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**Assessing the Teaching of English Reading
Comprehension in Secondary Schools
(A Case Study of Atbara Town)**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of M.A. in English
Language Teaching (ELT)**

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Dedication

To my beloved mother who is the most deserving good company.

To my father who dedicated his life to help and support.

To my sister Asma and brothers

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The researcher wishes to express her gratitude and sincere thanks to **Dr. Ibrahim Alfaki** for his valuable advice.

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I would like to express my gratitude to my brother Ustaz Mohamed and Ennor who always help me out.

Abstract

This study aims at investigating the teaching of English reading comprehension in secondary schools of Atbara.

The researcher adopted descriptive methods for gathering and analyzing the data. The study investigates the importance of teaching reading comprehension and its vital role in teaching English language, assessing the various aspects of reading comprehension, assured the effective role of reading comprehension, and showing important it is and how it can let to the proficiency of the language.

The research methodology are an observation and a questionnaire that is given to 40 secondary school English language teachers who are selected randomly from different secondary schools in Atbara.

The researcher discussed and analyzed the data obtained with the questionnaire and an observation. The analysis of the data is based on certain criteria, against the theoretical assumption of the research. Finally the researcher suggested the recommendations. The following are points recommended.

Reading comprehension is an essential element for learning language. Students should be trained on how to deal with unfamiliar words and concentrate on the general meaning of the whole text. Finally the language in the Spine series should be adjusted to suit even the weak students.

مستخلص الدراسة

تهدف هذه الدراسة لبحث تدريس نصوص المطالعة والفهم لطلاب المرحلة الثانوية بمدينة عطبرة.

تتبع الدراسة منهجاً وصفيّاً لجمع البيانات وتحليلها موظفة لذلك المشاهدة الحية للدروس والاستبانة.

بحثت الدراسة المفاهيم المختلفة لتدريس نصوص المطالعة والفهم وأكدت على دورها الفعال وأهميتها في تعلم اللغة.

اعتمد البحث على مشاهدة الدروس والاستبانة كأدوات لبحث فرضية الدراسة ، ثم اختيار عينة عشوائية من مدرسي اللغة الانجليزية بمدينة عطبرة.

عرضت البيانات بحسب المعايير من (وسط حسابي ، نسبة مئوية) وعليه تم تحليل النتائج وفق الافتراضات النظرية خالصاً إلى النتائج.

وأخيراً يقترح البحث النتائج التي توصل إليها الباحث والتوصيات المتمثلة في الآتي:

نصوص المطالعة والفهم عنصر أساسي في تعلم اللغة ولها أهميتها في تنمية التفكير والإبداع.

تدريب الطلاب على كيفية التعامل مع الكلمات غير المألوفة لديهم ، والتركيز على

المعنى العام بالنسبة للنص متكاملًا . نصوص القراءة يجب أن تعدل حتى تتناسب

مع مستويات الطلاب وأخيراً توفير فرص التدريب الكافي المنتظم لمعلمي اللغة

الانجليزية.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.0. Background

In Sudan English is taught widely and via advanced methods, never the less, the standard of the students has declined. The language teaching experts, government, family and students have to co-operate in order to find practical solution to improve the situation of teaching English as general and teaching comprehension in particular.

Teaching reading comprehension is an ideal way that leads to the proficiency in the language. At the secondary school students have been taught, the course of spine which are 4,5 and 6. The material in these books is quite sufficient to enable the learners to read and write, nevertheless, the methods, procedures and teaching the material are not sufficient to enable them to master the four skills of language.

Teaching reading comprehension is important for students at secondary school because, reading comprehension is holistic process of contrasting meaning from written text through the interaction of the knowledge the reader brings to the text and the reader's interpretation of the language that the writer used to construct the text. Moreover, the teaching of reading

comprehension is an active process of contrasting meaning, not skill application. The act of contrasting meaning is:

Interactive – it involves not just the reader, but the text in which reading take place.

Strategic reading – readers have purposes for their reading and use different of strategies as they construct meaning.

Adaptable readers change the strategies they use as they read different kind of text or as they read to different purpose.

It is considered that the investigation and assessing teaching reading comprehension at secondary schools is important.

1.1. Statement of the problem

It is observed that most Sudanese students have problems with reading comprehension. The study focuses on the problems that hinders the mastering of reading skill which lead to student's weakness in reading, moreover, students always have difficulties with reading their assignments and reading fluency is almost non-existent.

1.2. Aims of the study

The study aims to investigate the teaching reading comprehension at secondary school level in Atbara town.

1.3. Significance of the study

The study drives its significance from that fact, there is no doubt that reading is a fundamental, and basic literacy skill is critical for learning to read, but the ultimate goal of reading is comprehension. Comprehension helps to ward conceptual understanding of content and knowledge. Comprehension assesses and serves as excellent contribution to knowledge of how students may best promote.

1.4. Questions of the study

The questions of the study are ordered as following:

- 1- What types of difficulties face students at secondary school level when they read comprehension texts.
- 2- What are the reasons behind these difficulties.

1.5. Hypotheses of the research

The researcher hypothesizes that:

- 1- Reading comprehension causes some problems to students at secondary school level.
- 2- The student's weakness in reading comprehension is due to both teachers and students. Moreover, the students' weakness is due to insufficient and not authentic materials.

1.6 .Methodology of the study

The researcher will adopt the descriptive method. A questionnaire and observation will be used for data collection.

1.7. Delimitation of the study

This is a case study. It deals with secondary level school in Atbara locality, students at the age – group of 14 -16 years old, in 2011.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher discusses the teaching of English reading comprehension at secondary schools. The researcher reviewed what is written in the field of teaching reading comprehension referring to opinions, ideas and researches that have discussed reading comprehension.

Comprehension is the reason for reading, without comprehension reading is a frustrating and pointless. Teaching reading comprehension, therefore, is to help students develop knowledge, skills and experiences they must have if they are to become competent and enthusiastic readers. Teaching comprehension was based on concept of reading, as the application of a set of isolated skills. Such as identifying words, finding main ideas and contrasting.

2.1. Definition of Reading

Reading is an interaction that takes place between a reader and a text. It is defined differently by different linguists. Paulston (1975:157) defines reading as:

“de coding speech written down, a skill which would naturally transfer from a command of the oral skills which the major focus of audio-lingual programs.”

The definition above illustrates the point that the oral and written languages differ both in syntax and vocabulary. Jack (1985: 238) adds *“Perceiving a written text in order to understand its content. This can be done (silently). The understanding that results is called reading comprehension”*.

Reading is defined as information processing. Goodman Quoted in Paulson (1973 : 158) argues:

The reader, a user of language, interacts with the graphic input as he seeks to reconstruct a message encoded by the writer. He concentrates his total prior experience and learning on the task, drawing on his experiences and concepts he has obtained as well as the language competence he has achieved.

Thus, good readers are capable of decoding directly from the graphic stimulus and only decoding the meaning as oral output. In other words oral language is not considered as an important reading area for meaning. The competent reader draws three types of information according to Goodman. The first is graph phonic information. The second is syntactic information. The information connected with the grammatical structure of the language, finally there is semantic information.

Goodman (1994: 13) Defines Reading as:

“Meaning making, in other words the reader does not imply absorb or drink the words from a text and have meaning poured into his /her mind, but the reader in fact makes or constructs meaning from the words s/he reads. He looks at reading as ‘psycholinguistic guessing game”.

The researcher assesses its important to focus on this state which is reading in language classroom is treated in a very passive way. The short or medium passages are dealt with by traditional techniques of explaining new vocabulary and structures followed by some questions which the correct answers are the ultimate goal that indicates full comprehension of the text according to some teachers’ beliefs. Here springs questions: Do the correct answers mean that the learners have reached full understanding?

Some studies have provided that a very difficult text would be answered easily even with zero comprehension as stated by Willis, (1997: 150)

But questions are good means to lead to ward comprehension in the pre-reading and while – reading stage.

There are other ways of checking understanding in the post-reading stage which acts as a mirror that reflects the learners grasp of text meanings. Some of them are:

- a- Filling the gaps on a work sheet.

- b- Replacing the underlined words.
- c- A brief summary of the text even in L1.
- d- Converting a text from a passage to a dialogue or vice versa.
- e- Building a new similar text using words and structures of the original one.

2.2. Beginning Reading

It is generally preferable to begin reading only after the learners have some basic knowledge of the spoken language, reading become a matter of recognizing meaning rather than deciphering symbols. Such knowledge enables us to give much varied and interesting tasks for reading practice. It is most important to begin with single letters (the conventional, phonic method), starting with most common and useful. A collection of knowledge, common letters very quickly enables students to cope with a large number of words, it is, surely, more useful for reading purposes. If the learner knows the most common sound of the letter; its name can be left until later. It is better to teach the different of the letter together. This slows down the process a little; the letters the learners do know can immediately be recognized in the context.

2.3. Types of Reading

There are many different kinds of reading; each requires different approaches, techniques and levels of concentration.

a-Silent reading

Silent reading is a reading for comprehension. It is described as silent because it is supposed to be performed silently. This implies that graphic forms are visually perceived and then transformed into meanings and ideas. Silent reading is an important skill that has to be developed properly through guidance and practice. During the silent reading, the teacher is expected to help students develop their speed of silent reading, such development involves increasing the learners' eye span which is the quantity of words a reader's eye can catch from a written line at one glance. The larger the span is the faster reading can go.

b-Model Loud reading

Model loud reading is performed by the teacher as an example to be imitated by students when they read aloud. It usually comes after silent reading and discussion but before students reading aloud. In the model reading the teacher reads the text aloud phrase by phrase and sentence by sentence. Students follow in their books. Teacher may give live

presentation or may use a tape. One advantage of this technique is that it provides students an accurate model of sound.

c-Oral reading

Oral reading can also be called word recognition in context and refers to the ability to reading connected text a loud with accuracy, speed and appropriate phrasing. Reading a loud or oral reading is another type of reading that may be used in class in the condition that it is employed purposefully. For most readers, accuracy, speed and phrasing in oral reading are related to reading comprehension. The aim of reading instruction is to increase the level of silent reading comprehension. Students should be given many opportunities to practice oral reading, either by themselves or in pairs often, support given by a peer changes hesitant oral readers into competent oral readers.

d-An intensive reading programme

It may be helpful to outline the main points that have been made which will be relevant to intensive reading. The students will use skimming when appropriate to ensure that he reads only what is relevant and to help subsequent comprehension. Intensive reading involves approaching the text under the close guidance of the teacher or under the guidance of a task which

forces the student to pay a great attention to the text. The aim of intensive reading is to arrive at a profound and detailed understanding of the text. For the intensive lesson is intended primarily to train students in reading strategies. There are reading strategies which are scanning and skimming, the use of content list, an index and similar apparatus are obvious ones.

e-An extensive reading Programme

An extensive reading programme that will actively promote reading out of class. Class time is always in short supply and the amount of reading needed to achieve fluently is very great. Students who have not acquired the reading habit are often daunted by books and need the guidance and encouragement that an organized extensive programme can provide. Moreover, as there is no absolute divide between intensive and extensive reading, the same text can usefully be employed for training in both. Key passages from it being used for intensive study and in turn are illuminating the book as whole. Intensive and extensive reading is important and each complements the other. Brumfit (1977) Reading for accuracy and fluency.

