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**An Investigation into EFL Students Reading Aloud Difficulties**

**The Case of Third Year Middle School Students of Abadou Abd El Kamel**

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## Abstract

The current study aims at investigating oral reading difficulties faced by third year middle school students. It additionally puts forward identifying the different areas of difficulties that third year middle school students of Abadou Abd El Kamel encounter during their oral reading performance. It is hypothesized that these students encounter difficulties during reading aloud in English when it comes to pronouncing, decoding, and comprehending words, which may result from the students' lack of the reading aloud habit or merely to the fact that they face many difficulties in the process of reading itself. Therefore, in order to figure out these difficulties, qualitative research has been opted for. Two means of data collection were implemented: the stimulated recall interview with students, and a semi-structured interview with teachers. The choice of these two tools was purposeful: the stimulated recall interview allows the participants to reflect on their thinking or experiences in a natural comfortable setting, while the semi-structured interview enables the interviewer to have an open interview where questions could be formed starting from the interviewee's answer, so as to provide further explanation or to add more information. The stimulated recall interview was conducted with thirty two third year middle school students from an overall population of 111 students, and the semi-structured interview was done with four teachers of English at Abadou Abd El Kamel middle school. The analysis of the data revealed that all students encountered difficulties that vary from one student to another. These reading aloud difficulties are related to a lack of comprehension, a lack of vocabulary, a lack of phonemic and pronunciation awareness, shyness, vision and hearing problems, or difficulties in recalling previously learnt items. Finally, the study ends with proposing some solutions along with further future recommendations for both teachers and students to overcome the reading aloud difficulties they face when reading aloud.

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## **General Introduction**

1. Background of the study
2. Statement of the Problem
3. Aims of the Study
4. Research Questions
5. Assumptions and Hypothesis
6. Research Tools
7. Structure of the study



## 1. Background of the Study

Nowadays, the teaching and learning of foreign languages has become very essential. Among so many living languages English is by far the most commonly spoken language in the world. That is why, learning English as a second language (L2) or as a foreign language (FL) is gaining more and more significance. As a result, the learning of English in the present days can be declared to be a must for being the language number one of communication all over the world. Hence, learning/teaching EFL requires both of the learner and the teacher huge efforts to master it.

According to Brown (2007), in order to master the English language, learners have to be adequately exposed to all the four skills namely: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. i.e., we use these four language skills to attain the English language proficiency. Generally, EFL Learners have the tendency to mainly focus on the speaking and listening skills, while reading and writing skills are neglected. However, reading is considered to be a basic need in the modern world of science and technology.

“Reading is essential to success in our society” (Snow, Burns, and Griffin, 1998, p.17). Bright and McGregor (1970, p.52) noted that “where there is little reading there will be a little language learning”. So, there is a mutual relationship between academic success and a student’s academic reading skill.

In 2000, Brown suggested two categories of reading: oral reading (reading aloud) and silent reading. According to Gold & Gibson (2001), reading aloud is the basis for literacy development. So, expressing oneself in a FL, more precisely in oral reading is a necessity for native and non-native speakers for its significant role in enriching a learner’s vocabulary knowledge, spelling as well as writing. However, the process of reading aloud is not as easy as it seems, because reading aloud is one of the most extremely difficult skills to be mastered by students, particularly students with elementary and intermediate levels. As Goodman put it

“in oral reading, the reader must perform two tasks at the same time. He must produce an equivalent of the graphic input which is the signal in reading, and he must also reconstruct the meaning of what he is reading” (1967, p.131).

The fact that most EFL students are encountering problems in terms of comprehension, pronunciation, vocabulary, anxiety, vision, etc when reading aloud English texts cannot be denied. Thus, eliciting the students' perceptions of these problems is a must.

## **2. Statement of the Problem**

The learning of a FL is nowadays gaining more significance. However, the process of so doing is subject to many discrepancies and problems. Students may, for instance, face some difficulties during the process of learning that affect the learning experience negatively. As the reading skill is a key to success in all the fields, it is found that not all people can read and more precisely read aloud properly. Accordingly, students may encounter difficulties when reading aloud in terms of pronunciation, comprehension, vocabulary, etc. Putting it differently, students who undergo oral reading problems are not able to perform the reading aloud act effectively.

Middle school students and their teachers have reported, in an informal interview conducted with them, the existence of a certain number of problems and difficulties in the reading class, and more precisely when doing oral reading. These difficulties may impede FL students from doing well during the reading aloud session. As the process of such type of reading is pretty essential in developing the students' level in English, interest in investigating the reading aloud difficulties grew important and central to the success of the teaching learning activity. That is meant for helping both teachers and students be aware of the nature of the reading difficulties and the reasons behind them and perform better when reading aloud.

### **3. Aims of the Study**

The present study aims at identifying the reading aloud difficulties of third year middle school students when performing the reading aloud task in the English classes. It also puts forward suggesting some recommendations to raise both the teachers' and students' awareness about these difficulties to achieve success when reading aloud.

### **4. Research Questions**

The present research raises the following main questions:

- What difficulties do third year middle school students face when reading aloud a piece of discourse?
- What are the possible causes behind those problems?
- What are the possible suggestions to improve the students' reading aloud performance?

### **5. Research Hypothesis**

It can be hypothesized that third year middle school students suffer from some problems when reading aloud in the English language at the level of vocabulary knowledge, ambiguous words, sentence structure, pronunciation, and the causes behind these problems may relate to the learners' lack of reading aloud habit, or to the difficulty of the reading aloud skill itself.

### **6. Research Tools**

In order to investigate the difficulties middle school pupils face in the oral reading, two forms of data collection tools are used. First, Kvale and Brinkman (2009), SRI protocol has been adapted (see appendix A) and then conducted with thirty two third year middle school students of Abadou Abd Abd El Kamel. Second, a semi-structured interview has been conducted with four teachers of English in the same middle school. The use of the SRI seemed relevant to the research work aims since it helps students recall their previously performed reading aloud acts in class, which would in turn help identify the difficulties they

may have encountered. The teachers' interview would additionally add to the research in hand in that it helps elicit their views and attitudes towards such type of problem situations, and may hopefully provide solutions and suggestions.

## **7. Structure of the Study**

The present study is divided into two chapters. The first chapter is devoted to the theoretical framework of the study, while the second one is devoted to the field work.

The first chapter has two sections. The first section is concerned with the reading skill and its teaching. In this section, fundamental concepts are explained in relation to various theories. In addition, mention has been made about the different aspects of reading such as models, techniques, types, and teaching practices within the Competency-Based Approach (CBA). It also portrays the way reading should be assessed and the value of the reading skill. On the other hand, the second section is entirely restricted to one type of reading which is reading aloud. First, it provides a theoretical background to oral reading. Second, it presents the utility of the process of reading aloud. Then, light has been shed on the areas of difficulties in oral reading, and on the impact of this activity on the students' performances. Finally, the second section also presents some techniques of oral reading and the way feedback should be given to students throughout the process of reading aloud.

The second chapter represents the practical framework of the research work. It considers the research tools and the target population involved in the study. It also reports results and provides a qualitative analysis of the obtained data from the students' SRI and the teachers' semi-structured interview. The end of this chapter exposes some of the encountered research limitations and proposes some pedagogical recommendations as guidelines for further future research.

## **Chapter One: The Reading Skill**

### **Introduction**

The learning of a FL requires the acquisition of the four fundamental skills, namely, reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Thus, reading plays an important role in mastering any FL, in the sense that learners can share their thoughts and beliefs through it. The present chapter is divided into two sections. The first section tends to give an overall description of the reading skill. It proposes a variety of reading definitions, models, techniques, theories, and the stages to be followed while reading. It also tackles the teaching of reading under CBA and its assessment, offering some characteristics denoting that a learner is a good reader. The second section, however, sheds light on the practice of reading aloud and the different types of difficulties learners encounter when reading aloud. It also explains the reading aloud utility, and its techniques, suggesting some tips that contribute to having an effective read aloud session. The current section ends up with evoking the impact of the reading aloud activity on the learners' performance and the proper feedback to be offered.

### **Section One: Teaching the Reading Skill**

#### **1.1.1. The Nature of Reading**

Reading is a key factor in language learning. Being able to read properly means that a learner is in the right path to master a given language. Due to its importance several interpretations were set to define the concept of reading. For instance, Smith defined it as being "the most natural activity in the world" (2004, p.2), while Nunan (2003) viewed reading as a fluent process done by readers who combine information from a given text and their own background knowledge for the purpose of building meaning. Another definition was coined by Moreillon (2007) who saw reading as the act of making meaning from print and from visual information.

The process of reading cannot be fully fulfilled unless the reader recognizes and transcribes the printed message or text correctly. That is why, Snow, Burns and Griffin (1998) said that reading is a highly complicated developmental challenge in the sense that it requires developing certain factors such as memory, language, attention, and motivation. In brief, “reading is an awareness of the way in which we use language”. (Wallace, 1993: p, 3)

**1.1.2. Types of Reading**

For a better understanding of the notion of the reading process, a learner must be aware of the types of reading in classroom. Researchers such as Brown (2000) suggested two types of reading: silent reading, which is composed of intensive and extensive reading, and oral reading that signifies the student’s reading aloud performance in the classroom.

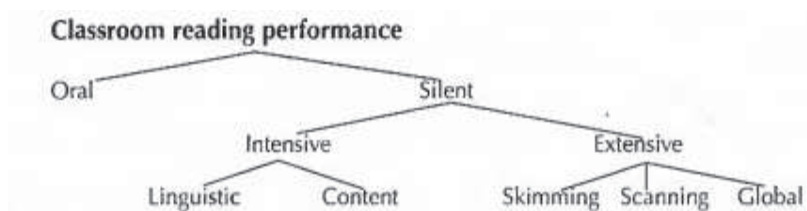


Figure 1: Types of classroom reading performance (Brown, 2000, p, 312)

**1.1.2.1. Reading Aloud**

Reading aloud was defined by Jackobs (2011) as a form of communication between a well-prepared reader and an interested audience. Doff (1988) added that one of the main features of reading aloud is that we do not aim to only understand the text we are reading , but also to convey the message to someone else. Hence, reading aloud involves three major acts: looking at the text (eye contact), understanding the text, and saying it aloud (the production of vocal sounds) (Doff, 1988). Besides, Brown (2000) viewed oral reading as a means of evaluation of the student’s level in terms of their progress, pronunciation, etc.

### **1.1.2.2. Silent Reading**

According to Doff (1988), silent reading or reading for meaning is what the reader does when reading a text. Unlike reading aloud, silent reading involves understanding and comprehending the message only.

On the other hand, Jajdelska (2007) described silent reading as a hearing act to the writer's words and a silent participation in an imaginary conversation between the writer and the reader. Similarly, Rather (2018) came to introduce silent reading as a process by which the student reads without making a sound. This kind of reading is mainly done for comprehension purposes, where the main focus of the learner is the meaning existed in the text. Brown (2000) added that the notion of silent reading can be subcategorized into two aspects of reading which are intensive reading and extensive reading.

#### **1.1.2.2.1. Intensive reading**

The term intensive reading refers to the act of reading a text in details, by which the student gives more importance to the different language items such as ideas, words, grammar etc. Mainly, this kind of reading is associated with academic reading, where the aim is to get information, and knowledge that allow the student to produce a research paper, a term paper, etc (Rather, 2018).

Salim (2001), however, explained that students do not only read for understating and getting details, but they also aim to master the vocabulary and the structure of the language, referring to this way of reading to be very effective in the acquisition of second language. In addition, "intensive reading calls students' attention to grammatical forms, discourse markers, and other surface structure details for the purpose of understanding literal meaning, implications, rhetorical relationships and the like" (Brown, 2000, p, 312).

#### **1.1.2.2.2. Extensive reading**

In 2001, the term extensive reading was explained by Salim as the act where students read for pleasure. Unlike intensive reading, this type does not focus on the structure of language, but on the general understating, which refers to a rapid reading where the student rapidly skims a text looking for the topic sentence to gain a general idea about the passage, avoiding certain paragraphs and parts. Generally, the skill of extensive reading requires from the student to be able to derive relevant information from the text rapidly.

Furthermore, Brown (2000) described it as a reading for pleasure for usually long texts such as books, long articles, or essays. Rather (2018) added that extensive reading is a rapid reading by which the students read silently a given text and through this reading, they derive the general meaning that recites in the passage. So, this kind of reading was found to be helpful in the process of acquiring a second language through giving the reader the freedom to pick the books he likes to read, making the reading act interesting and more enjoyable for learners.

In short, both of intensive and extensive reading are required in the process of learning a second language; intensive reading is related to finding specific details in the text, while extensive reading is concerned with improving the learners' comprehension ability (Kalmane, 2012).

#### **1.1.3. Theories of Reading**

Reading has always been a very important skill that must be learnt in order to master a language. Due to its weight in the domain of learning/ teaching a FL, reading researchers looked for the best methods and factors that facilitate the reading process for both the learner and the teacher. As a result, four major theories have emerged to explain the nature of reading.



First, there is the traditional view that focuses on the printed form of texts. Second, the cognitive view which emphasizes the role of the prior knowledge of the learner in addition to what appears on the printed page. Finally, the schema theory that states that knowledge is stored and organized into units while the metacognitive view is based on the reader's control of a text for the purpose of comprehension.

### **1.3.1 The Traditional View**

In the traditional view, research on reading was following a behaviouristic tradition, it was mainly concerned with the connection between stimulus and response, by analyzing written words and letters which were considered as the characteristics of the stimuli, in an attempt to comprehend the reading process (Hayes, 2000).

According to Dole, Duffy, Rohler, and Pearson (1991) novice readers tend to acquire a set of hierarchically ordered sub skills which facilitate the comprehension process. As long as readers master those skills, they would be considered as experts who are able to understand what they read. Within this view, readers are viewed as passive recipients of information in the text. i.e., the readers' goal is to produce the meaning that is resided in the text itself. Moreover, Gough's (1972) perception of readers in the traditional view is that they start with translating the parts of the written language mainly, letters, into speech sounds, then, these sounds are combined to form words and finally the words as well are combined to arrive at an understanding of the written message of the author. One of the shortcomings of this view is the fact that reading within it is inadequate. The meaning resides explicitly in the text which makes the reader passively absorbs it without being active or work on actualizing the meaning of the text (Richter, 2009). Consequently, researchers shifted their focus from the learners' reliance on form to how they construct meaning when they read. This eventually led to the development of the cognitive view. (Sweet and Anderson, 2013)

### 1.1.3.2. The Cognitive View

The 1960's witnessed the development of "the mind's new science" of cognitive psychology. This led to a massive influence from the cognitive model on reading research and pedagogy in the sense that it shed light on the prior knowledge and its important role within the reading process (McCormick, 1994).

From the perspective of Bamford and Day (1998), the reading process within the cognitive view was defined as the integration of the previous knowledge of the reader in hand with the information given in the written message in order to construct the meaning from the printed page. In addition, Goodman (1967) viewed reading as a 'psycholinguistic guessing game' by which there is an interaction between thought and language. Being a good reader does not necessarily result from knowing all the elements in a given text but from readers' ability to select the most important cues to produce guesses which are for the first time.

In short, the main concept in the cognitive view is that the comprehension of a text is completely influenced by the reader's background knowledge, where reading is seen as an "interaction process", referring that the meaning of the text is acquired only by an interaction between the reader, his knowledge, and the given text (Shafaei and Nejati, 2009).

