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THE EFFECTS OF ESP COURSES AND CONTENT-FAMILIARTY ON THE STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

An Action Research on the Master Students of Developmental Psychology at Abu Bakr Belkaid University, Tlemcen.

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DEDICATION

To my parents for their continuous encouragement and support.

To my sisters Rabia, Hidayet and my brother Ilyes.

To my aunts and cousins.

To my friends.

ABSTRACT

Using English nowadays as a lingua franca within the newly emerging world-order and international market-place, learning English for specific purposes is of an urgent need. To better cope with this demand, researchers around the world publish their research articles and books in that language. As a result, an adequate knowledge of the reading skills along with effective reading strategies have become *a defacto* for better access to the up-date materials.

In spite of this significance, teaching the reading skills in the ESP context seems to be taken for granted without paying more attention to the pivotal role of selecting appropriate content as far as interesting texts and suitable activities.

To achieve this end, the present action research aims, basically, at diagnosing the reading difficulties encountered by Master students of the Developmental Psychopathology for the purpose of providing them with reading courses drawn closely from their subject courses, as well as raising their awareness to the set of reading strategies. This is meant to see whether this may enhance their reading comprehension and therefore compensate for their language proficiency.

This research work is therefore composed of four chapters. The first one highlights some theoretical points relevant to the present investigation. The second one seeks to expose an overview of the ESP teaching and learning situation at the department of psychology alongside with the sample population, emphasizing, additionally, on the research methods and procedures undertaken in this study. The third chapter reports, analyses and

interprets the results obtained using both qualitative and quantitative data analysis. The final one, on the other hand, aims at suggesting some pedagogical implications and recommendations for the purpose of enhancing the rank of the ESP reading courses and advocates some critical comments about the quality of an effective ESP teacher.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AC: Action Research**.**

BMD: Bachelor Master Doctorate.

CBA: Content-Based Approach.

CBI: Content-Based Instruction.

DSM: Diagnostic Statistical Manual.

EAP: English for Academic purposes.

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

EGAP: English for General Academic Purposes.

EOP: English for Occupational Purposes.

ESAP: English for Specific Academic Purposes.

ESL: English as a Second Language.

ESP: English for Specific Purposes.

GE: General English.

LMD: Licence Master Doctorate.

NAI: Needs Analysis and Identification.

SD: Standard Deviation.

TALO: Text As Linguistic Object.

TAVI: Text As a Vehicle of Information.

Var: Variance.

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General Introduction

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Due to the process of globalization, the English language has become progressively a *global language* between nations outside the English speaking countries. Thus, people around the world are increasingly becoming aware of the necessity and vital importance of learning this language having some specific purposes in minds such as reading materials and abstracts, carrying out communications for their social, economic and educational purposes.

The importance of English as a global language has led the ministries of higher education all over the world to offer ESP courses in their universities and institutions. Therefore, their concerns, over a long period of time, have been to find ways to enhance the students' motivation and improve their language proficiency in language activities.

Teaching English for specific purposes is regarded as being an approach to language teaching aiming at catering for the learners' needs. The ESP teachers are seen as materials providers and course designers whose ultimate goal is to prepare and help learners to become communicatively competent in their area of concern.

The available literature in ESP has revealed that communication does not only refer to the exchange of information between persons who are present in space and time but also taking into account the learners' needs and requirements for a better performance. Being aware, for instance, that the ESP learners require reading up-date materials, it is for a great necessary to establish an effective communication therefore training them to read these

texts focusing on the main strategies that may be used during their reading comprehension.

Though second language researchers on the reading skills emphasize on the importance of prior knowledge activation for better reading comprehension, ESP teachers, in general, do not give an importance to such strategies. They most of the time neglect it, focusing totally on pushing their learners towards the habits of reading texts directly with no effort to draw their attention to relate it to what they know. Starting from this idea, it should be stated that the ESP learners are not only constrained due to insufficiency or lack of linguistic competence, but are rather unaware of using strategies while reading.

This research work is, fundamentally, based on strategy-training on master students of Developmental Psychopathology. Due the nature of the present study, the texts provided to them correspond with their subjects' content. However, it is worth mentioning, at this level, that the focus has not been made on the Brinton's *et al* (1989) severe adjunst model. The rationale behind this, is to make them aware of the range of strategies that might be useful to approach content-familiarity so that to gradually become independent readers, particularly that the field of psychology is often seen as a discipline which requires learners to read up-date articles as well as writing reports, justifying their answers by what they have read (Norton, 2009).

This research, thus, aims at investigating whether an ESP course in psychology- based reading may enhance the students' reading comprehension despite their language weaknesses. Hence, the purpose guiding this study is:

- To identify whether our ESP teachers teach reading strategies and determine the students' interests on these courses.
- To investigate whether training students to read psychology-based themes may improve their reading comprehension.
- To display the significance of content-familiarity to increase reading comprehension, i.e., identifying whether the learners compensate for their language weaknesses.

Accordingly, to achieve these objectives, the following research question has been proposed:

> *What might be the relative effects of ESP courses and content-familiarity on the students' reading comprehension and language proficiency?*

In an attempt to attain a reliable answer to the above general question, the following research questions have been reformulated:

- Are our ESP learners interested in the ESP reading courses offered to them, and therefore using the appropriate reading strategies?
- Do our ESP learners perform better in reading comprehension when providing them with psychology-based themes?
- Do psychology-based themes lead our learners to compensate for their language weaknesses by using their reading strategies in general and background strategy in particular?

In order to answer the above research questions, the following hypotheses have been put forward:

- Our ESP learners are not interested in the ESP courses provided to them, and are almost unaware of the range of reading strategies useful to a suitable comprehension.

- Our ESP learners perform better in reading comprehension when providing them with psychology-based themes.

- Psychology-based themes lead learners to compensate for their language weakness by using their background strategy.

On the basis of this problematics, four chapters have been proposed in this present research. The first chapter, being a theoretical one, aims at providing a review of literature related to this area of research, including ESP courses, the role of the ESP teacher in designing reading courses. In addition to this, a centre focus has been put on reviewing some researches on the effects of using content-based approach on ESP learning.

The second chapter, being a quasi-practical one, attempts at offering, a more or less, clear description of the psychology department as well as the subjects' needs and lacks through the use of an action research, focusing mainly on four phases, namely identifying the problem, planning, acting and finally evaluating their outcomes. In this sense, data have been collected through the submission of two types of research instruments at the psychology department of ABU BAKR BELKAID University.

As far as the third chapter is concerned, and based on the research tools submitted in this research study, two approaches have been used for analyzing data, i.e., quantitative and qualitative methods. This has been undertaken with the aim of reducing the bias of using one approach. Moreover, a comparison has been made between pre and post- test results

with the purpose of assessing   the students' progress before and after the training sessions.

The fourth chapter exposes pedagogical implications for the ESP teachers to enrich their reading courses, by suggesting a remedial work to assist our learners compensate for their language weaknesses through the use of reading strategies, mainly those of activating background knowledge.

Chapter One

CHAPTER ONE: READING IN ESP / EAP CONTEXT.

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1.1. INTRODUCTION

The needs for reading in an ESP / EAP context in hope to achieve some academic success lead the reading skill to establish itself as one of the most important skills for learners. This necessity implies a careful understanding of what ESP / EAP reading courses generally entails.

Accordingly, the review of literature provides a theoretical framework for some important aspects and researches relevant to the current study of ESP / EAP reading. These aspects are the role of the ESP / EAP teachers, the use of Content-Based Approach and the process of reading comprehension as well.

1.2. DEFINITION OF EAP/ ESP

ESP is used to refer to the fact of imparting the students with scientific and technical jargon based on their needs while learning English. A key concept in ESP teaching is to teach the students the bits of English related to their field of specialization such as science, engineering and medicine. In this respect, Hutchinson *et al* (1987: 19) write:

> *ESP is an approach to language teaching*
> *as to content and methods are based on the*
> *learner's reason for learning.*

Sharing the same line of thought, Basterkmen (2006) believes that ESP is a *'goal-directed'*; it aims at providing learners with the linguistic features of subject-specific discipline. Moreover, she adds that it aims at developing the competencies required to function effectively in their discourse communities.

Thus, being aware of different learning contexts, specialists (Robinson, 1980, 1991; Bolitho *et al*, 1984; Hutchinson *et al*, 1987; Jordan, 1997) rightly argue that ESP is sub-divided into two branches to fit different learning needs, notably EAP and EOP.

EAP is commonly defined as the teaching of English to students in formal educational contexts. The learners' requirements are related to their studies such as reading articles, summarizing the main results and attending conferences. In this respect, Bolitho *et al* (1984:4) argue: "*EAP is taught generally within educational institution to students needing English in their studies.*"

Similarly, Flowerdew *et al* (2001) describe EAP as an international activity of tremendous scope; the aim of such courses is to help learners studying, conducting research and complete some academic tasks. An example of EAP course is an English course which is designed to help students reading their economic textbooks.

Dudley Evans *et al* (1997, 1998) Jordan (1997), Basterkmen (2006), Hyland (2006), extend the definition of EAP subdividing it into groups, namely EGAP and ESAP. (See diagram 1.1: Types of ESP).

English for Specific Purposes

English for Occupational
Purposes
e.g. doctors and airline pilots

English for Academic Purposes

English for Specific Academic
academic purposes
e.g. medicine,
engineering

English for General
academic purposes
e.g. Listening and
note- taking
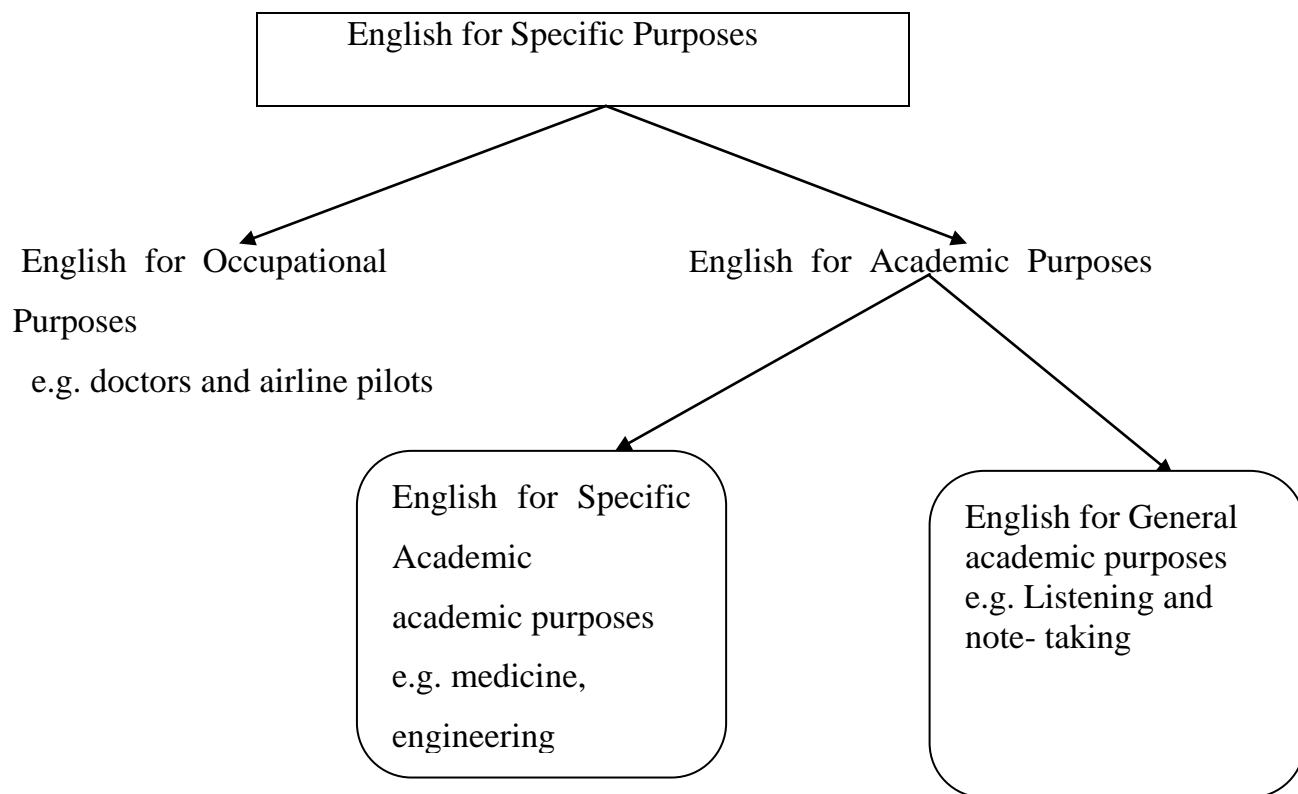
Diagram 1.1: Types of ESP (Adapted from Jordan 1997).

In EGAP or common core, the learners' needs are general. This allows the language teachers to design wide-angle courses where the content and the topics are chosen from a variety of disciplines. As an example of EGAP is an English course designed for engineering studies. In this context, learners are taught for instance to listen to lectures, read articles and take notes.

ESAP or subject discipline, on the other hand, refers to the type of courses where the learners' needs and requirements are limited. Thus, these narrow angled courses are addressed to students from one specific discipline. As an example of this type is the engineering students that are divided into English for Computer Engineering, Chemical Engineering and Civil Engineering classes.

To sum up, the difference between these two sub-categories is that EGAP group EAP learners in a language course where the focus has been put on the study activities that are common to all of them such as the preparing learners to make oral presentation. The latter, on the other hand, deals with teaching language skills and activities associated with the demand of one specific discipline. In this vein, Dudley-Evan *et al* (1998:42) clearly state: "*The difference is that ESAP courses focus on the actual tasks that students have to carry out while EGAP courses select more general contexts.* "

In addition to these categories, Flowerdew *et al* (2001), Dudley Evans *et al* (1998) believe that given different status of the English language around the world, it is necessary to speak about four types of EAP situation.

The first situation refers to the English speaking countries such as U.K and USA where English is used as the mother tongue. The second situation, on the other hand, is concerned with outer or extended circle which is related to the countries where English is used as a second language. As far as the third language is concerned; it is the situation where some content disciplines are taught in English. The fourth type refers to the expanding situation in which English is used as a national language. (Crystal, 2003)

In sum, it should be noted that all the above definitions share the view that the learners' needs, purposes , interests and requirements are used as a guiding principle that characterize any ESP or EAP courses.

1.3.   CHARACTERISTICS OF ESP / EAP COURSES

ESP courses have some characteristics that differ from that of general language courses. These courses stand on the fact that the syllabus and the materials used are based on the learners' needs. In this respect, Mundy (1978:2) defines them as*:*

> *Those where the syllabus and the materials are determined by the prior analysis of the communication needs of the learners.*

Carver (1983) adds some characteristic of ESP course summarizing them as follows:

- Purpose –related orientation.
- Self- direction.
- Authentic materials.

According to him, ESP courses are almost purposeful, aiming at helping learners to be communicatively competent in their target settings. The objectives oriented to such purposes involve, for instance, the preparation for papers, writing reviews as well as making orall presentation.

The second characteristic of ESP courses is that they are practically self-directed. This includes *"...turning learners into users" (*Carver, 1983). This means that these courses are based on the learners' needs; this gives them much more freedom to decide what, how and when to study. The final characteristic, according to Carver (1983) is the use of authentic materials. He believes that the use of such materials, modified or unmodified in form, are indeed a feature of

ESP, i.e., the authenticity of materials is therefore acknowledged in an ESP context.

In this respect, Robinson (1991:54) argues: "*A key concept (…) felt to be particularly relevant for ESP, is that of authenticity.*" In addition to this idea, she (1991) maintains two other criteria of ESP courses. First, she believes that they are goal-directed. This means that the ESP learners have a clearly utilitarian purpose in learning the language (Mackay *et al* 1978). These purposes are related to the learners' reasons in learning English. The second criterion is that the ESP courses are needs- driven, that is to say they are developed from the learners 'needs. In this view, Robinson (1991:3) argues:

> *An ESP course is based on a needs analysis which aims at specify as closely as possible what exactly it is that students have to do through the medium of English.*

Furthermore, she makes a clear distinction between criteria and characteristics of ESP courses. She believes that this latter refers to the features which are not always present in an ESP context. These include the notion of time and the ESP learners.

According to her, most of ESP learners are in general adult learners who are employers or learners in their tertiary education. This feature, thus, makes a distinction between ESP and general language courses. As far as the second characteristic is concerned, she believes that these learners have a very restricted period of time. As a result, they should be taught only the bit of English they need in their field of specialization.

In the same vein, West (1994) writes: *"Most ESP courses are subject to time constraints and time must be effectively utilized."*(Quoted in Basterkmen 2006: 18).This means that the notion of time plays also a significant role in an ESP course. All the decision about language items, study skills should be adjusted to the factor of time.

Later on, Dudley-Evans *et al* (1997) speak about some other characteristics. They argue first that ESP courses are purposeful and aimed at successful performance in their academic and professional contexts. They are based on an analysis of the learners' needs; on those skills, themes, topics, situations, and functions appropriate o their needs.

Joining this idea, Basterkmen (2006) highlights the importance of needs analysis and considers it as a key feature of ESP course design. She believes that the ESP learners do not learn the language for its own sake but for the purpose of communicating efficiently in their target environments.

To sum up, the ESP courses display some given characteristics; their content is closely related to the learners' needs and purposes to learn English. In addition to this, they are rather based on authentic materials so that to prepare learners for real world tasks.

1.4.   ESP/EAP COURSE DESIGN

ESP course design refers to the process of selecting and sequencing content that fits the teaching/ learning objectives. It consists of those language items, ideas and strategies that meet the learners' needs.

It is widely acknowledged among specialists (Hutchinson *et al,* 1987; Bolitho *et* al, 1984; Basterkman, 2006) that the design of ESP course is determined by the learners' needs and requirements, bearing in mind that these latter come with different justification for attending the ESP course, for instance, reading materials, and writing reports as highlighted by Richards (2001:32) who states:

> *Different types of students have different*
> *language needs and what they are taught*
> *should be restricted to what they need.*
> *These needs are fairly specific; they can be*
> *identified and should determine the content*
> *of any course.*

That is to say, the ESP course is developed around what the learners need to know and what they will be able to do at the end of their language course.

The role of Needs Analysis and Identification (NAI) in designing ESP courses is interpreted differently among educationalists, starting from Strevens (1977), who clearly states that this process enables the course designer to have different levels of restrictions. The first level refers to the restriction of the basic skills which are reading, writing, speaking and listening. The second level includes the selection of vocabulary, patterns of grammar, themes and topics that are most appropriate to the learners' needs.

Coffey (1984:4), largely extends Strevens' definition, believing that there is no special language in ESP, but rather it is the learners' needs that dictate the principle of selection. In this vein, he writes:

> *Before a course can be designed, in any of its parameters, the process that Strevens calls 'restriction' must take place: the selection of items and features from the corpus of the language that are relevant to the designer's intention and the student's needs.*

Hutchinson *et al* (1984), on the other hand, believe that the process of ESP course design starts with analysing the learners' needs, the learning situation, deriving competence and translating these needs into pedagogical items. The following diagram put forwards by Hutchinson *et al* (1984:110) explains the stages used for designing an ESP course.
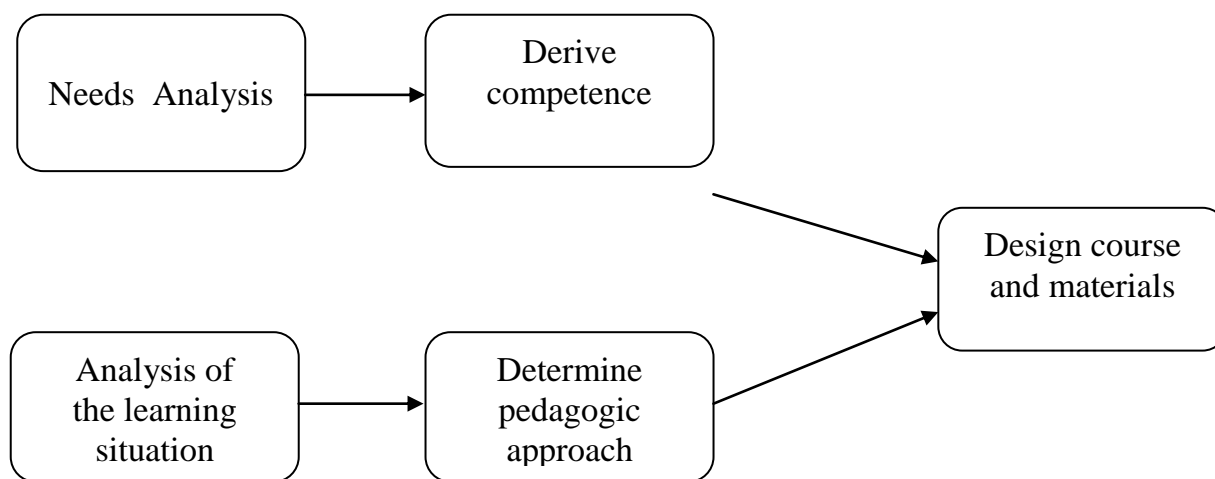
Diagram .2.1: The Process of ESP Course Design.

(Adopted from Hutchinson *et al* (1984:110)

Similarly, Jordan (1997) insists on the view that the learning situation cannot be isolated from the process of Needs Analysis and Identification. This includes some important parameters. The cases in point are the number of the students, their nationalities, motivation and interests, the available resources and the length of the ESP course.

Robinson (1991) rightly agrees on these parameters, however, she adds two other factors namely the teachers' approaches to syllabus and course design and the teaching methodology. In this respect, she (1991:34) writes:

> *ESP course design is the product between a number of elements: the results of needs analysis, the course designers' approach to syllabus and methodology, and the existing materials (if any).*

Later on, Nation *et al* (2010) describe ESP courses as a 'how to do activity' that is to say, it depends on several factors. First and foremost, it is based on needs analysis. This, according to them, involves *target* and *learning needs*. They add that needs analysis makes the course content more relevant and useful to learn. Second, they believe that the course designer should take into account the teaching and learning experiences. That is to say, it includes explicit and implicit ideas about the nature of language and theories of language acquisition. Additionally, for planning, designing and developing courses. Richards (2001:145) cites some other steps which are:

- Developing a course rationale;
- describing entry and exist level;
- choosing course content, and

- planning the course content.

The first step used for designing the courses is to develop the course rationale. He believes that it aims at describing the beliefs; values and the goals. He also adds that the second step is to identify the learners' levels of proficiency. That is to say, at this stage, it is necessary to conduct a needs analysis so that to have a clear idea about the current level of the students. Next, it is necessary to choose the course content. This stage is considered as the most important issue. It is developed around grammar, functions, topics, skills, processes.

Once the content is chosen, a key question that needs to be addressed is how to sequence the course content? Richards (2001) answers that it should be chronologically sequenced, that is from simple to complex.