2.4. Types of Skills We Need for Reading

a- Memory Skills

Readers need to use working memory as they read, to remember what they have read, and also to draw on aspects

of their previous knowledge to integrate it into the text as they work towards comprehension.

b- Decoding Skills

We need to be able to decode letters and words, connecting the single – letter shapes to the letters sound (as well as connecting sounds to paired letters and letter cultures), and we need to be able to put these sounds together or make words.

c- Recognition Skills

We need to recognize letters, morphemes and words efficiently, including root words, prefixes, and suffixes.

d- Comprehension Skills

we need to be able to put words together into a coherent string, the students must use lexical and syntactic knowledge, and use working memory to keep these relationship in mind in order to make inferences and other connections and to finally create a gist for the sentence, for the paragraph, and for the longer passage.

2.5 Reading for Comprehension

According to research, successful readers do several important things when they need. They have some ideas about the topic. From their previous experience and knowledge. They also have some general ideas about how the

material will be organized and presented. For example, a student reading a novel will expect a story and description of thoughts and feelings. While the same student reading a biology book anticipates a totally different kind of language, content and structure. Good readers use what they already know about a topic and the probable organization of selection to help them understand new material more efficiently, good readers preview the selection and consider its purpose as they read, successful readers have a context or framework, into which they can fit new information as it comes along

Poor readers often read word by word, making sure they understand each small detail. Successful readers, however, read for overall meaning. They first try to understand the most general idea fit into their understanding of the main point of the reading. Successful readers are critical readers, they use the new material in reading to build and reshape their understanding of the topic. They are not passive receivers of information, they think about react to and evaluate what they read as they read. Reading plays a key role in almost every course of students when they do their readings in a unfocused way. This can often lead to poor result. A reader can become a more successful by consciously adopting the characteristics of a good reader that were stated as following: reading more actively, read in a more focused

way, read in a more time, efficient way, read with a great understanding and read more creatively. Efficient readers do not always read every word to save time. They use techniques like skimming, scanning. When through a text, are reading it quickly to get an overall important of the text. However, when are scanning or searching a text are looking for specific information which know or expect is there.

2.6. The Role of Teacher in Reading

Reading involves skills that students themselves must learn, and that the measure of the teacher's success is how far students learn to do without his help. Some people would go so far as to say that reading cannot be taught, but only learnt. This does not, however, mean that there is nothing for the teacher to do: in fact there is a great deal.

The trouble is that, it is easy to give too much help of the wrong kind. Reading problem can be caused by providing so much help that it becomes a crutch that students cannot do without. It seems that the teacher's job as providing, first suitable text and secondly, activities that will focus on the

Student's attention on the text. Students must develop their own skills, and there, conscious development of reading skill. The teacher gives them techniques for approving texts for various kinds, and purposes. Teaching students how to read

texts is not the same as teaching them how read. However, the generalized skills of reading can only be acquired through practicing the specific skills required for reading text (A), text (B) and make sure that the bridge is built between the specific and general. And one way of helping student to generalize their skills to make sure that they read a lot practice in using the skills with various materials. It is more accurate to say that reading involves a number of complex mental process, these process need to be undertaken by the students in order to become more skilled. In other words, students should be allowed to read and gives a lot of opportunities to read and not to hinder the development of these processes by forcing to carry activities which do not allow them to predict or infer. A teacher therefore, who simply translates

A story for the pupils may allow them to go grasp the meaning of the text clearly, but he actually preventing them from putting into practice and therefore, developing these mental strategies by themselves. Since these mental processes are complex, students of differing mental capacities will read at different speed. These mental processes of predicting and inferring meaning can be related to sub-skills and can be useful practiced activities.

2.7 The Models of Reading Skill

The importance of having a model that provides an accurate representation of the process and nature of reading. A model is a simple description of a system; used for explaining how something works or calculating what might happen. Such a model help the students to understand, interpret and develop the skill of reading , many model have been offered to provide a working explanation of how people read these models attempt to explain the physical and cognitive process that are performed by the reader in carrying out the reading activities.

These models are explained as followings:

The linear model:

This model views reading as the assembling of letters to form words to form sentences which are then decoded for meaning. This model has the serious disadvantage of over simplifying the complex process of reading.

The bottom – up model

This model views reading as starting from the graphic representation of word son the paper and are then interpreted in the reader's mind for meaning. It is advanced form of the linear model, it differ from it in that does not took at letter words and sentences as single isolated entities that have to be

grouped together. It looks at the process of reading as taking whole groups of words in chunks and putting them together in units of meaning to decode the intended message.

The Top – Down model

This model views the background of the readers as a very important factor in making sense of reading text. It works on the premises that the reader brings to the texts is actually the decisive factor in the process of meaning making. The readers approach texts with an experience of reading at all levels. As signing meaning to words and expressions, ability to take great chunks of text at a time and ability to employ sub-skills of reading, scanning, skimming, prediction and inference. Moreover, they approach the texts with critical mass of background knowledge about the specific, knowledge of the world and familiarity with similar text in forms and contents.

The interactive model

This model tries to think of reading as a process that does not have any kind of top – down or bottom – up; it looks as give and take. The reader approaches a text with certain expectations, knowledge and skills some of these skills are recognition skills others are information processing skills. They give the reading text its due weight as the coded message .the interactive model views the readings process as interaction between the reader and the writer represented by

the text. It is a process of recognition that aims at building or rebuilding the meaning of the text.

2.8. The Reading sub-skills

Developing the reading skills requires developing the reading sub-skills.

These sub-skills are:

A- Prediction

is an important skill for reading we take information bit by bit, but we are always a head of a text when we process the information, we take in actually make all sorts of decisions make all sorts of decisions about it and take different sentences, sometimes we are not able to decide our position. In fact, jump over the paragraphs not with our physical eyes but with the eyes of our mind for mutate evasions and try to answer them or to find answers for them in the text, make assumptions and hypotheses and test them if the questions are answered and hypotheses are confirmed this reinforces understanding. If not, it makes adjustments quicker and easier, prediction makes comprehension possible.

B- Skimming

To skim means to read some things quickly in order to find the main points. Skimming is also important reading sub-skills.

Readers usually give the text they want read a roving eye so that they have a global idea about it. They look for the gist of the text before they decide to reading the titles and the sub-title, reading the topic sentences and concluding sentences paragraphs, reading the introductory paragraph and concluding paragraph of a text and looking at supporting clues and diagrams, this skill make reading easy because it reassures the reader and gives him or her confidence. Also activate the necessary frames and background knowledge and places them at the upper most of the reader's mind. Moreover, lowers the level of anxiety and gives a soothing feeling of relaxation and motivates readers to read.

C-Scanning

To scan means to look at every part of a document or text quickly, especially because you are looking for a particular piece of information such as name of a person or a date. Scanning is very help full because readers do not usually have enough time to read all the text. The readers might interested only in one or two data and they do not want to waste their time and effort in reading. Other irrelevant material, they might want to take quick decision about a book or a text to see if it contains the interesting topic, it in enables the reader to differentiate between vital data and unimportant data, and it summons all the linguistic skills and makes the reader mentally alert.

D-Inference

It is important that readers should develop their inference skills. Readers always encounter words the meaning of which they don't know exactly or don not know it in the specifics attention. They have to be able to get a global meaning that will enable them to understand the message embedded in the text. They have to be able to manage to overcome all the obstacles represented by the unfamiliar words which they encounter. These words need not be completely new words. They might be words they know, but are used in another meaning, they might be words they know but they are being used figuratively or to produce certain stylistic effects, the might be words, by they are being used creatively. Inference is not just making a wide guess a word to understand it inference should be based on a number of techniques and strategies inference acquires its significance as sub-skill of reading from the fact that readers have to be able to without frequently resorting to dictionaries or other people for help with the meaning of any word whose meaning they do not know or are not sure of. Good readers are by definition fast readers. Developing reading comprehension require developing the sub-skills of comprehension.

2.9 Reading Problems

1. Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness is a general appreciation of how spoken language can be divided into its components. Sentences can be broken down into words and words into syllabus, breaking down into onset – rime and an appreciation of rhyme and alliteration fall under the category of phonological.

2. Phonemic Awareness

The word “Phoneme” means sound. When a word is broken down into its smallest units, a sound or (phoneme), the term phonemic awareness is used. Phonemic awareness is a sub skill of the broad category of phonological awareness.

3. Learning reading:

lack of language or vocabulary problem, comprehension and writing tools. Listening comprehension and writing and study skills.

a- Spelling patterns to address phonics, encode and decode.

b- Quick and short reading drills to address reading fluency and visual.

c- A set of tools to address reading comprehension and listening comprehension. (Hatcher, 2004).

2.10. Characteristics of Good readers

Good readers are questioning themselves about:

- 1- Vocabulary.
- 2- Get the fact and evaluate it.
- 3- Connecting new information to other knowledge and experience.
- 4- Understanding points of view.
- 5- Reading actively asking himself, what I did learn?

Poor Readers

Poor readers often did “heard of a word but lack depth breath in word knowledge. A good ways for them to improve their reading are :

- a- Using new words correctly in her writing.
- b- Using knowledge of prefixes, suffixes and base words to expand her vocabulary.
- c- Mastering the vocabulary of different content areas.

Speed: poor readers are usually slow even after they become accurate. To build speed, the student needs to read a lot of text at a level that is easy for him to comprehend. (Louis, 2004).

2.11. Methods of Teaching Reading skills

There are four main methods for teaching reading in the early grades. These methods may be used in teaching native language or foreign language.

A-The letter method

In the adaptation of the letter method or the phonic method is teaching learners how to read the alphabet of the target or foreign language. After mastering the letters of the alphabet, learners are taught how to read words and then proceed to sentences and texts.

B-The Global Method

The global method rests on psychology, which assumes that we perceive wholes rather than parts. According to this assumption, teaching the reading skill should start with sentences and then words. The cost step is letter perception, in this sense; the global method goes opposite direction of the letter method. The global is sometimes referred to as the see - then – say method.

It sometimes called the look and say method. These names somehow reflect the nature of this method.

C-The linguistic Method

The linguistic method depends on some kinds of linguistic analysis of the graphitic phonic relationships within the target language itself. In language like English, the same graphitic may represent more than one phoneme or vice versa.

D- The Eclectic Method

The eclectic method makes use of the previously mentioned three methods. The assumption underlining such eclecticism is that each method has something to offer for reading. The letter

method is needed to develop letter consciousness, which is essential for both spelling and reading. The global method is needed to develop speed. The linguistic method is needed to establish some reading patterns and thus minimizes pronunciation mistakes during reading.

2.12. A proposed Procedure for Teaching Reading

It is useful for a teacher to organize the lesson stages, because it makes the readers think carefully about how he can help pupils before the reading task, during the reading task and after the reading task. It could be illustrated into three activities as follows:

A- Pre-reading activities

Step one warm-up: here the teacher wants to get the students to be interested in the topic, to motivate them and try to pre-teach any vocabulary which they need in the reading task.

Step two: set up of task: it is important to get pupils to read with a purpose or the teacher needs to set the purpose for the reading.

B- While reading activities

Here the teacher lets students read with a target in mind and tries to answer the questions.

C – Follow up and extension activities

Instead of telling the answer directly, the teacher should lead students to talk about it themselves so they can share ideas and also practice speaking.

2.13. What is Reading Comprehension?

According to Byrne (1988: 10) reading comprehension is the kind of written material which students are exposed to so as to understand the gist of the text. If they understand this, they will know the purpose of the writer, the teacher leads his pupils to understand the passage by giving them questions that guide them to understand gist and details of the text. “If the pupils read a letter, for example, and know that the writer is congratulating apologizing, enquiring or inviting, this means that the learners have understood the purpose of the written language.” (Byrne, 1988, 11).

