strategy when they read. That is to say, whether students stop reading for a while just for the sake of analysing the text, and come up with a conclusion that would provide them with an overview of the text.

The answers tabulated above indicate that the majority of students state that they usually analyse the text to reach a conclusion about it, followed by sometimes and then always. This may mean that students use the deduction strategy so often due to its usefulness in dealing with the text. Students using reasoning while reading enables them to understand the read text because they make sense of the text applying the necessary rules that would help them decode the writer's intentions and reach reading comprehension.

Question 22 : How often do you check to see if your guesses about the text are right or wrong

Table 22

Frequency of the Self-monitoring Strategy Use

Options	N
Never	4
Rarely	4
Sometimes	14
Usually	17
Always	19
Total	58

This item question is meant for identifying whether students are aware most of the time of choices they opt for. Hence, they can check the correctness and appropriateness of their guesses.

The answers yielded from this item question indicate that the largest portion of students claim that they always check their guesses whether they are right or wrong. This means that they are aware of the choices they made. When students find their guesses as correct and appropriate, they keep reading. However, students may opt for other choices that they think would be more appropriate.

Question 23 : How often do you try to visualize information to help you remember what you have read ?

Table 23

Frequency of the Imagery Strategy Use

Options	N
Never	2
Rarely	7
Sometimes	11
Usually	22
Always	16
Total	58

This question aims at investigating the frequency of use of the imagery strategy. This question seeks to know whether students frequently relate new information found in the text to previously acquired information stored in the memory so that it can be easily remembered.

In this item, the majority of students use the imagery strategy usually. 16 students reveal that they always make association of new information with already existing one. It seems that students consider the imagery strategy a useful way to draw connections between what is known and what is to be known after completing the reading activity. This may help them to construct new body of knowledge based on the already acquired one which is stored in memory and can be easily retrieved.

Question 24: Do you correct mistakes immediately when you think you

misunderstand the text's message ?

Table 24

Frequency of Students' Self-correction Mistakes

Options	N
Never	/
Rarely	2
Sometimes	11
Usually	22
Always	23
Total	58

This question is asked in order to check students' awarness about their reading process. This question seeks to find out if students can manage their learning so often, and whether they are aware of their mistakes and be able to detect them immediately providing a correction on the spot.

23 students reveal that they correct their mistakes on the spot always, followed by usually as it is the choice of 22 students. This may denote that students are aware of their learning process as a whole, and since reading is a part of the learning process, they know when they make mistakes. Because they may view themselves as the responsibles of their own reading, they take action immediately whenever a mistake occurs and correct it. They believe that in doing so they are going to avoid confusion and misunderstanding.

Question 25 : How often do you monitor your progress to complete what you are asked to do on time ?

Table 25

Frequency of the Self-management Strategy Use

Options	N
Never	/
Rarely	6
Sometimes	17
Usually	22
Always	12
No answer	1
Total	58

Maintaining the idea of students' responsibility, this question is asked to shed light on the students' awarness of their progress, and how often they monitor their progress. As well as, how they organize their time so they complete the task within the time constraints.

As far as this item question is concerned, the majority of students reveal that they check their progress usually. The option sometimes comes next followed by always which is the choice of 12 students. It may indicate that students use this strategy most often since they believe that it makes the task of reading easier, effective, and more enjoyable because they control this process. Students can manage efficiently their time while reading for the purpose of gaining what is planned for and what is required to be done after doing reading. In doing so, they better check their progress.

Question 26 : How often do you evaluate whether you have successfully achieve your objective after reading ?

Table 26

Frequency of Students' Evaluation of the Realization of their Objectives

Options	N
Never	2
Rarely	5
Sometimes	12
Usually	31
Always	8
Total	58

This question can also go in the same vein as the two preceding questions because the three of them are metacognitive strategies. This question aims at providing information about students' attitudes toward the success of realizing their pre-set objectives after reading. It seeks to know how often students evaluate what they achieve after reading has been completed.