The above definitions, apparently, share the view that there are certain matters to be considered before designing an ESP course. The first element is Needs Analysis and Identification. It is assumed to be an obligatory process for identifying the learners' purposes, wants and lacks. The other issues to be addressed include the determination of realistic goals and objectives.

1.5.   CONTENT-BASED APPROACH

Content-based approach is defined as an instructional approach in which language courses use content from other disciplines such as Sociology, Psychology and Medicine to provide the context of language acquisition (Mohan, 1986). The aim of this approach is to equip meaningful context for language learning.

The advocators of this approach (Brinton *et al,* 1989) believe that it has some features that differ from those of traditional curricula. They rightly insist that learners receive 'two for one', that is to say the incorporation of content and language learning as a result. It aims at creating opportunities for the learners to acquire the language in meaningful context. Sharing the same view, Stoller (1997) maintains that this approach

> *...allows for the incorporation of explicit language instruction (covering, for example, grammar, conversational gambits, functions, notions, and skills), thereby satisfying students' language and content learning needs in context*

This means that it aims at matching the activities of the language class to the subject matter being taught. In the same vein, Jordan (1997) argues that CBA has a dual function. The objective oriented to the first aim is to impart the students with the academic content. The second goal, on the other hand, is to teach the language skills associated with it.

As a reaction against traditional curricula which are built on grammatical points, content-based approach makes use of content as a driving force of classroom activities. That is, rather than building a course around grammar, the content dictates the selection and the sequence of the course (Richards 2001; Brown, 2001).

Later on, Muphy *et al* (2001) make the telling point that CBA focuses on two different orientations. They believe that at first, the stress is on the teaching of content which aims at teaching the subject matter through the use of English as a language of instruction. The second, however, deals with language teaching and learning with much emphasis on language

teaching through the use of content themes. In this end, the courses are either content or language driven. All in all, the following table tries to summarize the focus of these two courses.

CONTENT-BASED LANGUAGE
TEACHING:
A CONTINUUM OF CONTENT
AND LANGUAGE

Language-Driven

Content-Driven

Content is used to learn L2.

Content is taught in L2.

Language learning is priority.

Content learning is priority.

Content learning is incidental.

Language learning is secondary.

Language objectives determined by

Content objectives determined by course goals or
    curriculum.

L2 course goals or curriculum.

Students evaluated on content to be

Teachers must select language objectives.

integrated.

Students evaluated on content mastery.

Students evaluated on language

skills/proficiency.

Table 1.1: A Continuum of Content and Language Integration.

(Adapted from MET, M 'NFLC Reports'

http://www.carla.umn.edu/cobaltt/modules/principles/decisions.html)

Moreover, Davison *et al* (2001:47) quote in Mohan (1986) that though these two models have different emphasis, they have some common features. They state:

Heuristic label for a diverse group of curriculum approaches which share a concern for facilitating language learning broadly defined through varied, but systematic linking of subject matter and language in the context of language acquisition.

In sum, it should be noted that content-based instruction seems to be an approach that has a dual function, the learning of content is accomplished through the teaching of related language items and skills.

1.6.   TYPES OF CONTENT –BASED INSTRUCTIONS

Based on Brinton's *et al* (1989), Content –based Instructions, for short CBI, are either Sheltered, Thematic or Adjunst types.

1.6.1. Sheltered Model

A strong form of content-based instruction is said to be a *sheltered model (*Brinton *et al, 1989).* This term is often used to separate second language students from native speakers of the target language in a content-driven course.   A basic definition of this type states: "*A sheltered content based course is taught in a second language by a content specialist to a group of learners who have been segregated or 'sheltered' from native speakers"* (Briton *et al* 1989:15). The content-specialists commonly teach the content area courses, the language teacher, however, is not included since the goal of those courses is the master of the content materials rather than language skills and activities.

Sharing the same line of thought, Brown (2001) insists that the primary aim of this course is to instruct students in their subject area

matter, as a result, a little or no attention is given to the teaching of language.

However, it should be mentioned that these content courses call for high level of language proficiency. The reason behind this is that, at this level, learners are able to focus on the content necessary so that to receive grades in their content courses (Brinton *et al* 1989; 2003). In this sense, Larsen- Freeman (2000: 142) states: *"...sheltered instruction is geared to students' developing second language proficiency….".* This means that high level of language proficiency is a key condition required for acquiring content knowledge.

Stressing on the fact that the aim of such courses is to master the content where the subject specialists are the only instructors, lead this model to be criticized for being 'teacher driven'. In this sense, Snow (2001) maintains that the content teacher should design 'learning to learn' activities in order to help them to become independent and self-directed learners.

1.6.2.   Adjunst Model

This model aims at connecting language course with a regular academic content course for the purpose of language instruction. The rationale behind this model is to give learners the necessary language skills to function effectively in their content course. In view of that, Hyland (2006:26) writes:

> *In the adjunct model the language course is*
> *linked with a content course which shares*
> *the same content base, the rationale being*

> *that students will develop strategies and*
> *skills which will transfer from one course*
> *to the other.*

Thus, this model is used as a supportive language course in which the language teacher can give extra- help to his students in activities such as, reading comprehension, giving speeches, writing reports in addition to other activities required in their content courses. (Deborah *et al,* 2006)

Being aware of the importance of such extra-supportive course, Lyster (2007) defines it as a 'content-obligatory language course' in which the focus is on what the students need to know for the sake of studying their subject matter through the medium of English. This means that this model is used to offer excellent opportunities to develop the academic strategies necessary to cope with real academic content.

In sum, this model places much more emphasis on acquiring specific vocabulary and the learning of the language skills. The language teacher helps students to complete some academic tasks such as writing terms papers, improving their note taking and skimming and scanning texts.

As far as this model is concerned, it is worth mentioning that this is the researcher's concern through this study in an attempt to focus on the same themes taught in the students' content courses. However, it should be stated at this level that the investigator does not focus on the severe model presented by Brinton *et al* (1986); the aim of this study is not to teach the content, but language items and skills.

1.6.3. Theme / Topic Model

Theme / topic model is considered as a weak form of CBI (Brinton *et al*, 1989; Brown, 2001). It focuses on explicit language instruction; this has driven the teachers to organize their curriculum around selected topics and themes. The aim of this model is to develop the learners' language proficiency rather than the acquisition of content knowledge. This idea has been viewed by Brinton *et al* (1989):

> *In theme –based course, a high level of interest (…)should serve as the organizing principle (…)with the linguistic focus of instruction determined by the students' needs, their proficiency level, and (last but not least) the degree to which the content 'maps 'onto the course objectives.*

(Quoted in Richards 2001:158)

In this light, Davies (2003) admits that this type is usually taught in a foreign language context where the emphasis is on explicit language items and objectives. He also adds that the content of this course is not limited to specific discipline but rather it is the students' needs and interest that dictate the content of such a course.

In short, this model plays focus on the acquisition of language skills and strategies rather than discipline-based knowledge. Though these three models have different orientations towards language and content teaching, they have some common features. Thus, these three types use content as a point of departure which is chosen from themes closely related to the

learners' needs and interests, in addition to the use of authentic materials and tasks.

1.7.   CRITERIA IN CONTENT-BASED INSTRUCTION

The organization of coherent content resources and the selection of appropriate language activities are accomplished through the Six t's approaches put forward by Stoller *et al* (1997). These include: themes, topics, texts, threads, tasks and transition.

The first criterion used in Content-Based Instruction (CBI) is to select themes taught in these courses; they are broadly defined as "*...the central ideas that organize major curricular units...* " Stoller *et al* (1997:5). In other terms, they refer to the major ideas around which the units are organized which are chosen according to the students' needs and interests.

These themes should be later on sub-divided into several topics which aim at providing meaningful context of learning and teaching activities to be centered around. Their selections thus, should be based on the needs of the learners so that to provide them with opportunities to explore both language and content.

These topics should be presented through careful selection of texts. These latter refer to spoken or written language that the students may encounter in a particular language context. Text selection, however, is not an easy task; it is governed by a number of important elements, namely the writers' purpose in writing the extracts, their sections, functions and notions. To put it differently, it should fit both content and language aims.

The other aspect that Stoller *et al* (1997) talked about is that of *threads*. They are known as natural linkages between the units of themes with the overall aim of creating a sense of curricular coherence, in addition to providing learners with opportunities of reviewing and reconsidering what was learnt with the materials being at hand.

As far as transition is concerned, it refers to those planned activities which aim at providing coherence across topics and tasks within a theme unit. Once this criterion has been selected, the final step, according to Stoller *et al* (1997), is to design adequate tasks. These are those pedagogical activities which are selected in accordance with the appropriate content and the objectives of the course with the aim of helping learners to understand language. However; it should be mentioned at this level that in CBI the focus should be put beyond the practice of language. That is, they should be used in a way to focus on meaning as well as to help learners make use of their own linguistic resources.

In sum, all these above criteria should be carefully selected and skilfully practised in accordance with the needs of the learners in terms of language and content.

1.8. **READING IN ESP/EAP CONTEXT**

The majority of the articles and textbooks are published in English, thus, whatever language of instruction in the academic context; students are required to be able to read in the English language. As a result, reading for specific or academic purposes is often considered as an important skill among the other four skills as viewed by Robinson (1991:102) who defines reading as *"probably the most generally needed skill in EAP worldwide"*

Moreover, reading in these contexts is generally seen as similar to that of general English. This has been believed by Chitravelu (1980) who quotes a definition in Hutchinson *et al* (1987:13):

> *Reading skills are not language-specific but universal and that a core of language (…) which can be identified as "academic" and which is not subject-specific.*

This means that academic discourses contain certain language features that occur more frequently such as technical and sub-technical terminology. However, they are not specific to these environments and do not make the reading task different from general reading skill. Thus, it should be stated that what can be said about of EFL/ESL reading can be extended to ESP / EAP contexts.

According to Flowerdew *et al* (2001) EAP reading is just one part of GE reading. Yet, they believe that the only difference between these two types lies in the students' purposes for reading. They state that in GE reading, the purpose is more related to enjoyment. Besides, in EAP/ ESP reading context, ESP/ EAP learners have a clearly *utilitarian purpose* in learning English. This explains the fact that they have some clearly determined purposes in attending a reading course. They, for example, need to know how to skim the list so that to select what is relevant to their topics or scan the text to find appropriate information. Hence, they believe that these learners need "*to learn about something, get information, learn how to do something*" (Flowerdew *et al;* 2001:185).

In this sense, Jordan (1997:143) defines EAP reading courses as a multi-faceted subject believing that the EAP learners, in general, have some

specific purposes in mind. The basic reading activities according to him are:

- ✓ to obtain information (facts, data, etc.);
- ✓ to understand ideas or theories etc;
- ✓ to discover authors' view points.

In addition to this, he deems that the EAP learners have to focus on two important aspects while reading, namely the subject matter of what they read and the language which is expressed. In other terms, these include paying attention to both the content and the form of the text. The motive behind this is that the EAP learner is not only concerned with decoding passages but also the way these texts are used to convey communication.

Being aware of different purposes of ESP readers, Dudley-Evans *et al* (1998:96) sustain that new attention has been focused on the *Text As a Vehicle of Information* (TAVI). In this sense, they point out:

> *One of the most important contributions to the approach to reading in ESP was the shift from the Text As a Linguistic Object (TALO) to Text As a Vehicle of Information (TAVI).*

The text has been first viewed as a linguistic object. In this end, the focus is put on the basic language development such as vocabulary and grammar. As example of these tasks are:

- What tense does the writer use to talk about…? (Present, past or future).
- What language does the writer use to express opinion?
- Find all the words related to the topic of…?

Later on, with the emphasis on the 'Text As a Vehicle of Information', the aim of the reading course has become to understand the key information and ideas of the text. Examples of TAVI tasks are:

- Put the paragraphs in order?
- Match the headings to the paragraphs?
- Predict the content of the text?

The needs of these two approaches to ESP reading have been summarized by Dudley-Evans *et al* (1998) who state that this new focus proves to be important as it enables the EAP/ESP learners to deal with language as well as the unknown information used in text. Furthermore, TAVI allows them to work in groups, correct and evaluate each other and select topics and texts appropriate to their needs and interests.

Moreover, Dudley-Evans *et al* (1998) add another contribution to ESP reading course believing that this course should not only focus on language development but also on balance between skills. Thus the ESP reading course should emphasize on, for instance, understanding relationship within and between sentences, predicting and inferring identifying organizational patterns, using discourse markers

Though the focus on a single skill has proved to be successful in some educational settings, some opponent views have been emerged among specialists (Hutchinson *et al*, 1987; Dudley-Evans *et al* 1991; Jordan, 1997; Dudley-Evan *et al*; 1998) as they rightly argue that the reading skill cannot be isolated from writing, since in many cases the EAP learner is required to read articles, paraphrase, in addition to some exercises that involve writing.

In this vein, Dudley- Evans *et al* (1991: 305) advocate: "*...the concentration on one skill is limiting and some attention to other skills is likely to improve performance in the target skill.*" This means that in EAP/ ESP context, the comprehension of the reading text does not occur in isolation, it is often followed by comprehension exercises from the writing skills.

In short, reading for specific purposes is considered as an important skill. Nonetheless, it is not an easy task for both the learners and the teachers as the ESP learners are not passive learners engaging with texts, but rather active using whatever skills and strategies necessary for interpreting a given text.

The task of ESP teacher, on the other hand, is to design adequate courses and helping learners use some skills and strategies for furthering their comprehension.

1.9. THE ROLE OF THE ESP TEACHER TO DESIGN ESP READING COURSE.

Though it has been usually argued that the ESP teaching methodologies are not different in kind from any other form of language teaching, the ESP literature has clearly reported that the ESP teacher plays many roles depending on the syllabus. As a consequence, for designing, for instance, task-based syllabus, the ESP teacher performs clearly different functions from skill-based syllabus. This idea has been viewed by Jordan (1997:122) who states**:** "*The role of the teacher will vary according to the type of the syllabus and the course.*"

As the present study focuses on the ESP reading skill, the review of the stages used by the ESP teacher for designing such courses is reported in this section. In this respect, specialists widely insist that planning these courses requires taking into account the appropriate role to be performed.

The teacher has first to conduct a NAI so that to focus only on those sub- skills needed by the learners. If they require, for example, to skim the text for specific information, the focus on this micro-skill is to be made. In this sense, Robinson (1991:81) writes: *"the teacher will (…) act as a consultant. This involves diagnosing each student's language and communication needs."*

According to Frydenberg (1982), *the draw up of lists of skills* of the course is needed; the rationale behind this is that different specialities have different focuses such as interpreting graphics, describing and classifying. In this sense, he clearly states: *"…study skills were necessary components as well as direct reading skills."*

Once the learners' needs are analyzed, the next step according to Dudley-Evans *et al* (1998) is to cooperate and collaborate with the subject-specialists. They point out that the former refers to the stage where the ESP teacher seeks to gather information about the students' content courses. The latter, nonetheless, is related to the integration between subject and language specialists believing that these two phases give useful information about what the students need to read.

Additionally, they argue that these information provide the carrier content of the course which is associated to the conceptual level of the students' subject-matters. The role of the language teacher, however, is to

base his reading course on the real content. It is necessary to establish a balance between needs and motivational factors and course objectives as well. In this respect, Frydenberg (1982:157) writes:

> *the aim of the ESP course is not to teach the content of (…) that course, but to teach high-transfer skills that are only incidentally being developed through texts that are the same as or similar to those used on their content courses.*

This means that the ESP reading texts are selected in accordance with the students' content courses and the purpose of developing their reading skills necessary to understand a given text.

According to Hutchinson *et al*; 1987; Robison, 1991; Jordan, 1997, the next step is to select materials or texts. To meet this end, Bolitho *et al* (1984) make a clear distinction between authentic and simplified texts. They consider that the former refers to '*real world text*' that are written for non-language learners. The latter, on the other hand, are those texts which are modified in order to meet the learners' levels and language proficiency.

Furthermore, they cite some criteria of text selection; they believe that they should be sequenced from single to two or three paragraphs. Their sentences should be ranged from simple, complex to compound sentences.

Texts used in ESP reading courses should include tasks relevant to the needs of the learners. In this sense, Hutchinson *et al* (1987) believe that they should include interesting texts, enjoyable activities, in addition to the fact of providing learners with opportunities for the sake of using their existing knowledge and skills.

In designing a programme in English for Overseas Postgraduate Soil Scientists, Mackay *et al* (1978) cite two types of tasks in ESP reading courses, namely comprehension questions and comprehension exercises.

The former includes questions about the texts such as Wh, yes/ no questions and true/false statements as well. The latter, however, requires language production. The focus, at this level, according to them, is on the teaching of two types of vocabulary which are common core and specialized terminology relying on linguistic aspects of the text such as cohesion.

To sum up, it should be mentioned that besides the normal role of the ESP teacher; he is required to analyze the needs of his learners, designing appropriate courses and materials accordingly.

1.10.   READING COMPREHENSION

The need of EAP/ ESP to read books, articles and cared- index system has driven them to engage in the process of reading comprehension. It refers to how the reader struggles to make sense of a given text. In this sense, Celce-Murcia *et al* (2000) believe that reading comprehension depends on the readers' efforts to understand the text, according to them; this includes a number of tasks such as decoding the written signs, interpreting the message as well as understanding the writers' intention.

Being aware of the interactive nature of reading comprehension, it should be pointed out that this process involves more than interpreting and evaluating information from the text. This stresses the need to focus on the students' learning rather than reading as a separate process.

To put it in other terms, reading comprehension involves more than the readers' responses to text; it is considered as a multi-component process that consists of an interaction between the reader and what they bring to the text as far as reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, guessing the meaning from contexts. In this sense, Klinger *et al* (2007) define reading comprehension as:

> *...the process of constructing meaning by coordinating a number of complex processes that include word reading, word and word knowledge and fluency.*

Successful reading comprehension requires an engagement in to two types of processes, namely the bottom-up and the top-down approaches. Gough (1972) summarizes the bottom-up model as the identification of letters, followed by words; their syntactic features until their meaning are accessed.

Hence, this model places emphasis on the text as a separate process and neglects to take into account the reader' s background knowledge which is of crucial importance. In the same line of thought, Carrell *et al* (1983:556-567) highlight the importance of the readers' background knowledge. They state:

> *Efficient reading comprehension requires the ability to relate textual materials to one's own knowledge. Comprehending words, sentences, and entire texts involves more than just relying on one's linguistic knowledge.*

Reading comprehension does not only include the interpretation of words and sentences, however, reader makes use the top-down process. That is to say, the use of the background knowledge, in this regard, Carrell (1987) defines it as what the readers bring to the text in terms of two types of schemata, namely the content and formal schemata. Content schemata, according to him, are the knowledge appropriate the content of the text. The formal schema, on the other hand, refers to the knowledge of textual and rhetorical organization of the text.

To sum up, it should be pointed out that reading comprehension involves an interaction between the bottom-up and the top-down processes. This, thus, requires an interaction between the reader and the text. In this way, the reader tries to decode the text by relating it to his background knowledge making use of adequate strategies.

1.11. THE IMPACT OF CONTENT-FAMILIARITY ON ESP LEARNING

The integration of content and language has several advantages on language learners. This is supposed to enable the students to learn the content as well as its associated language skills. In addition to this, it is considered as a motivational factor for learning the language as the students learn only what is relevant to their needs and interests.

This idea has been viewed by De Escorcia (1984) who highlights the importance of providing the learners with tasks that correspond with their intrinsic motivation. In this sense, she (1984:143) states:

> *Content provides the vehicle for engaging the learner's participation and increasing his motivation. Familiarity with a given topic will make the student feel that, for once, he is not at a disadvantage in front of the teacher, who traditionally has provided all the answers. (Quoted in Peretz 1988:183)*

Content-familiarity is viewed as a motivational factor that leads to successful language acquisition allowing learners to engage in meaningful communication. They let the teachers relinquish their traditional roles. The learners, hence, are able to take responsibility for their own learning.

Nevertheless, what draws the researchers' attention over a long period of time is how this content may affect the students' reading proficiency. As a result, several studies have been conducted on the role of content-familiarity and unfamiliarity in developing reading comprehension.

It is worth noting that content-familiarity is interpreted differently among specialists. Some define it as simply what the learners already know about any general topic as the content used in theme-based models. Others, however, relate it to the students' subject matter, i.e., they correlate it to what the students learn in their content courses. As a result, several opponent views have been emerged to explain the importance of selecting their content on the EAP/ ESP leaning process.

According to Bratlett (1932), any content-familiarity plays a significant role for improving the learners' reading comprehension. He believes that when the students are faced with content-unfamiliarity, they are unable to repeat information of the text.

Sharing the same idea, Coady (1979) extends the vital role played by content-familiarity in an ESP/EAP context. He maintains that once the content of the reading materials is based on the students' interests, expectations and background knowledge, they will, in all probabilities, be able to compensate for their syntactic weaknesses.

Admittedly, any reader makes use of two types of schemata, namely formal and content schemata; Carrel (1987) uses an experimental investigation for the sake of checking which type accounts for a greater share of importance. To achieve this end, high intermediate students are asked to read texts which contain content familiarity and unfamiliarity. The results validate that content-unfamiliarity poses more difficulty for the reader than familiarity of form. This confirms the view that *"More interestingly, the results for the "mixed" conditions (…)indicated that content schemata affected reading comprehension to a greater extent than formal schemata" (*Carrel 1987:416).

Another study has been carried out by Hale (1988). He examines the effect of major field area of two groups of learners, namely humanities and biological sciences. He finds that these groups perform significantly better on passages involving content relevant to their field of study than those texts of general interests.

Later on, a new orientation has put emphasis on language proficiency. For this purpose, Hudson (1991) conducts a research. He uses second year students of Chemical Engineering Department. The purpose of his study is to develop EST reading courses around thematic units based on the students' content courses. The results indicate that this approach helps students to improve their reading comprehension, general reading ability as

well as their knowledge of reading grammar. Similarly, Hudson (1991:96) writes:

> *...a content comprehensive approach to reading can be effective basis for a program to improve reading ability at the same time this approach does not impede the development of other language components.*

This means that this approach has proved to be quite effective in the developing the students' ability to read technical English, in addition to the fact of improving their language proficiency.

Another study has been carried out by Tsai *et al* (2001). They use 101 students at I Show University of southern Taiwan. The purpose of such a study is to design and implement a content-based language instruction in literature class. They reveal that this approach succeeds in enhancing reading comprehension and their critical thinking ability as well.

For the same purpose, Kasper (2005/2006) uses 152 ESL students as a sample population. They were divided into two groups. The materials provided to the first group were related to their academic disciplines. The second group, however, were not grounded to any academic disciplines. That is to say, they cover a variety of topics. He mentions that students of the first group obtained significantly high score in the reading assessments than those of the second group. In this effect, he posits**:** *"Reading psychology texts does a lot even if they aren't psych students."(Kasper 2005/2006:298).*

He believes that teaching reading based on topics in the mainstream helps learners to become aware of how to construct meaning from the

information stored in memory, and this helps learners to extract relevant information from them.