By means of teacher questions the learner will be guided to find out how the writer achieve his purpose. “*It is through questions we can get students to understand why the writer writes certain things and expressed them in a certain way.*” (Byrne, 1988, 11).

In a reading text we can get the students to look at the “language in general and at particular expressions to draw their attention to the ways in which he does this.”

Also in reading a text “we can get the students to look at the features such as linking words, sentence structure and enter sentence structure.”(Byrne, 1988, 11)

Another definition of reading comprehension is what has been written by (Richard, 1987: 283) “*perceiving a written text in order to understand its contents. This can be done silently*”.

According to Horn by (1988: 699)

1. “*Reading is the act of one who reads.*”
2. *Read: look at and be able to understand, mentally learn the significance of-*
3. *Having knowledge gained from a text books.”* (Williams (1985: 142) also defines reading comprehension as “a receptive skill means being able to use the reading sub – skills efficiently”.

These sub-skills are:

1. Recognizing words and phrases in English script.
2. Using one’s own knowledge of the side. Reading is the meaningful interpretation of written or printed verbal symbols. Reading is a very elaborate procedure understanding a paragraph is like solving problem in mathematics. It includes all features and characteristics of typical reasoning. (Byrne, 1988: 11)

From the definitions above it is clear that reading comprehension is more than looking at the written symbols and

recognizing them. It is of course a matter of employing several reading sub-skills to interpret the text and acquire the way passages are written, ideas are expressed, organized and concluded.

2.14. what is a text?

Nuttal (1996: 24) defined the text as
“a piece of language, complete in itself and (written or spoken) for purpose. It may consist of a single sentence or even a single word such as a sign saying “DANGER” .Brief text like this have their uses for teaching reading”.

This means even a single word can be considered as a text which will invoke interest and open windows of discussion and can be extended to represent a base for a lot of interaction concerning this situation. So teachers can benefit from every written piece of language whether artificial like course book text or authentic material such as road signs, newspapers and magazines headlines, information pamphlets, ...etc.

Nothing will hinder any teacher from using any text within the learner's level by exploiting this text and makes it talk and walk to give the learners the chance to be creative and unlock the hand cuffs of using the text only to answer some questions and miss a real opportunity of doing many things based on the text and get use of the vocabulary, structures and expressions.

Nuttal, (1996: 33) added that,

“Reading widely is a highly effective means of extending our command of language, so it has an important place in classrooms where language learning is the central purpose. Language improvement is a natural by-product of reading. A good reader carries on a dialogue with the text. An effective to promote the skill is to talk about the text in class, teachers can plan activities for this purpose, but it is the students who have to make the most of opportunities by joining in”.

Any text can easily be altered into a similar one or a dialogue prepared by the learners themselves according to their level. This will give them the chance to talk with something they have participated in its creation. Furthermore, they will get more understanding of the text and the previous related ones from which they compose their dialogues or the new adapted texts. Here, there is a golden chance of skills integration. They read the text, they discuss (talk) in their groups, they create a new form (write), they act the dialogue (speak) and they listen to one another. It is a healthy learning environment created by the learners themselves which adds to their motivation to practice fluency with no inter version by the teacher who opens the debate (after dialogue or role play practice) to serious comments through learners self correction as remedial work for the sake of accuracy.

The whole process is learner – centered and in groups. This will add to their critical thinking they discover that they are creative and can have something to speak about. Many learners ignore their potentials and language abilities as human but they do realize that many bright, fruitful days and work are awaiting them. They enjoy their work with a sound tangible pleasure and feel that language learning is just like playing a game. They agree to face any kind of challenge because the door is open and the fresh health breeze fills their lungs. They feel free to do many things. They realize this game is for the sake of language use not for the examination with all its horrible pressure.

Anyone, whatever his age or level if he finds a single chance to use the foreign language, will try to do it and many school leaves and university graduates hope to does

2.15. Techniques of Exploiting the reading texts :

A–Role play

One way of task based learning is the use of role play which can be used on a taught reading text to act as a base for learners to fix their feeling upon. This will push them to go back to their stock of vocabulary and structures or explore previous taught texts to extract useful words, expressions and structures. This is the stage of production and the main emphases on fluency rather than accuracy Lado,(1989:5) defined role plays:

“ When the learners pretend to act the role of other persons. e.g. a doctor, a nurse, teacher ... etc. they experiment with their knowledge of the real and develop their ability to interact with other people.”

Lado listed the need for using the role play in class room as follows:

1. Bringing experience inside the classroom with a chance to introduce functions, structures and vocabulary by which the learners are trained in speaking skills in different situations.
2. Forms of language are used and developed when the learners are put into social situations.
3. Preparing some learners for specific real roles in their future lives.
4. Role plays act as a mask for shy reticent learners in their groups.
5. Role plays gives the chance for learners to practice language with fun. Thus, it increase motivation, promotes interaction and develops fluency.

Through role play, learners do not practice language, they learn language because role play changes the formal presentation of language in personal use.

Lado (1989: 17) added that

“Role play is not an isolated activity, but an integral part of the lesson ... useful structures can be presented before the role play

starts, or can be fed in after wards. As remedial work ... you will be letting your class explore language as it works in the real world. It is for this reason that role play is a vital part of any course”.

B-Simulation

While role play is a guided classroom activity in which learners play role of another character, in simulation they represent themselves. They discuss opinions and analyze data. They speak about their own experience in life rather than pretending characters. In simulation learners can depend on the text but try to go beyond it and provide their own additional points. This technique is suitable for advanced learners who ought to have a good stock of vocabulary and back group knowledge of various social topics.

C- Chain stories

Another technique is the chain stories which the teacher begins a story and asks the learners to finish it one by one in a chain. This technique is very enjoyable, highly motivating and it encourages learners creativity. It challenges their imagination and gives them a real chance of oral production and a chance for everyone to participate.

D – Dialogues

Dialogues, the simplest reading forms, are talking texts. They give the learners, especially the younger ones, the feeling

that dialogues are written to be read aloud and acted. They read them as if they are addressing or listening to someone else. This characteristic is a great chance to use the dialogues. Dialogues represent natural interaction among people in their communication for real social life.

While role play is a guided activity a dialogue is a controlled oral work and the recorded dialogue depends on everyday situations, grammatical points, vocabulary and some expressions that can be used in language classroom. A recorded dialogue is to improve speaking and communication ability from memory.

Dialogue is one of speaking skills. It can be a good means for young learners who should know from the very beginning that language is studied to be used. Through short dialogues teachers can instruct and practice useful structure, phrases and vocabulary.

*“Starting from the text book material, students can write dramatizations, using what they have learned to create variations of dramatizations, using what they have learned to create variations of situations for their favorite characters.”*Rivers (1981: 201).

Thus, the learners are not only parroting, they participate in choosing and preparing the material that is suitable to their level and age. At this point, motivator is in utmost. Learners are busy preparing their dialogues, asking for class mates and teachers

help to challenge other groups. This competition will force them to create and practice using all their tools (of language) and efforts. (Imagination and creativity).

Learners, a mid this race, use new taught material as well as previously learned one, which will fix the words and structures in a recycling way. Learners should be aware of what they are going to do and why they are performing this activity as (Rivers 1981: 213) mentioned:

“The teacher must ensure that the students have a clear idea of what the dialogue is about before they begin to work with it. This can be achieved by a native language.”

Dialogue gives the learners the state of success because they express themselves using the target language in everyday situations.

The dialogue at this stage is intended to practice speech fluency. So the teachers’ role is before or after process. The pre-stage is to provide the learners with the needed vocabulary structures and expressions.

2.16. Theories of comprehension

a– Schema theory – accepted as playing a key role in reading comprehension. It has been defined as an important conception in reading instruction. Reading theory is view schema theory as “*a frame work*” that organize knowledge in memory by putting

information in to correct “*slots*”, each one contains related parts. When new information enters memory it must be entered into the proper slot before comprehension occur.(Nist and Mealy, 1991).

b – Active comprehension theory

Good reader is extremely read, as is apparent when ever excellent adult readers are asked to think as they go through text. (Pressley and After Bach, 1995).

Good readers are aware of why they are reading a text, again and over view of the text before reading, make predictions about the coming text. Read selectively based on their over view, associate ideas in a text to what they already Know, note whether their predictions and expectations about text content are being met, revise their prior knowledge when compelling new idea conflicting with prior knowledge are encountered, figure out the meanings of unfamiliar vocabulary based on context clue, underlined, rereads and make notes and paraphrase to remember important point, interpret the text, evaluate its quality and think about how ideas encountered in the text might be used in the future.

2.17. Types of comprehension:

There are many types of reading comprehension. These are often used according to the reader’s purpose in reading. Jack (1985 : 238) add the following types of reading comprehension:

- a- Literal comprehension: reading in order to understand, remember or recall the information explicitly, context in a passage.*
- b- Inferential comprehension: reading in order to find information which is not explicitly stated in a passage, using the reader's experience (inference).*
- c- Critical or evaluative comprehension: in order to compare information in passage with the reader's own knowledge and values.*
- d- Appreciative comprehension: reading in order to gain an emotional or other kind of valued response from a passage.*

2.17.1. Understanding meaning

Besides understanding the way the text is organized. It is advisable to understand its content. Comprehension is usually checked through the use of various types of questions such as pen questions, right or wrong and multiple choice questions. For checking comprehension it has been suggested that the exercises which are designed for this purpose should be highly challenging and the students should not answer any of them unless they go through the text carefully. The exercises which are created for understanding are inspired by two different aims.

Brigham (1981: 4) illustrates these aims as follows:

To make the student active in the reading process by presenting them with decision – making activities (e.g. drawing diagram with information given in a text).

To design activities which are as natural as possible. The activities suggested have been divided in to two categories:

(1) Non-linguistic responses to the text:

There is a whole range of comprehension activities do not require any complex verbal response on the part of the learners in these, exercises are added to the text and the students are asked to relate the text to that document. This can mean:

– a comparison (e.g. comparing texts and pictures, matching passage).

-A transposition of the information (transcending the information in to the form of diagram.)

(2) Linguistic response to the text

This part includes the following categories:

(2.1) recognizing the information

In this category the students are required to produce information in different ways ; to identify it according to different pattern (e.g. completing a table, drawing up chronological list of events mentioned in the passage) proved that there are different ways of presenting the same information.

2.2. Comparing several texts:

In this area we compare different version of the same event or incident, for instance what someone wrote in a letter and what we read in a paper. The passage given for comparison may differ:

-In their content, (one can study the development of an item over a period of time.)

-In their point of view (e.g. several articles on the same subject taken from different new papers).

2.17.2. Assessing The Text

One of the essential feature of reading comprehension is to assess and evaluate the text. In this account one should be fully aware of the writer's intention. (Grellet (1981: 24)

Suggest the following points of the text :

1. Fact versus opinion

In this part student should be given through training in how to differentiate between facts and opinions which are provided through out the text.

2. Writer's intention

In this section the activities suggested are concentrated on the attitude of the writer, the particular bias that can be felt through his writing .in order to be comprehensive this part should also

deal with several other aspects which contribute to the conveying message.

A -Tone is the most difficult part of the text but it is essential.

b -The language used by the writer, this includes the sentences he chooses and the ways these sentences are organized.

2.17.3. Stages of Reading Comprehension

The main objective of here is to train the students to read the text and understand it by grasping and relating its parts to each other and to develop the student's own experience. Mahil (2000: 8) lists the stages on how to deal with reading comprehension in the following lines:

Stage 1

This is an introductory stage. Before the students are exposed to the subject matter, the text is to be introduced orally or visually by the teacher. The purpose of this stage is to relate the reading practice to that of the students own experience. This is called a warming up stage. The researcher suggested that the basic vocabulary that the students will encounter in the text should be presented using different techniques.