The table above shows that more than half of the population (31 students) reveals that evaluation of the extent to which students achieve their objectives is usually done. 12 students claim that they do evaluate them sometimes, followed by 8 students saying that they check the realization of their objectives always. This may denote that students most often refer back after finishing reading to check whether what is found in the text they read meets what they aim at attaining before indulging reading. Students, then, are aware of the extent to which what they get from the text meets successfully their expectations.

Question 27 : Do you think of how to improve your reading efficiency ?

Table 27

Students' Awarness of their Weaknesses

Options	N
Yes	36
No	20
No answer	2
Total	58

This question is asked to investigate the students' awarness of their weaknesses while they read a given literary document. It aims at knowing whether students have a high consciousness about their deficiencies that would prevent them from getting a complete understanding of the read text.

The majority of students declare that they are aware of their weaknesses. However, 20 students claim that they have no idea about what their weak points are in addition to two students providing no answer to this question. It seems that students who are aware of their weaknesses know how to overcome them, and they take actions to turn their weak points into strengths.

Question 28 : How could you overcome your weaknesses for a better understanding of the read text ?

Ways to Strengthen Students' Weaknesses while Reading

Options	N
Read more	21
Employ strategies in different ways	6
Use the dictionary	5
Total	32

This question requires students to provide information on what they can do to strengthen their weaknesses for a better understanding of the tackled text.

Out of 36, 32 students provide an answer to this question. The answers fall into three choices. The high portion of students (21 students) states that in order to overcome their weaknesses, they have to read more and more about different kinds of materials that tackle different topics. They believe that practice makes perfect. So, when they make reading a habit, they would get enough knowledge to deal with any encountered reading situation because they get familiar to a variety of topics. 6 students declare that using strategies qualitatively different is a good way to remedy more efficiently their deficiencies in reading. They put this view forward because they think that strategy use affects highly their understanding. Not all the strategies used may successfully work for them. Hence, they believe that they have to be cautious about which strategy to use from their repertoire that would best solve the problems, and facilitate reading comprehension. The third option students opt for is using the dictionary (5 students). This may indicate that those students have only weaknesses at the vocabulary level. That is, they have difficulties in comprehension because of the problematic words encountered in the text. Hence, once

they consult the dictionary to check their exact meaning, they overcome their weaknesses

and comprehend very well what the text is all about.

Question 29 : How often do you evaluate the effectiveness of strategies you used while

reading ?

Table 29

Students' Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Strategies Used

Options	N
Never	12
Rarely	14
Sometimes	19
Usually	9
Always	3
No answer	1
Total	58

This question is asked to check whether students are aware of the effectiveness of

the strategies they use to interact with the text.

The table above shows that the number of students who state that they sometimes

evaluate the effectiveness of their strategies is the highest. However, the table also shows

that the first two frequencies gain a good portion of students : 12, and 14 respectively.

This may indicate that students do not frequently evaluate whether the strategies they

employ work for them or against them, and this can be illustrated by the low number of

students who opt for usually and always. The reason behind this may lie in that they

sometimes use strategies they are not aware of. So, it will be imposssible for them to

evaluate what they do not know.

Question 30 : With regard to the aforementioned strategies, which ones according to you, are mostly used by Algerian EFL learners for a better reading comprehension ?

Table 30

Mostly Used Strategies by Algerian EFL Students for a Better Comprehension

Options	N
Guessing from context	22
Underlining key terms	5
Taking notes	3
imagery	2
Planning	8
Self-monitoring	14
Self-evaluation	9
Scanning	2
Skimming	2
Total	68

This question seeks to provide more information about the mostly used strategies by Algerian EFL students at University Mohamed Seddik Ben Yehia of Jijel that would better facilitate their reading comprehension. This question is answered by 49 students from the whole population, and the majority of students in their answers suggest more than one strategy. The students' suggestions are tabulated above.