For the same objectives, another research was handled by Duell *et al* (2008). Their subjects were first-year Akita university medical students. Their texts were selected around health awareness themes. These courses had positive effect on the students' reading comprehension and their language skills as well.   They (2008:41) write "*... this course has successfully provided opportunities for students to improve their language skills and to enhance their knowledge of preventive health topics.*"

What is more, Glenn (2005) insists on the fact that the reading courses should not only rely on texts familiarity. He believes that it be should based on a systematic use of content-based instructional strategies. These include explicit reading strategies, explicit language instruction as well as vocabulary introduction.

In sum, content familiarity in ESP reading courses helps learners to activate their background knowledge, and therefore facilitate their reading comprehension .This idea has been viewed by Liu *et al* (2009:1) who state:

> *...test takers who have acquired knowledge in a particular field develop schemata regarding this area, and their accumulated prior knowledge can facilitate the understanding of passages related to their field of study.*

The advantages of content-familiarity on reading comprehension lead researchers to focus their studies on other skills such as writing and speaking. As an example of this concern is an experimental course offered to nonnative English-speaking pharmacy students at the University of

Maryland. Graham *et al* (1986) organize their syllabus on speech functions and linguistic structures necessary for effective communication. At the end of these courses, students' evaluations and comparison of the results on pre- and post-tests of the speaking have proved that the course is efficient as they develop their speaking skill.

Moreover, it helps learner to know how to correct errors, to use their academic language appropriately such as technical vocabulary, in addition to their development of their communicative skills such as conveying information, discussing maths concepts and writing paragraphs (Deborah 1991).

Later on, greater interest has been put on developing the students' communicative competence. Harley *et al* (1990) handled a research to examine the effect of content familiarity on the students' communicative competence based on the model provided by Canale *et al* (1980). They concluded that though this approach proved to be successful in nearly all the areas of communicative competence; the students had not developed their grammatical competence. In this respect, Harley *et al* (1990:16) assert that students:

> *...were closely less proficient on most grammar*
> *variables and especially on verbs in the oral*
> *grammar test.*

(Quoted in Lyster 2007:15).

With respect to strategic competence, they add that this approach enables the learners to use their communicative strategies to transmit their messages.

To put it in a nutshell, the content-based approach is believed to be of primordial implication in an ESP teaching/learning context. This, consequently, gives birth to a dichotomy of content-familiarity and unfamiliarity. Specialists agree on the fact that content-familiarity is conceived as the basis upon which students rely on to comprehend their passages, improve their language ability and develop their four areas of communicative competence.

1.12. CONCLUSION

This chapter summarized, to a certain extent, several stands relevant and closely related to the current research area. This review of literature has first highlighted the concept of ESP / EAP followed by discussion of the main characteristics of ESP courses in general, and reading in particular. The second step was devoted to the process of reading comprehension, and finally, exposing a number of studies on the effects of content-based knowledge on EAP learning in general.

Chapter Two

CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES

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2.6. STRATEGY-TRAINING PHASE.

2.7. CONCLUSION.

2.1. INTRODUCTION

It is widely acknowledged among ESP specialists that ESP teaching closely tied to language course, preferably based on authentic materials which students may possibly encounter in their academic or professional environments. That is, a modified adjunst courses have been proposed with the aim of matching ESP reading courses to psychology content courses.

Being, a more or less, a practical chapter, it aims at providing classroom-based–empirical data for the sake of developing the students' reading comprehension, raising their awareness to the range of reading strategies to process content-familiarity. At first, this chapter seeks to display how data have been collected. The researcher has tried to give a general description of the department of psychology, along with the sample population. Next, a focus has been put on data collection tools. In this end, two research instruments have been used, namely a placement test and an achievement test, in addition to semi-structured interviews.

2.2. THE DESCRIPTION OF THE PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

In an attempt to portray the status of the English language teaching in the department of psychology, at Abu-Bakr Belkaid University, a concern has been put on the description of this educational setting. The reason of such a focus is be aware of how ESP teaching has been progressed from the early constitution of this department till the present time.

The psychology department is placed at Abu-Bakr Belkaid University of Tlemcen. Since the new academic year 2000; it has opened its doors with

a staff of 5 permanent teachers and 45 learners.   It has received students awarded with the 'Baccalaureate' exam coming from letters, scientific and technical streams.

This department has been first used to prepare learners for the graduation in Clinical Psychology which last 4 years for the obtention of the 'Licence degree'. The students are prepared to become future clinical psychologists. In addition to this, they can continue their post-graduate studies enabling them to be trained not only for their professional carrier but also becoming academic psychology teachers.

Due to the process of globalization, this department has witnessed remarkable changes as it has adopted the 'B.M.D' (generally known in the French literature as the L.M.D), an acronym for Licence/Master/Doctorate. Thus, as all the Algerian institutions, in the psychology department, the design of the studies is articulated around three main grades:

- The licence granted after three years of study.
- Master degree conferred after two years of study.
- The doctorate conferred after the completion of research for at least three years and defending a thesis.

Yet, it is worth remembering that unlike the traditional system which aims at preparing learners to become Clinical Psychologists, this new one is said to offer these learners with opportunities to specialize in different sub-disciplines. (See Diagram 2.1.)

First-year

Sociology

Second-year

Psychology

Educational Sciences

Education.

Third-year

Clinical Psychology

Educational Psychology

Master

Developmental psychopathology.

Educational Psychology and Learning Difficulties
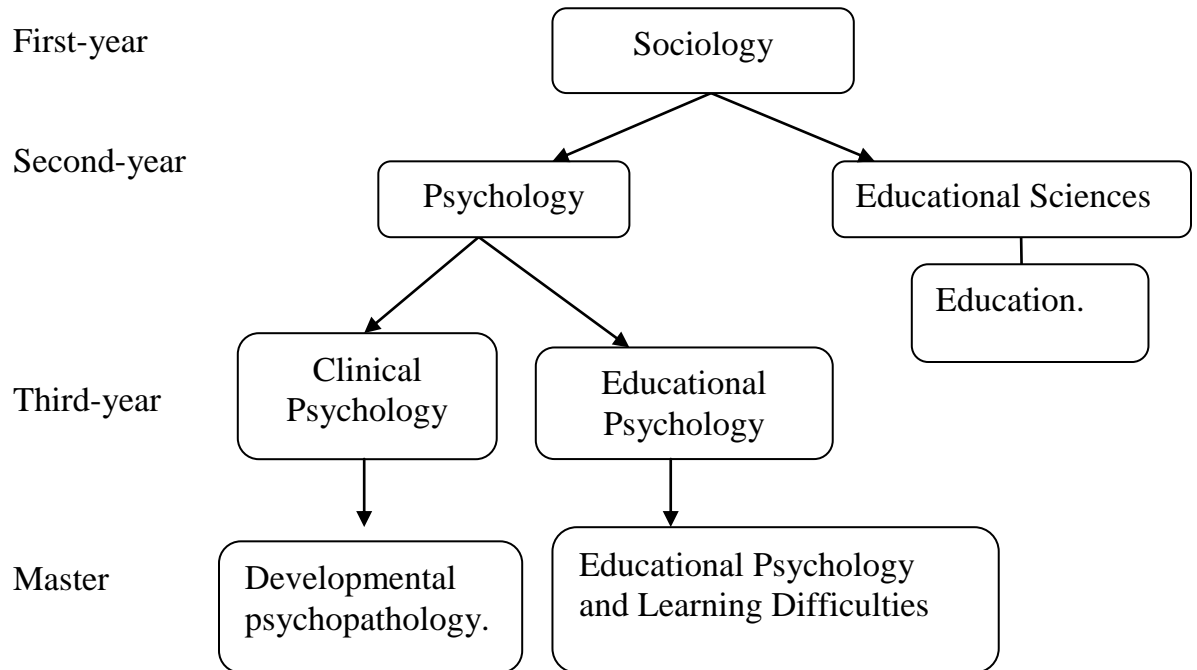
Diagram 2.1: Training stages in the Department of Psychology.

It is clear from this diagram, that first-year students have a common stream called Sociology. They are provided with a general introduction to humanities and social sciences. Once this year is achieved, students have to choose between Psychology and Educational Sciences which are later on sub-divided into sub- branches in their third year. At this level, the psychology students have two specializations, namely Clinical Psychology and Educational Psychology.

Throughout these third-years, students are required to have training sessions in hospitals for the sake of diagnosing and treating some mental illnesses so that to be better prepared for their occupational carrier. Following them, they are required to deliver a training report, in terms of an extended essay.

These two specialization mentioned earlier are later sub-divided into two branches. The former refers to Developmental Psychopathology, while the latter, on the other hand, enables the students to specialize in Educational Psychology and Learning Difficulties.

Long sides with their studies, these students have an optional foreign language course. The students have to choose between English and French language courses. As a result, nearly 90 % of the students prefer French over English course.

However, being aware of the importance of English as a global language, the psychology department provides a compulsory ESP course only to students preparing their master degrees. Therefore, they are obliged to attend it even if they are not proficient.

Owing to the implementation of this one-world-education system as well as the status of English as a global language, the psychology department schedules these ESP courses in the morning allotted in time for one hour and a half per week. In addition to this, its coefficient is two.

In spite of the significant importance of such courses, it should be noted here that the number of the English teachers at this department is only three part-time practioners. Concerning their ESP curriculum, no instructional materials, or even language guide, are provided to them. The teachers have to rely on themselves to design adequate courses. Consequently, most of these instructors, usually, focus on general language teaching aiming, basically, at providing a general linguistic knowledge on language structure.

2.3. THE SAMPLE POPULATION

In any field of inquiry, most of the experiments should constitute subjects on which the investigation is processed. These subjects are, generally, known as a *subset* or *census inquiry* of the population. This present research makes use of both sixteenth (16) students of first-year developmental psychopathology and three (3) teachers as a sample population.

2.3.1. The Students' Profile and Needs Analysis

It is widely acknowledged among specialists that defining the subjects selected in any investigation is of a paramount importance. This enables the researchers to know more about their subjects' needs and decide about the sampling size. In this respect, Brown (1977:278) highlights this significance of the subjects' definition, stating that:

> *One now needs to define a specific population and then to draw a reasonable sample of that population. Populations are typically defined in terms of age, sex, language proficiency level, L1 background, educational background, and perhaps occupation.*

The subjects selected as a sample population in this present study are first-year students of developmental psychopathology at Abu-Bakr Belkaid University of Tlemcen. Due to the fact that there are a limited number of students in this department, this experiment, in general, consists of a random assignment of the population; all the members of this group are included without exception so as to ensure the validity of the research study, enabling the researcher to probably obtain *generalizability* of results.

This group almost composed of 10 females and 6 males ranging in age from 21 to 26 years old, coming from two different learning environments, namely letters and scientific streams. Being at the master level, these learners have two semesters differing in their modules. During the first semester, students are required to fulfill courses such as Cognitive, Social and Emotional Development, Neuropsychology, Statistics and a so-called ESP course. In the second semester, they receive Developmental Psychopathology, Motor and Sensor Development, Language Acquisition and again an English course.

These students have Arabic as the only language of instruction; however, due to the process of globalization, the psychology department offers an obligatory ESP course in the two semesters. As a result, they attend these courses with different English language background since only four of these students have received ESP courses during their graduation studies.

The rationale behind choosing this group is that, at this stage, these learners are supposed to be aware of the importance of the English language in their field of specialization and are believed to be enough motivated and interested in the ESP courses. This idea has been stated by Kennedy *et al* (1984:13- 14):

> *The older a learner is, the more likely to have his own definite ideas on why he is learning English…the utility of learning English is likely to be more apparent.*

Students, therefore, should be aware of this importance of English as a worldwide language; most of the researches and studies are published in that

language. Thus, it is necessary for the present study to cater for the immediate needs of these students as a result, ESP reading courses are offered during their academic year for the sake of providing them with materials based on their discourse community, and therefore developing their reading comprehension.

2.3.2. The Teachers' Profile

Because of the restricted number of ESP practitioners, the three teachers of English available in this department have been also selected to better cross-check data of this investigation. Therefore, in fact, no randomization was made. These teachers are 'licence' holders obtaining their diploma from different places. Two of them obtain their BA degree from Algerian university, the third one, however, from Kuwait university. Their teaching experiences differ from one teacher to the other, but all of them are engaged in designing ESP courses to cater appropriately for their learners' requirements.

2.4. ACTION RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

An action research is, in fact, known as a r*eflective* practice undertaken by the researcher with the purpose of changing and improving his own teaching and learning process. In this regard, Ferrance (2000:1) states: "*Action research is a process in which participants examine their own educational practice systematically and carefully, using the techniques of research*".

This research, thus, has a double function, teaching as well as searching for effective ways to improve practice. In her turn, Burns quoted Cornwell (1999:05) a definition of action research:

> *… a self-reflective, systematic and critical approach to enquiry by participants who are at the same time members of the research community. The aim is to identify problematic situations or issues considered by the participants to be worthy of investigation in order to bring about critically informed changes in practice.*

Different characteristics, then, have been associated when defining an action research. It is, according to Bill *et al* (1988), *a social process, participatory, practical, collaborative, emancipatory, critical and recursive practice.* These features lead this kind of research to be considered as a useful method for teachers as it helps them to work better when identifying their own problems; they are more encouraged to use different ways of teaching and assessing their own work (Watts1985).

It is, according to O'Brien (1998), designed using four steps repeating throughout two cycles until the researcher reaches his objectives. (See diagram 2.2.) These are: Planning, acting, observation and reflection.
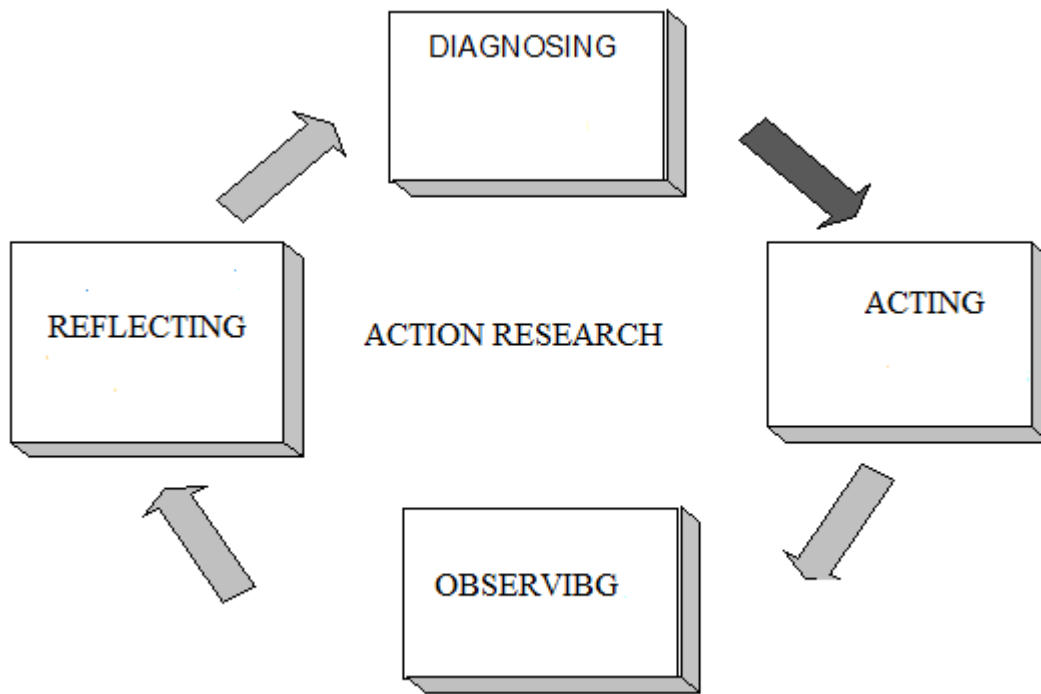
Figure2.2: Cyclical AR model based on O'Brien (1998).

The present research work is, thus, based on O'Brien's model, relying on the afford mentioned steps:

1. Diagnosing: during this phase, the researcher has identified the problem through the use of teachers' interview as well as a pre-training reading test. The aim of these two instruments is to elicit information about the students' reading difficulties and how this may affect their reading comprehension. Consequently, teaching reading strategies have been planned.

2. Acting: in this second step, a plan has been put into practice with the aim of training our learners to approach *content-familiarity* focusing

on raising their awareness to the set of reading strategies, mainly those related to how they activate their background knowledge.

3. Observation: in this phase, the researcher has observed the effects of providing the learners with psychology-based themes as well as training their reading strategies to approach content-familiarity.

4. Reflection: at this level, the researcher has evaluated and described the effects of this research on her students' improvement. This has been undergone through a post-training reading test and learners' questionnaire.

2.5. THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

In this present investigation, the researcher has drawn upon both qualitative and quantitative data collection tools. The goal of this mixed-method in education is, according to Perlesz *et al* (2003), to increase concurrent and construct the validity of the research questions by enabling the researcher to reduce prejudice.

To achieve this goal, two research instruments have been used for the sake of having a triangulation of data. This technique allows for cross-checking results, hence, it enables the researcher to obtain a better understanding and has a clear picture of a phenomenon. This idea has been supported by Cohen *et al* (2007, 141) who advocate that:

> *...triangular techniques in the social sciences attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint and, in so doing, by making use of both quantitative and qualitative data.*

Due to the type of present research, the first step used for collecting the data has been done through a teachers' semi-structured interview as well as pre-training test carried out at the beginning of the academic year. The second step refers to the post-training test which has been administered along with the learners' interview. These three collecting tools have been used to find out answers of the same questions.

2.5.1. The Interviews

Interviews are widely seen as one of the most common research instruments used to elicit information from the subjects under investigation. According to McDonough *et al* (1997:182): *"Interviews(…) are just another way of asking questions, this time is face to face interaction…"* they may be employed for the purpose of being as the primary research instrument or rather occupying additional role, functioning as cross-checking tool ,i.e., triangulation.

Due to the interaction nature that exists between the interviewer and the interviewees, they enable the researchers to extract real information about the subjects' life, perceptions as well as beliefs. The importance of the interviews is highlighted by Cohen *et al* (2000:267):

> *Interviews enable participants—be they interviewers or interviewees—to discuss their*

> *interpretations of the world in which they live,*
> *and to express how they regard situations from*
> *their own point of view. In these senses the*
> *interview is not simply concerned with collecting*
> *data about life: it is part of life itself, its human*
> *embeddedness is inescapable.*

Two Interviews have been used in this research mainly in pre-training and post –training phases (see appendix A and F). However, it should be mentioned that starting from the view that questions are rarely best that they could be at the first attempt, it was necessary to pilot these interviews so that to see if they are obtaining the results required by the researcher.

In hope to ensure the validity of these interviews and eliminate any ambiguity or difficulty of the items, the first interview was piloted to 01 ESP teachers and the second to 09 learners from the same group. In addition the this, the responds were asked to forward any comments regarding the length, wording and the structure of the interviews .The need for piloting the interview has been asserted by Nunan (1992: 151):

> *…it is very important that interview questions are piloted*
> *with a small sample of subjects before being used. This*
> *gives the researcher the opportunity to find out if the*
> *questions are yielding the kind of data required and to*
> *eliminate any questions which may be ambiguous or*
> *confusing to the interviewee.*

After piloting the target interviews, it is worth noting that some questions have been modified, others have been omitted because of their irrelevance of the current purpose of the research.

2.5.1.1. The Teachers' Interview

As already mentioned above, because of the limited number of ESP teachers at the psychology department, an interview has been used as the first research instrument in this case study. Moreover, the researcher opted fundamentally for a semi-structured interview which is characterized by the use of ready-made questions, but at the same time gives the interviewees freedom to express themselves.

One of the most prominent features of this semi-structured interview is that it leads it to be widely privileged and favoured over the other types. The interviewer may clarify and interfere to elicit information when necessary. This has been stated by McDonough *et al* (1997: 184*):"The interviewer, then, remains in control of the direction of the interview but with much more leeway …it allows for richer interactions and more personalized responses…"*

This teachers' interview has been administered to three ESP practitioners in the pre-training phase seeking at gathering useful information about the ESP teaching situation that may affect the students' reading comprehension. This face to face interview has been used to unveil data about:

-Teachers' selection of content.
-Students' language proficiency, needs, weaknesses in reading comprehension sessions.

-Students' use of reading strategies.

-Teachers' strategy training.

It has been completed in approximately 15 minutes with each teacher, and then has been recorded through an audio tape recorder and transcribed later on, so that to avoid the potential weaknesses of this type recording tool. The interviewees have been informed in advance about the questions as well as the fact that it has been used to gather data about their personal experiences so that to create a relaxed atmosphere.

Most of the questions are open-ended questions so that to give freedom to the interviewees when expressing their ideas. Besides, the researcher has used probes to ask for clarification, rephrasing as well as emphasizing on the needed answers when deviating away. As an example: are your ESP learners interested in your ESP reading courses? Explain why?

2.5.1.2. The Learners' interview

Though tests are often viewed as being useful methods for collecting data, Shohamy expresses in Celce-Murcia *et al* (2000) that in order to have a complementary and alternative assessment, a variety of elicitation techniques are to be used. In a consequence, she recommends that the focus has to be stressed on other procedures such as interview.

For the sake of collecting reliable data, another semi-structured interview has been used in the present study after the learners have been tested. It has been chosen for the aim of gathering data from the ESP learners in the post-training phase so that to check the validity of the research questions and the hypotheses.

This semi-structured interview has been conducted with 16 students of Developmental Psychopathology completed in approximately 15 minutes as

well. However, it is worth remembering that due to the learners' English language proficiency and the fact that Arabic is the only language of instruction in the psychology department, this interview has been translated into dialectal Arabic so that to ensure that they had a full understanding of the questions; therefore creating a relaxed atmosphere as well as enabling them to express themselves freely. Furthermore, the interviewees have been encouraged to verbalize all their answers, since even a small detail might be of great importance for this research.

The primary objective of this data collecting instrument was to find out how the ESP reading courses were taught, and how this might affect the students' reading comprehension through the use of reading strategies. In other words, the learners' interview has been used to know:

> ➢ The teachers' selections of their content during strategy training.
> ➢ The students' attitudes towards the training sessions.
> ➢ The factors that lead to successful / unsuccessful reading comprehension to occur.
> ➢The students' use of strategies as a tool for compensating for their language weaknesses.

The researcher makes use of both:
> ➢ Fixed-alternative.
> ➢ Open-ended questions.

As far as the first set of questions is concerned, they refer to the type of questions in which the interviewees were provided with multiple-choice answer. As an example of this:

How do you find the training sessions:
-    Very interesting.

- Interesting.

- Not interesting.

The open-ended questions *are "...those that supply a frame of reference for responds' answers, but put a minimum of restriction on the answers and their expressions*" (Kerlinger 1970 quoted in Cohen *et al* (2007:357). As an example of this type of questions is: What strategies do you generally used when reading? These examples are taken from the learners' interviews (see appendix F).