Stage 2

In this section the students are asked to read the questions in exercise before reading the article. Pre-reading questions are very important to be discussed in this stage. The main aim of

these pre-reading questions is to lead the students to the whole text.

Stage 3

In this stage the students are fully exposed to the text. Here the students are asked to compare their answers in pairs and arrived at conclusion.

Stage 4

Once all pairs reached agreement, the teacher takes the feedback by conducting a general discussion in which the students give their answers to the questions and justify them with reference to the text. In this stage the teacher should explain anything which was not understood.

Stage 5

In this stage teachers include any work done after the basic reading practice is completed. It may involve writing, listening or further oral practice related to the text. This is what is called follow up.

2.17.4. Types of Comprehension Questions

Comprehension questions in west's terms either after – questions or before questions. After questions are just that, questions which are given or asked after a reading activity whose purpose is to check that the student comprehend a reading task. Before questions are to focus the students attention

on the essential points during reading. The before- questions are introduced initially before the students read the passage.

Norris cited in Paulston (1973: 165) state the followings :

Type 1: information from the reading sufficient for the answer contained the question itself :

a) Answer able simply yes, No or true/ false.

b) Multiple choice of answer is given with its question.

Type 2: Answerable with information quoted directly from the reading selection (WH-question).

Type 3: Answerable with information acquired from the reading selection but no by direct quotation from a single sentence (usually why or how questions).

Type 4: Answerable from inference or implication from the reading , the information is not stated explicitly in the selection.

Type 5: The Answer requires evaluation or judgment relating the reading selection to additional information or experience of the reader.

2.17.5. Guessing Meaning

Guessing the meaning from the context is the most difficult task for the students to over control. Teachers make a great effort to train their students to work out the meaning from context because a dictionary might not be available all the time and it also saves time. Yorkey (1982:68) mention the following three

ways of getting the meaning of an unfamiliar word that one comes across while reading :

1. One way is to stop reading and immediately look up the word in a dictionary. The disadvantage of the way it slows reading if the reader tries to look up every new item in a dictionary, and the reader might be discouraged and get bored.
2. Using what is called stems and word formation help the reader to guess the meaning of a new word easily.
3. A third way of guessing the meaning of a word is to look at the surrounding context. This is what is called inference. Here the reader exploits the clues given in the context and tries to work out the meaning. According to the researcher's point of view, the last point is the most advanced one and it needs highly advanced students, because the clues which are given in the context need particular analysis in order to work out the meaning.

2.17.6. Four kinds of meaning

Understanding a text is completely based on understanding different kinds of meaning at the same time.

Nuttall (1982: 80-1) states four levels of meaning when reading a text, these levels are ranked gradually:

- 1- Conceptual Meaning : The meaning a word can have on its own. Concepts can be available at any level to a single word or morpheme.

2- Prepositional Meaning : The meaning a sentence can have on its own. This is the same idea of signification or plain sense. The signification of a sentence is the kind of a meaning it can have when it is cited.

3- Contextual Meaning: The meaning a sentence contains in a context.

4- Pragmatic Meaning: The meaning a sentence has only as a part of the interaction between a writer and reader.

Students face lot difficulties can be clearly illustrated in the following points.

a. Concepts

If concepts are beyond the students understanding we are expecting some difficulties to take place. The teacher's role in this part is to choose texts with easily concepts in order to pave the way for the students to get the meaning a crossed.

b. Vocabulary and sentence structure

It is possible to get the writer's message without understanding every sentence given in the text, but it is not possible to be certain of it.

2.17.7. What Makes Words Difficult

1- Idioms

The term idiom is used to clarify a lexical item containing of several words with a meaning that cannot be deduced from the

meaning of individual words. Because idioms are very important in reading programs, the researcher advises both teachers, and students to give them particular attention. The researcher also notices the absence of idioms in the student's text books that is what makes the students fail to deal with them, so idioms are considered as a source of difficult for some students.

2- Transfer of meaning

Metaphor, metonymy are the same kind of transferred meaning. Like idioms, they do not mean what they at first glance seem to mean.

3- Words with several meanings

Words which have more than one meaning are considered as problematic area for students with poor experience because writers use these words differently in different fields. These words with several meanings should be tackled smoothly, otherwise students might confuse them. Training in using a dictionary properly will help students in selecting the meaning that is suitable to the given context.

4- Sub-technical vocabulary

Technical jargons are considered as an area of difficulty for the students, because these terms are used with limited kinds of texts. Although explanation four these terms should be made before hand in order to facilitate the meaning for the students.

5- Super ordinate

Super ordinates are words of more general meaning viewed in relation to other words of more specific meaning which could be referred by the more general term.

6- Synonyms and antonyms

Synonyms are words which have the same meaning but with different spelling and pronunciation: the main reason behind using synonyms is to avoid repetition and make variety in a text.

Synonyms are considered as a chronic problem for students if not enough attention is focused on them.

Antonyms are words with opposite meaning, which are also considered as a source of difficulty and confusion for student; the researcher suggests that both of these areas should be given particular consideration in a reading program.

7-Irony

In this area the words are not the source of difficulty, but the use of the writer makes the task difficult for the students to comprehend the text. The difficulties when the students compare the words given in the text and the intension of the writer.

2.17.8 Teaching Vocabulary

The study of vocabulary is highly victimized in all language teaching, yet there is increasing evidence both from L1 and L2 acquisition, studying semantic relation is very essential for receiving messages. There is one factor that infers with student's

reading is poor vocabulary, as result of the interference with students lack the ability of reading. In other words, their reading performance is very poor. Studying vocabulary is an essential factor of improving students reading ability and this should be given particular emphasis by both teachers and students. Paulston (1973: 168) adds “*Vocabulary study is the process of learning words Item by item. We can distinguish between vocabulary taught for productive and receptive use*”.

In grammar class all words are taught for productive use, for the ability to recall these words for communicative reason, the context words are to be taught.

Content words are those which are connected with the semantic rather than grammatical meaning, e.g. table, dog, run. But in grammar the concentration should be placed on function words. Function words are those which are connected with grammatical meaning, e.g. auxiliaries, articles and conjunctions.

In reading great emphasis should be placed on content words, which clarify 90% of the meaning of the passage.

2.17.9 .Learning words

A word has been learned when we:

- 1- Understanding the meaning and pronunciation.
- 2- Recognize it in written and spoken.
- 3- Relate to appropriate object or concept.

- 4- Using it in the suitable grammatical form.
- 5- In writing spell it correctly.
- 6- Use it with words it correctly goes with. Identify if it is formal or informal word.

The researcher considers these as essential concepts of teaching a word, so teachers should to investigate that all learners were achieved the understanding of concepts.

2.18. Features of a good comprehension

A course book should include a few exercises involve retelling the content of one text in another form. Marianne. Gelce, (1984: 226) says: one approach: liner ones would be to finish through a syllabus, or book, converting each structure thoroughly at prescribed time.

There are some criteria for a good text book as harmer (1985) states that *“a good text book : contains lively and interesting material, sensible progression of language. Shows what has to be learnt, summarizing what has been studied. Can be systematic about the vocabulary presented. Relieve the teacher from the pressure of having to think of original material for every class. The second point is very important for the text book material should summarize what the students have studied by recycling and reinforcing from time to time should be clear through content of the text”*.

2.19. Developing reading comprehension

Reading comprehension requires motivation, mental frame work for holding ideas, concentration and good study techniques, here are some suggestions:

1. Broaden a broad background

Broad background knowledge by reading newspapers, magazines and books.

2. Know the structure of paragraphs

Good writers construct paragraphs that have a beginning, middle and end. Often, the first sentence will give an over view that helps and provides a frame work for adding details.

3. Anticipate and predict

Really smart readers try to anticipate the author and predict future ideas and questions.

4. Look for the method of organization is the material organization is the material organized doxologically, logically, functionally, spatially or hierarchical.

5. Create motivation and interest preview material, ask questions and discuss idea with class mates. The stranger interest, the greater comprehension.

6. Pay attention to supporting cues.

Study pictures, graphs and headings. Read the first and last paragraph in a chapter, or the first and last sentence in each section.

7. Highlight, summarize and review.

To develop a deeper understanding, readers have to high, summarize and review important ideas.

8. Build a good vocabulary

9. Most educated people, this is a life time project . the best way to improve vocabulary is to use a dictionary regularly, carry around a pocket dictionary and use it to look up new words. Or keep a list of words to look up at the end of the day, concentration roots, prefixes and endings. (Margaret Rouse, Nov, 2005)

2.20. Reading strategies

The following strategies might be used by readers in a foreign language classroom. These strategies are either effective or ineffective.

Good readers always employ effective reading strategies' which are considered to be ineffective.

In this context Parotte (1993: 173) suggests the ideas below:

A- Effective strategies are provided in following points:

1- Looking for a topic sentence in a paragraph

2- Try to use the context to work out the meaning of unfamiliar word.

- 3- Mentally translating the passage where complicated syntax or clause structure has led to confusion.
- 4- Trying to identify implicit logical relationships between sentences and sentences, paragraph and paragraph.
- 5- Try to distinguish between major and subordinate assertions.
- 6- Speculating about the content of the text on the basis of headings pictures and introductory sentences.
- 7- Choosing to use a combination of strategies according to the nature of the text.

B- Ineffective strategies include the following points:

1. Mouthing the word.
2. Mentally translating everything.
3. Using a dictionary to find the meaning of all new words.

2.21. Previous Studies

In the following section samples of previous studies on the related fields will be discussed:

EFL students Attitude towards using L1 in teaching comprehension in ELT classroom By:

Ibrahim Altype Mohammed. (1998)

The study investigates EFL students' attitude towards using Arabic in EFL class-room and using of mono and bilingual dictionaries. It also tries to identify the linguistic area

where Arabic can be effectively used especially in reading comprehension.

Another thesis reported entitled:

An investigation of factors affecting speed and comprehension among second year, students in the Faculty of Education of Khartoum University.

Written by: Fatima A/ Rahman. This research attempts to investigate the direct reasons affecting reading ability. It is to test student's comprehension rate and speed as well as word and phrase recognition abilities.

The findings of this study states that teaching reading should concentrate on teaching reading as a skill for its own sake and not only for information, vocabulary presentation or structure reinforcement.

Finally another study written by Salah Eldin Mohammed, University of Khartoum, November, 2000.

The researcher describes reading as an essential element in language learning. It supports and develops other skills and plays an important role in vocabulary acquisition.

The study aims to discover if there is a deficiency in reading comprehension skills, specifically with two techniques of skimming and scanning.

The researcher reached the following findings:

- Learning is best achieved when the new information builds on the background knowledge and previous information.
- Reading is a complex socio-linguistic process.

Summary

It is considered that the above mentioned studies play a significant role in developing language learning process. Therefore, the researcher would like to conclude that more attention should be paid to the teaching of reading comprehension which contributes to the improvement of language skills generally and reading skills particularly.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.0. Introduction

In this chapter the researcher will state the procedures and techniques used for collecting the data. The reasons behind which the questionnaire and observation have been chosen as effective tools for collection will be mentioned. In addition to this the researcher will mention the problems which came across while distributing the questionnaire.

The researcher will also illustrate how the validity and reliability of the questionnaire are measured.