At first glance, there are two suggestions for the strategies students think are effective to enhance reading comprehension and not already mentioned in the questionnaire. They are scanning, skimming as two examples of reading strategies. The remaining strategies were all included in the questionnaire. However, it is noteworthy here

that students suggest other strategies like reading strategies, albeit they are asked to identify the most used ones from those which are already mentioned in the questionnaire. The students' answers can be categorized into three different types since the aim behind this question is to find out which type of strategy is mostly used by Algerian EFL learners at University Mohamed Seddik Ben Yehia of Jijel that would contribute largely to their reading comprehension. The first category is the cognitive strategies ; guessing from context, underlining key terms, taking notes, and imagery are examples of the cognitive strategies. The second category is the metacognitive strategies. Under this heading, there is planning, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. The third category is the reading strategies which include scanning and skimming. The results obtained from this question show that cognitive and metacognitive strategies are frequently used while reading, and they have almost the same frequency of use with a total of 32 and 31 respectively.

2.2.2. Summary of the Results

The analysis of the questionnaire reveals many insights on the students' attitudes towards the significance of cognitive and metacognitive strategies in improving reading comprehension. Students show a great range of strategies they opt for when they read in order to cope with the difficulties related largely to the text nature as revealed by students. For example, as illutrated in their answers on question 17, almost all students agree that relying extensively on the context helps to overcome the breakdowns caused by the occurrence of the unfamiliar words, and helps them better understand the text (as they reveal in table 17). In general, students interestingly report a considerable frequency of both cognitive and metacognitive strategies all along the way of reading a given literary document. To illustrate, underlining the key word is the most frequently used cognitive strategy because students believe that the whole text is summarized in those words. This may reflect the extent to which they are aware of the appropriate strategy to be selected

from their repertoire. Surprisingly, as far as metacognitive strategies are concerned, students show their frequent use of self-monitoring and self-evaluation as illustrated in table 22, and 24 respectively. Accordingly, they take control of their own learning. However, students reveal that they do not evaluate so often the effectiveness of the strategies they employ simply because they can use strategies without being aware of their use. Thus, this sheds light more on the complex nature of the LLSs in the sense that not all the strategies can be used consiously or can be observed. Added to previous results, students are found to focus on what they themselves can do when they are in a reading situation. Simply put, they rely on their abilities to face the difficulties caused by the reading situation, and this is best exemplified by the extensive reliance on context to make sense of the text at hand. Nevertheless, not to deny that students also opt for easiness which is, generally, more likely to be found outside the oneself. A best instance of this is using the dictionary to know what a problematic word means rather than focusing on what one has in mind (as presented in table 10 where according to students, consulting a dictionary is the most useful strategy to keep reading when get stuck). Another important point which is noteworthy is the nature of the relationship that exists between the cognitive and metacognitive strategies. This can be illustrated by the fact that metacognitive strategies help learners orchestrate their own learning which in turn involves the inclusion of the cognition. The question 26 is an example in which the evaluation of the objectives as a metacognitive strategy would control the reading process to meet the pre-set objectives. In doing so, the students first need to think about the process of evaluation, which in turn involves deduction or reasoning which are cognitive strategies.

2.2.3. The Report

Based on the analysis of the relation between the students' use of strategies and their reading comprehension, it can be concluded that both cognitive and metacognitive

strategies contribute largely to reading comprehension. According to the social-psychological model (that has proposed that social-psychological variables play a key role in the use of LLSs), knowing a strategy well, percieving it as effective and not considering it too difficult to use predicts the majority of the variance in strategy use (MacIntyre, 1996), and this is shown by the present study. A study by College students, conducted by two Chinese scholars Lv and Tu (1998) on the adoption of strategies while reading, revealed that the metacognitive strategies as planning and self-evaluation were least frequently adopted by students when they read. However, it is not the case in the present study. Interestingly, it is found that planning, self-evaluation, as well as self-monitoring are frequently adopted by students in reading. A best example is that students reveal that they always check the correctness of their guesses (self-monitoring), and correct all the time their mistakes on the spot (self-evaluation). Planning as well, is found to be usually adopted just like other reported cognitive strategies (inferencing, note taking, deduction, and imagery). Up to this level, one can reach the conclusion that Master2 students employ frequently cognitive and metacognitive strategies while reading, and it is found that both types of strategies almost have the same frequency of use because students show the existing mutual relationship between cognitive and metacognitive strategies mentioned in the preceding lines. As it was hypothesized so far, this study confirms the hypothesis that if Algerian EFL students at University Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia of Jijel employ cognitive and metacognitive strategies in doing the reading activity, their reading comprehension will be improved.