In sum, this interview consists of three rubrics; their breakdown is listed as below: the first one is closely related to the students' perceptions towards the training sessions in general and, psychology-based themes in particular. Concerning the second rubric, stress has been put on their language proficiency. The third rubric, on the other hand, is about the range of strategies used while reading.

2.5.2. Tests

It is widely acknowledged among specialists that language teachers tied closely to assess their students' leaning so that to see who are learning as expected and who need help. Thus, the information obtained from tests are supposed to provide them with necessary ideas about the subjects' language ability and their skills' progresses in a given situation.

As a data collection tool, this instrument is frequently regarded as a powerful method for gathering facts about the students' current level, their

progresses/ as well as their achievement in language learning. It is according to Brown (2001:384) that:

> *… a method of measuring a person ability of knowledge in a given domain…It is a set of techniques, procedures, and items that constitute an instrument of some sort that requires performance or activity on the part of the test taker…*

Educationalists agree on the fact that this instrument should be constructed in accordance with two characteristics, namely validity and reliability (Cohen *et al,* 2000). That's why, for designing a good test, these two criteria should be borne in mind:

➢ Validity: refers to the idea that the test should measure what is expected to measure. To do so, it should reflect the purpose for which it is originally developed. If the test, for instance, is designed for the purpose of measuring the students' reading comprehension, it should achieve this purpose, thus, no previous knowledge of the subject is tested unless it is known that all the test takers share the same background knowledge before the administration of the test (Harmer,2001)

➢ Reliability: refers to the idea that the same test takers obtain similar scores on the same test. In doing so, the tester has to use clear instructions and provide a good atmosphere. In addition to this, it is argued that it should be scored by more than one tester so that to avoid subjectivity. (idem)

As part of the development efforts of testing reading, the investigator takes into account the conditions put forward by Weir *et al* (2000) which essentially include:

➢ *"Topics of texts should be familiar to all students so that to avoid possible bias caused by topic familiarity."*

➢ *"Passages of various lengths should be used to allow the testing of various kinds..."* (Weir *et al,* 2000).

The researcher has used, here, tasks and content which might be familiar to all of the students. Hence, she has matched the ESP course to psychology-based themes. The aim of selecting such a text was not only to facilitate reading comprehension, but also to see whether the learners activate their knowledge acquired in their content courses as well, or not.

2.5.2.1. The Pre-Training Test

As in any ESP context, the course is based on the communicative needs of the learners. This nature requires, primarily, a careful language needs analysis to fit their desired learning objectives. For achieving this purpose, it is necessary to pay more attention to the needs of each individual. This has driven the needs for the first instrument to be administered.

The pre-training test, serving a placement test, has been used with the aim of checking the students' linguistic weakness, and therefore, assess their reading comprehension at the sentence level, in addition to this, it is conceived as a useful way for determining the type of the course which is

most appropriate to their needs. In this respect, Hutchinson *et al* (1987:146) argue:

> *The aim of the placement test is to determine the learners' state of knowledge before an ESP course begins. In so doing it should indicate firstly whether the learners need the course at all and secondly, should a need be indicated what form of course should take.*

This means that it is worked for the sake of knowing what the students already possess, and what their lacks are. The results obtained from this test are supposed to provide the researcher with useful information on how these students progress at the end of an ESP course.

It is pen –and-paper test, administered to16 students at the fourth week of the academic year 2010-2011. It has taken place on Sunday at 10:00 and lasted one hour and a half. It is based on Harold's views (1983) that it is almost impossible to assess the students' reading comprehension of an essay if these learners have difficulties to understand a sentence. It is worth remembering again that this latter is based on content familiarity derived from the psychology- based themes. This test has the following objectives:

- Assessing the students' comprehension at the sentence level.
- Vocabulary points (general language and specialized terminology).

2.5.2.2. The Post-Training Test

Because of the nature of EAP / ESP and the context of the present study, the second data collection tool has served as an 'achievement test'. It is, in fact, assumed to be a language test administered at the end of the instructions used to examine how well the learners succeed in achieving the course objectives. In this view, Richards *et al* (2002:7) state a definition:

> *A test designed to measure how much a language learners has successfully learned with specific reference to a particular course.*

It is a '*reading test"* carried out to examine *"how specific features such as discourse topic/content, discourse domain … manifest themselves in the teaching situation"* (Shohamy quoted in Celce-Murcia *et al* (2000: 2003).This means that this test is concerned with the role of the subject matter in the reading comprehension test users' scores.

In the design of this test, the investigator has taken into consideration a another condition stated by Chalhoud –Deville *et al* (2000:524) which includes that the reading test has to *"...incorporate a variety of item types that reflect those used in instructional setting."* as a result, all the types of questions were previously used in the training phase.

This pen-and-paper reading test has taken place almost on February 22nd, 2011 at 10 o'clock; it has been completed in duration of one hour and a

half by only 18 students, as two remaining learners were excluded because of their repeating absences during the training phase.

2.5.2.3. Texts selection

As a matter of fact, in any ESP context, the ESP practitioner has to rely on himself for designing materials. Moreover, the language teacher is not only concerned with such a role; however, it extends to assessing how well this course has been achieved.

To do so, the investigator has selected the content of the two tests in collaboration with a subject specialist. That is to say, the themes used correspond with the students' content courses. In this end, the researcher has focused in the first test on one of the theories of language acquisition which is related to the cognitive development.

In order to fit the students' level of language proficiency, the texts has been adapted to suit appropriately their target needs. The first text consists of four paragraphs differing in their lengths and focus.

➢ The first paragraph speaks about the first stage which is the sensorimotor.
➢ The second paragraph speaks about the preoperational stage.
➢ The third paragraph focuses on the concrete operational stage.
➢ The fourth paragraph deals with the final stage which is the formal operational.

The words that constitute these sentences are sub-technical vocabulary such as *language acquisition, preoperational, concrete…*etc. This type of terminology belongs to Baker's (1988) first category of terms which are general to all or several specialized disciplines. The idea behind the use of this type is to avoid confusing and misunderstanding on the part of the researcher.

The second test, on the other hand, has been also based on psychology-based themes. The focus has been put on one the main mental disorder that may experience both children and adults. The text, thus, comprises three paragraphs speaking about the causes and the consequences of depression.

2.5.2.4. Tests questions

As it is mentioned earlier, the primary objectives of using reading tests are as follows:

- ➢ To check the students' comprehension at the sentence and paragraph levels.
- ➢ To assess whether the students use their background knowledge.

To meet these goals, the pre as well as post-training test focus on the same questions, namely:

- ➢ Finding the main idea of the passage.
- ➢ Scanning to obtain information.
- ➢Defining vocabulary in context.

In so doing, the investigator has made use of different types of reading comprehension questions summarized under the following headings:

> ➢ Fixed response items.

> ➢ Alternative response items.

> ➢ Free response items.

> ➢ Sentence completion.

The first type enables the test takers, in fact, to choose the right answer from some given alternatives.

e.g. According to Piaget theory, infants in the sensorimotor stage, cannot:

- Use sensory impressions to understand the world.

- Use motor impressions to understand the world.

- Form symbolic representation to understand the world.

In the second type, the researcher has rather used *true-false* items. The use of such a type is *that"...responses could be used to indicate understanding of the basic idea expressed in a sentence."* Harold (1983:85) thus, the answer of such a question requires a careful concentration on the passage.

Within the third set of questions, the test takers have to answer complete sentences. In this end, the readers were tested on the comprehension of the passage as a whole. As an example: In just a sentence, explain what you feel the main point of the passage is………….

The purpose of using free response items is to allow the readers producing language for the sake of testing their language abilities. The alternative response items, on the other hand, were used to assess students'

comprehension of the passage. The final set of questions refers to the type where the test takers have to complete sentences by extracting the missing words from the text.

It should be mentioned also that the two tests have been adapted from the type of reading courses provided by Mackay *et al* (1978). That is to say, the use of such types of questions is dictated by the nature of the types of exercises, namely comprehension questions and comprehension activities. The former is used to test the students' comprehension about the content of the text. The latter, on the other hand, is designed to help students understand how the text functions as a linguistic entity. (See appendix C).

Type of Exercise	Item	Question	purpose
Comprehension questions	1	Free response items	Scanning the text.
	2-3-4	Fixed response items.	Content understanding.
	5-6-7	Free response items.	Assess students' language ability as well as scanning for the main information.
	8-9	Alternative response.	Sentence comprehension.
	10	Free response items	Passage comprehension.

Comprehension Exercises	11-12	Sentence completion	Sentence comprehension
	13-14	Finding synonyms	-Inferring the meaning.
	15-16	Finding reference items	Assess students' language ability of finding reference items.

Table 2.1: The Sequence of Items in the pre- training tests.

(Adapted from Mackay *et al*,1978)

The questions used in the pre- training and post-training tests were a combination of factual questions and inference questions. The former refers to what is stated in the text. The goal of using this type is to help learners increase their self-confidence by answering the initial questions so that they may create a relax atmosphere to be encouraged to complete the test. The aim of using the second type of questions, in contrast, is to check whether learners are able to relate to their own experiences.

These questions have been, of course, carried out to compare whether the learners become able to use different reading strategies when reading, leading them to compensate for their language weaknesses.

2.5.2.5. Tests Examination and Scoring

When the researcher has finished the design of the tests items and labeled the comprehension questions and the comprehension activities required for both tests, she cooperates with another ESP teacher form the department of Law and Political Sciences so that to see consensus on theses labels. As a result, it is to be noted that some questions have been changed, some have been added and others have been modified so that to suit the learners' language proficiency.

What is more, these tests have been scored by two raters, namely the ESP teacher of Law and Political Sciences and the investigator herself. However, the scoring for both tests are used in accordance with Michigan Guide to English for Academic Success and Better TOEFL Test Scores (2004). Accordingly, the researcher has scored these tests as follows:

➢ Multiple choice questions were scored on 1 point.
➢ Open questions were scored on 4 points; however, it should
   mentioned that:

   - 4 points were given to complete correct answer.
   - 3 points were given when the answer was correct but more information was needed.
   - 2 points when the answer was partially correct.
   - 1 point when the answer was incomplete and may not address   all requirements of the task.
   - 0 point when the answer was inaccurate, confused, and/or irrelevant

➢ Short answer questions were scored on 2 points for complete correct answer, and 1 point for partially correct answer and 0 for incorrect answer.

In view of that, the first test consisted of 3 short answers, 08 multiple items, 1 open question in addition to the synonyms and reference items which have been scored on 0.5 for each correct answer. This makes a sum of 20 points.

The second test, on the other hand, has been scored on 20 pints consisting of 4 multiple- choice questions, 2 short answer questions and 3 open questions.

2.6. THE STRATEGY-TRAINING PHASE

For the sake of helping students to further their reading comprehension while reading psychology-based themes, a focus has been put *on strategy-training* or what is known as *strategies-awareness*. It is, according to Oxford, (1990:2)

> *a program in which participants become*
> *aware of and familiar with the general idea*
> *of language learning strategies and the way*
> *such strategies can help them accomplish*
> *various language tasks.*

The aim of strategy-training, as believed by Cohen (2003), is to provide learners with the necessary tools from which they can choose during language learning and use. It aims at:

➢ Raising the students' awareness to the range of strategies
    that facilitate language learning.

> ➢ Training students how they transfer their successful strategies to new leaning context.

The strategy training has taken place over three weeks of a period of time; each instructional phase lasted one hour and a half of duration. Nearly sixteen (16) students out of twenty (20) were present in this training session. The four (4) students were excluded from this study for not having attended the training sessions. In this phase the researcher adapted Pearson's *et al* (1987) framework in strategy training. That is to say, the basic steps are:

1. Initial model of the strategies by the teacher, with explicit explanation of the strategy's use and importance.
2. The teacher guides the learners to use the strategy.
3. Consolidation whereby the teacher assists the learners to identify the strategies and decides when it might be used.
4. Independent practice with the strategy.
5. Application of the strategy to new tasks.

During this training phase, the learners were provided with psychology-based themes along with some strategies-training, mainly those of helping students to approach content-familiarity for the sake of enhancing their already existing skills in their mother tongue.

For achieving this goal, the teacher adapted the reading portion of her guided reading lesson plans to include explicit instruction of reading strategies based on the students' needs, the nature and the context of the present research. For this reason, the basic reading strategies are adapted from Ogle's (1986) strategy.

These training sessions were first used to raise the students awareness about a number of strategies used to better their understanding. It was for great necessary for the teacher to draw the learners' attention that texts are language in use, that is to say, it is semantic carrying out ideas rather than grammatical forms (Halliday *et al,* 1976). This was done for the sake of changing the students' habits which include focusing on each word of each sentence. Thus, the learners were encouraged to infer meaning from context as well as neglecting unknown vocabulary.

After this introduction, the teacher adapted her teaching strategies to Ogle's (1986) KWT strategy. It was carried out in three steps. In short, the teacher asked the learners to draw a chart composed on three columns including *'what I know, what I want to know and what I learnt'*. (See table 2.2.)

The fact that the students' lack of strategy use in reading comprehension, the teacher ended up giving more of an overview of strategies. Many other strategies were, thus, embedded but taught explicitly through direct modeling and explanation. The strategies added during this training phase are *answering questions, debate and discussion, prediction and identify paragraph structures.*

At a first step, the teacher asked the learners a number of questions before they started reading the text. As examples used in the first step are: Do you know anything about this topic? How much can you remember? Or what you have in mind about this subject?

Students, at this level, were asked to write down their answers and were encouraged to read what they wrote. This strategy was, in fact, used

for the sake of helping learners to exchange their stock of knowledge as well as reinforcing their lack of linguistic competence. Having verbalized their ideas, the teacher tried to record them to the board in the form of semantic mapping so that to recapitalize what they said.

As a second step, the teacher asked the learners to predict about the content of the text. They were trained to form hypotheses which were confirmed or rejected later on. In the while-training reading activities, the learners were asked to identify the main ideas of the text stating whether some ideas are mentioned in the beginning or at the end of the text as well.

The final step refers then to what the researcher used as the post-reading activities; learners were encouraged to write down what they learnt from this text. This was done as a form of summary to find out what was acquired in terms of specialized vocabulary as well as new knowledge. The following table tries to summarize the procedures undertaken by the teacher in this training phase:

	KWL strategy	Strategies embedded	Purpose.
Pre-reading activities.	What I know	-Answering questions. -Debate and discussion. -Semantic mapping.	-Identify the topic and see whether the learners are familiar with.
	What I want to know	-prediction	-To learn to guess the content of the text.
While reading		-Identify paragraph	-Skimming the text quickly to find the

		structure. -Scanning the text for details.	main ideas as well as focusing on specific details.
Post-reading	What I learnt		-To know to acquire from this text.

Table 2.2: Strategies Training.

(Adapted from Ogle's, 1986)

Being familiarized with these strategies, it was necessary for the teacher then to use other texts asking the students to work independently for checking their reading comprehensions and their individual use of strategies as well.

In short, this training was performed in an attempt to raise the students' awareness to the range of strategies that may be used while reading comprehension. In this vein, an interest was oriented on only those strategies for approaching content- familiarity.

Starting from the view that it is almost impossible to get a better picture of reality when only one instrument is used, triangulation of techniques have been used in the present study so that to enable the researcher to cross-check results and have data from different perspectives. The following table tries to outline the procedures undertaken by the investigator to collect and analyse data.

2.7. CONCLUSION

This quasi-practical phase of this research work intended to offer the reader with a general description of how data were collected, focusing, first on providing a general idea of the stages of training   in the psychology department along with the time allotted to the ESP teaching and the materials used.

After that, the research instruments were, systemically, discussed. A placement test was used as a first tool, aiming at depicting our learners' lacks, and knowing their language proficiency and comprehension at the sentence level. As the second data collection instrument, an ESP learners' interview was submitted, focusing on some important facts, as the content selections and their impact on their students' reading comprehensions. The third research method was, additionally, concerned with measuring the learners' improvement of reading comprehension and language proficiency.

Chapter Three

CHAPTER THREE: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS.

3.1. INTRODUCTION:

3.2. DATA ANALYSIS AND DATA INTERPRETATION

 3.2.1. The Pre-training Phase Results.

3.2.1.1. The Teachers' interviews.

3.2.1.2. The Pre-training Test Results

3.2.2. The Training Phase Results

3.2.3. The Post-Training Phase Results.

3.2.3.1. The Post-Training Test Results.

3.2.3.2. The Learners' Interview Results.

3.3. SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS.

3.4. CONCLUSION

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This third chapter strives to analyze and interpret the results gathered through the data collection procedures. It is divided into three sections. Each phase will be analyzed in isolation so that to unveil how the learners perform and progress and depict their reading comprehension performances and strategy use before and after the training phase.

It is commonly agreed that data analysis aims at investigating and scrutinizing the different data carried out through the experimentation with the purpose of summarizing and supporting conclusion. In this regard, it is believed to be an operation making data open to a large-scale analysis and multilayer of interpretations.

3.2. DATA ANALYSIS DATA INTERPRETATION

As suggested by Cohen *et al* (2007), the decision of data analysis procedures is determined basically by:

- The focus of the research,
- The precise character of the data,
- The sorts of data are being employed.

Joining this idea, Norton (2009) believes that the validity of any research does not only take into account the validity of the research instruments but also, and more significantly, how data are collected and analyzed. Moreover, the decision upon which approach the researcher relies on for analyzing his data can not be isolated form his data collection instruments.

It seems to be appropriate for the present study to use both quantitative and qualitative data analysis for the sake of obtaining multi-level of analysis, and therefore reaching a near full picture of reality. These two approaches, according to Greene *et al* (1989), have a complementary function, they "*…are used to measure overlapping but also different facets of a phenomenon, yielding an enrich understanding by illustrating, clarifying, or elaborating on certain aspects*"(Quoted in Dörnyei 2007: 164).

Concerning the quantitative analysis, it is believed to be about statistical, numerical and mathematical analysis by organizing the results, counting and calculating the mean, describing what is observed and inferring what is not clearly seen as well.

This approach is used in this chapter to analyze the tests and the interviews through the application of closed questions and multiple-choice answers that have enabled the researcher to unveil and make out the percentages of the learners and teachers' answers and their scores. This has been done through the use of descriptive analysis which is simply defined as the description, presentation and the summary of results.

The results have been quantified through the use of *standard deviation*, or what is also known for short 'SD', and the centre tendency which has been measured in terms of median, mean and mode. The ultimate aim of this measurement is to designate the middle and the most frequently scores within students' performance of the same test. Additionally, the researcher has opted for a *paired- sample t-test* for the sake of comparing and examining the differences of the scores obtained before and after training tests.

The results reported from quantitative approach are widely seen to be non-generalizable to all the subjects, as it may fail to explain and interpret some patterns. Thus, after the codification of the data, a decision has been put intentionally towards another layer of analysis.

The use of the qualitative approach along with the quantitative method has been used to reveal and explain data through the utilization of open questions which entail the subjects to express themselves freely. The analysis of this type, usually, seems to be of the exploratory nature seeking for explaining causality.

With regard to data analysis phases which have been used in the present chapter, the researcher has opted for the same procedures undertaken during the data collection phase, i.e., data have been analyzed and interpreted through three different stages namely:

- Pre-training phase.
- While training phase.
- Post-training phase.

3.2.1. The Pre-training Phase Results

As a pre-training phase, this stage has been designed as an identification step aiming at investigating the learners' difficulties as far as reading comprehension and strategy use. To achieve the required data, two diagnostic instruments were used, namely the teachers' semi- structured interviews and the learners' placement and proficiency tests.

3.2.1.1. The Teachers' Interviews

An interview was submitted to three ESP teachers at the department of psychology for the purpose of unveiling some data about the teaching reading methodology. This was undergone, in fact, to see how their explicit and implicit reading strategies teaching as well as content selection may affect the learners' reading comprehension.

Items one and two are fundamentally related to the teachers' background (see section 2.3.2.). Questions two and three (See Appendix A) are respectively related to checking the teachers' selections of the content of the reading courses. All of them seem to agree on the fact that they rely on themselves in the selection of teaching material and pedagogical supports, as no collaboration and cooperation with the subjects-specialists are available in this department. Despite two teachers out of three mention that their focus is put on comprehension questions, the second one decided to make use, additionally, of some grammatical tasks that occur most frequently in the text. Likewise, the third teacher seems to neglect this skill believing that pushing learners to speak is, to a certain extent, of greater value.

With regard to the learners' interests, two teachers clearly stated that their learners are not interested on the type of reading courses provided to them, justifying their answers by stating that they are beginners and they lack motivation as they consider the ESP course as being additional one. For the third teacher, however, the content of the course plays a crucial role, particularly, if it is easy, according to him, this may facilitate the students' comprehension.

With respect to teachers' assessment of the students' language proficiency, there is a general consensus among them that the majority of them exhibit a low level of the English language. This may be due to the fact that nearly all of them received French courses in their university studies. In addition to this, none of them denied the role of language in reading comprehension, except one teacher who apparently tried to deviate from the answer stating that he has no idea!

Concerning the students' difficulties, one teacher stated: *"my students do not have any difficulty and I always provide them with an easy content."* Two others, on the other hand, argued that their learners encounter serious problems in reading supporting their answers by the following reasons:

- ➢   Low level of language proficiency,
- ➢   Lack of use of the reading strategies,
- ➢   Students' negative attitudes towards the reading courses in general.

Furthermore, talking about the application of strategy training in the ESP classroom, a noticeable split of answers has been marked among the three teachers, as one of them seems to be unfamiliar with the meaning of 'reading strategies' reporting the types of activities practised during the reading sessions. He, therefore, mentioned some techniques used in language teaching in general like to divide the students into groups with the aim of enabling them to work collaboratively. He reported: *"What I basically do is that I breakdown the text into paragraphs. I split students into groups, then I give each paragraph to each group (…) but during the time that I give them to read, I pass over them and help them"*.

As it could be observed from his saying, this teacher did not really take into consideration the sub-skills and strategies required by his ESP learners for a successful reading comprehension, but rather simply trying to facilitate and assist learners, according to him, understand some difficult words while reading. However, relying heavily on this activity is often negatively criticized in literature. The teacher, in contrast, should preferably train his learners to neglect or rather help them guessing the meaning of the unknown words from context. The remaining teachers, yet, quote some additional reading strategies with no explicit training. The cases in point are:

> Guessing the meaning from context.
> Finding the main idea of the passage.
> Extracting key-words.

As a matter of fact, and as an attempt to see how well readers make use of the reading strategies taught in their courses, two teachers out of three agreed that the majority of the students are not conscious of them. One ESP practitioner, nonetheless, seems to be uncertain of what happens in his classroom saying that: *"I have no idea"*. This in fact shows the limited vision and perception of a 'novice' teacher expressing no teaching experience in EFL in general, and ESP in particular.

Asking them about the role of content-based themes in reading comprehension, two teachers maintained that this approach might be of crucial importance supporting their ideas by stating that providing them with such a content, students might be interested and motivated to read.