3.1. Sample

For the purpose of the study, group of teachers from Atbara Secondary Schools are selected for responding to a questionnaire and ten teachers are selected for preparing reading comprehension lessons to be attended with the researcher at Atbara Secondary Schools. Those teachers are varied according to their ages and experiences. They are both male and female.

3.2. Instrument

The researcher has collected the data for the research through a questionnaire and an observation. The

questionnaire is considered to be one of the most well-known and effective tool for data collection.

3.2.1 Questionnaire

The researcher designed questionnaire of twelve statements. Forty teachers from Atbara Secondary Schools are selected for responding to questionnaire. The questionnaire has three options for answer which are agree, disagree and not sure. The statements concern with the process of teaching comprehension, sub-skills of reading and the text-book of teaching comprehension.

The researcher has chosen this tool for these reasons:

1. It is very effective.
2. The questions or the statements provided can be understood by the respondents directly.
3. The statements can be answered within very short time.
4. It makes the respondent aware of what the investigator is seeking.
5. The number of respondents is very limited.(forty teachers form Atbara Secondary Schools are selected for responding to a questionnaire).

3.2.2. The Observation

The researcher attempts to provide the study with documented data which reflects what is actually going on inside the classes of Atbara Secondary Schools. This is

thought to help seeing how the teachers implementing the process of teaching reading comprehension. The observation sessions would act as a complement for the teachers' responses to the questionnaire.

3.3. Validity

The researcher has set up a committee to revise the statements provided in the questionnaire and the statements in the list of the observation sheet. The committee includes teachers and experts in Atbara town. The questionnaire and observation sheet were given to the three experts all of them have been teaching at Nile Valley University.

The committee has suggested the following modifications:

1. The researcher has suggested seventeen items for the questionnaire. But only twelve of these items have been accepted by the committee.
2. Some of the statements have been suggested to be written as recommendations.
3. The committee suggested to the researcher to add the options.
4. The committee has advised the researcher to divide the statements in to sections as from (1-5) the statements deal with the process of teaching reading comprehension, the way, the criteria and how completing the reading session, where as the statements (6-9) included the difficulties

which encounter the students when they deal with reading comprehension. Finally the statements (10-12) deal with the text books which are provided for teaching. (see appendix I).

For an observation the committee suggested to the researcher to add the statements and to use the scientific language to set up the statements and some statements are omitted (see appendix II).

3.4. Reliability

After reaching the final copy. Ten copies of the questionnaire were distributed to two groups of secondary level teachers. Then ten copies were collected back for testing reliability, they were analyzed statically then, correlation between the two groups of responses of the questionnaire was made.

$$r = \frac{N \sum xy - (\sum x) \cdot (\sum y)}{\sqrt{[N \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2] - [N \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

$$N = 5$$

$$\sum xy = 42$$

$$\sum x^2 = 115$$

$$\sum x^2 = 36$$

$$\sum x = 1$$

$$\sum y = 4$$

$$r = \frac{5.42 - 4}{\sqrt{52900 - 5184}} = \frac{206}{218} = \underline{\underline{0.94}}$$

3.5. The subject

The questionnaire is mainly designed for secondary school teachers in Atbara, because they are highly concerned with the subject matter of the research. Only 40 teachers have been taken randomly to present the sample. For an observation 10 teachers are requested to prepare reading comprehension lesson.

3.6. Procedure

The researcher has designed a questionnaire for collecting data which contains twelve items covering the relevant areas of the research. In the closed questionnaire the respondents are requested to choose one of the options provided for each item by putting a tick.

The researcher has distributed forty copies to secondary school teachers in Atbara town. While distributing and collecting the questionnaire, the researcher has come across the following problems:

1. The completed questionnaire was not handed on time.
2. Some teachers have accepted to answer the questionnaire unwillingly.
3. Some teachers showed little interest toward the questionnaire and asked about the benefit of the study, which made the researcher very surprised!
4. The distributing of the questionnaire is exhausting work.

For an observation, the researcher has designed the observation questions for collecting data which contains ten items. The headmaster or the headmistress of the certain school were met to permit conducting the observation sessions. Then the researcher met the target teachers and explained her task and purpose and requested the teachers to prepare and conduct reading comprehension lessons, they gratefully agreed.

There are some problems which faced the researcher

- 1- The target teacher was absent
- 2- Some teachers had formal meeting with the headmaster.
- 3- Some teachers prepared revision lesson.

Chapter Four

Data Analysis and discussion

4.0. Introduction

In this chapter the researcher will analyze the data collected through the questionnaire and an observation. The data collected contain thirteen items which are provided in tables illustrated below. Then the frequency tables transformed into graphs. The researcher's analysis of these tables is based on certain criterion which is illustrated below.

Key to analysis

1. Least minority	0-----25%
2. Minority	26-----50%
3. Majority	51-----75%
4. Great majority	76-----100%

4.1. Data interpretation

In the following, the statistical results of the statements are illustrated in tables and figures.

The sole aim of the teacher when teaching reading comprehension is to ensure students understanding.

Table (4.1.1) Aim of teaching reading comprehension

Option	frequency	percentage
Agree	33	82.5%
Disagree	7	17.5%
Not sure	0	00.0%
Total	40	100.0%

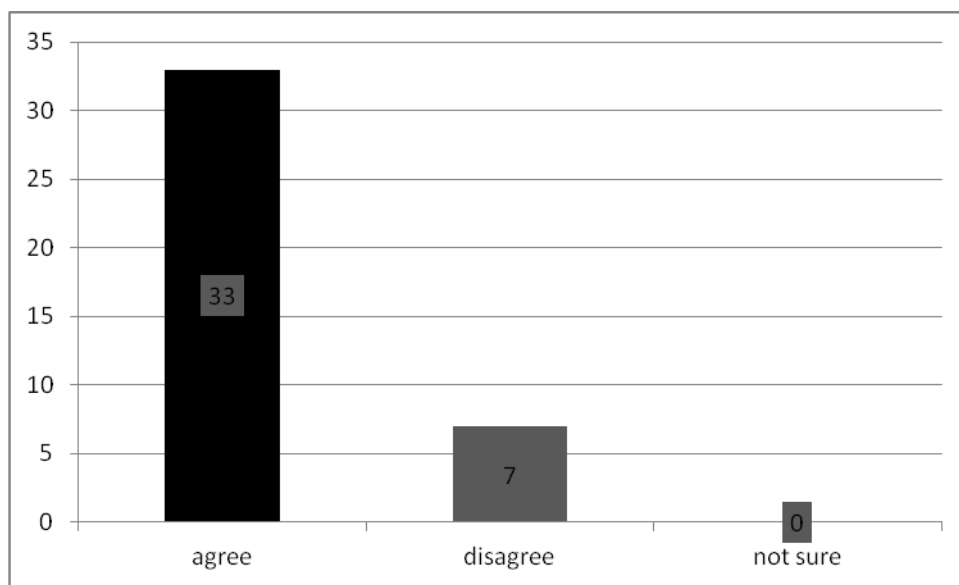


Figure (1) Aim of teaching reading comprehension

In figure one and the table (4-1-1), the great majority of the respondents (82.5%) agree with the statement that the sole aim of teaching comprehension is to ensure students understanding. This shows that teaching comprehension should focus on the activities which make the students understand what they read. However the small minority of the respondents (17.5%) disagree with the same idea. None of the respondents (0%) doubt the statement.

This conclusion proves that what the researchers has stated above is true.

Teaching English reading comprehension can be done through reading aloud.

Table(4.1.2) Reading aloud

Option	frequency	Percentage
Agree	12	30.0%
Disagree	26	65.0%
Not sure	2	5.0%
Total	40	100%

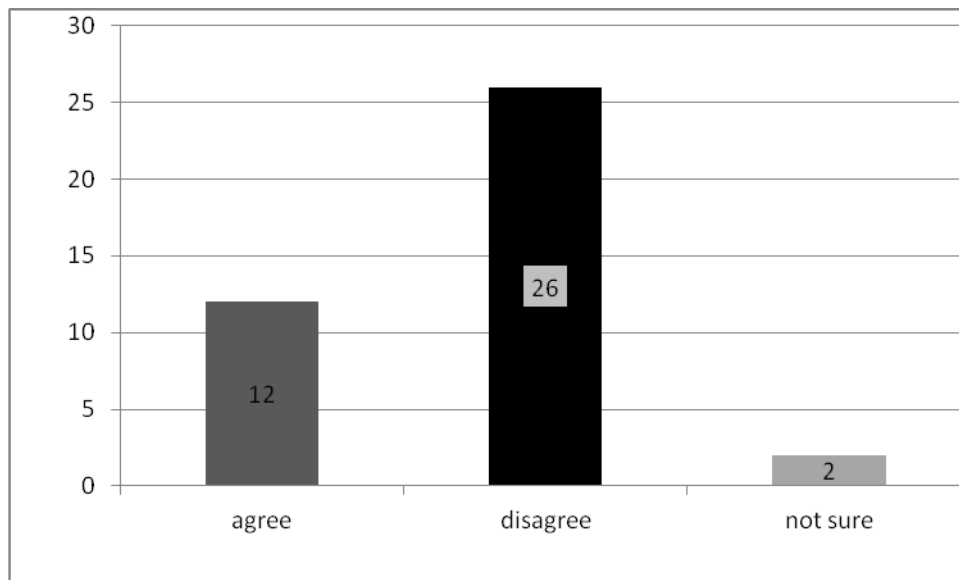


Figure 2 Reading aloud

In figure two tables (4-1-2) with regard to statistical results analysis, the minority of the respondents (30%) agree with the statement that teaching reading comprehension can be done through loud reading!

This indicates that there is ambiguity between the silent and loud reading.

While the majority of the respondents (65%) disagree with the same statement. on the other hands the small minority of the respondents (5%) neither agree nor disagree with the statement mentioned above.

The most important aim of reading comprehension is teaching vocabulary.

Table (4-1-3) The importance of teaching vocabulary

Option	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	25	62.5%
Disagree	13	32.5%
Not sure	2	05.0%
Total	40	100.0%

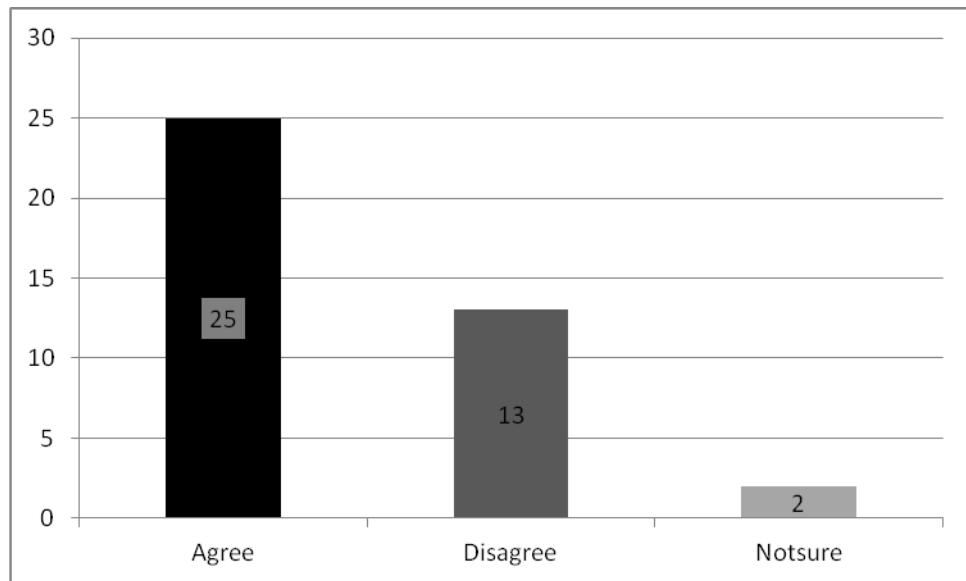


Figure (3)The importance of teaching

vocabulary

In the figure three and the table (4-1-3), the majority of the respondents (62.5%) agree with the statement that the most important part of reading comprehension is teaching vocabulary .while the minority of the respondents (32.5%) disagree with the idea. However the least minority of the respondents (5%) are not sure about the statement.