Conclusion

The data elicited from the students support what has been hypothesized earlier. It is found that cognitive and metacognitive strategies are helpful to improve reading comprehension when they are used while reading. They help students cope with the

difficult encountered reading situations. Cognitive and metacognitive strategies make students more aware of the reading process because they can deal with the problems caused by a variety of factors in a more efficient way. Those strategies direct students to know how to quickly and efficiently learn. Simply put, they help students build their autonomy that contribute to their reading in particular, and their learning process in general because they will be able to orchestrate their own learning effectively.

General Conclusion

The noticeable shift which has been directed toward learners and learning arouse great interest in how learners experience learning, and how they successfully deal with the pitfalls all along the way of this process with the help of LLSs. The latter were the main concern of many researchers in the field since they play a significant role in facilitating the process of learning English as a second or foreign language. They best reflect the active participation on the part of the learners in their learning, and how the application of those strategies results in better performance in the language learning tasks. Reading is considered as one of the most crucial language skills that EFL students need to develop. Thus, it gains a deluge of research since it serves as an input for the development of other skills. Knowing how to read is an art that many people are not aware of. Based on the previous studies, being an astute reader denotes to employ a wide range of RS for reading comprehension to take place. However, least research is directed to investigate the use of other types of strategies in relation to reading and reading comprehension such as cognitive and metacognitive strategies employed by EFL students while reading which is the main concern of the present study.

This piece of research is composed of two chapters. The first chapter is the descriptive part that reviews the related literature. In this chapter, general issues related to LLSs are dealt with in terms of their taxonomies, importance, etc. Additionally, cognitive and metacognitive strategies are emphasized since they are the skelton of the present study. A comprehensible description of the concept of reading and reading comprehension as well is provided in this chapter. As far as the second chapter is concerned, the methodology adopted in the present study, and the analysis of the data obtained from the students' questionnaire are presented in this chapter. The results yielded from the questionnaire answer the research questions asked earlier as well as confirm what was hypothesized so

far that if Algerian EFL students at University Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia of Jijel use

cognitive and metacognitive strategies while reading, their reading comprehension will be

enhanced.

Recommendations

In the light of what was found out from the analysis and discussion of the results obtained, more horizons for future research are opened :

1. More research needs to be conducted to investigate the relationship between metacognitive control and achievement in reading comprehension. In other words, to thouroughly examine the extent to which EFL students can successfully orchestrate their reading process through the use of metacognitive assessment tools such as checklists. Therefore, one can percieve more concretely the extent of their awarness reflected by the practical ways they self-regulate their reading process.

2. The strategy transfer to other language skills is another issue worthy of consideration. When the EFL student succeeds to decode the text's message and be able to extract the key points and ideas to remember, can he/she transfer this bulk of knowledge to produce a piece of writing as an example ? such a question necessitates further research since reading is important to develop other skills.

3. It is recommended also, to take cognitive training into consideration for the sake of exploring the effectiveness of other cognitive and metacognitive strategies that may be very helpful for a better reading comprehension.

4. The profile of LLSs needs more attention in the Algerian context in the sense that students cannot realize the potential benefit of strategy use unless they are informed about it. The best way to do so is to provide them with strategy training through which they will be well aware of the appropriate strategy to employ in a given situation, and that would yield to fruitful results with regard to their performance in the academic tasks.

5. However, strategy training is best succeeded when it is integrated regularly with the skills to be taught as parts of the curriculum they supposed to learn.