As a final step, and for the aim of eliciting information about the teachers' viewpoints as far as the strategies which might enhance the learners reading comprehension, and enable them to overcome their difficulties, a number of recommendations were proposed summarizing in the following headings:

> ➢ Strategies training.
> ➢ Focusing on the main importing ideas of the passage.
> ➢ Teaching them to write correct sentences.
> ➢The use of short text so that learners will not get bore.
> ➢ The integration of the other skills to empower the reading skill such as listening and writing.

To sum up the results obtained from this interview, one would say that the teachers themselves appear to be unaware of the set of strategies that might be applied and useful to teach reading, and thus, process comprehension. All of them seem to entirely focus on only *while-reading* strategies neglecting completely those used for activating background knowledge.

In the light of their responses, one may deduce that the application of strategy-training as far as *previewing* and those of post-reading strategies; the case in point is *summarizing the main point* of the text, are often seemed to be totally absent in these ESP teaching target situations. What is more, the lack of teaching materials lead their ESP learners to be, in general, not motivated and interested in these reading courses.

3.2.1.2. Pre-Training Test Results

The data attained during the pre-training test was, in fact, collected through the use of a placement test aiming, fundamentally, at checking the learners' level of reading comprehension by providing them with ESP theme drawn intestinally from their subject matters courses.

Based on the available literature in this area of research, testing reading may include different purposes, but one of the key-objectives, that is most appropriate to the aim of the present research work, is that of comprehension. Moreover, it seems to be of great necessity to start with a sentence level. (Harold, 1983).

The researcher, in this sense, took into account some other criteria also proposed by Harold (1983) when he stated that in addition to comprehension questions, the reading test may include vocabulary and grammar.

Accordingly, this test consisted of sixteen (16) items focusing, mainly on reading strategies including, predicting; skimming; scanning and inferring. Question one was used as a pre-reading task, aiming at testing the students reading ability to activate their background knowledge. It was, in fact, undergone separately from the test so that to ensure that they did not make use of the information of the passage.

First, at a macro level of analysis, the students' reading performances were essentially evaluated on the basis of the *Michigan Guide to English for Academic Success and Better TOEFL Test Scores (2004)*. Thus, each answer was scored according to its type of question (see section 2.5.2.5.) Their

overall results indicated that only few of the informants managed to achieve this test. The following table tries to summarize the students' performance in the pre-training test:

N° of students	The scores
S 1	09
S2	08
S 3	09.5
S 4	08.5
S 5	10
S 6	08.5
S 7	07.5
S 8	08
S 9	11
S 10	12.5
S 11	09
S 12	11.5
S 13	15
S 14	12.5
S 15	10
S 16	11

Table 3.1: The Students' Scores in the Pre-Training Test.

Using quantitative analysis, the researcher opted for some statistical techniques such as those of measuring central tendency and variance. The following table sums up the findings of this pre-training test:

Central tendency			Variance	Standard deviation
Mode	Mean	median	2.936	1.713
09	10.09	10.5		

Table 3.2: Summary of the Students' Pre-Training Scores.

The use of central tendency in this kind of analysis was meant to see the total distribution of the scores attained by our ESP learners. Therefore, this table displays that the most frequently score obtained in this placement test was nine (09), while the median of the group that represented the midpoint of the scores was ten and a half (10.5).

For this reason, one may conclude that the majority of the scores were below the central value. This practically means that the test was positively skewed and was difficult to the majority of the students (Norton, 2009). This obviously explains the students' low achievement.

Knowing the normal spread of the students' scores, the choice was made upon S.D which was, in fact, used to indicate whether the learners have had approximately the same level of achievement or not. Taking into account that their scores roughly ranged from 07.5 to 15, it seems wiser to say that they were little bit far from the mean, i.e.; 10.09. This indicates that the S.D was far from the mean which signifies the low performances of the majority of the learners.

Second, at a micro level of analysis in this investigation, the researcher has taken into consideration two analytical layers, namely the students' completion of the tasks and their strategy application as well.

Beginning with the first strategy related to background activation, students were, in general, not familiar with this task, asking many times what should be answered. Hence, only two out of sixteen, i.e., 12% were able to use this strategy successfully; reporting their key-words such as *communication, language development, thought and Piaget…*The following pie-chart illustrates the results obtained:

Background Knowledge Activation in
the Pre-Reading task

0%   0%   Good
12%

poor
88%
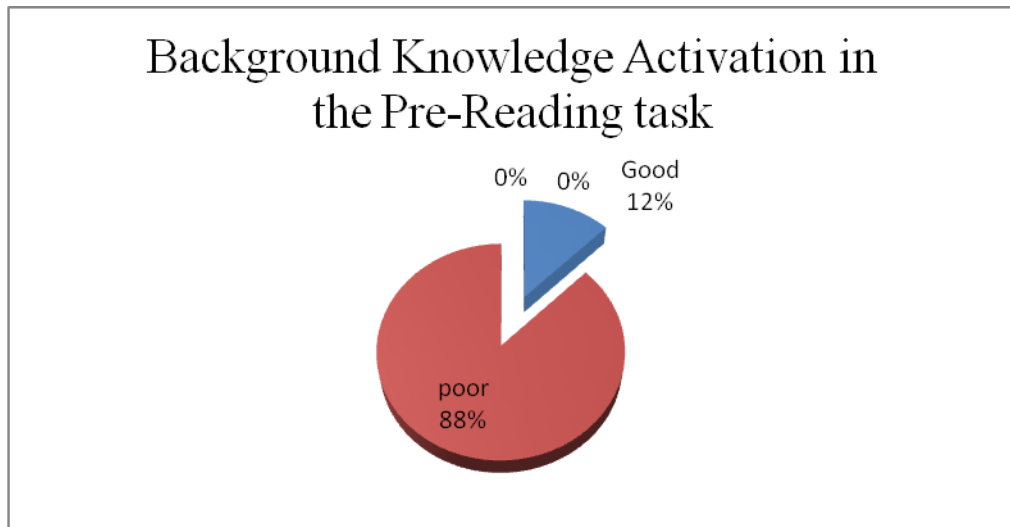
Pie-chart 3.1: Background Knowledge Activation in the Pre-Reading Task.

Concerning question two which was meant to test the skimming strategy, all of the learners with no exception, i.e., 100% have achieved correct answers.

Questions 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 are respectively related to checking the learners' performance of the scanning strategy using three different tasks, namely multiple choice items, open-ended questions and true/ false items. Concerning the first task, the result revealed that nine (9) learners out of

sixteen (16); that is only 56.25% failed to submit correct answers. The following table supports the results gathered through this task:

Students' answers	A.F	R.F
Successful	7	43.75%
Unsuccessful	09	56.25%

Table 3.3: The Learners' Performance of the Scanning Strategy Using Multiple-Choice Items.

Although providing the learners with alternative answers which are extensively believed to be an easy assignment. A great deal of learners seems to be unable to choose the correct answer. The following bar-graph supportively clarifies the above table:
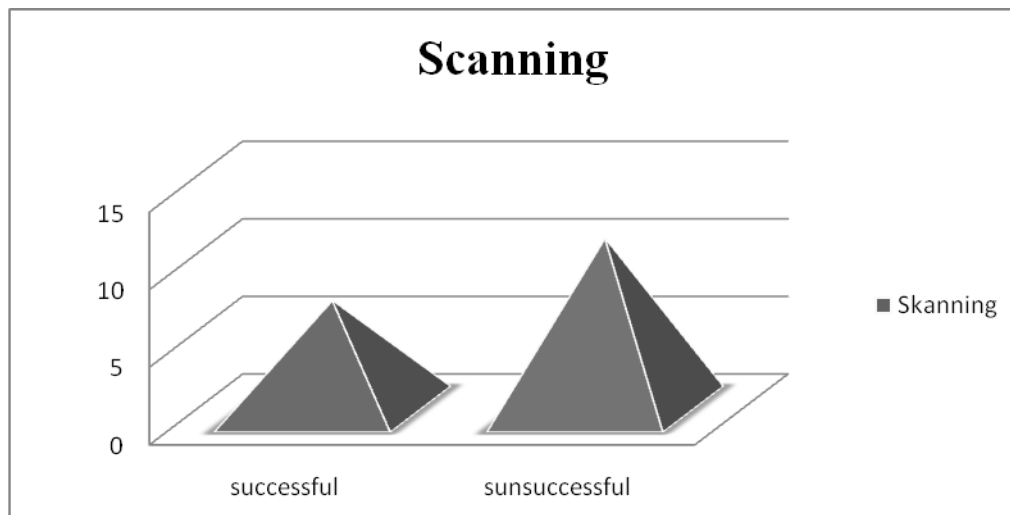
Bar-graph .3.1: Students' Performance of the Scanning Strategy Based on Multiple-Choice Questions.

With regard to the second type of questions which were principally based on open-ended questions, the learners were required to answer them for the purpose of assessing their capacity to produce language (Widdowson, 1987).   In this end, the overall aim was not only the application of the scanning strategy, but also, to evaluate its use across advanced, intermediate and beginners' learners as well.

The results display that 62% of the students were able to use this strategy, however, it is worth stating that only 37% succeeded in giving correct answers with reference to syntactic structures. Nearly, 25% of them, on the one hand, relied heavily on the text without changing the structure of the sentences; others on the other hand, answered the questions without transforming them in the affirmative forms. An example of this is what a student wrote:*"In just a sentence, what do you feel the main point of this passage is the text speak about the theory of Piaget and different stage."*

As for items 11, 12, 13 and 14 which are correspondingly related the application of inferring the meaning of specialized as well as general terms, the results showed poor performance of this type of strategy. It is worth pointing that due to the students' limited level of language proficiency, the majority of the learners did not achieve the full task successfully. Only 37% of the students succeeded in inferring the meaning of the general language terms, and approximately 13% managed in guessing the meaning of psychology-based terms. The remainers, however, were unable to guess the meaning of both categories. The following Bar-graph further summarizes the results obtained:
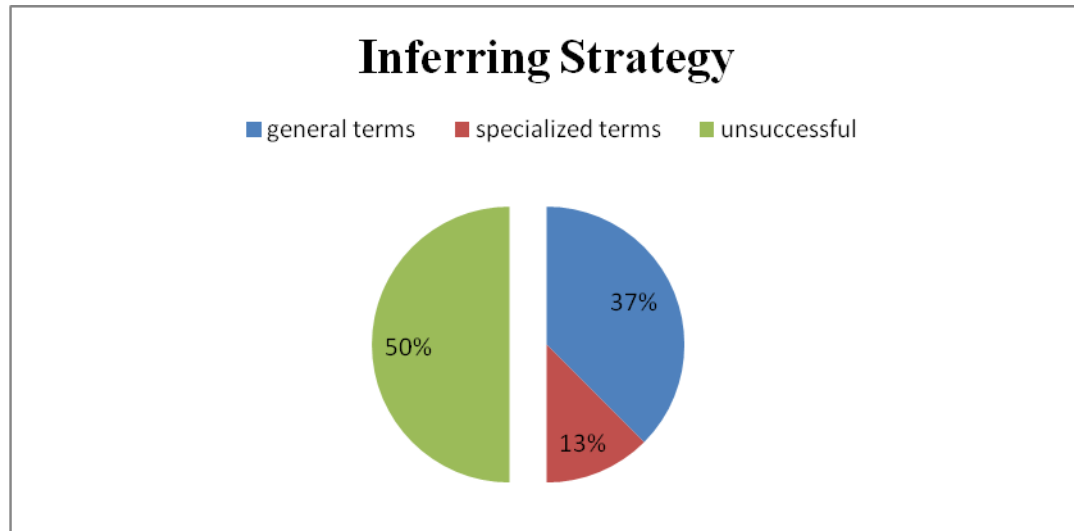
Pie-chart .3.2: Students' Application of the Inferring Strategy.

For the identification of the referent items, only 10 students out of 16 i.e., 62.5% achieve this task effectively. The following table attempts at exposing the different data gathered:

Identification the referent items	A.F	R.F
Successful answers	10	62.5%
Unsuccessful answers	06	37%

Table 3.4: Tested the Identification of the Referent Items.

As it is displayed from this table, this task seems to be easy for some learners; accomplished by approximately 62.5 %, the remainers, conversely, experience a great deal of difficulties concerning this strategy. Here is also a graphic representation of the identification of the Referent Items for a better clarification.

Indentification of the Referent Items

unsuccessful
38%

Successful
62%
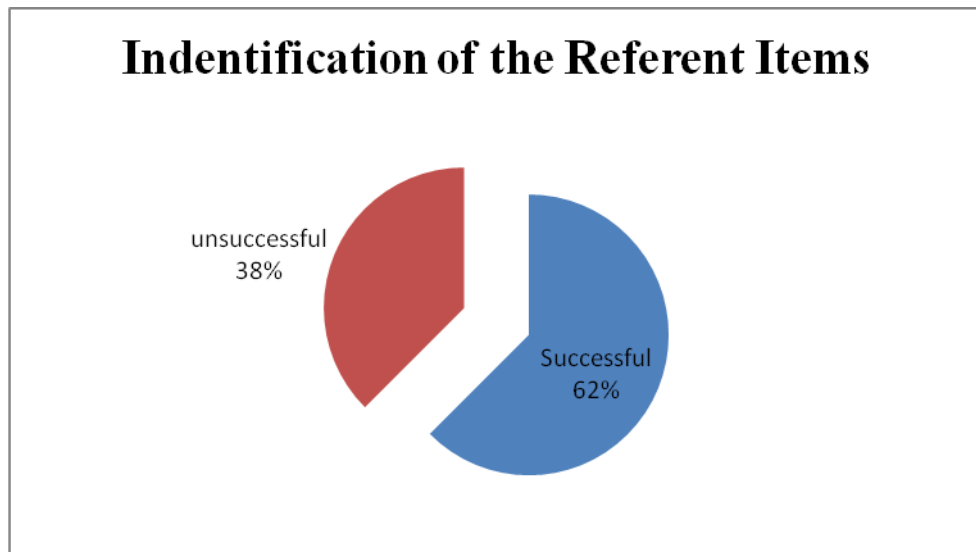
Pie-chart.3.3: The performance of the Identification of the Referent Items.

Data interpretation

In the light of the results obtained in this pre-training test, one would say that the students' low performances of reading comprehension lied significantly in their poor application of some strategies, namely those of activating background knowledge such as previewing. Despite the fact that the content of the test was drawn primarily from the students' subject-matters courses, they were unable to transfer the already knowledge existed skills in their mother tongue. In this end, they seem to use a *bottom-up* model while reading focusing, most of the time, on the text as a separate process.

Neglecting the top-down model, it is to be added that learners were unable to guess the meaning of specialized terminology, such as *egocentric,* as only 13% of them handled this task efficiently. Most of their successful inferring lied fundamentally on those of general language terms.

Comparing with scanning, the skimming strategy constituted a good deal of performance as 100% of the learners accomplished this reading activity correctly. In the skimming strategy, on the other hand, learners' linguistic weakness is seemed to an obstacle when reading; due to their limited level of language proficiency, they failed to structure their answers in accordance with the questions.

3.2.2. The Training Phase Results

To investigate the hypotheses put at the beginning of this experimentation stating that providing learners with content-familiarity based on their subject courses along side with their strategy awareness, may lead learners to activate their background knowledge, enhance their reading comprehension, and therefore, compensating for their language weaknesses. This is expressed in Hudson's words (1991:77): *"...the emphasis on reading for content improved reading comprehension as well as knowledge of reading grammar and general reading ability."*

It is to be mentioned that all the 16 students were exposed to the same reading strategy-training with the purpose to approach content-familiarity. Starting from pre-reading strategies, the teacher opted for those of activating the learners' already existing skills. In this context, they seemed to be highly motivated and interested in these courses; engaged in meaningful communication, without paying attention to their language production errors. As a result, in this phase, the teacher encouraged the participants to speak freely thereby informing them that mistakes are part of learning, and that focus would be on comprehension of the text rather than on its form.

The second set of strategies was those used while engaging with the texts. They were taught explicitly through direct instructions so that to help learners become much more aware of their application. Throughout strategy-training, the teacher followed Pearson and Dole's (1987) framework that is, the *modeling* of the strategy, the *guidance*, the *consolidation,* and finally the *application* and the independence practice on the part of the learners.

Relying on the results achieved in the pre-training test, one may deduce that learners' awareness of the range of strategies as well as their motivation to read psychology-based themes were observed and determined during the training sessions. The following phase will confirm whether learners will be able to compensate for their language weaknesses and overcome their reading difficulties encountered during the pre- training stage.

3.2.3. The Post-Training Phase Results

This stage was, indeed, used as an evaluation step, aiming at assessing the effects of the planned action which included strategy-awareness to approach psychology-based themes. This was undertaken through the submission of two evaluation instruments, namely the students' proficiency test and a semi-structured interview.

3.2.3.1. The Post-Training Test Results

The post-training test intended to check the students' improvement with reference to reading comprehension in general, and strategies in particular. Providing the psychology learners with content familiarity, they

were required not only to focus on the passage but also, and most importantly, to relate them to what they know as well.

Following the same procedures undertaken in the pre-training test analysis (See section 3.2.1.2.), the researcher relied, first, on a macro analysis, stressing on the overall scores. This was, in fact, intended to be compared, later on, with the pre-training results. The following table stands for the results attained in this phase:

N° of students	The scores
S 1	13
S2	11
S 3	10
S 4	11
S 5	10
S 6	12
S 7	13
S 8	10.5
S 9	13
S 10	14
S 11	13
S 12	12
S 13	16
S 14	16
S 15	10
S 16	13

Table 3.5: Scores for Reading Strategies after Instruction.

Training learners to make use of reading strategies resulted in enhancing their reading comprehension to approach content-familiarity. This, respectively, confirms the hypothesis put at the onset of this present research work. Having a look at the learners' scores, one may notice that most of them succeeded in the comprehension of the text, obtaining scores ranging from 10 to 16 which indicates a considerable achievement compared with pre-instruction scores. Going over statistical analysis and based on the central tendency and the standard deviation, these marks may be further elucidated. The following table endeavors to uncover the learners' performances in the post-training phase:

Central tendency			Variance	Standard deviation
Mode	Mean	median	3.482	1.866
10	12.34	12.5		

Table 3. 6: The Students' Post-Training Scores.

Statistically speaking, as it shown in this table, the results display that all of the scores; that is 10, 11, 12, 13, and 16 were not very far the mean of the group which was 12.34. This justifies that the learners are homogeneous, which resulted on the fact that strategy-training was highly effective. In addition to this, the majority of the learners' scores were almost above the central value of the group which indicated that the majority of them adequately perform the task.

Furthermore, and for the sake of measuring the students' improvement in both tests, the following *t-test* formula was applied:

$$T = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{\sqrt{\frac{var_1}{n_1} + \frac{var_2}{n_2}}}$$

$\bar{x}_1$ stands for the mean of the first test.

$\bar{x}_2$ stands for the mean of the second test.

Var 1 stands for the variance of the first test.

Var $_2$ stands for the variance of the second test.

N stands for the number of the students.

$$T = \frac{10.09 - 12.17}{\sqrt{\frac{3.76}{16} + \frac{3.74}{16}}} = \frac{-2.08}{\sqrt{0.235 + 0.234}}$$

$$= \frac{-2.08}{\sqrt{0.469}}$$

$$= \frac{-2.08}{0.685}$$

$$= -3.037$$

The number -3.037 represents the *t-test* results, bearing in mind that it is negative; this indicates that the pre-test scores were lower than the students' post-test performances which means that they highly achieved the test. The following bar-graph further clarifies and shows the difference in their achievements:
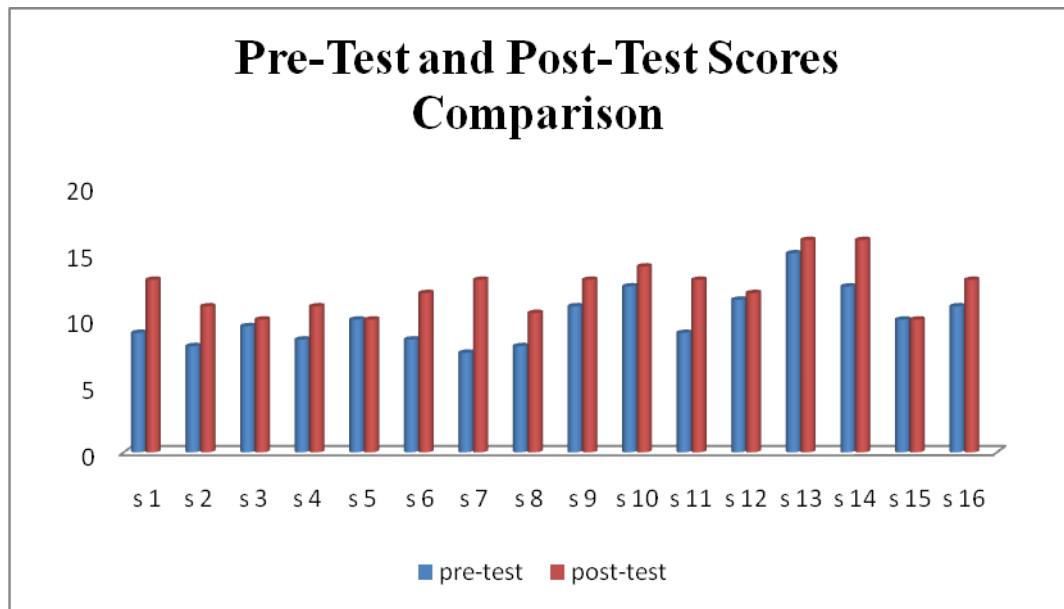
Bar- Graph. 3.2: Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores Comparison.

Adopting a micro analysis, and with regard to the first question which was fundamentally based on pushing readers to activate their background knowledge, a reasonable progress was felt, then compared with the their application in the pre-test as 62% were able to transfer their knowledge into English through some words such as *depression may result in suicides, most of the suffers are adults, it is difficult to be treated, a mental illness, severe sickness…* The following bar-graph reports their significant changes:
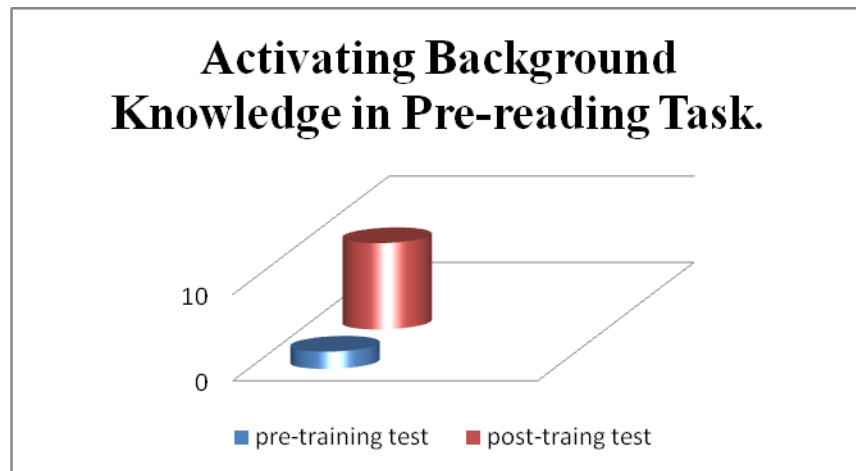
Bar-Graph 3.3: Successful Activation of Background Knowledge in the Pre and Post Tests.