### 1.1.3.3. The Schema View

An (2013) stated that the term schema was first used in psychology by Barlett(1932) . Then, it was adopted in other fields like education, more precisely reading which was introduced by Rumelhart(1980), Carell(1981), and Hudson(1982).

According to Heller (1999), schema (or schemata) refers to a set of structures which are used by humans in order to organize information in their memory. Starting from this point, we can depict that schemes have a great impact on the process of reading. Yet, Nunan (1991) made this point clear and maintained that a schema theory suggests that the knowledge or data that we have in our head is organized into interrelated patterns. These data are constructed

from our previous experience of the world. He concluded saying that the used schemata is very important, particularly for L2 and FL learners for the purpose of reconstructing the meaning of a discourse. Hence, in the domain of reading, schema theory describes how we construct the meaning of words of the print forms from our previous knowledge of those words i.e., comprehending a text is an interactive process between the reader's background knowledge and the text.

#### **1.1.3.4. The Metacognitive View**

Hacker, Dunlosky, and Graesser (2009) defined metacognition as follows: "1/ knowledge/ awareness of cognitive processes, and 2/ control over processes. The first aspect can be further subdivided into the knowledge that people experience cognitions and the awareness of one's own cognitive processes as they relate to tasks. The second aspect of metacognition can also be broken down into two components, the monitoring of cognitive processes and the ability to regulate cognition to improve effectiveness" (p. 27).

Metacognition in the context of reading was explained by Zhang (2001) saying that this concept should not be restricted to cognitive processes solely. In fact, it should be broadened to finally mean in reading research the learner's metacognitive awareness of which strategies should readers use in a reading task. So, it is based on the understanding of the strategies used to refer to the learner's conscious and self directed efforts for meaning-making. Also, it emphasizes the fact that reading is not a passive process but an active and an interactive one where readers use their knowledge of the language to predict the meaning of the text.

Since effective readers must also have some awareness and control when engaging in the process of reading, Douglas, Hacker and Arthur (2009) argued that reading characterizations include skills and activities that involve metacognition. To conclude, there is a strong relation between reading and metacognition.

#### **1.1.4. Reading Models**

In an attempt to have deep understanding of the process of reading, three models of reading were introduced by researchers. These models are; the bottom up model, the top down model and the interactive model.

##### **1.1.4.1. The Definition of a Reading Model**

A reading model was defined by Browne (1998) as a reflection to the different ways used by readers while reading a text. It aims at analyzing and describing the processes involved during the act of reading.

##### **1.1.4.2. The Bottom-Up Model**

“The bottom-up model is related to the traditional view of the reading process”. Norton (2007, p. 8). Accordingly, the behaviouristic ideas have a huge influence on the bottom-up model of reading as well because they view reading as a mere perceptual process. In other words, readers do not activate any cognitive processes; they only read in a mechanical way where they translate the written symbols into their corresponding word sounds (Salazar, Esteve, and Codina, 2005).

Additionally, the bottom up model of reading was defined by Liu (2010) as a model which puts more focus on the written or printed form of a text, and that meaning is only derived in a process from part to whole. In a more specified elaboration, the bottom-up model progresses in a serial fashion from letter to sound, to words, to meaning as it is illustrated in the bellow figure.

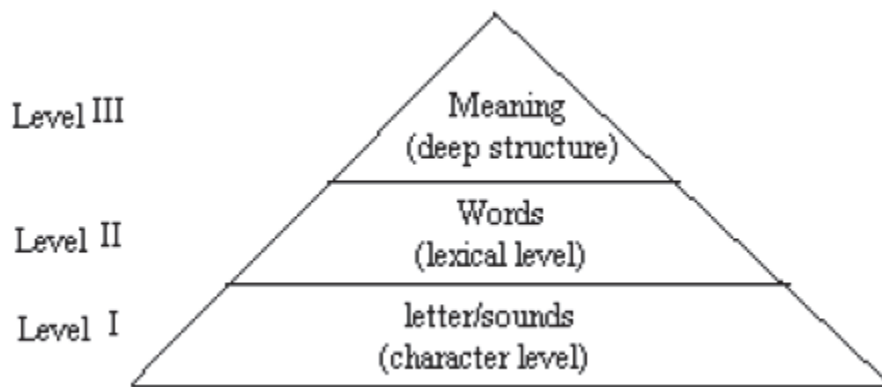


Figure 2: The bottom-up model (Lui, 2010, p.156)

Furthermore, Manzo and Manzo (1990) explained that within this model, the first step in reading is the recognition of letters followed by phonetic elements, then words, then word groups, then finally moving to the meaning of the sentence and the passage as an entity. Hence, the reader's role is defined in processing these units accurately to build meaning from the smaller to the larger units. i.e., from the bottom to up. This view assumes that in order to attain overall reading competency, the learner needs to master each successive reading sub skills. Consequently, this assumption has been a challenge for researchers as Goodman(1984) and Smith (1979) who later on introduced the top down model.

#### **1.1.4.3. The Top-Down Model**

The reading process within the top-down model was described as a meaning-driven process where the readers actively apply and compare the materials being read from their prior knowledge. The top-down model deemphasized sub skills and gave more emphasis to the pre-reading activities that develop the learners' background knowledge (Manzo, Manzo, 1990).

Liu stated that "In this model it is evident that the flow of information proceeds from the top downward so that the process of word identification is dependent upon meaning first. Thus, the higher level processes embodied in past experiences and the reader's knowledge of

the language pattern interact with and direct the flow of information, just as listeners may anticipate what the upcoming words of speakers might be” (2010, p.155 )

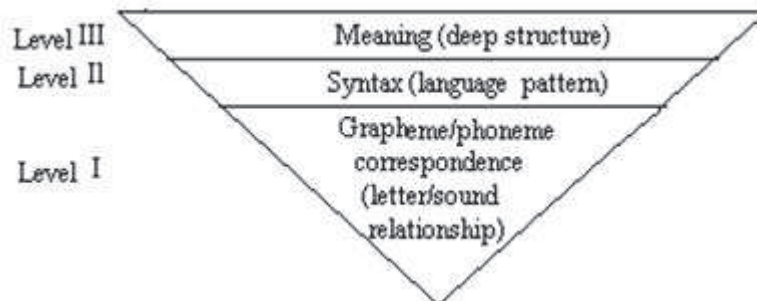


Figure3: the top-down model (Lui, 2010, p.157)

So, the process of the top-down model as it is shown in the figure points that the reader should gain the meaning of the text first through reading the full passage, and linking it to the prior knowledge, i.e., it first starts by meaning and then it proceeds to language patterns, graphemes, etc (from whole to part).

In addition, Carrell, Devine and Eskey (1998) claimed that in this model, the readers' role is not restricted to making predictions and processing information only, but it includes everything in the readers' background knowledge and experience which has a significant role in the process of reading. In brief, this view points that the reader's prior knowledge of the content area of the text is as important as his prior linguistic knowledge and proficiency level in L2.

On the other hand, Boyle and Scanlon (2009) indicated that in the top-down model, learners can generate hypotheses about what they are going to read thanks to their background knowledge, assuming that they already have the knowledge about the topic, and that reading is an "Active process" where learners construct meaning while reading a text by the use of background knowledge and personal experiences.

All in all, what is most important in this model is the teacher's contribution and role in activating the background knowledge of the students when they read, by the use of a variety

of activities that aim to tap their knowledge of the topic before reading. However, despite the theorists' views, it was noticed that some readers are still using the bottom-up model strategies to unlock words (Lui, 2010).

#### **1.1.4.4. The Interactive Model**

After the examination of the above two models of reading by theorists, it was concluded that neither the bottom up nor the top down model sufficiently explains the reading process. For instance, the top-down model, the main concept of which is to generate a prediction about the meaning and ideas in the text cannot be fulfilled all the times because readers may not always be knowledgeable enough about a given topic, which makes it hard for them to predict (Pearson, 1984). Also, the bottom-up model is criticized for the saying that the process of reading works completely in reverse to the way introduced under the bottom-up model. This means that instead of going from the smallest to the largest unit, we need to understand the meaning of the text to be able to identify words (Nunan, 1989). As a result, a new model known as the interactive model of reading was developed. The main concept introduced under this model is that information is derived from the combination of both processing (bottom-up/top-down) i.e., it uses both of the bottom-up and the top-down. For example, when the reader faces a familiar material he/she would use the top-down process; however, if the reader encounters difficulties when reading a text, he would switch to use the bottom-up process (Boyle, Scanlon, 2009).

So, all the valid insights from both the top-down and the bottom-up in this model as it is shown in the accompanying figure.

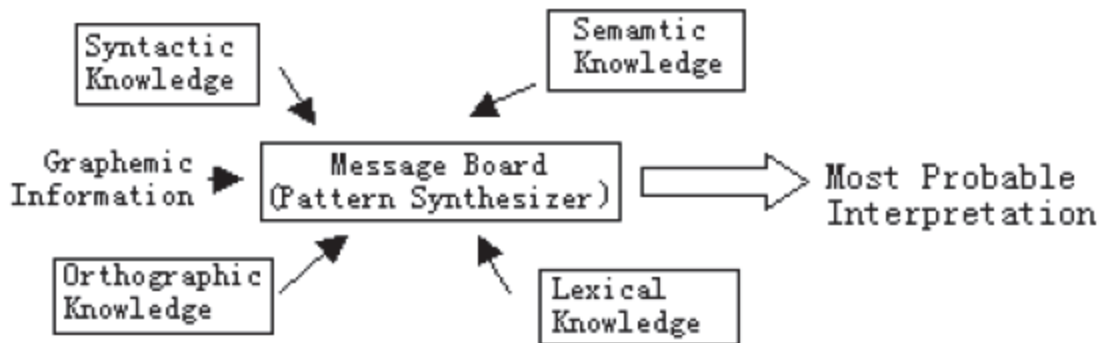


Figure4: The Interactive Model (Liu, 2010, p.157)

As it is shown in the figure above, the interactive model combines between the bottom-up and the top-down characteristics, where an effective decoding or interpretation of a given text requires the reader to use different kinds of knowledge (semantic, syntactic, lexical, and orthographic).

According to Manzo and Manzo (1990), within the interactive model reading is an active strategic process that focuses on questioning, predicting, confirming and self-connecting. In short, the interaction model tends to describe what readers must do to construct and derive knowledge from the printed page.

## 1.5. Techniques of Reading

Reading in a FL is more challenging than reading in one's mother tongue. To fulfill the act of reading, learners must acquire the appropriate strategies or techniques that enable them to read meaningfully. For that, researchers acknowledged four main reading techniques which are; skimming, scanning, predicting and guessing, and reading narrative story.

### 1.1.5.1. Skimming

Cramer (1998) defined skimming as the technique that does not require the reader to read every single word, but by only skipping with a skilled judgment through moving his/her eyes quickly all over the text. That is why it is regarded as the most rapid reading technique and the most complex as well.



In order to skim, it is required to follow these tips:

- Start at the beginning and check section headings (if there are).
- Think of the relationship of section headings.
- Take note of vocabulary or terms, which may be in bold, or italics print.
- Read each topic sentence, usually the first sentence under the heading.
- Read the study questions at the end of the chapter and think which section could I find that answer in?
- Go back and read each section.

(The program development division of magister training center, 2008, p.56).

#### **1.1.5.2. Scanning**

According to West (2010), scanning is a reading technique which is used to find answers to specific questions by running the eyes down the printed page. Generally, the answers are short and factual.

In order to scan, it is required to follow these steps:

- After the section or chapter, look at the study questions at the end.
- Answer each question in your head looking for the exact word, term, or phrase.
- Go back and look up each vocabulary term and re-read the definition from the book.

(The program development division of magister training center 2008, p.57)

#### **1.1.5.3. Predicting and Guessing**

Lin and Chien defined this technique as “remembering the previous read content and predicting the unread” (2010, p.99). Predicting and guessing work through making predictions on the learner’s previous knowledge, and then extract the meaning of the text even if there exists unfamiliar words. The reader can predict the information from graphics, text, experiences, etc.

#### **1.1.5.4. Reading Narrative Story**

According to Lin and Chien (2010), in this technique a lot of materials are associated with a story because stories have the ability to stimulate a reader's motivation. That is why, when reading a story, the reader should realize the characters of the story, the setting (time and place), and the plot. In the plot, the reader needs to identify steps; conflict, complication, climax, and resolution; in order to raise his/ her level of understanding the story.

#### **1.1.6. Reading Stages**

The process of reading can be divided into three phases which are; the pre-reading stage, the while reading stage, and the post reading stage (Yazar, 2013).

##### **1.1.6.1. The Pre-reading Stage**

The first stage of reading was defined as the process where readers work on activating their background knowledge about a certain topic and make predictions about its content which is also known as before reading stage. Mainly, this stage includes tasks that are concerned with analyzing words and terms related to the text in hand with an introduction of some new vocabulary (McCune and Alexander, 2015).

Yazar (2013) explained that within the pre-reading stage, the teacher attempts to make his students interested in the reading act, by providing them with a short introduction about the topic and some hints about the content. Generally, it aims to familiarize the learner with the language used in the text. In addition, this phase creates interest and motivation among learners because it has the ability to activate their background knowledge (Keene, 2006).

##### **1.1.6.2. The While-reading Stage**

During reading a text learners use their knowledge to decode words and understand the text they read by the use of different strategies. The teacher's role here is to decide which amount of scaffolding is needed based on their reading level, which enables him to assess

their weaknesses and strengths. Hence, he will provide them with notes that would improve and regulate their process of reading (McCune and Alexander, 2015).

Yazar (2013) added that the while-reading stage aims are the following:

- To help understanding of the writer's purpose
- To help understanding of the text structure
- To clarify text content.

In order to fulfill the above aims, the teacher designs comprehension activities by which he/she prepares activities like completing diagrams or maps, making lists, etc

### **1.1.6.3. The Post-reading Stage**

The final stage of the reading process is known as the post-reading stage. In this stage learners express their views and experiences about the reading activity. They have the right to ask questions related to the text and exchange different ideas and points with the teacher and their colleagues. After that, learners can retell the story and even link some of its events with some real life situations which would eventually reveal whether they understood the topic fully or not (Cohen and Cowen 2008), While Yazar (2013) viewed that the post-reading stage is the learners' reaction about the text, where they give their views about whether they found it useful or enjoyable. That is why, this stage mainly aims to;

- Consolidate or reflect upon what has been read
- To relate the text the learners' own knowledge, interests, or views.

### **1.1.7. Reading under the Competency-Based Approach**

The Competency-based approach is a communicative approach that focuses on the learning outcomes. For deeper clarifications about this approach, one must know the significance of its key term 'competence'. Competence was defined by Ait Haddouchane, Bakkali, Ajana, & Gassemi (2017) as the ability to do something correctly and efficiently by a

person who will be facing a complex situation and this competence allows him/her to build the appropriate response; i.e., it is a knowing how to act successfully.

However, Kleynhans, Markham, Meyer, Aswegan and Pilbeam (2006) explained competence using three main terms which are knowledge, skills and attitude. Knowledge is simply the learnt information that is going to be used when it is needed; skills go hand in hand with knowledge in the sense that they are the ability to apply the gained knowledge and put it into practice and to act in different situations. Lastly, the term attitude which refers to the beliefs or thoughts that a person has about certain things and events. The attitude can easily affect the motivation of the learner either positively or negatively. In other words, positive attitude results in obtaining the wanted outcomes.