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Appendix

The Questionnaire

Dear student,

This questionnaire is a part of a piece of research. It aims at collating information about the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies and its relation to reading comprehension enhancement. So it would be greatly appreciated to take your time filling in this questionnaire. Please tick (√) the appropriate box (more than one answer can be possible). All your answers will be kept confidential.

Section One : General Information About the Reading Skill

1. Do you find reading an interesting activity?

   Yes ▭   No ▭

2. How often do you read in English ?

   Never ▭   Rarely ▭   Sometimes ▭   Usually ▭   Always ▭

3. What is your aim behind reading a written text ?

   a. Pleasure   ▭

   b. Look for information   ▭

   c. Enlarge the scope of knowledge about a given topic of interest   ▭

   d. Accomplish a learning task   ▭

4. To what extent do you understand what has been read ?

   Not at all ▭   Minimally ▭   Somewhat ▭   Extensively ▭

   Section Two : Problems and Factors Affecting Reading Comprehension

5. To what extent does the background knowledge about the text's topic affect your understanding of the read text ?

   Not at all ▭   Minimally ▭   Somewhat ▭   Extensively ▭

6. What do you think are the problems that may prevent you from comprehending

    well the read text ?

    ……………………………………………………………………………………

    ……………………………………………………………………………………

7. Do you think your level at reading has an effect on your reading comprehension ?

    Yes ▭   No ▭

8. To what extent does the type of the text you tackle impede the reading

    comprehension ?

    Not at all ▭   Minimally ▭   Somewhat ▭   Extensively ▭

9. Which of the following is more likely to affect reading comprehension ?

    a. The nature of the text   ▭

    b. The nature of the reader   ▭

    c. The nature of the reading activity   ▭

    d. The strategies being used to process reading   ▭

    Section Three : The Use of Cognitive and Metacognitive Strategies

10. If you get stuck while reading, what strategies are you going to use in order to keep

    reading ?

    ……………………………………………………………………………………

    ……………………………………………………………………………………

11. How often do you plan what to read before you start reading ?

Never ▭   Rarely ▭   Sometimes ▭   Usually ▭   Always ▭

12. Is planning helpful to you in relation to reading comprehension ?

    Yes ▭   No ▭

If yes, in what ways ?

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…………………………………………………………………………………………..

13. How often do you evaluate whether you successfully fulfil your plan ?

Never ☐   Rarely ☐   Sometimes ☐   Usually ☐   Always ☐

14. How often are you aware of what your reading needs are?

Never ☐   Rarely ☐   Sometimes ☐   Usually ☐   Always ☐

15. To what extent are you aware of how to get your reading needs while reading a

given text ?

Not at all ☐   Minimally ☐   Somewhat ☐   Extensively ☐

16. How often do you focus on the context to understand the difficult words ?

Never ☐   Rarely ☐   Sometimes ☐   Usually ☐   Always ☐

17. Do you think that relying on the context while reading can facilitate reading

comprehension ?

Yes ☐   No ☐

18. How does inferring from context contribute to reading comprehension ?

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19. How often do you take notes whenever you come across a useful information ?

Never ☐   Rarely ☐   Sometimes ☐   Usually ☐   Always ☐

20. While reading, how often do you underline key terms or main ideas that will help

you increase your understanding ?

Never ☐   Rarely ☐   Sometimes ☐   Usually ☐   Always ☐

21. How often do you analyse what is included in the text you read to reach

comprehensible conclusions about it?

Never ☐   Rarely ☐   Sometimes ☐   Usually ☐   Always ☐

22. How often do you check to see if your guesses about the text are right or wrong ?

Never ☐   Rarely ☐   Sometimes ☐   Usually ☐   Always ☐

23. How often do you try to visualize information to help you remember what you have

read ?

Never ☐   Rarely ☐   Sometimes ☐   Usually ☐   Always ☐

24. How often do you correct mistakes immediately when you think you misunderstand

the text's message ?

Never ☐   Rarely ☐   Sometimes ☐   Usually ☐   Always ☐

25. How often do you check your progress to complete what you are asked to do on

time ?