With respect to the second strategy which was mainly related to scaning, the majority of the learners succeded in the multiple choice quostions, as only 6% failed in choosing the correct answers. Items 3, 4, 5 and 6 were mainly factual questions; the results indicates that almost 70% the students answer them successfully which indicates a little improvement on the part of the learners. The following table compares their performances in both tests:
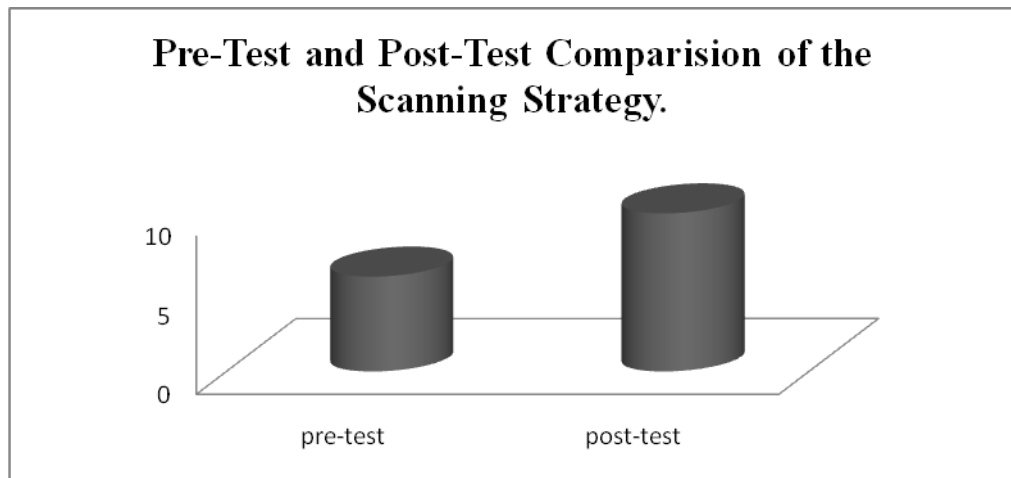
Bar-graph 3.4: Studensts' Performances in the Pre- and Post-tests.

Questions 7 and 8 were designed to check the students' application of the scanning strategy. In this end, they were required to write down what the author implies for the purpose of checking whether the students compensate for their language weaknesses, 56% of them succeeded in this previewing strategy. As an example of this is what a student mentions: "*Depression is means that all people can be depression, adults and children but there is different in percentages of human in suffer of depression*"

Similarly, despite their level of the English language , almost 87% of the learners managed to answer this item correctly with some grammatical errors; they all agreed on the fact that it is severe and difficult to be treated and considered as being one of the mental diseases in the *Diagnostic Statistic Manual*. As an illustration of this is what has been reported :

> *Because the name clinical have diagnostic and in*
> *clinic and have symptomlogy in DSM.*

An other example is here stated below:

> *There are two kinds of depression, the first is normal*
> *depression and the second is abnormal hear we speak*
> *about the clinical depression as a pathology.*

Concerning the identification of the referent items, the 16 students representing 100% achieved this task sucessfully, and revealed the same level of performance in both tests.

The strategy of infering meanings from context displayed that the majority, representing almost 86,75% succeeded to make suitable inferences of the general term, and only 43, 75% were able to infer the psychology-based vocabulary. The following bar-graph compares the sudents' achievements of the pre- and post-instruction tests:
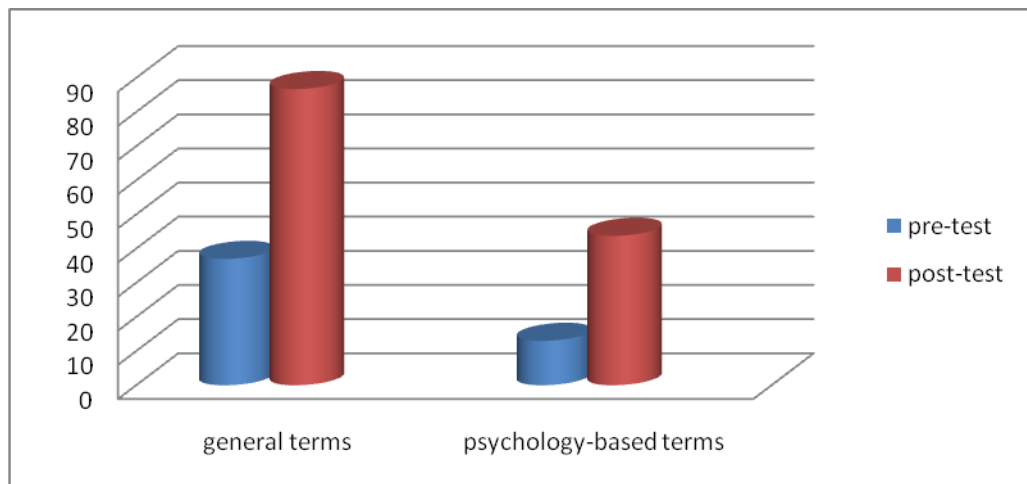
Bar-graph 3.5: The Students' Inferences of Meaning in Pre- and Post- Tests.

3.2.3.2. Learners' Interview Results

Following the achievement test, the learners were interviewed for the
the aim of unveiling   their perceptions towards the ESP reading courses
                              as well as to cross-check the results attained in the
post-training test, including the reading strategies.

Item one is respectively related to the learners' attitudes towards the
training sessions, the results reveal that the majority of the learners (10) are
interested and none of them find it boring. The following pie-chart sums up
the the data:
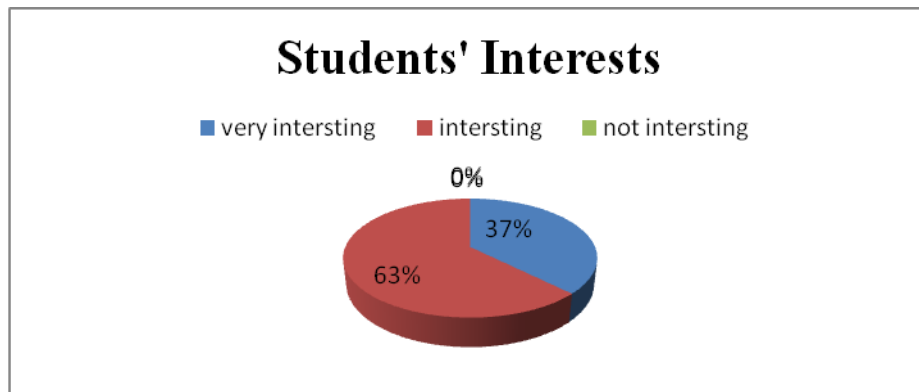
Pie- chart 3.4: Studensts' Levels of Interests.

Moreover, none of them deny the fact that psychology-based themes
are very intersting; because they are drawn from their area of research. This
has been reported by an interviewee:

إيه sujet تاع spécialité نكون intéressé   باش نقراه و يجيني ساهل باش نفهمو .''
'' كييكون,
Here, is an attempt to translate the student' answer:

> *Yes, if the text is about psychology-based themes,*
> *I am intersted in reading. Moreover, this may*
> *enhance my comprehension*

With respect to the third question, most of our learners evaluate their language level, after the training, of course, between advanced and intermediate. The following table displays the results:

Students' language level after the training sessions	A.F	R.F
Advanced	5	31,25%
Intermediate	9	56, 25%
Weak	2	12,5

Table 3.7: The Students' Language Levels after the Training Sessions.

Moreover, almost all the studenst seem to agree on the fact that the language have great impact on their reading comprehension.

The fourth rubric is, fundamentally, concerned with the students' reading strategies, thus asking them about the way they organize themselves; nearly all of them seem to focus at the beginning on the title and checking if it is familiar to them. After that, they formulate the general idea of the passage.

Moreover, there is a general concensus among all of them that for successful reading comprehension to occur, a number of strategies are used such as focusing on the general idea, relate to their background knowledge. One of them argues:

titre, على الأقل نعرف على واسم راه يدور هذا texte, نتفكر يلا عندي معلومات في هذا الموضوع, نقرا الحاجة اللولة نشوف'
texte مليح نخرج فكرة عامة و نقسمو ل 4 افكار فرعية, ماشي مهم نفهم كامل الكلمات باش نخدم الأفكار. '

Here, again, is an attempt to translate his answer:

> *The first thing to do is to read the title and see*
> *whether the topic of the text is familiar to me, then*
> *I exstract the general idea and divide the text to*
> *four sub-ideas, I don't need understand the*
> *meaning of each word to understand the text.*

The students' answers, in general, yielded the results disaplyed in the following table:

The strategy used	A.F	R.F
- Relate the title to their background knowledge	07	43,75%
- Focusing on the key words	04	25%
- Neglecting the unknown words.	05	31,25%
- The use of the dictionary.	03	18,75%
- Formulating the general idea.	05	21,25%
- Using an idea for each paragraph.	08	50%
- Extracting the topic sentence.	01	6,25%

Table 3.8: The TheStudents' Reading Strategies after the Training Sessions.

It sounds clear from this table that the learners use different types of strategies to suit their needs. Their strategies may be ranged, for instance,

from a simple focus on the title and relate it to what they know, to drawing up an idea of the text as a whole. The following Bar-chart better clarifies these results:
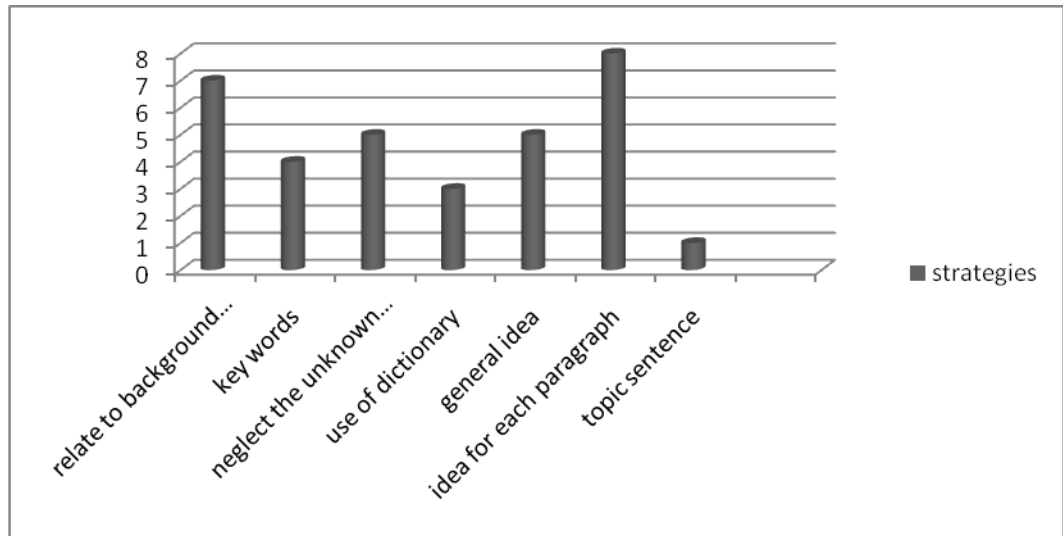
Bar-Graph 3. 6: Strategies used after the post-training sessions.

3.3. SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

To sum up, the results reveal that after the strategy training, learners become able to understand the psychology-based themes by drawing up on a number of different reading strategies, depending on their linguistic and cognitive ability.

Thus, the most commonly applied reading strategy among all the advanced, intermediate and weak learners' language proficiency is activating their content schemta through previewing. This confirms the hypothesis put at the begining of the dissertation, stating that content-familiarity may lead our learners to use their bachground knowledge

strategy and this may enable them to compensate for their language weaknesses.

Another one which seems to dominate the students' answers is devoting an idea for each paragraph. They believe that this enables them to enhace their comprehension little by little. In this end, they seem to focus on the part to have access to the whole and focusing on what they generally know rather than on the meaning of each word of each sentence.

3. 3. CONCLUSION

This present chapter attempted to carefully describe the results through three stages, including pre; while and; post-training phases. Thus, both interviews and tests were used to unveil the students' difficulties and reveal their application of reading strategies, mainly those of while and post-reading strategies.

The results revealed that the students' low achievement in the pre-training tests was mainly related to their poor application of reading strategies during the reading sessions. Raising their awareness to the range of strategies along with providing them with content-familiarity resulted in their improvements of reading comprehension.

In the following chapter, the researcher will attempt to enhance ESP learners' reading comprehension and reinforcing their language weaknesses through a pedagogical proposal focalizing on psychology-based themes, as well as tasks that promote the students' application of strategies.

chapter Four

CHAPTER FOUR: CHANGE AND INNOVATION.

4.1. INTRODUCTION.

4.2. REINFORCING THE STUDENTS' LINGUISTIC KNOWLEDGE WHILE READING.

4.3. SELECTING AND DESIGNING READING TEACHING MATERIALS

4.4. STRANDS IN TEACHING READING.

4.4.1. Instructional Reading Comprehension Questions

4.4.2. Preparing Tasks in Reading

4.4.3. Teacher as Strategist.

4.5. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE ACTIVATION

4.6. A SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHING READING THROUGH CONTENT FAMILIARITY.

4.7. CONCLUSION.

4.1. INTRODUCTION

Based on the results and conclusions drawn previously, this chapter seeks to provide pedagogical implications which may be of great importance of the ESP teachers of reading. Accordingly, some recommendations have been devoted to enhance the students' awareness of reading strategies in general, and activating their background knowledge in particular.

Additionally, and in an attempt at providing an effective reading course, a focus has been put on the teachers' role in materials selections, reading tasks and reading strategies.

The reading skill is usually conceived as a difficult task to be developed to high level of proficiency, as there is also relationship between reading skills, at the one hand, and language proficiency, on the other hand. It seems, logical, for the present chapter to take into consideration the two directions that may result in successful reading comprehension.

4.2. REINFORCING THE STUDENTS' LINGUISTIC KNOWLEDGE WHILE READING

The learners' reading comprehension is not only tied to their reading abilities, but also, and more precisely, their linguistic knowledge is believed to play a centre role. The reading task, in contrast, should center on some grammatical points that hinder the students' reading comprehension. Dudley-Evans *et al* (1998:75) believe:

> *For reading, where the learners'*
> *grammatical weaknesses interfere with*
> *comprehension of meaning, the*

relationship between meaning and form
can be taught or revised in context
through analysis and explanation. This
often includes the verb form, notably
tense and voice; modals ...

The consolidation and reinforcement of the ESP students' linguistic knowledge while teaching reading refers to what Spada (1997: 72) calls as *"Any pedagogical effort which is used to draw the learners' attention to language either implicitly or explicitly"*

These implicit and explicit language instructions are articulated around two approaches, notably proactive and reactive approaches (Lyster, 2007). The former refers to any instructional decision planned by the teacher during the design of the reading courses *"...to notice and use target language features that might otherwise not be used or even notices in classroom discourse"* (Lyster 2007: 44). It includes direct teaching of grammatical features found in the academic articles such as tenses; modals; voices; logical connections and articles.

The reactive approaches, conversely, includes unplanned interaction between the ESP teacher and the learners. This may take place during the students' answers of the reading comprehension questions by providing them with feedback about their errors (Lyster, 2007).

4.3. SELECTING AND DESIGNING READING TEACHING MATERIALS

Pedagogical materials should be designed, in a way, to fit the learners' requirements in acquiring reading knowledge of specific purposes. John *et al* (1983) recommend two principles for texts selections which are TALO and TAVI.

The underlying assumptions, related to the first, are that texts are used as objects emphasizing on grading new vocabulary and grammatical structures in the course. The basic principals used in selections texts in TAVI are determined by learners' purposes. This requires two ways which include the learners themselves and the subject teachers.

Furthermore, the vital question that needs to be, carefully, addressed before the selection of any teaching materials is "*what do we want teaching materials for*?" (Allwright 1981:5). The answer of this query is achieved through the use of some overlapping steps.

The decision phase calls for drawing a number of goals. In this end, Nation *et al* (2010) assign a useful *mnemonic* LIST, standing for language; ideas; skills and texts. They summarize these goals in the following table:

	Example
• Language goals may include . . .	New vocabulary. Letter–sound relationships. a grammatical structure.
• Ideas goals may include . . .	Content that needs to be learnt. Content required for other activities.
• Skills goals may include…	Reading for literal understanding. Reading to infer meaning.
• Text goals may include . . .	Genre structure. Cohesion and coherence.

Table 4.1: Examples of LIST goals (Macalister 2010: 3).

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The determination of the language goals opted for the selection of the teaching materials should be adjusted to fit the learners' demand in the target language, and based on their wants, needs and lacks. The ideas goals, in contrast, refer to the subject-matter content of the learners' specialiaty as this may include both carrier and real content.

Skills goals are those learning strategies undertaken by the teacher in an attempt at assisting their comprehensions. Texts goals, however, include those genre structures required by the learners to participate in their environments. Thus, knowing that the learners, for instance, need to read fiction, it is of great importance to fit their demands.

Additionally, Allwright (1981) maintains for two other steps, including action and review. However, there is no clear-cut distinction between these two fragments, as in many cases there is an overlap between the organization of objectives, the implementation and, later on, the evaluation. The results obtained in each phase may contribute to the notification of the following decision.
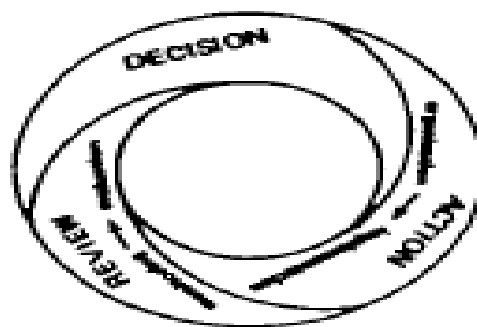
Diagram 4.1: Decision, Action, Review (Allwright 1981:6).

The process of materials design and selection is not an easy assignment as in many cases the decision about goals that should be embodied in teaching does not guarantee the use and success of these actions into practice. Accordingly, teachers as well as learners should be trained to be involved in decision making.

4.4. STRANDS IN TEACHING READING

Providing learners with texts followed by comprehension questions is, often, seen as a common activity undertaken by novice teachers for the sake of teaching reading comprehension. However, it is widely stated that "*using a text does not necessarily equal teaching reading*" (William 1986:45).

As suggested by Nation (2009:26), the teachers' responsibility is to find answer of the following question "*…how does today's teaching make tomorrow's text easier?"* This requires a systematic command, careful selections of texts, tasks and to develop the learner' reading skills and strategies that will support their future reading.

According to Macalister (2010), any teaching activity should be designed in accordance with four strands which are *meaning-focused input; language- focused learning; meaning-focused output; and fluency development.* He, also, stresses on the idea that for using meaning-focused input, five conditions should be bore in mind. These are:

- there is s focus on meaning;

- the texts and tasks interest the learners;

- for understanding; the input is understandable, activities help understanding;

- tasks are stress-free.

In this sense, the attention to meaning is seen as a fundamental concern; the primary objective in any reading lesson is to train learners to know or understand what the texts speak about. This should be accomplished through the use of interesting texts, enjoyable activities which include comprehension questions that help readers to interact with the texts.

In language -focused learning, Macalister (2010) calls attention that the teacher has to focus on the surface of the text. He states that this should be carried out by helping learners to pay attention and compare the target forms used. However, he adds that this activity should be supported by an emphasis on meaning so that to produce meaningful output and develop their fluency.

4.4.1. Instructional Reading Comprehension Questions

Teaching reading is, often, associated with the idea of examining how well the learners comprehend the text (Carver 1978). However, teachers should have a clear cut-distinction between teaching and testing. In this vein, Whitaker (1983: 331) sheds light on this idea stating:

> *We must for the moment keep the testing of comprehension separate from the teaching (or aiding) of comprehension.*

It is of great necessity to support their comprehension by devising effective and useful questions since these latter are seen as the most fundamental procedures due to their interactions between the

teacher, learners and the passage. Consequently, this requires a good command for teachers training.

Carver (1978) identifies six types of questions. These are:

- *Factual questions*: they refer to the type of items that required learners to find answers directly from the text.
- *Interpretation questions*: the readers are asked to find ideas which are not, definitely, mentioned in the passage.
- *Textual questions*: these refer to the kinds of questions that concerned with asking learners to identify in which part of the passage certain ideas have been mentioned.
- *Logical questions*: they refer to those types where readers are required to sort out connections or between sentences.
- *Inference questions*: these involve asking about something that is not clearly stated, therefore, readers are required to activate their background knowledge.
- *Judgment questions:* in this category, readers are required to give their personal viewpoints regarding what they have read.

Additionally, and at the final step, the language teachers should use alternative questions, asking their learners for information transfer. This may be achieved through transforming what they have read in the form of diagrams; tables; charts and summary writing as well (Palmer, 1982; Macalister, 2010).

Asking adequate questions is, generally, seen as one of the most powerful tools used to facilitate reading comprehension. However, coming with ready-made answers in mind make the students' task difficult one as the teacher may be unable to understand their vision. To

overcome this problem, Whitaker (1983:329) calls for another proposition stating that *"Comprehension questions must 'do an about-face'. The learners must ask the questions"*

In this end, she urges the need to prepare, encourage and train learners to ask questions themselves.   These include working in collaborative way, asking spontaneous questions occurring during their silent reading, and refining their answers through the use contextual cues.

Teaching reading comprehension entails not only for teachers' training but also to learners' training as well. The teachers' role should be, to observe, recommend and guide the readers all along their reading.

4.4.2. Preparing Tasks in Reading

Most teachers are not trained to prepare reading tasks. This is, may be, due to the fact that the instructional system opts to isolate theory from practice. To put in another term, teachers are just provided with the theoretical background. As suggested by Jarvis (1987), teachers have to be provided with effective models for better enhancing the rank of classroom interaction.

Tasks should be meaningful and purposeful, through the application of supportive activities. This may be, in an essence, based on real-world activities designed with clearly defined purposes, aiming at catering for the learners' demands of their academic environments in terms of content as well as forms (Lyster, 2007).

As far as tasks in teaching reading in ESP/EAP contexts are concerned, they are articulated around two different aims and objectives. *Content-based tasks* refer to the set of activities where

learners are required, for instance, to demonstrate names of countries in maps. *Form-focused tasks*, on the other hand, include drawing the learners' attentions to grammatical forms and lexis that occur more frequently in specific discourse.

The teachers' responsibility is to provide learners with meaningful input which is carried out through the use of instructional techniques and the establishment of well-defined goals and objectives. In this regard, Paulston (1984) recommends that teachers should make clear cut-distinction between methods and materials adding that *"methods and materials are not as important as principles of meaningful and interesting activities, on –task focus, clear activity objectives and comprehensive feedback"* (quoted in Jarvis 1987:181).