Therefore, the CBA appeared to bridge the gap between school and real life situations, seeking and giving knowledge through interacting with people everywhere using the four skills; speaking, listening, reading, and writing (Nkwetisama, 2012). Hence, Ait haddouchane, Bakkali, Ajana, & Gassemi (2017) suggested three fundamental objectives for the CBA as follow:

- Specifying the competencies that must be mastered by the student at the end of each year.
- Giving meaning to the learning outcomes where the teacher shows to the student the role of everything he/she learnt at school.
- Validating and verifying the student's achievement from what he/she resolved in concrete situations.

In brief, "CBA focuses on the outcomes of learning. It addresses on what the learners are expected to do rather than on what they are expected to learn about" (Nkwetisama, 2012, p.519)

As far as the reading skill is concerned, teaching it through the use of CBA is not a simple task that can be fulfilled easily because it requires from both the teacher and the

learners huge efforts. For instance, the teacher must train the learner to read accurately and effectively with full comprehension of the text (Benramdane, 2016). As mentioned before, CBA focuses on the outcomes, i.e., it is a learner-centered approach that seeks not only to teach students to read, but also to read meaningfully. So, the student's performance is the key point that defines the reading ability within competency-based programs (Sweet and Anderson, 2013).

The teaching of the four skills of the English language in Algeria has always been a controversial issue. As to reading, it is found that assessing reading or teaching it within CBA is a bit complicated especially when it comes to reading aloud because it is not acknowledged by the Algerian educational system and most of the times is seen as a pronunciation practice. So, as Benzerroug (2012) mentioned applying CBA in Algeria is pretty challenging due to the fact that the time allocated for teaching reading, speaking, listening and writing is not sufficient, the shortage of teaching aid tools, and the possibility of having incompetent teachers who cannot assess, guide and train learners. Hence, reading aloud does not match with what CBA entails.

#### **1.1.8. The Assessment of Reading**

The assessment of reading as stated by Afflerbach (2005) plays a significant role within teaching and learning processes. It is considered as a useful way to measure the level of students and define their needs based on their weaknesses and strengths. The teacher should assess his students in formative and summative processes to have an idea about the reading development they have achieved. Besides that, the assessment should measure different skills of the students. For instance, the teacher assesses his students not only through asking questions but also by evaluating their performance. Also, the end of the assessment should reflect the level of students on the reading skill in terms of the pronunciation of words and the way they decode letters and symbols of the text. That is why, teachers use different tools or

strategies to assess the students' ability and comprehension. For instance, the student would be provided with activities that call him to remember given information through adding questions that is related to the passage being read where the comprehension of the student would be assessed also by asking him/her to summarize the main points that have mentioned (Sabatini, Albro, and O'reilly, 2012). Hence, an effective assessment must be supported by information and feedback given by the teacher to make sure the students improve their reading skill and also to make them aware of their progress so they can evaluate themselves. These processes of assessment would help the teacher to pick the best instructions to be used in the classroom that develop the reading skill for learners (Afflerbach, 2005).

Reading assessment should focus on three main areas: the first area is the accuracy and the ability of the learner to decode the items of a text. The second area is the automaticity of the student that should be assessed to see how quick he is in deriving and recognizing the words mentioned in the text. The last area is the assessment of prosody and the ability of the student to correctly interpret the expressions and sentences of the text (APAC, 2009).

In 2011, Afflerbach added saying that in order to assess the reading skill, the assessment should integrate both of the formative and summative assessment. Mostly, the formative assessment gives an overall view of the development of the student and his progress in reading during several lessons, where the teacher is aware of the student level and helps by giving useful instructions. However, the summative assessment mainly reflects the effectiveness of the program and curriculum in a relation to the reading skill. At the end, the result gained from the assessment process would provide the teacher as well as the student with beneficial data that would lead to make an improvement in the reading performance.

In short, reading assessment enables teachers to have an overall view about the level and abilities of learners through assigning the needed instructions (Schumm, 2006).

### **1.1.9. The Importance of Reading**

During the process of learning English as a FL, the four fundamental skills are very important. However, reading is an essential skill as far as learning English is concerned. The importance of reading can be summarized as follows:

Reading has a huge effect when interacting with people. For instance, it helps them to decipher and acquire words that they are in need of while speaking. That means, reading contributes in the development of the speaking skill (Mart, 2012).

Reading extended passages helps learners to expand vocabulary, to boost general language proficiency, and to enhance writing. In other words, reading enables learners to acquire new vocabulary, words, models of writing, etc (Antepara, 2003).

Through reading, learners will have the chance to comprehend and produce correct grammar. Reading provides rich materials to be talked and written about during the learning process, and this results in creating motivation and curiosity within learners. Furthermore, reading paves the way to improve critical thinking, creativity, and awareness within learners. Lastly, reading produces a confident, competent, professional, and a well-educated learner (Doghonadze, 2017).

All in all, reading is a valuable source to attain a language effectively since it contributes to the development of major skills like speaking and writing.

### **1.1.10. Characteristics of a Good Reader**

Since reading is one of the most fundamental skills for mastering a FL, that means learning a FL fully is dependent on developing the reading ability. Hence, habitual reading results in the birth of good readers. These readers have certain features that rank them to be called fluent or good readers.

According to Foster (2005), good readers do not start reading as soon as they are exposed to an input. Instead, they first spend few moments observing the title of the text and

the illustrations if there are any. In other words, they start activating their background knowledge and using the notion of prediction of what the text would be about and what is the aim behind it. Stanovich (2000) added that skilled readers use a variety of strategies not only one in order to remember the words being taught before and to comprehend the input. They also have the ability to recognize words automatically either by direct visual identification or by decoding words.

Furthermore, good readers have the ability to grasp and use the most important information when reading and to fully understand the passage using prior knowledge in terms of vocabulary, grammar, etc. That is why, efficient readers are aware of the exact meaning of particular grammatical devices, patterns of sentences, formation of words, order of words, etc. They also tend to understand the grammatical relationships which occur between the lexical items and to guess the right meaning of these items in a particular context (Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill, and Pincas, 1980)

In short, good readers are “active readers, risk takers who have developed self-confidence and self-control” and selective readers who can skillfully skip ambiguous words, ask questions, and utilize signal words (French, Ellsworth, and Amoruso, 1995, p71).

## **Section two: Reading Aloud Difficulties**

### **1.2.1. Historical Background**

Oral reading is a common activity that is found in all classes all over the world due to its importance in enhancing the reading level of the students. Hence, Huszti (2009) defined and described reading aloud as the technique by which students can be trained through in a systematic way, for the purposes of absorbing the new learnt words and articulating them correctly.



In the early days of oral reading instruction, especially in the United States of America, reading aloud was pretty much seen as a tradition that must be performed not only in the classrooms, but at homes as well, where it was viewed as a means of family entertainment and information. Thus, by the middle of the nineteenth century, reading aloud dominated school instruction where textbooks were used for reading instruction only, following a simple procedure which is reading the text orally, rereading it again, and then memorizing the lesson (Rasinski, 2003).

By the end of the nineteenth century, oral reading as the primary mode of school instruction started to decrease because priority was given to pronunciation, not to understanding while reading. As a result, the American and European educational systems shifted to silent reading, maintaining that reading silently is more effective, but again, oral reading raised one more time with the development of a new method of reading called “the round robin reading”, where the teacher assesses his/her students ability to decode words by calling them to read one by one (Rasinski, 2003). That is why Kuhn and Levy argued that “when learners are reading silently, it is impossible to know how much progress they are making or even if they are engaging with the text. In order for teachers to determine how well students were reading, it was necessary to ask students to read aloud periodically” (2015, p.42). Consequently, reading aloud continued to be adopted and integrated in school programs even at the twenty first century for its huge importance on both the students and the teachers through informing them which level do their students reach so far ( Rasinski, 2003).

### **1.2.2. The Nature of Reading Aloud**

The notion of reading aloud first appeared and dominated school instruction in the first decade of the twentieth century. At that time, schools in the United States of America were called “blab schools” because students were required to read orally the assigned texts which were different (Rasinski, 2003). To put differently, each student is asked to read a given text

that is different from the one of his/her classmates. Oral reading continues its dominance even at the twenty one century due to its significant role in the teaching and learning procedures, especially at the elementary and middle school classrooms. As a result, several interpretations were set to figure out the true nature of reading aloud (Rasinski, 2003).

Gabrielatos (2002) defined reading aloud as the ability to deliver what is written in the text verbally in a way that the content is comprehended by the listeners. Oral reading or reading aloud, as Reynolds and Janzen (2004) stated, is also a technique that is used during reading instruction and takes place mostly in the early stages of learning where the students are requested to read a given text orally. Based on the students' reading performance, the teacher can distinguish the good reader and the poor reader by taking into account the time they spent in reading, in hand with the errors committed, which would eventually provide him/her with an overall assessment that allows him/her to decide the needed instructions in the class. In brief, reading aloud is an enjoyable learning time and an artful teaching and learning activity which is deeply embedded in teaching and learning throughout the day, the unit, or the year (Hahn, 2002).

### **1.2.3. Practice of Reading Aloud**

Researches on reading aloud maintained that teachers adopt this activity to be used in three main fields which are reading for comprehension, speaking, and pronunciation (Gabrielatos, 2002). These can be summarized in the following;

#### **1.2.3.1. Reading aloud as a Reading Practice for Comprehension**

According to Gabrielatos (2002), reading aloud may not sound as the best practice to reach a total comprehension of the text, especially for the students who are fluent readers and pronounce the words correctly because when it comes to comprehending what they read, they face huge difficulties. That is why the reader must distribute his/her attention while reading equally to all the words in the passage, i.e., to distribute attention equally between what is

seen in the paper (sight), comprehension (through the use of background knowledge and relating it to what is read), and pronunciation (the articulation of sounds) (Gabrielatos, 2002).

In addition, Lippman (1997) viewed reading aloud as a key factor that determines the success of readers when learning to read. This will make them benefit from oral reading to grasp new vocabulary and to comprehend the content.

### **1.2.3.2. Reading Aloud as a Speaking Practice**

To understand this utility, one must distinguish between speaking and reading aloud. Oral reading is the process by which the reader delivers what is written only in a comprehensive way to the listener without adding any extra information to the text, while speaking is a spontaneous act that requires the speaker to think of what he/she is going to speak about next at the time of speaking (Gabrielatos, 2002). So, even though both of them produce sounds while speaking, reading aloud should not be used as the only speaking practice for students because it will create many drawbacks. For example, students will get used to speaking unnaturally, relying on what is written on the print only without speaking spontaneously (Gabrielatos, 2002).

On the other hand, Huang viewed that “For some students who don’t have the confidence to practice spoken English, reading aloud can help them overcome the faults of disfluency, repeat, improper pause, and develop natural and good pronunciation habit” (2010, p.149). Thus, reading aloud is also a good speaking practice for students who do not feel self-confident enough.

### **1.2.3.3. Reading Aloud as a Pronunciation Practice**

Gabrielatos (2002) argued that reading aloud can be used as an effective solution to promote pronunciation among learners who are given the opportunity to read, to pronounce individual sounds and words, and to be corrected if they commit mistakes. Hence, reading

aloud enables the teachers to discover the problems faced by their students and their areas of difficulty to provide them with the needed feedback (Burton, 2007).

According to Huang (2010), reading aloud is a comprehensive pronunciation practice, where students are not only asked to pronounce words correctly, but to apply the suitable stress, intonation, and rhythm for every single word being read orally. Therefore, reading aloud is an effective pronunciation practice.

#### **1.2.4. Reading Aloud Difficulties**

The difficulties faced by students in reading, writing, and spelling are called literacy difficulties. Dyslexia, in its narrow sense, refers to reading difficulties to denote the reading of a word in an incomplete manner, or with a huge difficulty (Martin and Miller, 2003). It was defined by Arfè, Dochrell and Berninger (2014) as disorders in reading which are mostly shown in fluency, poor spelling, and the recognition of words.

On the other hand, Christo, Davis, and Brock (2009) defined dyslexia as unexpected problems faced by the students during the act of reading aloud. These difficulties mainly relate to the process of decoding words, i.e., the failure of students to decode the words of a text will lead automatically to comprehension problems and will affect the acquisition of vocabulary. Finally, Høien and Lundberg (2000) pointed out that the process of reading requires two main sub-tasks which are decoding and comprehension. When students lack these two abilities, they will face difficulties in oral reading.

##### **1.2.4.1. Areas of Difficulty**

Teachers can identify the students who have difficulties while learning by observing their spelling, oral reading, and writing (Allington and Franzen, 2013). As a matter of fact, reading is a very complex skill, so there are many possible sources of difficulties. That is why, it is very important to detect the problems that face students during the process of

reading (Nation, 2008). Accordingly, Berninger and Richards (2002) argued that oral reading problems can result from the lack of accuracy in decoding words, and the incapability to recognize familiar words, to comprehend the text, and to set the correct intonation to the spoken language. In other words, students face problems in phonology, vocabulary, comprehension, retrieval, etc.

#### **1.2.4.1.1. Phonological Difficulties**

Phonological difficulties in reading also referred to as phonological dyslexia was first introduced by Tempal and Marchall (1983). It refers to the state where students encounter difficulties in reading some words loudly. For instance, they may read Zan as 'Tan', Chait as 'Chart' or as 'Trait'. Also, readers with phonological difficulties tend to have problems during the oral reading at the level of morphemes. For example, they read the word 'image' as 'imagine', sickness as 'sicken' (Ayers et al, 2007). In other words, readers with phonological difficulties are characterized by their inability to differentiate between different sounds and morphemes that are found in a given passage, and this will eventually affect the reading performance of the student.

Furthermore, Farrel (2006) added saying that one of the common difficulties faced by students when reading aloud is the one related to phonology, i.e., difficulties related to the meaningful combination of sounds, which show that students who suffer on the level of phonological aspect and lack the ability to relate speech sounds tend to read words with different sounds causing a change in meaning. For example, they misread "dog" as "log", and "pig" as "pin". So, it was maintained that a poor mental mapping of letters of the alphabet to phonemes resulted from this phonological deficit, causing reading difficulties. Hence, readers with poor phonological processing skills face difficulties in decoding and recognizing the written words (Shore and Sabatini, 2009).

Accordingly, Hultquist (2006) said that many students suffer from their disability of making sense out of words due to their phonological problems, explaining that while reading a passage, these students can't understand different phonemes, their sounds and combinations, which make them poor readers who struggle from difficulties and errors during reading.

As phonology is concerned with the study of the function of sounds, and phonetics with the study of these sounds, pronunciation study is the combination of both phonology and phonetics (Tejeda and Santos, 2014). This means that having difficulties in these two aspects means that the reader is having problems in terms of pronunciation as well. According to Downing (1988), pronunciation is an essential process within the reading aloud acts. It is "a quite specific process of associating visual symbols with sounds" (Downing, 1988, p79). Hence, this led to the assumption that pronunciation difficulties are the main cause of reading aloud problems faced by the learner, in the sense that some words were found to be difficult to be pronounced, whereas other words were habitually mispronounced as a result of the reader's lack of knowledge (Downing, 1988)

That is why, phonemic awareness is pretty important for producing correct alphabets while reading (Nijakowska, 2010).