The analysis of the statement shows that studying vocabulary is an essential factor of improving students’ ability. The teacher should be aware of the criteria of selecting reading passages for his or her student.

Table (4.1.4) The criteria of selecting passage

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	33	82.5%

Disagree	4	10.0%
Not sure	3	7.5%
Total	40	100%

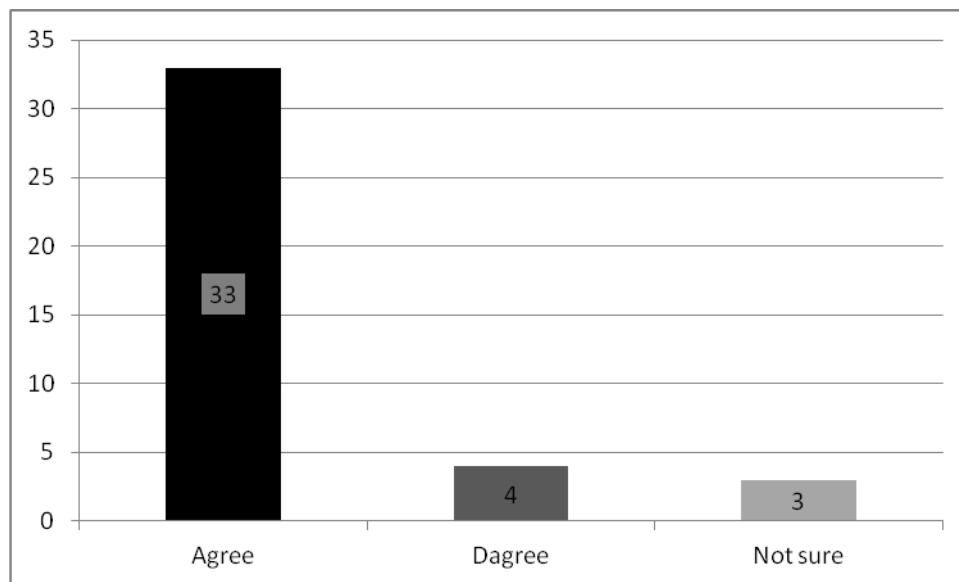


Figure (4)The criteria of selecting passage

In figure four and the table (4-1-4), the great majority of the respondents (82.5%) agree with idea that the teacher should be aware of the criteria of selecting reading passages.

The teachers are aware of the concepts and principles of teaching reading. The least minority of the respondents (10%) disagrees with idea and the small minority of the respondent (7.5%) is uncertain about the statement too.

The findings reflect that most of the subjects see that selecting of reading passages is important those who don't agree may justify their responses by that; since the passages have already designed there could not be away for selecting.

On completing the reading comprehension session, you do not offer follow up written exercises.

Table (4.1.5) The importance of the written exercise

Options	Frequency	percentage
Agree	13	32.5%
Disagree	27	67.5%
Not sure	0	00.0%
Total	40	100.0%

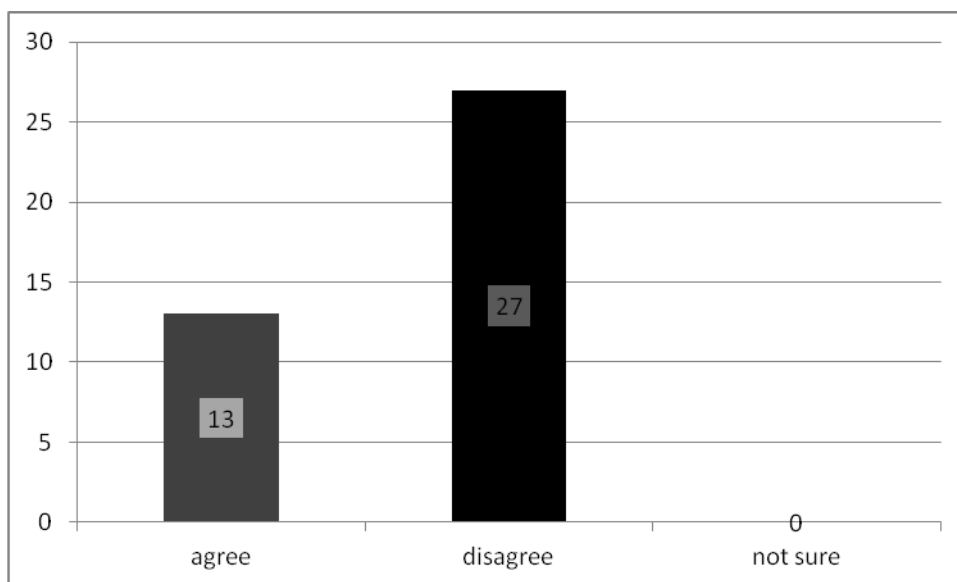


Figure (5) The importance of the written exercise

In figure five and the table (4-1-5), the minority of the respondents (32.5) Agree with the statement that on completing the reading session they don't offer follow up

written exercise. While the majority of respondents (67.5%) disagree. However none marked the third option not sure.

The findings indicate that most of the subjects provide written exercise. This indicates their awareness. It is use full for a teacher to organize the lesson stages, because it makes the teacher to think carefully about how she\he can help students before the reading task, during the reading task and after the reading task.

Some of my students encounter individual difficulties when they deal with reading comprehension.

Table (4-1-6) The difficulties of reading comprehension

Options	Frequency	percentage
Agree	34	85.0%
Disagree	0	00.0%
Not sure	6	15.0%
Total	40	100.0%

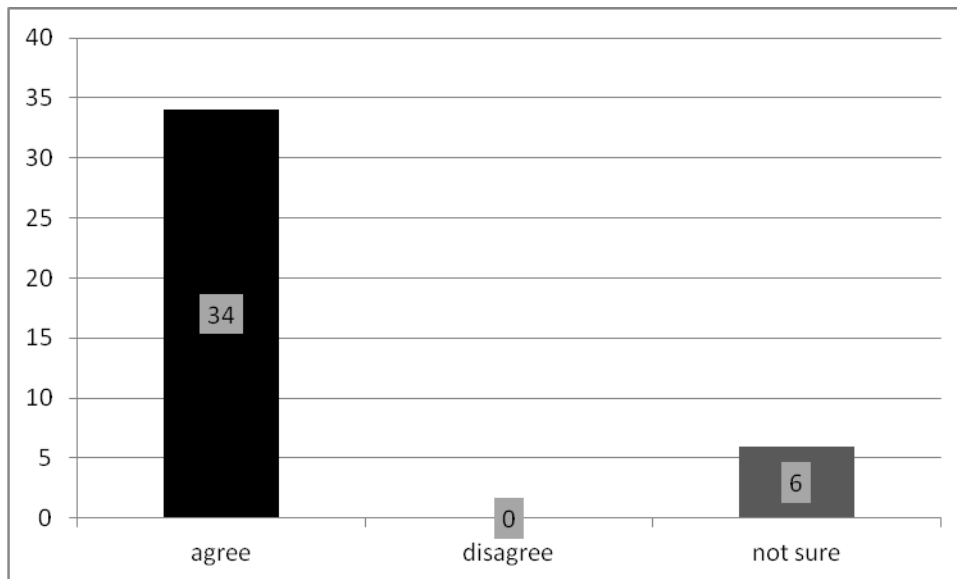


Figure (6) The difficulties of reading comprehension

In figure six and table (4.1.6) the great majority of the respondents (85.5%) agree with the idea that students encounters individual problems when they deal with comprehension. however no are marked the second option disagree while (15%) of the respondents uncertain about the same notion.

The findings show that the majority of the subjects said that the students struggle when they read comprehension because of these reasons

a- Comprehension is more than looking at the written symbols and recognizing them.

b- The complexity of employing several reading sub-skills.

Always tell my students about the purpose of reading.

Table (4-1-7) The purpose of reading session

options	Frequency	percentage
Agree	27	67.5%
Disagree	11	27.5%
Not sure	2	5.0%
total	40	100.0%

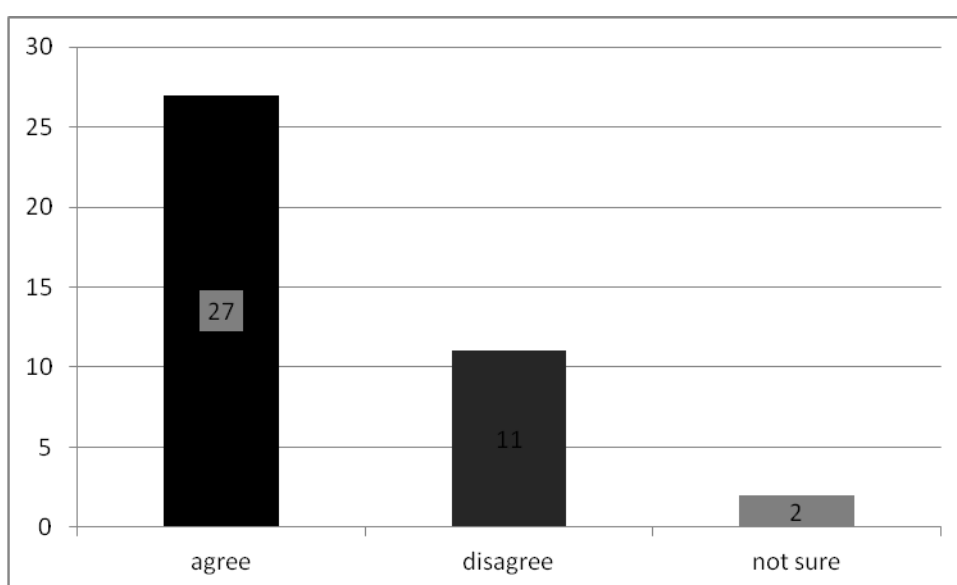


Figure (7) The purpose of reading session

In figure seven and table (4.1.7), the majority of the respondents (67.5%) agree with the statement that they always tell the students about the purpose of readings.

However the minority of the respondents (27.5%) disagree. while the small minority of the respondents (5%) are not sure.

The findings indicate that most of the respondents see it worthwhile to state the purpose of reading while teaching because students can read more actively, in a more focused way and read in a more time. However reading without stating the purpose lead to poor result. The researcher considers valuable to use the techniques of skimming and scanning. Students always struggle when they are asked to infer meaning of new words.