Teaching tasks do not only entail providing learners with texts related to their discipline and a collection of comprehension questions, as suggested by Statman (1981), the stress has, also, to be focalized on teaching the lexical features, bearing in mind that any passage displays certain kinds of terminology, namely technical and sub-technical terms.

It is widely agreed that the ultimate aim of reading is comprehension; this is achieved through teaching learners various kinds of vocabulary. Dudley-Evans *et al* (1998: 83) states:

> *In comprehension, deducing the meaning of vocabulary from the context and from the structure of the actual word is the most important method of learning new vocabulary.*

Joining the same idea, Statman (1981) and Kennedy *et al* (1984) assert guidelines for preparing tasks in teaching vocabulary including:

- words formations,

- words relationships.

Word formation activity is, closely, related to affixation, consisting of the meaning of prefixes and suffixes, as well as, the identification of words classes. The relationships between words, on the other hand, refer to the set of activities focusing on synonyms and collocations.

4.4.3. Teacher as Strategist

In any ESP teaching and learning context, the process of teaching reading depends heavily on the teachers' theories, or sometimes on their visions as far as what constitutes an effective instruction. Yet, this may not support a good education. The role of the teacher, in contrast, is to draw upon his past wrong experiences for the purpose of ameliorating and enhancing his practice. This may be achieved, according to Kemmis (1996) by answering the following enquiry:

- What are the useful strategies can I use in my teaching and what are the sort of remedies shall I make?
- What are the external conditions that influence my teaching?

(Quoted in Moore 2000)

Bearing in mind that learners exhibit certain tendencies, styles and strategies, come with different needs and interests, in instructing reading, the teacher tends to use an *eclectic* approach, drawing on a number of theories and models for effective teaching. Besides, he should be flexible, coping with the challenges of the learners. The tasks should, also, be structured and organized in a way to motivate learners

to read through the use of a set of supportive activities for the purpose of bettering the students autonomous in reading comprehension.

In so doing, the teacher should perform a *strategic role*. This requires a consolidating knowledge, an understanding of the subject matter, and the adaptation of possible strategies and materials in response to the immediate aims and objectives of the reading activity. In this trend, Moore (2000:140) labels the role of the teacher as being strategic accomplished throughout two responsibilities:

> *The first strand involves the construction of what might be called a pedagogic identity, that draws on the various discourses ...the communicative teacher, the competent teacher, the reflective teacher, the reflexive teacher, and the teacher as researcher and theorist.. The second strand is more directly connected to the notions of contingency and idiosyncrasy, in that it brings the professional identity to bear on the solving of often unanticipated problems and challenges…*

Additionally, Jarvis (1987) urges the need for the teachers to complete the following functions for the sake of improving the quality of classroom interaction during the reading comprehension sessions:

> ➢ *Setting tasks clearly and making them meaningful and purposeful to the learners*: before the design of any reading task, the ESP teacher should ask himself a number of inquiries related to the purpose of the reading activity that best suit his learners' requirements. This may be related, for instance, to enhancing the overall reading comprehension, developing specific skills, and teaching the ability to transfer information (Jarvis, 1987).

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➤ *Showing the learners any necessary steps to achieve tasks and what their outcomes are expected to be*: in this sense, the teaching objectives are to be made clear and explicit to the learners by providing them with the essential techniques and strategies that assist them to enhance their reading comprehensions.

➤

Organizing the class so that learners' works take up a large proportion of the available time: being in an ESP teaching and learning context, the available teaching time is limited, therefore, the fundamental aim is to teach them only the necessary skills to become communicatively competent in their target environments. The teacher's talk constitutes a great deal of interests. As a facilitator, the ESP teacher is believed to have an *economical* talk, supporting his learners to participate as much as possible through cooperation with their class mates and encouraging them to engage in dialogues with the texts (Wilson 2008).

➤ *Give clear and encouraging feedbacks to the learners*: setting an interactive learning environment, the teachers' role is to provide corrective feedbacks, helping them to become, progressively, aware of their errors produced during the communicative interaction. This may be carried out through correcting their mistakes, clarifying and summarizing their speech when necessary.

➢ *Teach English through English*: Jarvis (1987) calls for the use of the target language required by the learners, he believes that no use of the mother tongue is permitted, unless for some occasional switching for the purpose of assisting the learners' understanding of the texts.

4.5.   BACKGROUND   KNOWLEDGE ACTIVATION

For better enhancing the learners' reading comprehension, teacher should attach more importance for strategy training, introduced in a systematic way by teaching learners how to employ them. In this vein, Hamzaoui (2006:261) urges the need for instructors to devise

> *...curriculum that would enhance the cognitive and metacognitive growth of the learner by integrating learner strategy training besides content/skill training.*

This section is an attempt at shedding light on some strategies for prior knowledge activation, aiming, fundamentally, at helping learners to approach the content of the given passage through the use of pre-reading activities that might be of significant value to the learners.

➢ *Answering questions*: as a pre-reading phase, the teacher should ask learners a set of questions, training them to guess what the text is about. This strategy is, widely, believed to be effective as it enables them to relate what they know to the new text.

➤ *Prediction:* Prediction refers to a strategy used before and while reading, through the use of a number of hypotheses that will be confirmed, saved or modified. As suggested by Dutta (1994), this may be achieved by having an overview of the text, drawing the learners' attention to the title as well as key-words, asking for anticipation of meaning.

➤ *Semantic Mapping:* it refers to word-association activity, asking readers in the first step about the topic of the text which will be recorded on the board afterwards. The students, then, are asked to verbalize their thoughts concerning the text being at hand, and later on, arranged them in the form of maps. The importance of this strategy is highlighted by Tarquin *et al* (1997: XI) arguing that:

> *They are visual representations of concepts and ideas. When used in classroom, they provide students with tools to make thought and organization processes visible. They serve as organizational frameworks to promote thinking and language development.*

➤ *Brainstorming:* as pre-reading strategy, brainstorming requires the learners to bring what they have in their brains about the topic. This will be accomplished through different ways, including groups and individual brainstorming. It is maintained to be a supportive strategy, aiming at raising the learners' motivation as far as their engagement in meaningful communication. In this line of thought, Bligh (2000: 220) argues that it enables the readers to express themselves freely, moreover, "*it aims to unblock repressed thought.*"

Being different in terms of questions, students' interactions through the use of pre-reading activities, these entire strategies share the same purpose which is mainly related the fact of activating the students' background knowledge for the sake of enhancing their reading comprehension. However, no strategy is considered as being better than the other.

4.8. A SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHING READING THROUGH CONTENT FAMILIARITY

The concern of English for specific purposes instruction is, mainly, centered on imparting the learners with content that matches their disciplines. Thus, in one way or another, ESP students are offered courses, adapting the content-based approach through the use of either sheltered, adjunst or themes-based models. Moreover, some fundamental elements are to be taken into consideration for selecting those courses, these are related, for instance, to the students'field of research, their linguistic levels, needs and interests.

Thus, in an attempt to design ESP courses based on the master students of psychology, and for the purpose of reinforcing and consolidating their language weaknesses, the following proposed reading courses have been suggested so to that to maintain balance between the learners' requirements and motivational aspects.

Text: *developmental psychology.*

Developmental psychology is the field of psychology which involves the examination of both constancy and change in human behavior across the entire life span, that is, from conception to death.

Developmental psychologists are concerned with diverse issues ranging from the growth of motor skills in the infant, to the gains and

losses observed in the intellectual functioning of the elderly. The goal of study in developmental psychology is to further our knowledge about how development evolves over the entire life span, developing a knowledge of the general principles of development and the differences and similarities in development across individuals.

The range of topics comprising the study of modern psychology is vast, and encompasses sub-areas as diverse as social psychology, comparative psychology, the study of learning, neuropsychology, abnormal psychology, and cognitive psychology. However, the study of development is possible within each of these areas. Thus, in one sense, developmental psychology can be thought of as an approach that one takes to the broader study of psychology.

Adapted from (http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/9397_008824ch1.pdf)

I READING COMPREHENSION

a) Read the passage and answer the following questions:

1. What is the goal of developmental psychology?

2. What are the sub-disciplines of modern psychology?

3. Is child psychology one branch of developmental psychology?

b) Choose an appropriate title for the text:

1. The importance of psychology.

2. Developmental psychology.

3. The sub-disciplines of psychology.

c) Write true or false after these statements:

1. Developmental psychology expands the concept of development well past childhood and adolescence.

2. Developmental psychology identifies only the biological aspects that interact to influence the growing human life-span process.

3. Developmental psychology deals with the constancy behavior of adolescents. (Adapted from BRUNO, J. 2002).

d) Extract from the text words that are opposites in meaning to the following:

Change   differences   specific

e) Write down the words of which the following are the meaning of then insert the agent nouns:

The discipline.	Definition.	Agent noun.
………..	Is the scientific study of the effects of cognitive and social processes on the way individuals perceive, influence and relate to others.	………………..
………………	Is the branch of psychology that studies unusual patterns of behavior, emotion and thought, which may or may not be understood as precipitating a mental disorder.	…………………..
…………………..	Is the scientific discipline that studies the structure and function of the brain related to specific psychological processes and overt behaviors.	………………………

F .Fill in the gaps by using words below into the spaces provided:

1. Developmental psychology is the study of the……… and……… of the individual over time.

1. Child psychology is a……….. of developmental psychology.

2. Adolescent psychology concerns itself primarily with the study of the individual from the beginning of …………..to its …………….

*Subset; growth; maturation; adolescent; end; branch. (*Adapted from BRUNO, J. 2002).

II LANGUAGE PRACTICE

a. Use the words found in the text to complete this table:

Verbs	Nouns
To Differ	
	Involvement
To develop	
	Examination
To Study	
	Change

B. Use the negative form of the following sentences:

1. Developmental psychology is the scientific study of age-related changes throughout the human life span.

2. The early focus of developmental psychology was on child development, or the maturation of children.

3. Developmental psychology recognizes humans of all societies and cultures.

(Adapted   from http://www.cliffsnotes.com/WileyCDA/CliffsReviewTopic/What-Is-Developmental-Psychology-.topicArticleId-26831,articleId-26749.html

Text: *Speech and language impairment*

Speech and language disorders refer to problems in communication and related areas such as oral motor function. These delays and disorders range from simple sound substitutions to the inability to understand or use language or use the oral-motor mechanism for functional speech and feeding. Some causes of speech and language disorders include hearing loss, ***neurological disorders***, brain injury, mental retardation, drug abuse, physical impairments such as cleft lip or palate, and vocal abuse or misuse. Frequently, however, the cause is unknown.

Speech disorders refer to difficulties producing speech sounds or problems with voice quality. *They* might be characterized by an interruption in the flow or rhythm of speech, such as stuttering, which is called ***dysfluency***. Speech disorders may be problems with the way sounds are formed, called ***articulation or phonological disorders***, or they may be difficulties with the pitch, volume, or quality of the voice. There may be a combination of several problems. People with speech disorders have trouble using some speech sounds, which can also be a symptom of a delay. They may say "see" when they mean "ski" or *they* may have trouble using other sounds like "l" or "r." Listeners may have trouble understanding what someone with a speech disorder is trying to say. People with voice disorders may have trouble with the way their voices sound.

A language disorder is impairment in the ability to understand and/or use words in context, both verbally and nonverbally. Some characteristics of language disorders include improper use of words and their meanings, inability to express ideas, inappropriate grammatical patterns, reduced vocabulary, and inability to follow directions. One or a combination of these characteristics may occur in children who are affected by language learning disabilities or developmental language delay. Children may hear or see a word but not be able to understand its meaning. They may have trouble getting others to understand what they are trying to communicate.

Adapted from Disability Fact sheet (2004)

I.   READING COMPREHENSION

Read this passage and do the following activities:

1. Give the general idea of the text?

2. What are the results of speech and language disorders?

3. What is the difference between speech and language disorders?

4. Match each idea with its corresponding paragraph :

- Characteristics of speech disorders   paragraph one.

- Characteristics of language disorders   paragraph two.

- The causes of speech and language disorders   paragraph three

5.   Three words or expressions are highlighted in the text. Write them next to the correct definition:

> It occurs when a person cannot correctly pronounce one or more sounds. This may occur as a result of delayed development, poor muscle control, cleft lip/palate, hearing impairment or learning disabilities.

> A group of disorders which involve the central nervous system, the peripheral nervous system and the autonomic nervous system.

> Is a disruption in the normal flow of rhythm of speech. Characteristics may include repetition of sounds, syllables, words or phrases, hesitations, prolongations or interjections.

(Adapted from Adults Communication Disorders, 2000)

6. What the pronouns written in italic refer to?

II.   MASTERY OF LANGUAGE

1. Extract the opposite of the words from the text then use them in sentences of your own: proper, known, misunderstand, Ability, Use, miscommunication, Meaning, fluency.

2*. Rephrase these sentences without changing their meaning:*

1- Some causes of speech and language disorders include hearing loss, neurological disorders.

2- A language disorders is an impairment in the ability to understand and/ or use words in context.

3- Some characteristics of language disorders include improper use of words and their meanings, inability to express ideas...

(Adapted from Speech and Language Impairments, 2011)

Text: Too relaxed to read.

Backward readers can be helped more by teaching them to read than by teaching them to relax, according to Christopher Sharpley, of Monash University, Austria, and Steven Rowland, of Scot's School, Australia (British Journal of Educational Psychology, vol. 56, part 1, page 40).

Previous studies have suggested that backwards readers experience stress caused by anxiety at failure, and that their learning can be improved by teaching relaxation.

This study involved 50 nine to eleven year old children, in five small primary schools, in four country towns in New South Wales. The children were divided into five groups. One group were taught to lower their muscle tension by using electromyographic biofeedback (which

involves electrodes attached to a force-arm and to a visual display dial); the second was given relaxation training; and the third had remedial teaching based on phonics and comprehension. In addition, one of the control groups had daily reading tests (as did the three experimental groups) and the other did not.

The children's accuracy, speed and comprehension in reading were measured for two weeks, then the different treatments were given for five weeks. The results showed that only the group which received remedial teaching improved in reading accuracy. No group improved in reading speed- and this even *decreased* for the group which experience biofeedback.

All the experimental groups showed gains in comprehension, as did the first control group, suggesting that this was an effect of increased reading practice.

The authors suggest that deducing reading may have worked against any improvement in reading (an optimum level of stress being necessary for successful learning), or that teaching children to relax reduced the attention they gave to their reading.

So while relaxation may be of general benefit, reducing the symptoms of stress seems to be less helpful than reducing its cause-failure.

In Haarman *et al* (1988:11)

Approaching the text

-        Before reading the report, indicate the kinds of information you would expect to find in the research report.

Skimming for text structure

-        Skim the article and complete the flow chart below. Indicate also the paragraph or paragraphs which contain the information.

summary	(Par.)
procedure	(Par.)
results	(Par.)
conclusions	(Par.)

Information extraction

Read carefully the report and complete the table below.

Phase one of experiment (2 weeks).

Procedures   for   all

group:………………………………………….

Phase 2 (5weeks):

Group	Procedures	Results		
		Accuracy	**speed**	**comprehension**
				No improved
			No improvement	
		No improvement		

(Adopted from Haarman *et al* 1988*)*

Vocabulary work and word building

- Find the word in the text, decide the word class, and write it and the translation of the word in the space provided.

- Then complete the table by forming other words using appropriate suffixes if necessary. Consult your dictionary.

VOCABULARY WORK				WORD BUILDING			
Word and		**class**	**Translation**	**Noun**	**Verb**	**Adjective**	**Adverb**

location					
Accuracy(1. Par.1)					
Accusation (2,2)					
Anxiety (1,3)					
Predict (1,1)					
Psychological (1,1)					
Experimental (1,2)					

(Adapted from Haarman *et al*, 1988)

Text

Mental illnesses are not common among children and adolescents. Approximately 12 million children under the age of 18 have mental disorders. The National Mental Health Association compiled some statistics about mental illnesses in children and adolescents:

- Mental health problems affect one in every five young people at any given time.
- An estimated two thirds of all young people with mental health problems are not receiving the help they need.
- Less than one-third of the children under the age of 18 who have a serious mental health disorders receive any mental health services.
- As many 1 in every 33 children may be depressed. Depression in adolescents may be as high as 1 in 8.
- Suicide in the third leading cause of death for 15—24- years old and the sixth leading causes of death for 5- to- 15 years old.
- Schizophrenia is rare in children under the age of 12, but it occurs in about 3 of every 1,000 adolescents.

From

READING COMPREHENSION

1. ***Choose the correct title:***
   o Physical illnesses.
   o Children disorders.
   o Mental illnesses in children and adolescents.

2. ***Say whether these sentences are true or false and correct the mistakes:***
   o Children don't experience mental illnesses.
   o Children over the age of 8 receive mental health treatment.
   o Depression in adults is less apparent than children.

3. ***Answer the following questions:***
   1. Do both children and adults may encounter mental disorders?
   2. Why do children experience depression less than adults?

   3. ***Match each word with its appropriate definition:***

   - Depression   - Mental disorders characterized by abnormalities in the perception of reality.
   - Schizophrenia.   - A feeling of sadness and lack of interests of activities that were once enjoyed.

- Adolescent   - a transitional stage and mental human development between childhood and adulthood.

4. ***Fill in the gaps by the following words:*** *Schizophrenia, disabilities, age, mental, depression, diagnosed.*

1. According to recent estimates, approximately 20 percent of American, or about one in five people over the … of 18 suffer from diagnosable…disorder in a given year.

2. Four of the ten leading causes of …-major depression, bipolar disorder, …and obsessive disorder- are mental illnesses.

3. Eight million people have…each year.

4. Two million Americans have schizophrenia, and 300,000 new cases are…each year.

(Adapted from http://science.education.nih.gov/supplements/nih5/Mental/guide/info-mental-a.htm)

Text: ***Human Aggression***

The man is an aggressive creature will hardly be disputed. With the exception of certain rodents, no other vertebrate habitually destroys members of his species. No other animal takes positive pleasure in the exercise of cruelty as brutal or bestial, implying by these adjectives that such behavior is characteristic of less highly developed animals than ourselves. In truth, however, the extremes of 'brutal' behavior are confined to man; and there is no parallel in nature to our savages treatment of each other. The sombre fact is that we are the cruelest and most ruthless species that has ever walked the earth; and that, although we may recoil in horror when we read in newspaper or history book of the atrocities committed by man upon man, we know in our hearts that each one of us harbours within himself those same savage impulses which lead to murder, to torture and to war.

To write about human aggression is a difficult task because the term is used in so many different senses. Aggression is one of those words which everyone knows, but which is nevertheless hard to define.

As psychologists and psychiatrists use it, it covers a very wide range of human behavior. The red-faced infant squalling for the bottle is being aggressive; and so is the judge who awards a thirty-year sentence for robbery. The guard in a concentration camp who tortures his helpless victim is obviously acting aggressively. Less manifestly, but not less certainly, so is the neglected wife who threatens or attempt suicide in order to regain her husband's affection. When a word becomes so diffusely applied that it is used both of the competitive striving of a footballer and also of the bloody violence of a murderer, it ought either to be dropped or else more closely defined. Aggression is a portmanteau term which is fairly bursting at its seams. Yet, until we can more clearly designate and comprehend the various aspects of human behaviour which are subsumed under this head, we cannot discard the concept.

One difficulty is that there is no clear dividing line between those forms of aggression which we also deplore and those which we must not disown if we are to survive. When a child rebels against authority it is being aggressive: but it is also manifesting a drive towards independence which is a necessary and valuable part of growing up. The desire of power has, in extreme form, disastrous aspects which we all acknowledge; but the desire to conquer difficulties, or to gain mastery over the external world, underlies the greatest of human achievements. Some writers define aggression as 'that response which follows frustration', or as 'an act whose goal-response is injury to an organism (or organism surrogate)'. In the authors' view these definitions impose limits upon the concept of aggression which are not in accord with the underlying facts of human nature which the word is attempting to expressed. It is worth noticing, for instance, the words we use to describe intellectual effort are aggressive words. We *attach* problems, or *get our teeth into them*. We master a subject when we have struggled with and *overcome* its difficulties. We *sharpen* our wits, hoping that our mind will develop a *keen edge* in order that we may better *dissect* a problem into its component part. Although intellectual tasks are often frustrating, to argue that all intellectual effort is the result of frustration is to impose too negative a colouring upon the positive impulse to comprehend and master the external world.

The aggressive part of human nature is not only a necessary safeguard against predatory attack. It is also the basis of intellectual achievement, of the attainment of independence, and even of that proper pride which enables a man to hold his head high amongst his fellows. This is no new conception. The historian Gibbon, in a famous passage, displays a very similar idea of human nature to that which psychotherapists profess. Whereas the latter refer to sexual instincts and aggressive instincts, Gibbon writes 'the love of pleasure and the love of action'

…to the love of pleasure we may therefore ascribe most of the agreeable, to the love of action we may attribute most of the useful and respectable qualifications. The character on which both the one the other should be united and harmonized and seem to constitute the most perfect idea of human nature

Penguin books, 1971(Adapted from Haarman *et al,* 1988)

Approaching the text

➤ The four general headings for the different sections of this *introduction* are indicated below. The phrases summarize the contents of each paragraph. Without making *reference* to the text, put the phrases in the order in which you think they might appear. An example has been given:

a- Possibility of self-destruction inherent in man's aggression.

b- The previous definitions of the concept of aggression: negative aspects

c- The advantages and disadvantages of a psychotherapist's approach.

d- Statement of man's innate aggression.

e- Elaboration of the concept of aggression in intellectual activity, supported by a quotation.

f- The implications of the study of aggression affairs and the problems of war.

g- Positive aspects of aggression: e.g. in intellectual activity.

1. *General statement of the subject.*

----

2. *Review of the previous definitions of the subjects.*

> --

3. Author's own reformulation of the subject.

> --

4. Relevance of the subject and statement of author's approach

> --

Advantages and disadvantages of psychotherapist's approach (c)

➢ Now skim the text to check your predictions.

➢ Identify aspects of the author' s presentation of theme

Read the first two paragraphs and underline descriptions and examples of 1) man's aggressive behaviour, and 2) information and comments on the definition of the term *aggression,* and write them in the appropriate column.

	Descriptions/examples of man's aggressive behaviour	Information/ comments on definition of the term
Par. 1	-destroys members of own species	
Par. 2	-red-faced infant squalling for the bottle	-term used in many different senses

(Adapted from Haarman *et al,* 1988)

Language work

➢ Below is a list of some modal verbs or their negative forms. Underline them together with the principal verb and the

subject. Then assign each modal verb to one of the general categories below, on the basis of its function in the text.