#### **1.2.4.1.2. Vocabulary Difficulties**

Since vocabulary is needed to master a given language, the lack of knowledge about it will affect the process of reading aloud, i.e., the students' inability to recognize words while reading aloud is also affected by their vocabulary knowledge (Nation, 2008). Thus, the students' shortage of vocabulary may result in bad performances when reading aloud, because readers will fail to recognize what is being read. Weiser (2013) added that limited vocabulary knowledge affects the reading process negatively, because without it, readers will not be able to make connections to understand and to read the text properly. So, the state of

not being knowledgeable enough in vocabulary will lead to a miscomprehension of the text and to a poor reading act.

Thus, for effective reading and for the sake of becoming a skilled reader, students must acquire a large amount of vocabulary (Torgesen, 2002).

#### **1.2.4.1.3. Auditory Presentation and Auditory Processing Difficulties**

At this aspect, Farrel (2006) saw that the reading ability is also affected by the perception of speech. In other words, the way a student perceives words and hears them is reflected in his reading performance where the term 'voice-onset time' was introduced, referring to the time taken in producing a sound. For example, some students perceive the sound /ba/ and hear it as a /pa/, causing an error in pronunciation and difficulties in reading. In other words, the misperception of different sounds when hearing them leads to disequilibrium within the reading aloud act by students.

In addition, Adlard and Hazan (1998) viewed that the absence of phonological awareness creates auditory deficit, which means that the student who is not phonologically aware of the functions of sounds and who has limitations in the perceptual processing cannot do the process of decoding words or sentences properly. Thus, he/she will eventually fail to produce the correct sounds while reading. So, the reason behind the auditory difficulties when reading is mainly related to the reader's failure to decode words when hearing them.

#### **1.2.4.1.4. Visual Difficulties and Visual Processing Difficulties**

Reading in itself is a complex visual task which would turn to be even more complicated and difficult if the reader is suffering from some visual problems. Many students suffer from sensitivity to black print on white papers, or as it is known from "scotopic sensitivity" (Farrel, 2006). Usually, this visual difficulty is noticed when the print is faint, glossy, and contains fluorescent lighting which causes eye irritation for readers where words appear to be moving around the page. Consequently, they face difficulties in the oral reading

(Farrel, 2006).

On the other hand, Stanovich (1986) stated that visual movements can be a sign to depict the level of readers, where poor readers tend to fix their eyes for a long period on a given word or a line more than the normal duration which is a sign of reading deficit. Besides, Stein and Walsh (1997) added that vision problems result in difficulties in reading, where the reader with an unstable vision suffers to see small letters which will cause him/her to commit errors while reading until he/she will be given larger print.

Hence, coming up with simple solutions as in typing well formed texts with clear colors and size is of crucial importance for the readers with vision problems.

#### **1.2.4.1.5. Shyness**

Shyness is a universal feeling that is felt by almost everyone at a given period. Crozier (2000) linked the feeling of shyness to self-consciousness and poor self-esteem, explaining that shy males and females tend to create negative thoughts about themselves creating obstacles in all the domains.

In the educational domain, Maclachlan and Arrow (2017) pointed that shyness has an impact on the performance of reading. Generally, students who suffer from shyness tend to skip words and parts that seem to be difficult for them during the oral reading which affects their performance. i.e., during the process of reading which is not supported by shy students, they tend to skip the words and lines of the passage in order to finish reading quickly because they feel as if they are forced to read and are not at ease.

A type of shyness that must be referred to is anxiety, where it was declared by Cassady (2010) that it can highly affect the reading performance of the students, especially at the level of the working memory. That way, students experience anxiety either when they are asked to read aloud in the class or when they come to realize that the text they are about to read is difficult and pretty hard to be understood. Eventually, this anxiety will affect their ability to



retrieve relevant information through the accession to lexical, phonological and orthographic information, i.e., the negative thoughts that are created when being anxious disable the reader to form a connection between the new information and the prior one, which will end up by having problematic issues when reading.

#### **1.2.4.1.6. Retrieval Difficulties**

Hultquist (2006) claimed that the weak performance of a reader was linked to his shortage in the retrieval ability. Mostly, students with retrieval problems can read the words mentioned in the text correctly; however, they are known for being slow readers and pause a lot while reading in order to recall the correct sounds of the word written in front of them before they say it aloud.

Moreover, Westwood (2008) maintained that one of the major difficulties that face readers is the one related to problems in the rapid retrieval of certain sounds of letters and words from the memory. According to him, those learners encounter difficulties that stand as a barrier to their ability to retrieve words which have been already learnt and stored in their memory. These difficulties were introduced in the literacy research under the term “word finding difficulty”. Besides, some researchers, as mentioned by Westwood (2008), reported that the process of retrieving is associated with pronunciation, meaning, and the spelling of words by which they demand a huge cognitive effort by the reader in order to produce the word and pronounce it aloud correctly, i.e., the retrieval failure affects comprehension, pronunciation, and spelling. Hence, readers who suffer from word finding difficulties tend to understand a text better through silent reading rather than the oral one.

#### **1.2.4.1.7. Comprehension Difficulties**

Comprehension of the content is very important when it comes to reading. Readers who have comprehension difficulties while reading do not process the written symbols in an

appropriate way (Wooley, 2011). The omission of words, hesitation, and self correction are all signs for comprehension disability (Stanovich, 2017).

Besides, Tanner (2008) claimed that some people can read aloud words and passages, but with a very poor comprehension to the material. These reading comprehension problems are not just for long complicated texts but also for elementary and simple sentences due to poor attention, inability to remember what a given word means, and also the inability to comprehend the general idea of the text. Yuill and Oakhill (1991) added that this category of fluent readers with poor comprehension is a sign of their incapability in making references from texts and using their working memory to integrate the content or the knowledge into a coherent model. So, despite being good at oral reading, without the use of the working memory and other techniques, the reading process will fail.

Hence, “comprehension difficulties can be prevented by actively building comprehension skills as well as linguistic and conceptual knowledge, beginning in the earliest grades” ( National Research Council,1998, p.6), i.e., reading comprehension can be improved with the use of correct instruction from the teacher to the students in terms of investing their background knowledge, vocabulary, etc.

Finally, “students’ with reading difficulties find themselves in a cycle of almost unrelenting failure that ensures an ever-widening gap between them and fluent readers...reading difficulties will usually result in academic problems” (Konza, 2006, p.152). Hence, as Konza (2006) said, a careful management of the oral reading by the teacher is a must in order to reduce the effects of those difficulties on the students’ performance.

### **1.2.5. Techniques of Reading Aloud**

The implementation of the oral reading in the classroom has always been a challenge for teachers. To solve this issue some teachers came up with certain techniques such as paired reading, choral reading, mumble reading, etc for the purpose of improving and facilitating the process of reading aloud in the classroom (Wood and Harmon, 2001).

#### **1.2.5.1. Paired Reading**

It is also called assisted reading which attempts to assign two students to read aloud a text together in order to make them feel more comfortable while reading the text. This created comfortable atmosphere is the result of the students' trust of each other when reading together and to the non-interference from other students when the reader commits errors (Wood and Harmon, 2001). Burton added that readers "start reading the text together until the learner signals that she/he is happy to read alone" (2007, p, 5).

#### **1.2.5.2. Choral Reading**

According to Wood and Harmon (2001), choral reading is a technique where a group of students read a story or a text orally in unison. This technique was found to be enjoyable and to take the pressure off the individual reader.

Moreover, Booth and Swartz (2004) indicated that this technique of reading refers to a group of learners reading a given passage together. Generally, choral reading helps students to gain a deeper meaning about the text being read, to make shy people overcome their shyness, and also to help students with speech problems. The major benefits of choral reading as stated by Booth and Swartz (2004) are as follows:

- It improves the memory skills of the reader.
- It creates a feeling of safety during reading.
- It encourages group solidarity.
- It helps students to enhance their fluency.

### 1.2.5.3. Modeled Reading

It was stated by Hamagichi (2002) that reading aloud to students is very important because it let them have a model to imitate while reading. Callella and Jordano (2000) added that the process of reading aloud supports the modeled reading, by which students get involved and engaged in the reading act.

Accordingly, Burton (2007) viewed modeled reading as the technique where the teacher takes the charge to read first the text orally then his/her learners repeat after him. In this technique, an impressive and an expressive modeling from the teacher to the students is pretty important.

The main benefits of modeled reading as stated by Callella and Jordano (2000) are the following:

- Introducing and exposing the learner to a variety of genres of texts.
- Developing the knowledge of the structure of language.
- Enriching the vocabulary of learners.

### 1.2.5.4. The Cloze Procedure Oral Reading

In addition, the cloze procedure oral reading technique, as stated by Wood and Harmon (2001), requires the teacher to read a text orally to his students and when he reaches a specific part, he would ask them to fill in the blank by adding the missing words. This technique makes the students focus and follow with the reading of the teacher to be able to match the spoken words with the printed one.

Booth (1998) viewed that the process of cloze procedure oral reading tends to focus on oral or written detection of specific parts of the text; it is based on activities that demand the learners to concentrate on the text to be able to fill up the gaps. Thus, the main objective of the close procedure oral reading is to develop reading fluency through encouraging learners to focus on the meaning of the text rather than words.

#### **1.2.5.5. Repeated Reading**

Armbruster, Lehr and Osborn (2010) claimed that the oral performance of the learner can be improved by the repeated reading technique, shedding the light on the Round-Robin technique that calls the students to take turns when reading aloud. Burton (2007) added that repeated reading requires the students to read the same passage again and again until all of them read it fluently and comprehend it well.

#### **1.2.5.6. The Mumble Reading**

Following the other techniques that serve to improve reading aloud, another technique was added after noticing that many students read aloud softly when they face an ambiguous word or alphabet during reading aloud. For this, the teacher asks the student to mumble read a given part of a text or a story until he/she recognizes the target word (Wood and Harmon, 2001). Also, in order not to disturb other students while reading a text repeatedly, mumble reading was created. It is characterized by reading and practising a given text with a low and soft voice for about five minutes. When the period of practice finishes, students are asked to read aloud in front of their teachers or the reading group (Rasinski, 2003).

In short, all these techniques contribute positively in enhancing the readers' level when reading aloud a given text in the classroom or at home. That is why applying them when teaching or learning is very helpful.

#### **1.2.6. Steps for an Effective Read-Aloud**

The process of reading aloud texts, stories, novels, etc by students or by teachers is pretty essential for building strong literacy skills, especially for beginners. Thus, in order to have an effective reading aloud session, certain procedures should be followed. As Moran, Stobbe, Miller, Baron, and Moir (2008) stated, a reading aloud session must be previously prepared by the teacher who will have to choose a given book that would capture the interest of the majority of the students. Then, the teacher starts reading it aloud with an enjoyable

manner, using facial expressions, tone, etc in order to make the story vivid, to make sure that students comprehend the content, and to encourage them to read next. Finally, after students' turns to read aloud finish, the teacher starts questioning them about the most important points in the book, to make sure that they fully understood what they read.

On the other hand, Carter (2004) maintained that a reading aloud session should be first started by a discussion about the title, the name of the author, and the cover picture. By doing this, students will identify the different parts of the book. Then, the teacher starts the oral reading, even allowing his/her students to see the text while reading and at the most important points or ambiguous words, the teacher slows down as a sign that it is an important point that will be explained later on. Carter (2004) added that the students will join on repetitive reading with the teacher or peers for future encouragement to read aloud alone. At the end, they will either respond to the story orally, by writing, role playing, or any other activities.

In addition, four main processes were suggested by Harvey and Goudvis (2007) for the purpose of having an interactive and effective reading aloud session as follow;

-Activating background knowledge is the first step suggested by both authors. This step aims at activating the background knowledge of the students who are going to be allowed to turn and talk to their peers in order to share the information they have about the text in hand and also to be prepared to listen to the teacher's reading.

-The second step is called modeling. In this step, the reader here models his/her thinking while reading. In other words, when the teacher starts reading the text, he/she will build an inner conversation with himself about the text, which will eventually make the teacher's opinion or thinking about the passage clear. Then, the teacher stops reading for a while and records his thinking on sticky notes, charts, a think sheet, etc. After learners have observed him modeling, they will be asked to write down their ideas as well and to share it later on.

-The next step is named guided practice where the teacher encourages his students to turn to their peers to discuss the text and their written notes about it. The teacher in this step acts as a guide and helps them in their practice.

-The last step is shared thinking. Here, both of the teacher and the students discuss what they have been talking about in the guided practice. So, it is a shared explanation and analysis of the key ideas of the text.

### **1.2.7. Importance of Reading Aloud for Readers**

The act of reading has a significant impact on readers, precisely reading aloud which is considered as a beneficial way to improve the reading performance of the students.

Researchers such as Rasinski (2003) viewed that reading aloud influences positively the students while learning, in the sense that it fosters their fluency, builds confidence, decreases anxiety, etc.

#### **1.2.7.1. Oral Reading Builds Confidence**

According to Rasinski (2003), Confidence plays an important role in the oral performance of the student, because it was found that students, who suffer from reading difficulties, like poor spelling, do not view themselves as good readers. However, the performance of the students can be shaped and improved by the oral reading through giving readers who struggle from shyness and lack of confidence opportunities to participate and read aloud different scripts and poems. This act will eventually lead to a total transformation for those students not only at the level of reading in the classrooms, but also in relation to their personalities by finding their voice through oral reading.

#### **1.2.7.2. Oral Reading Decreases Anxiety**

Gibson claimed that reading aloud is very beneficial for shy students in the sense that researchers" have found that group preparation work, evaluation, and performance involved in this can lessen anxiety" (2008, p, 32). So, reading aloud could be the only speaking activity

that shy students can do in the classroom because controlled and imitative activities enable the students to feel secure and less anxious, which would later on pave the way to the next step which is speaking deliberately (Gibson, 2008).

#### **1.2.7.3. Oral Reading Creates Community**

Unlike silent reading which is known for being a solitary act, oral reading is known for building community among learners, i.e., when students participate together in a choral reading activity, they feel themselves a part of classroom community. This connection between them can result from reading with peers, but it can also go beyond the classroom, creating even deeper relationships as friendship (Rasinski, 2003). In a similar view, Manzo and Manzo (1995) added that the participation in oral reading in the class gives the students the opportunity to practice on reading and to use this skill in different real life situations such as reading a birthday card or a speech.

#### **1.2.7.4. Oral Reading Connects Spoken and Written Language**

Rasinski (2003) viewed that reading aloud improves the students' ability to derive the existing connections between their oral speech and the written words in the text through encoding and decoding skills. For instance, "a common experience, such as field trip, is shared by a group of students, discussed in class, and then transferred into print, with the teacher as scribe" (Rasinski, 2003, p. 24). As a result, reading aloud makes complex ideas clearer and exposes students to new vocabulary and language patterns that are not a part of daily speech (Fountas and Pinnell, 1996).

#### **1.2.7.5. Oral Reading Strengths Decoding Skills**

Decoding is an important skill which can be developed by the process of oral reading, where students are required to examine words and to identify their sounds out accurately. Therefore, during the act of reading aloud, students get the chance to see, pronounce, and hear



the way they decode the words, which strengthens their skill in decoding what is being read (Rasinski, 2003).