Table (4-1-8) Inferring the meaning of words

options	frequency	percentage
Agree	34	85%
Disagree	4	10%
Not sure	2	05%
total	40	100.0%

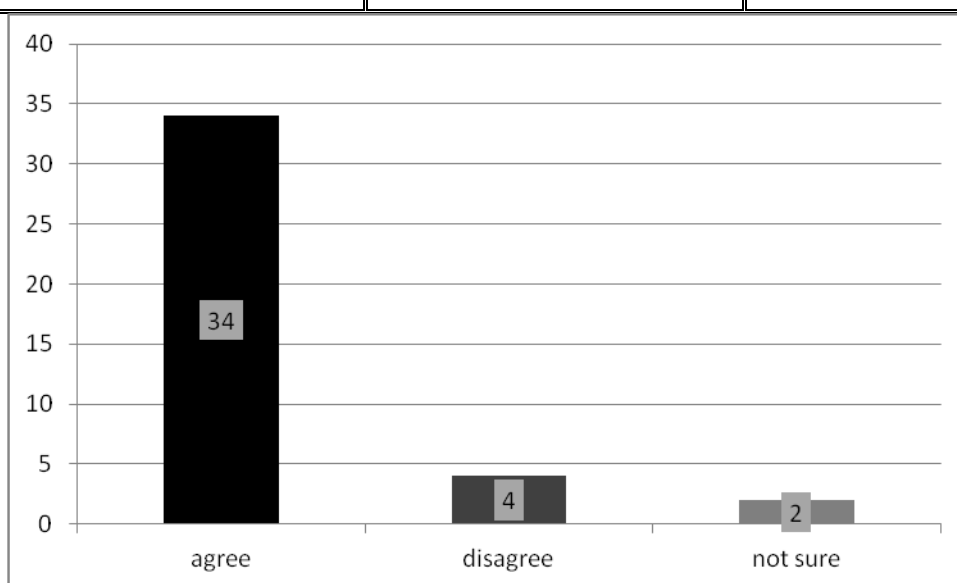


Figure (8) Inferring the meaning of words

With reference to the table (4-1-8), and figure eight, the great majority of the respondents (85%) agree with the idea that students encounter difficulties when they are asked to infer the word’s meaning. The least minority of the respondents (10%) disagree, while the small minority (5%) is not sure with the statement. The findings imply some “individual learners differences”

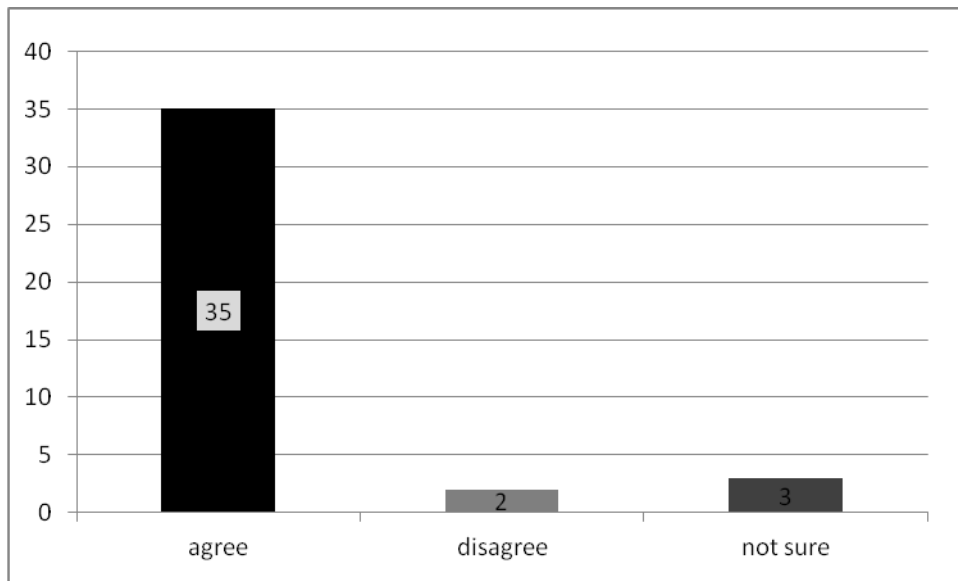
The researcher doubt whether the teachers help their students

“To read between the lines” In other words , in order to understand the hidden meaning , the student needs to be highly provided with much knowledge about the topic he is dealing with.

Some students find it difficult to predict the information.

Table (4.1.9) Predicting the information

options	frequency	percentage
Agree	35	87.5%
Disagree	2	05.0%
Not sure	3	07.5%
Total	40	100.0%



Figure(9)Predicting the information

In figure nine and the table (4.1.9), the great majority of the respondents (87.5%) agree with the statement that some students find difficult to predict the information. while the small minority of the respondents (5%) disagree and the least minority (7.5%) are not sure.

The findings imply that predicting information requires the students to anticipate what is coming. This skill widely practiced in school text books under the title guess what is happening next. (See appendix II)

It is wise enough to train students to exploit all the clues given in the passage to enable the students to practice effectively in a reading activity.

In “Spine 4” the material of reading comprehension is not sufficient

Table (4.1.10)The sufficiency of the material

options	Frequency	percentage
Agree	25	62.5%
Disagree	11	27.5%
Not sure	4	10.0%
Total	40	100.0%

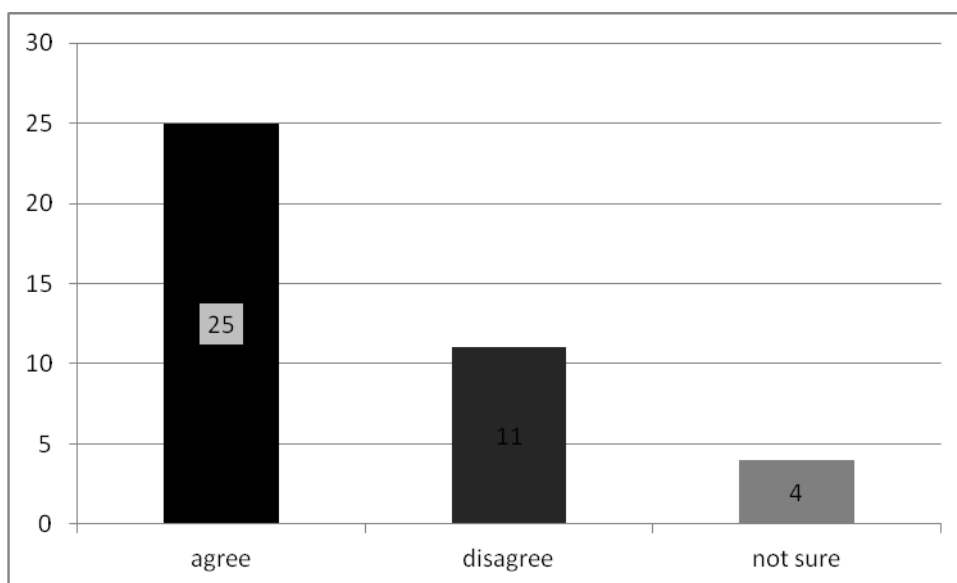


Figure (10)The sufficiency of the material

In figure ten and the table (4.1.10), the majority of the respondents (62.5%), agree with the statement that the material is not sufficient. while the minority of the respondents

(27.5%), disagree, however, the least minority of the respondents (10%) are not sure.

The findings imply that text book materials may discourage students from giving adequate attention to learning foreign language inside the class room environment.

In “Spine 5” some of reading comprehension passages are not effective.

Table (4.1.11) The effectiveness of comprehension passages

options	Frequency	percentage
Agree	23	57.5%
Disagree	15	37.5%
Not sure	4	05.0%
Total	40	100.0%

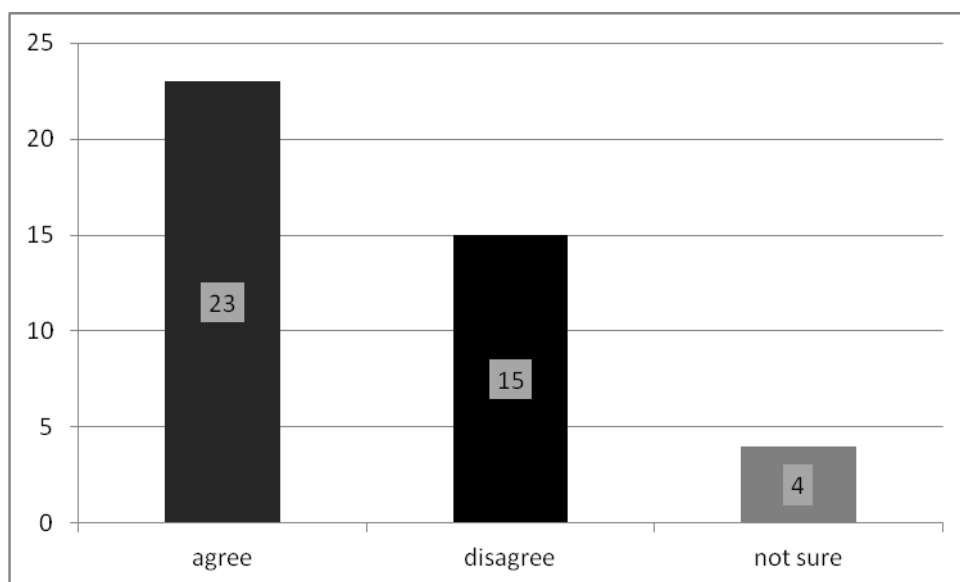


Figure (11) The effectiveness of comprehension passages

In figure eleven and table (4.1.11) the majority of the respondents (52.5%) agree with the statement that in Spine 5 some of reading passages are not effective. While the minority of the respondents (37.5%) disagree and the least minority of the respondents (5%) are not sure.

The findings indicate that the majority of the respondents see that some passages in Spine 5 are not effective. However those who do not agree may justify their responses by that; since some passages are about Sudanese topics thus, are effective!?. In "Spine 6" the material of reading comprehension is not interesting

Table (4.1.12) Interesting of the material

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	22	55.0%
Disagree	14	35.0%
Not sure	4	10.0%
Total	40	100.0%

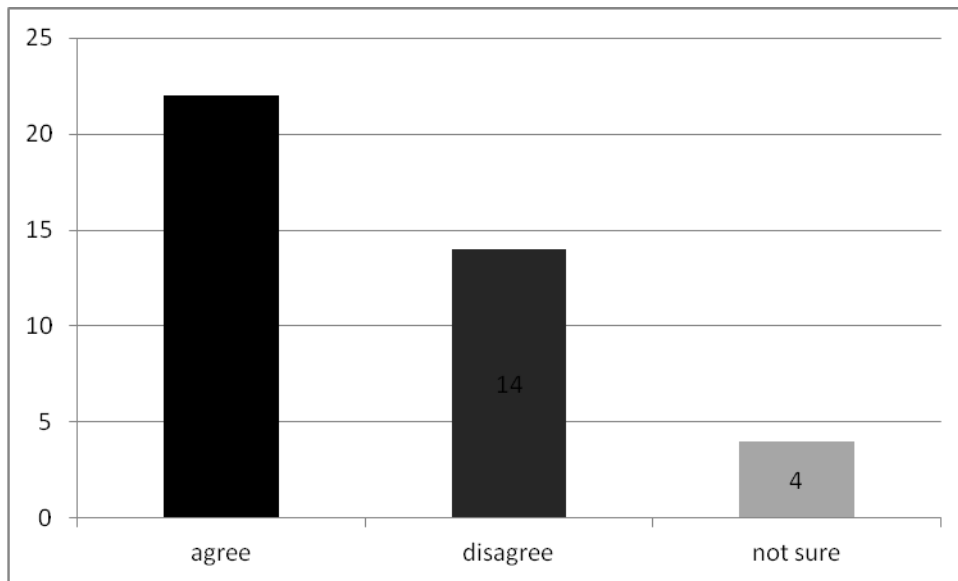


Figure (12) Interesting of the material

In figure twelve and table (4-1-12), the majority of the respondents(55%) agree with the statement that in” spine 6” the material of reading comprehension is not interesting .while the minority of the respondents(35%) disagree and the least minority of the respondents (10%) are not sure. The findings indicate that the majority of the respondents see that the material in “spine6” is not interesting .the researcher reminds that, the stronger interest, the greater comprehension.