Never ☐   Rarely ☐   Sometimes ☐   Usually ☐   Always ☐

26. How often do you evaluate whether you have successfully achieved your objective

after reading ?

Never ☐   Rarely ☐   Sometimes ☐   Usually ☐   Always ☐

27. Do you think of how to improve your reading efficiency ?

Yes ☐   No ☐

28. how could you overcome your weaknesses for a better understanding of the read

text ?

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

29. How often do you evaluate the effectiveness of strategies you used while reading ?

Never ☐   Rarely ☐   Sometimes ☐   Usually ☐   Always ☐

30. With regard to the aforementioned strategies, which ones according to you, are

mostly used by Algerian EFL learners for a better reading comprehension ?

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Thank you for being cooperative

Résumé

Le but de la lecture est de bien comprendre ce qui a été lu, ainsi, pour garantir la lecture compréhension, le lecteur doit utiliser des stratégies qui peuvent l'aider à construire le sens du texte lu. Relativement, la présente étude cherche à explorer l'utilisation des stratégies cognitives et métacognitives et leurs relations dans l'évolution de la lecture compréhension. Il a proposé comme hypothèse, que si l'étudiant utilise les stratégies cognitives et métacognitives pendant la lecture, sa lecture compréhension évoluera. Afin de confirmer cette hypothèse, un questionnaire a adressé aux étudiants de 2ième année Master en Anglais, à Université Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia de Jijel. Les résultats, collectés de l'ensemble du groupe d'un nombre de 63 étudiants, a révélé des points clés en relation avec le thème objet de la recherche. Les étudiants en Master 2 se trouvent utiliser les stratégies cognitives et métacognitives afin de faire face aux problèmes qui les entravent lors de la lecture et atteindre ainsi le but de la lecture compréhension. Cela prouve qu'ils voient les stratégies cognitives et métacognitives comme des outils efficaces qui leur facilitent la lecture compréhension du moment où ils déclarent utiliser fréquemment ses dites stratégies lors de leurs lectures. Par conséquent, l'hypothèse est confirmée, ce qui implique que les étudiants ont besoin d'utiliser les stratégies cognitives et métacognitives pour atteindre le but de la lecture comprehension.

ملخص

إن الهدف من القراءة هو الفهم الجيد. ولهذا ومن أجل ضمان ذلك، يحتاج القارئ إلى استخدام الإستراتيجيات التي تساعده في استيعاب النص المقروء. ولهذا، تصبو هذه الدراسة للبحث في استعمال الإستراتيجيات المعرفية والميتامعرفية (ما وراء المعرفة) وعلاقتها بتحسين القراءة والفهم لأهميتها الكبيرة في القراءة.

تم الافتراض أنه إذا استخدم الطلاب الإستراتيجيات المعرفية والميتامعرفية بشكل أكبر عند القراءة، فإن فهمهم للقراءة سيتحسن، ولإثبات هذه الفرضية، تم توجيه استبيان لجميع طلاب السنة الثانية ماستر إنجليزية بمحمد الصديق بن يحي،جامعة جيجل. إن النتائج المحصلة من خلال الطلاب الخاضعين للبحث، البالغ عددهم 63 طالبا، قد كشفت عن نقاط مفتاحية متعلقة بموضوع البحث. وقد وجد طلاب السنة الثانية ماستر أن استعمال الإستراتيجيات المعرفية والميتامعرفية يمكنهم من مواجهة المشاكل التي تعترضهم أثناء القراءة والتوصل بذلك إلى القراءة والفهم ، وهذا ما يدل على أنهم يعتبرون الإستراتيجيات المعرفية والميتامعرفية أدوات فعالة تسهل فهمهم عند تكرار استعمالهم لها. ولذلك تم إثبات الفرضية، بمعنى أن الطلاب يحتاجون إلى استعمال الإستراتيجيات المعرفية والميتامعرفية من أجل تعزيز فهم القراءة.