#### **1.2.7.6. Oral Reading Fosters Fluency and Comprehension**

According to Rasinski (2003), the lack of fluency results in poor comprehension. In other words, in order to read accurately, effortlessly, and effectively, reading regularly is required to attain both comprehension and fluency. Moreover, Layne (2009) stated that reading aloud enhances the reading comprehension of the learners. Hence, reading aloud helps them to understand the text, improve their learning skill, and also gain new words, expressions and vocabulary items.

All in all, as Gibson (2008) said, when teachers make students read aloud, they enable them to identify the problems they may face. So it could be seen as a diagnostic tool for students' problems.

#### **1.2.8. Feedback on Reading Aloud**

Since the 1970's, many researches were conducted to investigate the most effective strategies and techniques that may provide a useful feedback to learners when they read aloud (Crowe, 2005). In 2005, Crowe developed two main strategies of feedback which are the traditional decoding-based strategies (linear), and the communicative reading strategies (integrated).

Generally, the decoding-based feedback strategies aim at developing the students' word recognition and comprehension during the practice of reading aloud activities. It is seen as a bottom-up process by which the main focus is to develop the accurate and the fluent identification of words. Hence, this strategy claims that the direct feedback to students makes them more aware of the structure and pronunciation of words, which facilitates the process of decoding words and comprehending the meaning of the text while reading aloud (Crowe, 2005).

So, within this strategy, the reading aloud feedback follows three steps, starting by providing the word to the students to read, sounding out the word by reading it aloud, and corrective cuing by asking the students to read again with the correct form (Crowe, 2005). Besides, Crowe (2005) added that the communicative reading strategies or the integrated approach tends to make the learner reconstructs the meaning of the author's message through the use of a contextually supported feedback, where the teacher controls what to be read and the way the passage is read in order to notice the student's ability when it comes to deriving the meaning from the text. Otherwise, this approach of feedback gives more importance to the comprehension of the text rather than the decoding of visual words, where the immediate correction of the mistakes made by the student while he/she reads aloud is not required, pointing out that the learner should comprehend the meaningful ideas and messages recited in the given passage rather than just reading the words accurately.

Moreover, Cappello and Moss (2009) viewed that providing an immediate and effective feedback is an important step within the oral reading process. Therefore, the teacher should know when to give an immediate feedback or a delayed one, depending on the type of errors committed and also on the speed of reading taken by the student. For example, if the student omitted a word from the passage or suddenly stopped reading hesitating to pronounce the word for more than 3 seconds, an immediate feedback should be given. Generally, the correction, whether delayed or immediate, would be simply by providing the correct word and asking the student to read it again.

Furthermore, Heubusch and Lloyd (1998) described the oral reading as a useful activity in the classroom where many teachers devote a part of the session for the students to read aloud, and starting from their performance, the teacher provides them with a corrective feedback in order to promote a better reading competence. As a matter of fact, Heubusch and

Lloyd (1998) designed two models of feedback named as the psycholinguistic model and the direct instruction model.

Within the psycholinguistic model, it was seen that the students make hypothesis and guesses while reading a text, in an attempt to link meaning to word correction procedures. So, reading under this model is a process of confirming and disconfirming the hypothesis that is made by the students who are not going to be corrected immediately for the belief that immediate correction of errors and words has negative feedback on them. That way, students become too independent on external sources of information (Heubusch and Lloyd, 1998).

The direct instruction model gives more emphasis on the recognition of individual words and the immediate correction of mistakes. This model puts forward the fact that the process of reading starts from individual sounds, leading to the recognition of a given word. So, unlike the previous model immediate correction in the direct instruction model is a must because the wrong recognition of the sound of a word would change the whole meaning (Heubusch and Lloyd, 1998).

Consequently, all the forms of feedback are beneficial for promoting the students' oral performance and giving better results than the no-feedback condition.

### **Conclusion**

This theoretical chapter has investigated the essential points in reading and the reading aloud difficulties. Hence, given its importance, it was necessary to shed light on the reading skill as an essential skill for the learners' academic success through discussing different aspects in relation to theories, models, types, etc. Additional talk was devoted mainly to the reasons behind the students' failure to read aloud effectively. Accordingly, the SRI was used to investigate the difficulties encountered by students when reading aloud. The application of this method will be presented in the following chapter.

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#### General conclusion

## **Chapter Two: Research Methodology and Data Analysis**

### **Introduction**

This chapter deals with the field work and presents the investigation process. Given its descriptive nature, the present research work relies on two research tools: it first starts by analyzing and discussing the obtained data from the stimulated recall students' interview, and then we continue with the analysis yielded from the teachers' interview. The stimulated recall interview (SRI) was conducted with thirty two participants from three different groups of third year middle school students at Abadou Abd El Kamel School in Jijel. The SRI aims at investigating the difficulties encountered by students, when they read aloud a given text. It also aims at finding out, if possible, the reasons behind those difficulties. The chapter in hand also discusses the different views of teachers, concerning the act of reading aloud in classrooms, and explores their perspectives on their students' oral reading problems.

### **2.1. Description of the Sample Population**

Sampling is a subcategory of the whole population by which the researcher selects a portion from the population in order to be studied apart (Polit and Beck, 2004). Thus, the study was conducted with 111 middle school students from three groups. The sample population included thirty two students to go for the SRI and to be studied deeply. The results of such kind of study are not meant for generalizing but are merely for research purposes.

### **2.2. Methodology of the Research**

The present work uses qualitative methods. Stake maintained that "by qualitative we mean that it relies primarily on human perception and understating" (2010.p11). In this sense, most researchers who conduct a qualitative research tend to improve the way things work through the use of observation, interviews and the examination of data which are considered as the major methods applied in the qualitative research. Morse (1994) added that a qualitative

research aims at describing, explaining, and understanding the theory rather than trying to test hypotheses.

In this study, two research instruments were used to collect data in order to identify the reading aloud difficulties: a SRI addressed to third year middle school students and a semi-structured interview with English teachers.

### **2.2.1. The Stimulated Recall Interview**

The first implemented tool of data collection in this piece of research is the SRI. Gass and Mackey (2000) described the SRI as an introspective method which is used to remind participants to recall the different thoughts that they had while performing a given task. Clarke, Keitel and Shinizu (2006), however, stated that the SRI is one the most important methods that plays a huge role in exploring the ideas of the teacher/learner, where they would be asked to explain a given classroom events after watching it on the videotape. Accordingly, the SRI would be a very effective tool of data collection in spotting the different reading aloud difficulties faced by students. So, recalling the students' thoughts on their previously performed oral reading would clarify the nature of these difficulties and the possible reasons behind them.

#### **2.2.1.1. Aim of the Stimulated Recall Interview**

This method of data collection aims at investigating the encountered difficulties by third year middle school pupils when reading aloud and their effects on the reading performance.

#### **2.2.1.2. Conducting the Stimulated Recall Interview**

The stimulated recall interview sessions were conducted with 32 students of third year at Abadou's Abd El Kamel middle school out of 111. A small observation was done before beginning the process of recording from the 9<sup>th</sup> of April to the 15<sup>th</sup> from the same month. After it, the process of videotape recording the students was conducted from April 18<sup>th</sup> to the

2nd of May. During this period, three sessions were filmed in the classrooms with each group. The sessions were videotaped recorded through the use of Samsung galaxy prime smart phone. The recording starts once the students were ready to read aloud the target text. All the subjects who were filmed were invited to participate in the stimulated recall interview to reflect on their performance while they were reading aloud. The majority of the students were struggling to read effectively and fluently. Therefore, questions were prepared for the subjects and deep analysis of the videos was carried out to investigate the kinds of difficulties each student has encountered.

### **2.2.1.3. Description of the Stimulated Recall Interview**

The interview aims at investigating the areas of difficulty students faced, their reactions and thoughts about their reading aloud performance, and also their opinions about the oral reading act. The videos have been replayed at least three times for the video in order to make sure that even the smallest details had been covered, and notes have been taken while watching. Hence, questions and comments were prepared for each subject about the words or sentences he/she was not able to read them successfully. The SRI procedure was designed following the ones recommended by Kvale and Brinkman (2009), and Seidman (2006). The authors provided clear tips that the researcher needs to follow when using the SRI and proposed certain rules that must be applied when interviewing. For instance, Seidman (2006) claimed that the participation in the interview must be voluntary from the participant's part, who has the right to refuse to relieve his name and to keep his/her record confidential. A sample describing the SRI is found in the appendix section (see appendix A). The period of conducting the interview after finishing the sessions of videotape recording varied from one session to another. For instance, an interview was conducted after one day from finishing filming, another one was after two days from filming, and another interview was conducted after eight days, etc. This short period of interviewing after filming with few days was

purposefully done for the sake of obtaining relevant answers from the students, who are going to recall their concurrent thinking during their oral reading. So, in order not to forget the memories of that period, interviews were conducted after a short period from filming.

### **2.2.2. Teachers' Semi-structured Interview**

The second implemented tool that is used in the practical part is a semi-structured interview conducted with teachers. The choice of a semi-structured interview was meant for enabling the interviewers to ask extra questions, starting from the teachers' answers moving to more specific answers that may contribute to understanding more the issues being dealt with in the investigation. Raworth et al (2012) stated that this type of interview was viewed to be focusing on a specific theme and subject, by which, it takes a form of a conversation which is an informal structure of interview. Thus, it is considered to be a good method that helps first to discover motivations, beliefs, and attitudes of people, and second to provide useful and valuable information related to the topic of research.

#### **2.2.2.1. Aims of the Interview**

The semi-structured interview aims at investigating the teachers' perspectives about the different areas of difficulty that encounters the students while reading aloud. In addition, it puts forward investigating the teachers' views about the act of reading aloud in general, but also within the CBA. It also seeks to find out whether teachers are aware of their students' problems in reading aloud. Moreover, the interview tends to elicit teachers' views about the different strategies they use while teaching reading and their suggestions of how to deal with the students with reading aloud problems.

#### **2.2.2.2 Conducting the Interview**

The interview was conducted with all the four teachers of English of Abadou Abd El Kamel middle school. It consisted of twelve questions and lasted from 30 minutes to 45 minutes depending on the teachers' answers and the direction of the questions and answers.



### 2.2.2.3. Description of the Interview

The semi-structured interview consists of twelve questions. But, the questions are not fixed because the teachers have different perspectives and directions that differ from each other. The written questions are organized from the most general to the most specific ones. The interview starts by investigating the teachers' experience in teaching English in the middle school with reference to the devoted hours to teach English to third year middle school students per week. The next question is about teachers' most preferable skill usually focused on when teaching, and their views about reading, precisely reading aloud. Lastly, the questions become more narrow and focus on the reading aloud within the CBA, with the difficulties students find when reading in class under their guidance, together with strategies used in teaching.

## 2.3. The Analysis and Interpretation of the Data

Detailed analysis is going to be carried out with the two first students from task 1. Starting from student number three, the analysis will be less detailed.

### 2.3.1. Analysis and Interpretation of the Stimulated Recall Students' Interview

Four passages were read by the third year middle school students. Thus, different questions were addressed to them to investigate the nature of these difficulties for each one of them. As the students read different texts, they are classified according to the text they read to make the process of analysis easier. The tasks were designed by the teacher, which were well prepared and formed. She aimed to fulfill two goals: to make her students practise both of reading aloud and grammar.

#### Task 1

*In the first half of the nineteenth century, the American writer Herman Melville wrote a novel, Moby Dick. It tells the story of Captain Ahab's strong desire to find and kill Moby Dick, a white whale which has devoured his leg. Films have presented Moby Dick as a man*

*killer, so people have thought that whales were dangerous to people. This is not true. Moby Dick is just a film. In fact, men have hunted whales for food and oil for thousands of years.*

*Today, whales are in danger of extinction. Since 1950 the number of blue whales has fallen from 40.000 to only 6.000. In order to protect them, the international whaling commission was created in 1946 in Washington. Since 1946, 24 member states have decided to meet once a year. The commission has banned whale hunting since 1986. So, most countries have stopped hunting whales.*

**S1: I like the way I read in the clip. At that time, I felt good when reading aloud because I can ask the teacher to explain for me the words that I do not understand on the spot.**

Q1: would you please read the following words: desire, whales, since, fallen, and commission?

The above words were pronounced as / d i z a: r /, / w ɔ: l /, / s aɪ ns /, / f a: l æ n /, / k ʌ m f ə n /.

Q2: would you please explain each one of them as well?

The student was unable to tell the meaning of all the words that he could not pronounce very well. While replaying the video and interviewing the student about the reasons behind her acting in a certain way or reading a given word incorrectly, we have noticed that she mainly suffers from difficulties in comprehension, and pronunciation. Difficulties in understanding the meaning of words, as seen in the theoretical part, disenable readers to process the written symbols in an appropriate way, and this will eventually result in having problems at the level of pronunciation as well. These two factors have been noticed in the student's performance, where whenever she came across the words whose meaning cannot be understood, she hesitated in reading them. As a result, she ended up by mispronouncing these words.

Q3: would you please explain why you read “states” as “starts”?

The reason behind the misreading of “states” is because of the quality of the print which was not clear. Readers who suffer from sensitivity to black print on white papers have visual printing difficulties when reading. As with this student, she justified her incapability to read “states” by her weaknesses to distinguish letters when written that way.

**S2: I love the way I read, despite the fact that I was a bit shy when you were filming me. I like to read aloud texts in the class, because I think when I read aloud I can understand better.**

Q1: would you please explain the following words: temperature, commission, wrote, since, century, whale, and extinction?

When analyzing the clip, we found that this student did not face many problems when reading. The subject responded to the questions being asked correctly.

Q2: would you clarify why you read words as “temperature, and commission” in French?

The student faced few problems in pronouncing some words. She pronounced both of temperature and commission as they are pronounced in French, claiming that she turned to French because she did not know the correct pronunciation and she did not want to stop reading just because she did not know how to pronounce the words. Also, she pronounced “wrote” as /rɒt/, and “since” as /sæns/. Thus, as discussed in the second section, pronunciation is the result of the students’ lack of knowledge of how words are pronounced.

**S3: the way I read is normal. I like to read in the class and I did not feel nervous when I was reading.**

After analyzing the clip, it was noticed that the student found problems to read some of the written symbols correctly which is a sign of comprehension deficit. e.g., when she was

asked to justify why she read each of “whales, and most” inappropriately, she answered: “because I did not understand them”. Hence, the student did not know how to pronounce them, and how to pronounce other words in the text. For example, she pronounced “whales” as /w ɔ: l z/, “most” as /m æ s t/, “since” as /s æ n s/, and “temperature” as /t ɒ m p ɪ r a t ɒ r/. In addition, the failure to differentiate between morphemes and sounds leads to phonological difficulties, which was seen with the students who could not differentiate or decode sounds correctly. Examples of this is when she read “thought” as “do”, and “dangerous” as “dongerouz”.

**S4: I did not like my way of reading. I do not like reading at all and I did not feel good when I was asked to read.**

The first thing that we have noticed with this student, during filming and when analyzing the clip, is that she was very shy and anxious, she kept moving her legs while reading left and right. All of these gestures are due to a state of lack of self-confidence. As seen in the theoretical part, it is because of both shyness and anxiety. Hence, the student was hesitant in reading and pronouncing words, especially the ones their meaning was unknown. Also, she was in a rush while reading that she even skipped some lines in order to finish quickly, which denotes anxiety. When it comes to pronunciation, she misread “danger” as /d ɑ: n ʒ ə r/, “states” as /s θ ɑ: t s/, “hunted” as /h ɒ n t ɪ d/, “desire” as /d ɪ z ɑ: r/.