If you have any training experience please, mention where and when?

Table (4-1-13) The importance of the training

Trained	22	55%
untrained	18	45%

In table (4-1-13); more than half of the respondents (55%) have training experience, however less than half of the respondents (45%) have not training experience. The findings indicate that training is essential and the researcher see it is great that the most of the teachers have being trained and wish to those who have not training experience to find a good and chance of training experience.

4.2. Interpretation of the data collected through the observation.

As far as advocated concepts and ideas of teaching reading comprehension is concerned and at Atbara secondary schools having observed a group of English language teachers at random, the observer has arrived at the following results.

The researcher's analysis of the statements based on certain criteria which is

$$\frac{\text{Subjects Frequency}}{\text{Total Number}} \times 100\% = \text{valid percentage}$$

Total Number

(Number of the subjects 10)

4.2.1. Motivation of the students.

With regards to statistical results analysis the most of the subjects (80%) motivate the students. While a small number of the subject (20%) disregard this factor.

The analysis shows that most of the subjects are aware of the advantage of the motivation. The motivation of the teacher to her/his student is a fundamental concept for its guides and toward the language more.

4.2.2. Introducing topic before reading.

i.e. (warm up)

All the subject (100%) introduced and discussed the topic before reading the text. The finding indicates that the majority of the teachers implement the procedures of teaching reading lesson in planning way.

4.2.3. Presentation of new lexical items

Using (translation or pictures, real objects and mime)

With regards to statistical results analysis, the most of the subject (70%) using the translation technique to present the new items. However the few of the subjects (30%) using the other techniques. The analysis indicates that most of the teachers always resort translation more than using realia, facial expressions and mime.

4.2.4. Practicing of new lexical items using (Drilling or Repetition, word-building and group work).

There are about (60%) subjects who use drilling method in practicing new lexical items. While (30%) who use the method of the repetition. However only (10%) who use group-work. In comparison to other method such as

word-building, pair work, group work and word-building, it is observed that the weak performance of these methods, it might be for the fear of using new techniques.

4.2.5. Loud reading while teaching reading comprehension.

With reference to the results, less than half of the subjects (40%) let the students practise the loud reading. while the most of the subjects (60%) let the students practice the silent reading only. The findings indicate that both of the loud reading and the silent reading are valuable for learning language.

4.2.6. Using of audio visual-Aids.

With regard to statistical results analysis, the small number of the subjects (30%) use the audio visual-Aids. While the most of the subjects (70%) have not used the audio visual Aids while teaching comprehension. The findings reflect that majority of the teachers have not used the audio visual- Aids while teaching. However using of these techniques enable students to learn the language effectively.

4.2.7. Role of the teacher while reading session.

The results concerning the role of the teacher indicate that most of the subjects (60%) are aware of the

teacher's role while the minority of the subject (30%) act as instructor only. On other hand only (10%) who hang the every word set by student.

The findings show that there are several concepts of the teacher's role which is playing an important role for the students towards the language.

4.2.8. Class size and group work.

The results concerning the class size and group work show that the most of the subjects (60%) use the technique of group work. In contrast to less than half of the subjects (40%) are against the idea. The findings show that the positive attitudes of teachers towards this type of technique. On the other hand it is observed that the class rooms help the teachers to divide the students in group work.

4.2.9. Group work checking.

The statistical results show that half of the subjects (50%) check the work of each group. While half of the subjects (50%) directly are against the idea.

The analysis indicates that the half of the teachers apply the technique. However the half of the teachers against the idea. Here it is necessary to state this fact, the stage is necessary for allowing students control over the accuracy of learning English language and enable the

teachers to know their students' level and trying to treat the students' weakness.

4.2.10. Comparing the material with other resource.

With regard to the statistical results analysis, none of the subjects (0%) use other resource of material to compare and contrast with the material he/she deal with it. The findings indicate that comparing the material with other resource is valuable for learning language effectively.

4.3. Testing the hypotheses

The first hypothesis assumes that English reading comprehension causes some problems to students at secondary level schools. The first finding is that, reading represents some difficulties which students have with the sub-skills of reading comprehension. This was censured by findings (4) and (5). The second hypothesis is that, the students' weakness in reading comprehension is due to both teachers and students' performance in the class room, more over the material is insufficient. This hypothesis is affirmed by the two last findings that illustrate the students' weakness of reading comprehension is due to many factors which are:

Method of teaching, curriculum design and lack of material, but teachers' performance in the class room is the most important.

Chapter Five

Conclusion & Recommendations

5.1. Summary

The study aims at investigating the teaching of English reading comprehension at secondary level schools in Atbara town.

The hypothesis of the study is the” comprehension causes some problems to students at secondary level schools”.

The researcher has then reviewed “ in chapter two“ the process of teaching reading comprehension and proposed procedure for teaching comprehension and how to develop reading comprehension .sub skills of reading comprehension are reviewed , too previous studies about the relevant topics were also reviewed.

The methodology of the research was described in chapter three. The sample included 40 secondary school English language teachers. In chapter four the researcher discussed and analyzed the data obtained through the questionnaire and an observation.

The questionnaire investigated the process of teaching reading comprehension and how to complete the reading session, the difficulties which encounter the students when they deal with reading comprehension and the materials of the text – books which are provided for teaching comprehension.

5.2. Findings

The researcher arrived at the following findings after the data have been analyzed.

1- Most of the students encounter individual difficulties when they deal with reading comprehension, thus students need to be alert.

2- Silent reading has primacy over loud reading.

3-The most important part of teaching comprehension is teaching vocabulary.

4- Reading comprehension is an essential element in language learning. It supports and develops other skills and plays an important role in vocabulary acquisition.

5- Practicing in reading sub-skills is not an easy task.

6-When the teachers face some problems of failure or un - effective process, the text book materials may be one of those problems.

7-There are some criteria for a good text book, thus the teacher has to be aware of the criteria of selecting reading passages, and the passage selected should be of considerable interest.

8- Comprehension is the understanding of what is being read and it is the understanding of and it is the ultimate goal of reading, therefore, there are seven strategies identified to enhance reading comprehension:

- 1- Comprehension monitoring.
- 2- Cooperative learning.
- 3- Use of graphic and semantic organizes.
- 4- Question generation
- 5- Question answering
- 6- Story structure
- 8- Summarizing (This part is taken from literature Review)
- 9- Most of the teachers are aware of the procedures of teaching reading comprehension.

5.3. Recommendations

The researcher suggests the following recommendations according to the research findings

- 1- Students should be trained how to deal with unfamiliar words and to build a good vocabulary.
- 2- English teachers should permanently be trained.
- 3- It is wise enough to contrast the material of session reading with other resource of reading, for example, (the Nile course).
- 4- Literature is a valuable and the decision of reactive worthy of teachers support.
- 5- The student should be encouraged by their teachers and parents to go beyond the boundaries of their text-books.
- 6- The students should be trained to concentrate on the general meaning of the whole text rather than trying to get the meaning of every item in isolation.

7- It is necessary to find co-operation between the teachers and syllabus designer

Why? Because through that can be achieved a degree of 'fitness' between the needs and aims of the learners and the activities which will take place in the classroom.

8- School text-books should be supplemented with more reading activities to meet the students' needs.

9- It is necessary for teachers to give the students opportunities to assess what they have been learning.

10- The language in The Spine series should be adjusted to suit even the weak students.

11- The students should be sufficiently trained to

a- Ask comprehension question.

b- Practice authentic material.

c- Use and carry around a pocket dictionary.

12- It is necessary for teachers to consider the factors and processes of teaching reading comprehension

5.4. Questions for future research

The following are suggested topic for research

1- Is it necessary for teachers to vary in their approaches, methods and techniques?

2- If you want to be an effective ESL teacher, you need to keep up with current researches and new techniques. Is It too difficult to do?

- 3- The experts and designers of the text-books should evaluate achieving of objectives by the end of every year, using different instruments (i.e. questionnaire).
- 4- Could the experts and those who responsible for education and its development establish the training centers in every where, as the teachers spread for teaching?!
- 5- Technology is essential for education, never the less there are some teachers and students have not used it ! Do the supervisors, teachers and parent discuss the obstacles and establish the solution?

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http:// www.indian.edu/1517whatisreading .

<http://www.readingresource.net/teaching reading.com.htm>

Appendix One

Questionnaire

Assessing the Teaching of English Reading Comprehension in secondary school.

Dear teacher,

This questionnaire is designed for research purpose, the researcher conducts the questionnaire to assess and find out about the reading comprehension in secondary school.

Please choose one option which is designed as agree, disagree and not sure.

1-The sole aim of the teacher when teaching reading comprehension is to ensure the students understanding.

Agree disagree not
sure

2-Teaching English reading comprehension can be done through loud reading.

Agree disagree not sure

3- The most important part of reading comprehension is teaching vocabulary.

Agree disagree not sure

4-The teacher should be aware of the criteria of selecting reading passages for his or her students.

Agree disagree not sure

5-While completing the reading comprehension lesson, you don't offer follow-up written exercises.

Agree disagree not sure

6-Some of my students encounter individual difficulties when they deal with reading comprehension.

Agree disagree not sure

7-Always tell my students about the purpose of reading.

Agree disagree not sure

8-Students always struggle when they are asked to infer, meaning of new words

Agree disagree not sure

9- Some students find it difficult to predict the information.

Agree disagree not sure

10-In "Spine 4" the material of reading comprehension is not sufficient.

Agree disagree not sure

11-In "Spine "5 some of reading passages are not effective.

Agree disagree not sure

12- In "Spine 6" the material of reading comprehension is not interesting.

Agree disagree not

sure

13-If you have any training experience, please mention where and when.

Appendix Two

The Observation Questions

Data is collected, through attending formal lessons with teachers at their schools. These statements are set for the process of the observation. The statements are arranged as the follows:

1. Motivation of the students.
2. Introducing topic before reading.
3. Presentation of new lexical items using
(Translation or using real objects, pictures and mime).
4. Practicing of new lexical items using (drilling or repetition, word-building and group work)
5. Loud reading while teaching reading comprehension.
6. Using of audio visual-Aids.
7. Role of teacher while reading session.
8. Class size and group work.
9. Group work checking.
10. Comparing the material with other resource.

Appendix Three

Course Book Text

Helen Keller

Helen Keller was an American author and lecturer who was able to overcome great physical hardships. She suffered a serious illness and she became blind. Deaf and dumb before she was two years old however, she did not give up hope. She struggled very hard in order to live an active and useful.

In her first book, the story of my life's, she tells us of her early childhood which was at first gloomy and sad. She was desperate until something happened which completely changed her life. The third of March 1887 was a day which she would remember for a long time.

Can you guess what happened on that day?

It marked a turning point in her life because on that day she met her teacher and guide, Miss Sullivan, for the first time. Like Helen, Miss Sullivan herself had lost her sense of sight when she was young, but she later recovered it. She was perhaps the best person to understand the problems of those who were blind. She volunteered to stand by Helen and take care of her education.

Can you guess how Helen learnt to speak?

(Remember how she learned to read and write)

her first efforts at learning to speak were by feeling with her fingers the movements of her own and her mother's lips and throat in a very short time she was able to say the six basic sounds' P A S T I.

it was her ambition now to study at Radcliffe university she sat the entrance exam with other students who were neither blind nor deaf . To her great joy, she passed as well as English, she studied many foreign languages such as Latin. French and German during her four years of study at the university she did not ignore her talents and creative imagination.