**S5: My way of reading is not good. I felt normal while reading and I prefer to read silently.**

After analyzing the video and the SRI with the student, we have seen that the student encountered several difficulties. First of all, he took a long time to read the text, around five minutes, and while reading, he started by reading a given word or sentence letter by letter.

Then, he read it as a whole one more time, which is a sign of having phonological problems that stood as a barrier for the student's process of decoding and processing symbols. For instance, the following sentence "in the first half of the nineteenth century, the American writer Herman Melville wrote a novel, Moby Dick..." was read as if a robot was reading it. Also, the student lacked vocabulary, which is a very essential element in the four fundamental skills. He neither knows simple vocabulary nor complex one. So, as it is seen in the theoretical part, the lack of vocabulary affects the reading aloud process badly, especially at the level of comprehension and pronunciation. Hence, he has difficulties in relation to two aspects as well. For example, he did not know how to read or the meaning of the coming words; "devoured" read as /dɪvɔrɪd/, "decided" read as /dɪsɪdɪd/, "created" as /krɪtɪd/, "stopped" as /stɒpɪd/, "desire" read as /dɪsɪr/. Furthermore, as noticed in the clip, the student has difficulties in retrieving, because readers with retrieval problems have a weak memory and are known for being slow readers who pause a lot. So, as it is known, learners start studying numbers from the first year. However, this student failed to retrieve what have already been taught. He didn't know how to read these numbers: 6000, 1946, 24, 1986, 1962 due to retrieval problems. In addition, he showed visual problems as well, where the words that he could not see clearly are either read as they are seen ("have" was seen written as "love") or skipped away (e.g. "in fact" was skipped because it is not clear in the paper).

**S6: I think that my reading is average. I enjoy reading aloud in the classroom, and I did not feel anxious while reading.**

From the analysis of the clip and the interview, difficulties in terms of pronunciation, comprehension, and vocabulary were noticed. Generally, the meanings of the words of which were unknown to the student, or the ones that were new to him, deprived him from

pronouncing the words properly. Hence, the shortage in vocabulary knowledge resulted in difficulties in both comprehension and pronunciation. For instance, the following words; desire, extinction, created, once, and whale were totally new for him. Consequently, the reader did not know their significance and read them as; /dɪsɪr/, /ɪkstɪnæsjən/, /krɛɪtɪ/, /ɒns/, and /wɪl/.

**S7: My performance in reading is normal. I like to read aloud, but I feel anxious and nervous during reading.**

The first thing that we have noticed on the student when filming and analyzing video is that she seems like a shy-type person and she confirmed that in the interview. During the reading performance, she read with a very low trembling voice that sometimes the hearer could not tell what she was reading. Hence, this denotes that the student is not confident enough to read comfortably. i.e., the student encounters psychological difficulties in terms of anxiety and shyness. So, the feeling of shyness causes difficulties in her reading, by which negative thoughts are created about her personal performance, thinking that she does not read in a correct way, and this is the reason behind her reading with a low voice. Phonological problems were also depicted on the student's oral reading, due to her disability to combine speech sounds into meaningful words. The student suffered to combine sounds properly, like in "strong" and "dangerous". She divided the sounds into syllables, and repeated them many time because of this deficit of not being able to make sense out of words from the very first time. Furthermore, the student read certain words incorrectly, which means that she has pronunciation difficulties as well. She read the following words like; "devoured" as /dɪvɔrɪd/, "pupil" as /pɪpəl/, "desire" as /dɪsɪr/, "whale" as /wɪl/, "thought" as /taut/, "since" as /saɪnz/. She claimed that words like pupil", "whale and "thought" are known by

the student, while the other words are not. Adding that, she just read them by chance in order not to stop reading.

**S8: I didn't like myself when I was reading. It's fine with me to read aloud, but I was kind of nervous because of my classmates.**

While analyzing the video and interviewing the student about his reading of certain words incorrectly, we have noticed that this student had problems of comprehension, pronunciation, vocabulary, and anxiety deficits. The first noticeable thing about the student's performance is his body gestures. Along the period of his reading, he kept moving his legs fast, covering his ears with his both hands, and reading in rush manner. These symptoms are all signs of being in a state of anxiety, which was later on confirmed by the student, saying that it is all because of my classmates. The classroom atmosphere makes him anxious. As far as vocabulary is concerned, we have seen that the shortage of vocabulary leads to difficulties in reading. Hence, the lack of it will eventually lead to comprehension problems, because the student could not recognize the nature of the vocabulary in the text. Among the words that he failed to comprehend are "desire", "century", "killer", "oil", "extinction", "hunting", "whales", "fallen", and "Washington". In addition, as pronunciation is a very important skill that must be attained accurately, the student mispronounced certain words due to his deficit in it. For instance, he pronounced "whales" as /w ɒ l/, "since" as /s ʌ n s/, "pupil" as /p ɪ p ə l/, "stated" as /s θ æ t ɪ d/, and "fallen" as /f æ l æ n/.

**S9: I liked my reading. I did not feel afraid when I was reading, and I prefer to read aloud English texts just like in French in order to understand better.**

The examination of the video showed that the student was very comfortable when reading. He did not read in a rush. Thus, the main difficulties that the student encounters has

to deal with pronunciation, where the majority of words were pronounced in French (e.g. captain, 1950, international, commission, 1946, decided...). So, the student's lack of knowledge in pronunciation lead him to mix between English, and French. In addition, the student failed to process certain words appropriately. In front of ambiguous words, he posed for a while before reading it. The interview with the student made this point clear, saying that he could not tell their meaning, and that they are new for him. For example, the student did not know the meaning of each of "whales, banned, and novel".

**S10: I like the way I read in the video. I was excited, and I felt very happy and energetic when I started reading. I love to read a text aloud; it helps me to understand it.**

Through the analysis of the clip and the interview with the student, we have come up that he has pronunciation, comprehension, and phonological difficulties. The student's inability to relate speech sounds, and decode certain words correctly resulted in the emergence of a phonological deficit. Despite the comfortable state in which he was, the student took a long time while reading the passage. He tended to read first the letters in a given word letter by letter, and then he moved to read it fully. For instance, he failed to decode words like "countries, protect, Washington, commission, captain, etc" The reason behind this is generally related to phonology, where students who are not able to relate speech sounds appropriately tend to have this deficit. Decoding was not the only deficit that he had, pronunciation and comprehension were noticed as well. Generally, the words that he did not understand were not pronounced correctly. Thus, he pronounced "desire" as /d i s i r/, "true" as /t r u/, "since" as /saɪəns/, and "stopped" as /s t u p i d/.

**S11: My reading performance is okay. I feel good when I read aloud in my class, and I like it because when I hear myself reading I understand better.**



The subject did not encounter many difficulties when reading. The analysis of the clip and the interview with the student showed that he has some pronunciation and comprehension problems; however, they are not severe. The student failed to comprehend words like “Melville, and whales” because they are new to him. So, not being able to process the written symbols properly lead him to miscomprehension. Concerning pronunciation deficit, he read “decided” as /dɪsɪdɪd/, and “captain” as /kʌptɛɪn/.

**S12: I like my reading on the video tape. I was feeling comfortable during reading. I do prefer to read aloud more than silent reading, because I get confused when I read silently and I pass on lines because I cannot concentrate.**

The examination and the analysis of the video showed that the reading performance of the student was acceptable. The student was not hesitant to show his readiness to read, which means that he was comfortable when reading. He did not stutter at all as a sign of decoding deficit. However, when it comes to pronunciation, the student committed some pronunciation mistakes when reading. For example, he read “danger” as /dɑ:njəʀ/, “since” as /saɪəns/, “people” as /pɪpəʀ/, “desire” as /dɪsɪr/, “countries” as /kʌntrɪz/, and “Dick” as /dɪsk/. Moreover, some words which are the ones he failed to pronounce were not understood. According to him, those words were ambiguous which created difficulties in pronouncing them. Hence, comprehension plays an important role in the process of reading.

**S13: My reading performance seems okay in the video. I was feeling comfortable during reading and I do prefer to read aloud in order to comprehend.**

The most faced difficulties that were noticed during the analysis of the video were found to belong to three major areas of reading aloud difficulties which are decoding, pronunciation and comprehension. During the reading performance of the student, symptoms

of each type of these difficulties were detected, and based on what have been mentioned in the theoretical part, the observed signs were set to belong to those three difficulties. The student was noticed to read the word story as "sto-sto-oh-ori" separately. She explained that she was trying to find the correct way to read the word through dividing it and reading each sound alone, and then combining them in order to form a correct pronunciation. Moreover, she mispronounced words such as "just, dangerous, decided" and read them in French. So, the switch to the French language while reading is a sign of pronunciation deficit. The student's incapability to process the written symbols correctly denotes her failure to understand what is written on the paper.

**S14: I like my performance; it is fine. I felt good when I was reading, and I did not feel afraid. I prefer to read aloud because it allows me to improve my level in English.**

Through the analysis of the video, it was noticed that the student was confident during reading. However, the student stammers a lot when she reads. The interview with the student reveals that the reason behind the pauses that she made before reading some words is because they are not clear. As they are written by hand, and typed they were difficult to be read correctly. So, the student had vision problems that disabled her to read in a correct manner. In addition, she read the words "whales" as /w ɔ: l z/, "danger" as /d ɑ: n g e ə r/, and "lived" as /l i v ɪ d/, which means that she had pronunciation difficulties. Besides, her disability to read numbers correctly means that she failed to retrieve what have been studied before about numbers. The student could not read numbers correctly, even though she tried to correct herself. So, her disability to recall what was studied about numbers is a retrieval deficit.

**Task 2:**

*I think that many changes have taken place in our world recently. Men have hunted animals in danger of extinction. So, most of these animals have disappeared. The global*

*temperature has increased. So, the ice-pack in the North Pole has started to melt. In addition to these natural problems, the spirit of solidarity has started to disappear because money has become very important. Besides, the price of food has gone up; as a result, poor people die of hunger and starvation. Can you give some solutions?*

**S15: My way of reading is normal. I am a shy person I do not feel relaxed when I read in front of my class.**

The first thing that was noticed in the student's reading is that he stuttered a lot before each word he was going to read. So, it was difficult to tell what kind of difficulties he is going through just by sight. That is why, during the SRI, we asked him to give us the meaning of words that he took a long time to read and he answered correctly and pronounced them correctly as well. When asked about the cause of his behavior, he answered: "this is why I do not like reading in any kind. As soon as I start reading my voice cuts off, I lose control of myself, and I feel like I cannot remember how to read words correctly". So, from the student's answer and from what is mentioned in the theoretical part, students who are not self-confident, and who fail to retrieve relevant information from their working memory are suffering from shyness and anxiety. These two feelings are the result of creating negative thoughts about oneself and of having poor self-esteem. The pronunciation mistakes that he made were mainly due to his shyness. For example, he read "melt" as /m ɪ l t /, "disappeared" as / d ɪ s p a ɪ r ɪ d /, 'extinction' as / e k s t i : n k ʃ ə n /, and "ice" as / ɪ s /.

**Task 3:**

1. *Pollution has become a big problem.*
2. *You have studied in the school for three years now.*
3. *I have taught in this school since last September.*
4. *Algeria has become an independent country since 1962.*

5. *My uncle has lived in France since 10 years now.*
6. *My brother has just got his diploma.*
7. *My mother has not eaten Dolma since she found an insect in a dish at the restaurant.*
8. *The pupils haven't gone for a trip since last year.*

**S16: I like reading aloud, and the way I read in the video. I did not feel anxious at all.**

After analyzing the video and interviewing the student about the reasons behind his acting in a certain way or reading a given word incorrectly, we have noticed that this student encounters several problems. First, he has an unstable vision where he cannot distinguish between letters well. For instance, he reads the two letters /i/ and /o/ as /a/. Also, during the interview he said that he struggled to read from the board because he cannot see every single word written on the board properly, especially when the writing is small. This entails that the student has vision deficit that disenable him to read accurately and correctly. As a result, reversing and mixing letters due to this deficit will lead to several problems at the level of comprehension, pronunciation, and phonology. The student takes a pause before reading certain words as "independent, pollution, problem, taught...", which means that he struggled to decode sounds. Besides, pronunciation and comprehension difficulties were observed in words like "is, whales, since, insect, lived, pupils", where they were pronounced as /æ s/, /w æ l s/, /s æ n s/, /æ n s æ k t/, /l i v i d/, /p ə p l/. Furthermore, when the teacher corrected his false pronunciation of the word "pupils", he read in a wrong way. So, the teacher repeated again the correct pronunciation, but he failed to perceive correctly one more time. Thus, this leads to the assumption that the student has auditory difficulties as well. So, as seen in the theoretical part the student who is not phonologically aware will fail to perceive words as they are pronounced. So, auditory deficit is the result of phonology deficit.

**S 17: I didn't like my way of reading in the video. Eventhough I like to read aloud, but at that time, I was nervous and I ended up by committing many mistakes.**

The first remark that was made during the analysis of the video was that the student suffered from high anxiety while reading. She read with a noticeable trembling voice. The reason of this state is the student's disbelief in her capacities, and her creation of negative thoughts about her performance. Hence, this affected her confidence that later on developed into shyness. As far as her pronunciation is concerned, the student failed to pronounce certain words correctly. She pronounced "independent" as /ɪ n d i s p ə n d ɪ t/, "three" as /θ r i/, "got" as /g ə t/, "found" as /f u: n d/, and "thought" as /t ə t/. The lack of knowledge about the language leads to pronunciation deficit. This lack of knowledge also let her unable to comprehend. Thus, the student could not process the written symbols in an appropriate manner because of miscomprehending words as "thought, found, trip..."

**S18: I do not know if I read well or not. I like to read aloud; however, I was anxious while reading in the class because I didn't want my classmates to laugh at me.**

Through the analysis of the video, we found that the student suffers mainly from comprehension, phonological, and pronunciation problems. Based on what has been explained in the theoretical chapter, comprehension difficulties are the result of the student's shortage of knowledge, which will also lead to pronunciation deficit. So, the disability of the reader to pronounce words correctly was because she didn't comprehend their meaning. The student read the words "taught" as /t ə t/, "studied" as /s θ æ d i y i d/, "lived" as /l eɪ v i d/. In addition, her voice was cut off from time to time. As she explained, she was not feeling at ease when reading because she did not want her classmates to laugh at her when she did not read well. Thus, this feeling created a state of anxiety with her.

**S 19: I think the way I read is acceptable. I felt very comfortable when I was reading because I enjoy reading aloud. I prefer oral reading because I want to improve my level in reading.**

The analysis of the clip and the interview with the student showed that this student is mainly suffering from comprehension, phonological, pronunciation, and visual difficulties. Students, as seen in the theoretical part, with phonological difficulties are characterized by their disability to differentiate between sounds and morphemes. For instance, this student read “thought” as “to”, and “trip” as “chraip”, and “taught” as “tauf”. In addition, she encountered difficulties in giving the correct pronunciation and knowing the meaning of some words. The student did not know the meaning of the coming words: lived, since, and trip. So, she pronounced them as; /l i v i d/, /s æ n s/, /ʃ r e i p/. Unstable vision has also lead to reading problems, where the reader found the letters very small and sometimes could not even see them. As with this student troubling with unstable vision, she couldn’t read some words written on the board, claiming that they are too far from her, and very small. Accordingly, the student saw the words “dich” written as “disk”, “diploma” as “diplom”, “she” as “the”, and she did not read “new” and “country” because she did not see them.

**S 20: I read normally. I like to read aloud, and I felt comfortable when I read in the class.**

The analysis of the video showed that the student suffers mainly from phonological and comprehension difficulties. The student faced problems in combining sounds, and in sounding out the words correctly, which is a sign of having phonological difficulties. For instance, “three” as “chri”, “taught” as “dot”, and “france” as “franch”. So, the wrong combination of sounds resulted in faults when articulating them. Accordingly, this has obviously lead to having difficulties at the level of pronunciation as well, where the student

committed errors in pronunciation due to the lack of knowledge about the language, and a weakness at phonology. Besides the words cited before that were pronounced in a wrong way, the student also read “since” as /s æ n s/, “got” as /g əʊ t/, “gone” as /g əʊ n/, and “lived” as /l ɪ v ɪ d/. Furthermore, the mispronunciation of certain words could also be related to miscomprehension. As stated by the student, he did not know how to read words like “gone, since...” because he did not know their meaning. So, each of phonology, comprehension, and pronunciation play a significant role in the process of reading successfully, in which the absence of one of them will lead to a total failure in reading aloud.

**S21: I didn’t like my oral performance. I became highly anxious when I start to read because I do not know how to sound out the letters correctly.**

The first thing that was noticed during the analysis of the video is that the girl was pretty anxious. She kept touching her hands by crossing them unconsciously as a sign of not being comfortable. It was noticed that whenever she came across a word she found ambiguous, she stopped and hesitated to read it. Hence, the reason behind these gestures is that the student is not self-confident enough. The creation of bad thoughts about her reading aloud performance lead her to be in a state of anxiety and shyness. The SRI also revealed her disability to decode and pronounce words correctly, in the sense that she tended to spell the words that were difficult to her and read them letter by letter. For example, the student read “now” as /n-no-nouw/, “taught” as /ta-ta-ah-teit/, “lived” as /li-fid-lifid/. She also mispronounced “pollution” as /p l eɪ ʃ ə n/, “insect” as /æ n s ə k t/. As far as comprehension is concerned, we asked her to explain given words from the text. She knew the meaning of some of them, while she failed to guess the meaning of the words she failed to pronounce correctly.

**S22: My reading performance is normal. I did not feel afraid, and I like to read aloud because I feel like it helps me to understand more and comprehend the text.**

During the analysis of the video, it was noticed that the student read in a rush and as fast as she could. The interview showed that the girl was a bit shy, that is why she read fast. She said that she was a bit shy when reading, so she read that way in order to finish in a short period. Hence, shyness affects the reading performance of the student in a negative way. Moreover, the student showed difficulties in pronunciation. She pronounced “studied” as /s t u: d i d/, “years” as /y a: r z/, “since” as /s æ n s/, and “got” as /g əʊ/. So, not being knowledgeable enough about English leads to problems in pronunciation. Accordingly, the failure to process the written symbols accurately leads to miscomprehension. However, the student was not found suffering from this difficulty. She knew the meaning of almost every single word proposed to her to explain

**S 23: I like my reading performance in the video. I was feeling comfortable during reading, because I love to read aloud.**

Through the examination of the video, and the SRI, many difficulties were detected in the reading performance of the student. The first thing that was noticed is the long period of time that was taken by the student in order to finish his reading. As he was wearing thick glasses, it was easy to tell that the student has an unstable vision that disenables him to read from the board easily. The student misread “dich” as “disk” and “now” as “new”, claiming that the light reflected on the board did not allow him to see what is written clearly. Also, the letters were not clear, and they should be written with big size. This deficit disenabled him to distinguish between letters. The student was not able to make correct combinations between the letters when reading. He read “three” as “there”, “taught” as “tag” “trip” as “chrip”, “pupils” as “paypil”, and “eating” as “aiting”. The failure to combine sounds is a sign of



having phonological deficit. The student could not read the words correctly because he is not phonologically aware. Thus, having this deficit means that the student failed to pronounce the words, i.e. , having pronunciation deficit. In addition, he hesitated to read some words, the fact that was later on justified in the interview by not being able to understand their meaning. So, hesitation is also a sign of miscomprehension.

**Task 4:**

*Many animals such as tigers, whales, fennecs, and wolves are in danger of extinction. They have many natural enemies but man is their principle problem. Man has hunted these animals for food and clothes for thousands of years. So, these animals are now in danger of extinction. He takes animals skins which are very expensive to make coats, shoes, and bags or just for pleasure to put them on walls and floors for decoration. He takes green lands and food from animals and destroys forests to build cities, factories, and roads. As a result, many animals die and disappear.*

*Recently, some countries and governments have decided to establish special parks and biosphere reserves to make these species live in security, and protect them from extinction.*

**S24: I did not like the way I read in the video. At that time, I was ok, but I do not like to read aloud because I do not think that I read very well.**

The analysis of the video and the interview with the student about her reading performance showed that this student has pronunciation, retrieval, and comprehension difficulties. Concerning retrieval, which is mainly about the student's incapability to retrieve or remember what has been studied before, this student could not retrieve how the word "whales" is pronounced. She did not even know its meaning, despite the fact that they have dealt with this term so many times. In addition, as comprehension and pronunciation are very related to each other, it was noticed that almost whenever there is a mispronunciation of a

word, it is mainly due to miscomprehending it. As matter of fact the student mispronounced “tigers” as /t ɪ g æ r/, “whales” as /w a: l z/, “fennecs” as /f a: n k s/, “hunted “as /h u: n t ɪ d/, “shoes” as /ʃ əʊ w/, “bags” as /b ɪ g/, and “pleasure” as /p l i: s ʊ r/. Furthermore, seeing herself as a bad reader who prefers not to read just because of this thinking, reading very quickly and in a hurry when being asked to read, omitting certain words and letters are all signs of being in a state of anxiety. Thus, the student’s reading aloud performance was affected by the state of shyness that she was in.

**S25: my level in reading is average and I did not feel scared when I was reading.**

The result of this analysis is that this student is having vision, comprehension, pronunciation and phonological difficulties. The student wears thick glasses, which means that she has an unstable vision, and this was confirmed during her reading. The subject took a long time to read the passage, because as she said “the print was small”. Hence, when it comes to decoding words correctly and differentiating between phonemes, she suffered a lot, i.e., it is a phonological deficit. Among the words that she could not see and decode, we mention; “so”, “their” “biosphere”, etc. Besides, the student could not pronounce the words that she did not understand. So, the following words were misread due to miscomprehension as well; “clothes” as /k l u: d ɪ s/, “pleasure” as /p l ɔ: z æ r/, and “coats“ as /k ɔ: t s/.

**S26: I do not know, maybe I read normally. I was not nervous and I prefer to read silently, because I think oral reading is difficult because of pronunciation.**

After analyzing the clip and interviewing the student, we have noticed that this student has major difficulties in pronunciation, where a lot of mistakes were committed. The examples of pronunciation deficit are: “clothes” was read as /k l aʊ d ɪ s/, “pleasure” was read as /p l u: z æ r/, “result” was read as /r ɪ z ɒ l t/, “disappear” was read as /d ɪ z a: p i: r/,

“countries” was read as /k ɒ n t r i: z/. In addition, the student hesitated to read the words that are new to her, where it was noticed that she stuttered a lot at each time she found problems to comprehend certain words. So, as it is seen in the theoretical part, hesitation is a sign of miscomprehension. The words that were not understood are “enemies”, “wolves”, “factories”, and “governments”.

**S27: My reading is acceptable. I felt excited when reading aloud, because through oral reading I can figure out whether I am a good reader or not.**

The analysis of the video and the interview showed that the student encounters phonological, and pronunciation difficulties. As the phonological deficit is characterized by the reader’s inability to decode and differentiate between phonemes and sounds, it was noticed that the subject suffered from this problem. She read “this” as “these”, “their” as “dear”, and “die” as “di”. In addition, she mispronounced the words that she could not understand. Thus, she pronounced “tigers” as /t i: g ə r/, “wolves” as /w ɒ l v ɪ z/, “clothes” as /k l ɒ d ɪ s/, “thousands” as /θ u: s æ n d z/, “coats” as /k ʌ t s/, and “species” as /s p i: s/. So, having these difficulties disabled the reader to read properly.

**S 28: I did not like the way I read. I do not like to read by voice because I do not think that I read well.**

During the analysis of the video, we found that the student has major problems in pronunciation. He mispronounced the words “fennecs, thousands, coats, flowers, enemies, build”, and read them as /f ɑ: n k s/, /d i: s ʌ n d/, /k ɒ t s/, /f l ɔ: r/, /ɪ n ɪ m i: s/, /b ɪ l ɪ d/. So, the reader’s lack of knowledge of sounds lead him to mispronounce the words. In addition, the mispronunciation of words could also due be to miscomprehension, which is the case for this subject. The student could not tell what the text is about. Thus, miscomprehension was

developed, and weak performance was noticed along the period of reading. Accordingly, the student got problems in pronunciation and comprehension.

**S 29: My performance is average. Eventhough I felt shy when I read, I like to read aloud texts in order to hear myself and see whether I read well or not.**

From the analysis and the interview with the student about the reasons behind her reading with a low slow voice, failure to read and combine sounds accurately, we have noticed that the student has many difficulties. First, the student tended to read with a very low voice, claiming that she read that way in order not to be laughed at by her mates in case she reads incorrectly. So, the lack of self-confidence let the student to create negative thoughts about oneself, which resulted in shyness. In addition, not being knowledgeable enough about the language creates vocabulary, comprehension, and pronunciation deficits. Hence, the interview with the student translated that her lack of vocabulary and her disability to comprehend words lead her to mispronounce words correctly. For instance, she mispronounced “money” as /m ɒ n i/, “years” as /j u: r z/, “thousands” as /d ə ʊ z ə n z/, “recently” as /r ɪ k ʌ n t l i/. Accordingly, the student did not show correct pronunciation as well.

**S 30: my reading is average. I did not feel anxious, and I do not have any problem with both of oral and silent reading because I practice both of them.**

While analyzing the video and interviewing the student about her oral reading performance, we found that the subject did not encounter many difficulties when reading. In fact, she made countable mistakes at the level of pronunciation and comprehension. As far as comprehension is concerned, she did not know the meaning of words like” factories,

establish, and reserves”. Mispronunciation was remarked in words as “flowers, recently, make, and disappear”, which were pronounced as /f l ɔ : r z/, / r ɪ k ɒ n t l i/, /m aɪ k/, /d e ə s p e ə r/. So, the student encountered difficulties in comprehension and pronunciation.

**S 31: I read normally. I felt a bit annoyed when being asked to read aloud, because I think I do not read very well, and I also get confused to combine letters and words to make full sentences.**

The analysis of the video and the interview with the student showed that she has phonological and comprehension difficulties. The student was not able to decode and read words accurately. Hence, she started by spelling words letter by letter, and then she read the full word at once. So, her incapability to decode words and understand them created phonological deficit. Furthermore, as pronunciation and comprehension are very related to each other, she could not read the words that she did not understand. For example, she pronounced “takes” as /θ eɪ k s/, “recently” as /r ɒ s ə n t l i/, “shoes” as /ʃ ɒ z/, “forests” as /f ɒ r s t i d/, “decided” as /d ɪ s ɪ d ɪ d/. Another reason that let her commit such mistakes is the state of anxiety that she was in. As she declared, she felt annoyed when she started to read because she thinks she does not read well. This denoted that she was anxious to make mistakes while reading. So, the fear of committing mistakes created uneasiness and anxiety with the student.

**S 32: I do not know. I like to read aloud, and I did not feel afraid when I was reading.**

During the analysis and the interview with the student about the different obstacles that he faced when reading, we found that the student encountered major difficulties in comprehension. The student was asked to explain the meaning of certain words, and he replied wrongly. He did not know the meaning of nearly all the words being asked at him,

even if some of those words were read correctly. The student answered that he mainly read without comprehension. He continued to read the text even though he understood nothing. The second encountered difficulty by the student is pronunciation. He failed to read words like “tigers, fennecs, enemies, danger, and coats” and pronounced them as /t ɪ g ə r z/, /f eɪ n ə k s/, /ʌ n ɪ m z/, /d ɑ: n j ə r/, and /k ɒ t s/. Accordingly, the student’s lack of knowledge let him perform badly when reading aloud.

Table 1  
Students’ Most Committed Errors in Oral Reading.

Areas of Difficulty	phonology	comprehension	vocabulary	pronunciation	vision	auditory retrievals	shyness	
Number of Students	14	28	4	32	7	1	4	10

The types of difficulties faced by the third year middle school students vary from one student to another. From the table above, we noticed that all students have problems in pronunciation, while 28 of them out of 32 have problems in comprehension, and 14 out of 32 have issues in phonology. Hence, most students shared difficulties in comprehension, pronunciation, and phonology. The second most shared difficulties are vision and shyness representing 7 and 10 out of 32 successively. Lastly, the third ones are auditory, vocabulary, and retrieval difficulties with a lesser degree. Therefore, this table shows a clear variation in the students’ reading aloud problems.

**2.3.1.1. Discussion of the Stimulated Recall Students’ Interview Results**

After analyzing the students’ answers, it was noticed that the amount of difficulties encountered by students while reading aloud differs from one student to another, but the majority of them share the same areas of difficulty.

As for as the students with severe reading difficulties, they showed from the very first day of filming unpleasant feelings about the reading aloud act to which they felt reluctant from the beginning. The reason behind such attitude may relate to the fact that they are less skilled readers. So, they tend to avoid reading as much as they can in order not to be put in an embarrassing situation.

The middle school pupils in general shared three main areas of difficulty when reading, which are comprehension, pronunciation, and phonology. As seen in the analysis, these three areas have a strong relation with each other, in the sense that students who tend to have pronunciation difficulties are found struggling with comprehending the words they failed to pronounce correctly, and to combine the sounds in an appropriate way, and vice versa. Hence, the weakness in one of these three areas will eventually lead to bad performances in the other areas. The reason behind having these issues is the students' lack of knowledge in English, which in turn affects their performances. Besides, some students encountered difficulties at the level of vocabulary where they could not read certain words because they are not familiar with the nature of vocabulary items proposed to them.

Furthermore, a category of students were said to have problems in vision which is a health issue. So, students with an unstable vision fail to read all what is written either on the board or books. This category of students is not able to read passages which are written with a small size, or when the print is faint and glossy because it causes irritation to their eyes. Accordingly, it directly affects as seen in the video the reading aloud performance. Having hearing problems also exerts an important role in making the reading procedure not appropriate. Despite the fact that this area of difficulty is not seen on the subjects repeatedly as the other types of difficulty, it badly affects the performance of students in case it is found. So, an auditory difficulty is characterized by the student's incapability to repeat accurately what is heard from the teacher.

On the other hand, students also showed disabilities to recall what have been studied before when reading. The retrieval problems are the result of not being able to retrieve what is stored in the memory, which would affect pronunciation, spelling, and comprehension as well. As far as shyness is concerned, it contributes in the development of retrieval problems as well, where students who are not comfortable with reading would find it hard to retrieve the lexical, phonological, and orthographic information. This shyness is due to the students' lack of self-esteem and bad thoughts held about oneself. Thus, retrieval and shyness deeply affect the reading aloud process in the class.

For a deeper clarification of the difficulties that third year middle school students of Abadou Abd El Kamel have, it was noticed that these students are deprived from reading properly due to the fact that they have many problems in reading that affect their performances in a negative manner.

**2.3.2. The Analysis and Interpretation of Teachers' Interview**

Q 1. How long have you been teaching English to middle school students?

Table 2

Teachers' experience in teaching English to middle school students.

Teacher(s)	1	2	3	4
Year(s)	20	10	17	12

The target behind addressing this question is to know whether the teachers' experience influence the students' performance in reading aloud positively. As it is seen in the table, all the teachers have a long experience in teaching English as a FL to middle school students, their experience ranges from ten years to twenty years. Hence, teachers with long experience may lessen the impact of the difficulties faced by students when reading through the use of different strategies and techniques of reading aloud.



Q 2. How many hours do third year middle school students study English per week?

The aim of this question is to know whether the time devoted for teaching English language to third year middle school students is sufficient or not and whether it affects the students' performance in reading aloud. The teachers reported that English language is taught for four hours per week.

-Do you think that they are enough? Why?

All the four teachers said that teaching English for four hours is not sufficient at all because not all the needed information can be covered in this short period. Hence, it affects negatively the students' process in reading aloud.

Q 3. What is the main skill you usually focus on when teaching English?

The aim behind this question is to know the teachers' perspectives about the four skills and whether their choices affect the students' oral reading performances positively or negatively. Most teachers representing 3 out of 4 reported that they do not focus or favour one skill over another because they are all important in enhancing the acquisition of a given language. In fact, they integrated all of them when teaching. However, one teacher said that she mainly focuses on two skills which are speaking and writing.

Q 4. What are the steps you often undertake in teaching reading within CBA (strategies)?

All the four teachers adopt and use the same strategies as they are stated in the CBA. Hence, there are four main steps starting by a warm up to the text by which teachers prepare students to the subject they are going to deal with, the pre-reading stage where activities are designed to let the student engage with the content of the text, the while reading stage which is the stage of interaction with the text, then finally the post-reading one that seeks to produce what is learnt from the text.

Q 5. According to you, what are the most important goals of the reading act in class?

Teachers answered saying that they usually target enhancing students' pronunciation through correcting their mistakes and doing a first reading aloud so that they would be taken as a model by their students, and providing them with new vocabulary, grammar and lexis as much as they can to be used later on in writing. So, we conclude that reading aloud could be seen as a rich source for developing the students' level in English.

Q 6. Have you attended any training courses or seminars which deal with teaching the reading skill or reading aloud?

The aim from this question is to know exactly the place of the reading skill in the Algerian educational system and whether it is given its right through organizing seminars and courses that train teachers on how to teach this valuable skill. Two teachers said that they have attended training courses which deal with the teaching of reading.

-Would you please tell us what were these seminars about?

The organized seminars in Algeria focus on the strategies that teachers must undertake during the reading session. For instance, they must follow certain steps and strategies when teaching reading.

Q 7. What do you think about the reading skill, precisely reading aloud?

-How relevant is it to the CBA?

All the teachers agreed on the fact that the reading skill is an essential skill that teachers must focus on during the process of teaching. Only 3 of them said that reading aloud is pretty important and relevant to the CBA. So, teachers practice it because it is beneficial for building self-confidence, lexis, grammar, vocabulary, writing, etc.

Q 8. What is your opinion about the neglect of reading aloud in our educational system?

All the teachers agreed that the neglect of reading aloud is a wrong decision except for one.

-Would you explain further, please?

Teachers with reading aloud explained that this act is a training act for pronunciation, vocabulary, comprehension, grammar, and to become a fluent speaker, etc. However, one teacher claimed that the neglect of the reading aloud to be taught in the reading session is a good decision suggesting that it should be integrated in the listening one. Accordingly, oral reading helps learners to be better readers through enhancing their pronunciation, through also enhancing their way of writing via the absorption of different lexis and grammar.

Q 9. Do you teach reading aloud in class? For how long per session?

The addressed question aims at checking whether the time devoted for reading aloud can be a reason for having reading difficulties, i.e., neglecting reading aloud or limiting a short time for it can lead to having troubles in reading. All the four teachers teach reading aloud in class but differently. Three teachers use it in the normal reading session while the fourth one includes it with the listening session. The teachers allocate a period of 10 to 15 minutes for reading at the end of the session.

Q 10. What are the major difficulties faced by your students when reading aloud?

Teachers reported that the most common difficulties faced by students are pronunciation, comprehension, and shyness, stating that students struggle with pronouncing words which are new to them. Also, without the monitoring of the teachers, readers would fail to read and guess the meaning of words for the purpose of comprehension. Other difficulties the teachers added relate to anxiety, shyness, and language interference, claiming that whenever their students face difficult words, they switch to read it in French. Hence, the lack of pronunciation, comprehension, and confidence directly leads to facing problems when reading aloud.

Q 11. What do you think the causes behind these difficulties?

Two teachers out of four put the blame on students, arguing that learners who have no will in learning English will eventually face difficulties when coming to the class. Another

teacher put the blame on the Algerian educational system saying that it does not give English its right in the program and does not put huge efforts as it is the case with French to move forward with this international language. The last teacher argued that society, environment and the psychological state of the student are the reasons behind having these issues. To conclude with, all teachers proposed reasonable causes that explain why these students have these difficulties.

Q 12. What are the solutions you suggest to face those problems?

The aim of this question is to look for solutions that might decrease the impact of the difficulties encountered by students on their performances. Teachers provided several suggestions that might help cope with the reading aloud difficulties faced by students when reading. They recommended the following:

- To change the way the Algerian educational system works, especially when it comes to teaching reading by adding more reading aloud sessions to the program and designing suitable activities that go hand in hand with this type of reading and giving more attention to the teaching of English language in Algeria and making it a second language.
- Schools should be provided with visual aids, including native speakers, where students can have a closer look on how pronunciation of words should be.
- To practise reading regularly through reading short stories, novels, books, texts for pleasure etc.
- Students should be motivated and ready to read and learn.
- To rise the coefficient of the English module.

#### **2.3.2.1. Discussion of Teachers' Interview Results**

Based on the teachers' interview results, it is evident that all teachers, despite their differences in the experience of teaching English or reading in the middle school and the time allocated for it, are aware of the reading aloud difficulties that students encounter when

reading. Additionally, all of them stressed the importance of the reading skill and its huge contribution to developing learners' proficiency level of English where they all follow certain procedures when practicing reading in the classroom as they are stated in the CBA.

All teachers referred to the reading act as an act where certain goals could be achieved through it. For instance, via reading, students can learn a big amount of vocabulary, grammar, and lexis that will help them during the process of learning by using all these elements in different contexts; writing, speaking, etc. The teachers agreed that there are some problems that stand as a barrier against the students' reading aloud improvement. These difficulties were classified in terms of pronunciation, comprehension, and shyness. The suggested causes behind the evolvment of these difficulties might be either because of the student's weak level of ability or in being not interested in learning English language, the system and its neglection to the reading aloud act, which will disenable learners from having the chance to read in front of their teachers and to be corrected on the spot, or due to some psychological and environmental factors.

In order to overcome these difficulties, teachers of English stressed the role of regular practice of reading at home and at school in the students' reading performance through reading books, novels, and short stories. Adding extra sessions for teaching English and devoting longer times for reading aloud is also another solution that may decrease those difficulties and this will only happen through doing a reform on the Algerian educational system. In addition, supplying schools with the needed tools would help to develop the readers' level positively is a must.

Finally, despite the teachers' different perspectives on the reading aloud act and their different ways in adopting it in the classroom, all of them are conscious about the major difficulties that are encountered by their students. As a result, immediate feedback is given whenever a given difficulty is noticed.

## 2.4. Discussion of the Final Results

The results of the study confirmed that there are many factors that affect negatively the students' reading aloud performance. The bad performance is not due to the difficulty of the reading aloud act, but to other reasons.

The results showed that students who are not aware at the level of phonology in terms of combining and decoding words correctly, pronunciation through the articulation of correct sounds, vocabulary, and comprehension by guessing the exact meanings of words tend to have many difficulties when reading aloud. Furthermore, students who have auditory, retrieval, and visual problems, and suffer from shyness are also incapable to read aloud effectively. In the sense that, they fail to recall what have been studied before, to see and to produce what is heard correctly, and to control their shyness that affect their performances negatively. Hence, In order to reduce the impact of these difficulties on FL students, a daily practice of reading aloud as suggested by teachers should be held outside the classroom context as well as adding extra time for the English language classes in Algeria.

## 2.5. Limitations of the Study

The present study aims to investigate the different difficulties faced by FL students. Accordingly, some difficulties were encountered during the process of investigation. They are subsequently listed as follows:

- The application of the reading aloud activity in classes is a controversial issue in itself, where despite its neglect in the Algerian educational system, it was found to be used, but not for a long time.
- As the subjects were very young, all their answers cannot be taken as absolute answers. So, we tried to confirm their responses by asking them again indirectly.
- During the SRI, many students were absent. As a result, we had to minimize the students' number to be called and interviewed from 43 to 32. Thus, we wanted to attend other sessions

to bring more subjects, but as it was the end of the year and the period of exams, it was impossible to fulfill that, especially when the teachers started switching and changing their hours without informing us about that. Accordingly, there were some days where we arrived to the middle school without doing anything.

-we suffered a lot during the filming time. Some students did not want to be filmed when reading. Hence, we attended one week with them without filming, until they get used to having us with them, and agreed to be filmed. The category of noisy students made this process pretty hard as well, where we stopped filming so many times because they tried to ruin the oral reading of their classmates. So, controlling them was a big challenge.

-As far the sources are concerned, we found a difficulty in finding primary sources about the areas of difficulty during the oral reading in class.

-We could not put the original protocol made by Kvale and Brinkman in the appendix section because the book was not for free and we could not download it.

-Time constraint was another major obstacle that we faced when conducting this piece of research.

-We would have appreciated better to conduct the practical side of this dissertation with fourth year students since they are supposed to know more about reading in English and can express themselves better during the interview. Yet, it was impossible to start the practical part with them as they are supposed to finish the program early to prepare for their final exam "BEM", which would be insufficient for us to do the practical part on a small entity in a very short time.

-The interview with the teachers was supposed to be recorded. However, all of them refused. So, we were obliged to write in details all what was said, and to have a long interview that lasted between 30 and 45 minutes. The interview with them was not in the same day, but in

separate days, and unscheduled ones, as one of them claimed that she does not know when to be free.

## **2.6. Pedagogical Recommendations and Suggestions for Further Research**

The present study tended to investigate the different areas of difficulty which are encountered by third year middle school students during the process of reading aloud.

Therefore, the subsequent items are merely suggestions proposed in order to help both teachers and students cope with those oral reading difficulties, develop the reading aloud achievement, and hopefully be able to solve those problems.

-As reading aloud links writing, speaking, and listening, interest should be put on the reading skill and its importance for FL students, especially for those at the elementary, and middle school levels. Thus, preparing a schedule for oral reading to those who love to read is pretty essential at their age.

-Large size classes do negatively influence the performance of students in all domains, precisely reading aloud. So, the number of students in each class should be reduced for better results.

-Teachers should be aware of the type of difficulties faced by their students and should instantly supply them with the needed feedback when committing mistakes during reading.

-Teachers should make their students participate in the process of error correction by encouraging peer oral feedback for the sake of overcoming the problem of shyness and anxiety.

-Teachers should encourage their students to read in and outside the context of classroom. They should also prepare and make them familiar first with the passage before asking them to read.

-Teachers should adopt the reading aloud techniques that help shy students to finally speak up, and prepare them to be confident to read alone next. Thus, teachers should vary between



the different reading aloud techniques until they find the technique that suits the majority of their students. They can do that by trying to identify their students' needs, preferences, and learning styles to help their students cope with the demands of the learning situation.

-Teachers should create a warm and friendly atmosphere when deciding to do a reading aloud session through creating the feeling of curiosity about the topic and using humour with their students.

- Teachers should avoid using black print on white papers written by hand, and with a small size because it causes eye irritation for those with vision problems. Instead, they should type clear well-organized text with an average size.

-As a warming up, teachers should refresh their students' memories about the previously learnt vocabulary, before letting them read the text.

-Students should be aware of the fact that the encountered difficulties are just a part of the learning process by which they can learn and improve their level. Additionally, teachers need to make their students far from any psychological filters that make learning difficult.

-Further experimental research should be done to test the effectiveness of given reading techniques such as choral reading to measure the degree of difficulties before and after reading individually.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter was concerned with the field work. It consisted of a collection of data from the students' SRI, and the teachers' interview, and reported the obtained results of both tools of research. The chapter then provided a detailed analysis and discussion of the results, which revealed that third year middle school students encountered so many difficulties when reading aloud. Additionally, it was found that students face more than one difficulty at the same time. The chapter also outlined some limitations that made the process of investigation difficult, along with some research recommendations and further research suggestions.

### **General Conclusion**

Reading is one of the four fundamental skills that is very important in the process of attaining any language. As reading aloud is a type of the reading skill, it is said to be as well of a crucial importance especially for elementary and middle school students. Studies have shown that through reading aloud, the other remaining skills; speaking, writing, and listening could be improved. However, any failure encountered during the process of reading aloud or as it seen known dyslexia is explained by having a deficit or deficits. Hence, the core of this qualitative research is to describe and explore the different areas of difficulty that the third year middle school students are facing.

The present study showed that the failure in reading aloud is the result of not being knowledgeable enough about the language or to other psychological or health deficits. It is seen that students who could not read effectively are struggling from problems in terms of, comprehension, vocabulary, pronunciation, phonology, retrieval, vision, hearing, and shyness. Thus, having one of these deficits or more than one results in bad performances in oral reading from the students' part.

The findings of this study proved that not being knowledgeable enough about the language being studied in terms of how to combine different sounds properly to form correct words that are ready to be pronounced, and to comprehend, and guess the meaning of the passage lead to difficulties in oral reading. In addition, the failure to retrieve what have been studied before to be used again is also a sign of a deficit. Not being confident enough of oneself is another factor that deeply affects the students' performance which will develop to be a sign of shyness and anxiety. Besides, vision and hearing issues hinder the students' achievement in oral reading.

Therefore, in order to reduce the impact of these difficulties on the students' performance, both teachers and students should take part towards this step. Teachers, on one

hand, should be aware of the different difficulties encountered by their students, ready to give the appropriate feedback to their students, motivate their students, and encourage them to read aloud, and design well formed with a clear color and size texts. Students, on the other hand, can reduce these difficulties by preparing themselves to read aloud, having the will to learn the language and to read, practicing oral reading regularly in and outside the context of classroom.

To conclude, the results of the present study the previously addressed questions that students encounter several difficulties while reading aloud that prevent them to read properly. Hence, teachers claimed that the students' low level in English results in weak performances, and the Algerian educational system as well contributes in fostering these difficulties s well. Accordingly, teachers and students must work together to lower the impact of these difficulties to do better when reading aloud.

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