Meaning	Modal verbs
Ability/potential	
Probability/possibility	
Obligation/necessity	
prohibition	

(Adapted from Haarman *et al* ,1988)

4.9. CONCLUSION

In sum, reading for specific purposes is considered as a necessary skill required by the ESP learners for academic success, social interactions, and transmission of ideas. Teaching reading embedded not only comprehension questions but also centre on content-based themes so that learners become acknowledged with the range of topics as well as the different set of terminology required in their target environments.

As a matter of fact, the reading course should not only focus on the text as linguistic entity but rather on the text as a vehicle of information, emphasizing, fundamentally, on its function. This requires a good accommodation of text selection and effective reading tasks that encourage the learners to read through the use of systematic and supportive reading strategies that facilitate and enhance their abilities to approach content-based themes.

General Conclusion

GENERAL CONCLUSION

As pedagogically supported, in the light of our theoretical framework, the importance of reading in any ESP context has become increasingly acknowledged, as many ESP learners outside the English speaking countries have been driven by the need to read text-books, articles and abstracts for their social, economic, educational and scientific purposes.

In many educational contexts, however, teaching the reading skills seems to be one of the intricate tasks to be developed for some reasons. The case in point is the lack of practical collaboration between the subject-specialists and the ESP teachers. Thus, in an attempt to design ESP courses for first-year master students of Developmental Psychopathology, close collaboration and cooperation with the learners and content-specialists have been established to better suit their learners' needs.

Therefore, this dissertation is primarily concerned with providing some substantiation about the connection of two fundamental aspects in teaching ESP reading; the presentation of content-based themes is correlated with raising their awareness to the set of strategies that may help learners approaching content-familiarity, and thus, enhancing their reading comprehensions.

The handling of this point was carried out through the use of an action research framed within four related chapters. The first chapter aimed at shedding lights on some key-concepts and approaches quite relevant to the purpose of this research work problematics.

In the second chapter, the researcher endeavored to offer, a more or less, general description of the ESP teaching situation at the psychology

department at ABU-BAKR BELKAID UNIVERSITY of Tlemcen. Research design and procedures undertaken for collecting data, were then respectively portrayed in terms of semi-structured interviews and placement and achievement tests.

Chapter three strived rather to analyze, interpret and discuss the findings related to the research questions and hypotheses set at the onset of this dissertation. Thus, the post-training phase revealed that the majority of the learners' post-test scores were higher; this signifies that they have been, to a certain extent, aware of the effective reading strategies, put, planned and acted in the training sessions.

The findings led to the concluding commands and recommendations for an appropriate design of adequate reading materials and tasks that may ameliorate the quality of ESP reading courses, therefore promoting the students' reading comprehension.

As a matter of fact, this dissertation displayed some delimitations which were purposefully made, of course. The researcher, for instance, focused on matching ESP courses to psychology content courses. However, the stress was not on the severe adjunst model provided by Brinton *et al* (1989) with the aim of teaching content and language. The investigator, in this action research, tried to propose reading courses through the use of the students' subject themes. The rationale behind this is that the ESP teacher is not supposed to teach the students' subject courses but rather to help them approaching their required content. Furthermore, these reading courses were based on modified materials in hope to suit the learners' language proficiency.

This research limited itself to the existing restricted number of subjects; this is maybe due to the new educational reforms, namely the

LMD system with its pedagogical implications. Moreover, another limitation was related to the training sessions as they were insufficient to focus on some additional reading strategies that are supposed to be of valuable help to enhance reading comprehension among our ESP learners.

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Appendices

Teachers' Interview

Dear teachers,

The following interview seeks to gather information about the effects of the ESP reading courses on your students' reading comprehension and language proficiency. I would like to ask you to answer these questions sincerely as this will guarantee the success of this investigation.

1.   What is your qualification ?

2.   What is your ESP teaching experience?

3.   How do you choose the content of your ESP reading courses?

4.   Do you have any collaboration or cooperation with the subject specialists?

5.   Are your learners interested in ESP reading courses? Why?

6.   What is, according to you, your learners' language proficiency?

7.   To what extent the learners' language proficiency affect their reading comprehension?

8.   Do your learners have difficulties in reading comprehension? Why?

9.   Do you teach any reading strategies? If yes What are they?

10.   Do your learners make use of reading strategies when reading?

11.   Do you think that make use of your students' content-based themes may enhance their reading comprehension?

12.   What might be your suggestions concerning the strategies that your learners should make use to better understand the ESP reading courses?

Thank you for your cooperation.

Teachers' Interview Answe

Teacher 1 :

1. My qualification is B A in English.

2. Approximately one year of experience.

3. First, I choose the texts from the internet, them I focus in my lecture on teaching the grammatical points found in these texts.

4. No, there is no collaboration.

5. No, they are not, this because they have low of proficiency, they lack motivation and have difficulties in understanding the texts provided to them.

6. They have low level of language though we may have some exceptions.

7. Yes, language proficiency has a heavy impact on the students' reading comprehension.

8. Yes, they have as I have already stated because their language is low they don't make effort for understanding text moreover, they don't make any strategy.

9. Yes, but implicitly, for example I focus on extracting key words, guessing the meaning from context.

10. Learners are not aware of the importance of reading strategies so they neglect them.

11. Yes of course, being familiar with the content may help them to better their understanding and this may result in their highly motivation.

12. For the improvement of the courses I suggest to enhance the students' reading strategies, the use text division in order to identify the main important ideas as well as the selection of key words.

Teacher 2:

1. Licence in English.

2. Nearly three years.

3. I choose text from psychology and use some comprehension questions.

4. No collaboration in this department, we select the content from our personal point of view.

5. It depends on the topic presented to them but most of the time they are not interested as they considered the English course as being an additional one.

6. Approximately all the learners have the same level of weakness.

7. Language proficiency have a great level of comprehension.

8. Yes, they face many difficulties in reading because of their language and their attitudes, they are unable to understand some terms, even when answering questions they just extract the sentence from the text without changing its structure.

9. Yes, I teach them for example to read the text silently, find the main idea and summarize the text at the end of the reading course.

10. Students, in general, focus on the text even if they are taught these strategies this may be because they are not conscious.

11. Surely, if they are provided with content-familiarity, they will be motivated to read.

12. My suggestions are: the use of short texts, teach students to use correct answers and reading strategies.

Teachers 3

1. English Literature degree

2. NO experience

3. By hunch, I mostly try to find a hot topic that we can discuss at class orally more than we read it and answer questions.

4. NO

5. I have no idea, when I give them something to read in order to understand, they read. it depends on the text, if it is easy, they can understand , if not they start asking me to speak arabic. even though sometimes, I just give them the meaning of words and I prefer that they do the understanding by themselves.

6. emmm, not satisfactory at all

7. No idea

8. not really, I mentioned before it depends on the easiness or complicatedness the test is.

9. emmm I prefer to call it techniques . What I basically do is that I breakdown the text into paragraphs. I split students into groups, then I give each paragraph to each group and they are responsible to explain it to other groups, but during the time that I give them to read, I pass over them and help them.(becuz it is very imp that they indulge with themselves, this will help to get a better understanding, communication is very crucial among them .

10. maybe

11. Not really, what helps them is they should have general background about English, If they do not have the basis of the language, then I'm expecting nothing from them. it is like bringing a jungle man back to the city. How is he going to interact with people? it needs time to get back the basis !

12 . They should read, read and read and before all that LISTENING to Psychology Conversation. This is going to help for sure. Now I'm

learning French by my own, and i just depend on TV Radio and the Internet!!! it is not that bog deal. The Technique that I'm using with them is good as I guess. that's what we used to do at college. Each group is responsible of a certain text from the lesson to explain in no more than one paragraph of 8 lines and in no more than 5 mnts.

Pre-Training Test

Test 1: cognitive development

At the center of Piaget's theory is the principle that cognitive development occurs in a series of four distinct, universal stages. During the first, or sensorimotor stage (birth to 24 months), knowledge is gained primary through sensory impressions and motor activity. Through _these_ two modes of learning, experienced both separately and in combination, infants gradually learn to control their own bodies and objects in the external world.

The preoperational stage (ages two to six years) involves the manipulation of images and symbols. One object can represent another. Key concepts involved in the logical organization of thoughts are still absent. The child's focus remains egocentric throughout both the preoperational and sensorimotor stages.

During the third, or concrete operational, stage (six or seven to 11 year of age), children can perform logical operations, but only in relation to concrete external objects rather than ideas. _They_ can add, substract, count, and measure. They also begin to loose their egocentric focus, becoming able to understand a situation from the viewpoint of another person.

The fourth, or formal operations, stage begins in early adolescence with the development of the ability to think logically about abstractions.. They become able to reason scientifically and speculate about philosophical issue. 4Abstract concepts and moral values become as important as concrete objects. Piaget's theory represents a blueprint for cognitive development. _It_ captures the spectrum of thinking from its primitive beginning to its most sophisticated level.

Adapted   from http://www.cliffsnotes.com/WileyCDA/CliffsReviewTopic/What-Is-Developmental-Psychology-.topicArticleId-26831,articleId-26749.html

Read the text carefully then answer the following questions

Comprehension Questions

1. Read the title of the text and write what information you would expect to find in the text.

2. How many paragraphs are there in this text?

Choose the best answers

3. According to Piaget theory, infants in the sensorimotor stage, cannot:

- Use sensory impressions to understand the world.

- Use motor impressions to understand the world.

- Form symbolic representation to understand the world.

4. A major characteristics of preoperational stage, children:

- Tend to think in logical terms.

- Tend to think in abstract terms

- Become egocentric.

Answer the following questions:
5. What are the stages of Piaget's theory?

6. Do children remain egocentric during the third stage?

7. Can children perform logical operation during the sensorimotor stage?

Say whether these sentences are true or false:

8. Cognitive process associated with concrete operation stage deals with abstraction, not what can be seen or experience.

9. In the sensorimotor stage, children don't control their own bodies and objects in the external world.

10. In just a sentence, explain what you feel the main point of the passage is………….

Comprehension Exercises

Complete the following sentences by using words from the text:
10. During the sensorimotor stage, the infant senses the world and ………..or analyses, acts in response to his own impression.

11. ……………is a tendency to perceive oneself as excising at the centre of universe.

Rewrite the following sentences by replacing the words in italic with

expressions from the passage which have the same meaning:

12. The sensorimotor stage is *associated* with infancy.

13. During the first stage, the infant *acts* as if self-consciousness is absent.

Identify these reference items found in the text:

14. Though <u>these</u> two modes.

15. <u>They</u> can add subtract, count and measure.

Text Used in the Training Phase
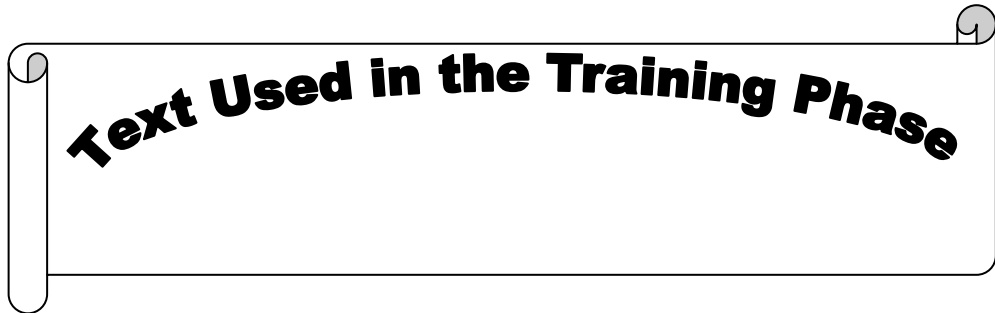
What use is psychology?

Ordinary people who know nothing about psychology can predict the results of the psychological experiments with reasonable accuracy on the basis of their own common sense. This finding that most hard-own psychological knowledge is in fact self-evident comes from John Houston, of the University of California at Los Angles (psychological report, vol. 57, No. 2, page 567). Houston, a psychologist himself, placed a poster which read 'Earn $5 by answering 21 questions about behavior' in a local park on a Sunday afternoon. He got 50 respondents who had never read a book of experimental psychology or studied the subject, and they completed a questionnaire consisting of 21 questions each of which embodied a principle related to the working of the memory.

For example, they were asked how pigeons would behave if they expected food to be left on a particular windowsill because this had been so over a long period, and then found it empty one day. And they were asked words in a word list were easiest to remember after they had been read by someone else.

Of the 21 items, 16 were answered correctly more often than chance would have predicted. Older and better-educated people were more likely to be correct. But one question, where the correct experimentally verified answer seems to contradict common sense, received significantly more wrong answers than might have been expected by chance.

Houston concludes that psychology is, at least partly, 'a system of self-evident information.' But he points out that what psychology *does* offer is precise measurement of such phenomena and a theoretical explanation.

Adopted from Haarman *et al* (1988:11) .

Approaching the text

> ➢ Before reading the report, indicate the kinds of information you would expect to find in the research report.

Skimming for text structure

> ➢ Skim the article and complete the flow chart below by inserting the following headings (indicating various types of information) in each box.

Indicate also the paragraph or paragraphs which contain the information.

Summary	(Par.)
Procedure	(Par.)
Results	(Par.)
Conclusions	(Par.)

Checking comprehension

Read carefully the research report and answer the following questions:

1. What common characteristics did Houston's subjects have?
2. What common characteristics did his question have?
3. How can the higher incidence of wrong answers to one of the questions be explained?
4. What use, then, psychology, according to Houston?

(Adapted from Haarman *et al* 1988)

Post-Training Test

The word depression is used to describe the range of moods- from low spirits to a severe problem that interferes with everyday life. If you are experiencing severe or 'clinical' depression, you feel quite unable to cope, and hopeless about the future. If you are depressed, your appetite may change and you may have difficulty sleeping or getting up. There is often an overlap between anxiety and depression, in that if you are depressed you may have also become anxious.

Depression in both women and men is often linked to life changes or to loneliness. About 10% of women experience depression in the weeks following childbirth. People over the age of 85 seem to have a slightly greater risk of depression. However, *they* can be difficult to be recognized as they are less likely about feeling, and more likely to speak about physical problems. It is not only restricted to adults, Children can suffer as well. However it is to be stated that only 2 % under 12 experience depression.

Adapted from Borrill (2000).

Read the text carefully then answer the following questions:
Comprehension Questions

Choose the best answers

2. People over 85:

   a) Are less likely to have depression.

   b) Are more likely to have depression.

   c) Do not experience depression.

3. Depression is defined as:

   a) An irritable mood most of the day, and lost of interest and pleasure.

   b) Despair you feel when you abandoned hope or success.

c) A normal response to stress and danger.

Answer the following questions:

4. What are the consequences of depression?

5. Why do people over the age of 85 have depression?

6. In just a sentence, explain what you feel the main point of this passage?

7. What does the author imply in this sentence *'It is not only restricted to adults, Children can suffer as well. However it is to be stated that only 2 % under 12 experience depression.'?*

8. Why does the author name depression as being 'clinical'?

Comprehension Exercise

9.   Identify the reference item found in the text:

<u>they</u> can be difficult…

10.   ***Extract from the text the synonym of the following word:*** concerned.

11.   Complete the following sentence by using words from the text:

12. According to recent estimates, approximately 20% of Americans, or about one in five people over the ……….of 18, suffer from a diagnosable……….disorder in a given year.

Standard Deviation

N of students. (s)	The scores. (x i)	(xi-$\bar{x}$)	$(xi - x)^2$
S1	09	-1.09	1.1881
S2	08	-2.09	4.3681
S3	09.5	-0.59	0.3481
S4	08.5	-1.59	2.5281
S5	10	-0.09	0.0081
S6	08.5	-1.59	2.5281
S7	07.5	-2.59	6.7081
S8	08	-2.09	4.3681
S9	11	0.91	0.8281
S10	12.5	2.41	5.8081
S11	09	-1.09	1.1881
S12	11.5	1.41	1.9881
S13	15	4.91	8.4681
S14	12.5	2.41	5.8081
S15	10	-0.09	0.0081
S16	11	0.91	0.8281
16	161.5		46.9696

$$\bar{x}_1 = \frac{xi_1 + xi_2 + \cdots + xi_n}{n}$$

$$\bar{x}_1 = \frac{9 + 8 + \cdots + 11}{16}$$

$$\bar{x}_1 = \frac{161.5}{16}$$

$$\boxed{\bar{x}_1 = 10.09}$$

$$\partial(x) = \sqrt{v(x)}.$$

$$V(x) = \frac{1}{n}(xi - x)^2 .$$

$$V(x) = \frac{1}{16}(46.9696).$$

$V(x)=2.9356$

$\partial(x)=\sqrt{2.9356}$.

$\partial(x)=1.713$

Mode (Mo)	Mean ($\overline{x}$)	Median (Me)	$v(x)$	$\partial(x)$
09	10.09	10.5	2.9356	1.713

N of students. (s)	The scores. (x i)	(xi-$\overline{x}$)	$(xi - x)^2$
S1	13	0.657	0.431649
S2	11	-1.343	1.803649
S3	10	-2.343	5.489649
S4	11	-1.343	1.803649
S5	10	-2.343	5.489649
S6	12	-0.343	0.117649
S7	13	0.657	0.431649
S8	10.5	-1.843	3.396649
S9	13	0.657	0.431649
S10	14	1.657	2.745649
S11	13	0.657	0.431649
S12	12	-0.343	0.117649
S13	16	3.657	13.373649
S14	16	3.657	13.373649
S15	10	-2.343	5.489649
S16	13	0.657	0.431649
16	197.5	-	55.719384

$$\overline{x}_2 = \frac{xi_1 + xi_2 + \cdots + xi_n}{n}$$

$$\overline{x}_2 = \frac{13 + 11 + \cdots + 13}{16}$$

$$\overline{x}_2 = \frac{197.5}{16}$$

$$\boxed{\overline{x}_2 = 12.343}$$

$$\partial(x) = \sqrt{v(x)}.$$

$$V(x) = \frac{1}{n}(xi - \overline{x})^2 .$$

$$V(x) = \frac{1}{16}(55.719384).$$

$V(x)=3.482$

$\partial(x)=\sqrt{3.482}.$

$\partial(x)=$ 1.866.

Mode (Mo)	Mean ($\overline{x}$)	Median (Me)	$v(x)$	$\partial(x)$
10	12.343	12.5	3.482	1.866

SUMMARY IN ENGLISH:

This present work is an empirical classroom-based research on the master students of Developmental Psychology at ABU-BAKR BELKAID University of Tlemcen aiming at investigating whether content-familiarity along with strategy-training may affect these students' reading comprehension and language proficiency.

KEY-WORDS:

ESP, Content-familiarity, Reading comprehension, strategy-awareness.

RÉSUMÉ EN FRANÇAIS:

Ce travail est une recherche empirique en classe sur la base des étudiants en master de psychologie du développement à l'Université Abou-Bakr BELKAID de Tlemcen visant à examiner si la connaissance basée sur le contenu ainsi que la sensibilisation stratégie pourrait influer sur leur compréhension de la lecture et les lacunes linguistiques.

Mots-clés:

ESP, Content-familiarité, compréhension écrite, la stratégie de prise de conscience

تلخيص باللغة العربية

يتبلور موضع هدا البحث حول أهمية الإدراك المعرفي للموضوع و أيضا الوعي الاستراتيجي و ما مدى تأثيرهما على مستوى الفهم القرائي و إتقان اللغة لطلاب المستير علم النفس للنمو السوي و اللا سوي.

☒

الكلمات المفتاحية:

اللغة الإنجليزية لأغراض محددة ، المحتوى الألفة، القراءة والفهم، وإستراتيجية للتوعية

People's Democratic and Republic of Algeria
Ministry Of Higher Education and Scientific Research

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ABU-BEKR BELKAID UNIVERSITY- TLEMCEN

Faculty of Letters, Human and Social Sciences

Department of Foreign Languages

Section of English

<u>RÉSUMÉ</u>

THE EFFECTS OF ESP COURSES AND CONTENT-FAMILIARTY ON THE STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

An Action Research on the Master Students of Developmental Psychology at Abu Bakr Belkaid University, Tlemcen.

Presented by: Supervised by:

Ms. Awicha BENABDALLAH   Dr. Amine BELMEKKI

Academic Year: 2010/ 2011

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RÉSUMÉ

Due to the process of globalization, the English language has become nowadays a lingua franca between nations outside the English speaking countries, thus people around the world have become increasingly aware of the necessity and the requisite of learning this language having some specific purposes in minds such as reading text-books, articles and abstracts for their social, economic and educational purposes.

The importance of English as global language, therefore, has led the ministries of education all over the world to offer ESP courses in their universities and educational institutions. As a result, their concerns, over a long period of time, have been to find ways to enhance the students' motivation and to improve their language proficiency in language activities.

Teaching English for specific purposes is often regarded as being an approach to language teaching aiming at catering for the learners' needs. The ESP teachers are seen as materials providers and course designers whose ultimate goal is to prepare and help learners to be communicatively competent.

The available literature in ESP has revealed that communication does not only refer to the exchange of information between persons who are present in space and time, however, it is widely stated that for better communication to occur, teachers should take into account the learners' needs and requirements.

Being aware, for instance, that the ESP learners require reading up-date materials, it is for a great necessary to establish an effective communication therefore training them to read these texts focusing the main strategies that may be used during their reading comprehensions.

Though second language researchers on the reading skills emphasize on the importance of prior knowledge activation for better reading comprehension, ESP teachers in general do not give an importance of such strategies, they most of the time neglect it focusing totally on pushing their learners towards the habits of reading texts directly with no effort to draw their attention to relate it to what they know. Starting from this idea, it should be stated that the ESP learners are not only constrained due to insufficiency or lack of linguistic competence, but are unaware of using strategies in their reading.

The present study is based on strategy-training on master students of Developmental Psychopathology. However, it should be stated that due the nature of the present study, the texts provided to them correspond their subjects content. The reason behind this is to make them aware of the range of strategies that might be used for approaching content familiarity for the sake of helping them to become independent readers, taking into consideration that the field of psychology is often seen as a discipline which requires learners to read up-date articles as well as writing reports justifying their answers by what they have read.

This research, thus, aims at investigating whether strategy-training used in psychology- based reading may increase the students' reading comprehension therefore compensation for their language weaknesses. Hence, the purpose guiding this study is:

- To identify whether ESP teachers teach reading strategies and determine the students' interests on these courses.
- To investigate whether training students to read psychology-based themes may enhance their reading comprehension.
- To display the significance of strategy- training on psychology-based themes therefore identifying whether the learners compensate for their language weaknesses.

Thus, for achieving these purposes, the following research question has been asked:

> ***What might be the relative effects of matching ESP courses to psychology content courses on the students reading comprehension and language proficiency?***

For the sake of obtaining what is known s a reliable answers to the above general question, the following research questions has been reformulated:

- Are our ESP learners interested in the ESP reading courses offered to them therefore using their reading strategies?
- Do our ESP learners perform better in reading comprehension when providing them with psychology-based themes?

- Do psychology-based themes lead learners to compensate for their language weaknesses by using their reading strategies in general and background strategy in particular?

In order to answer the above research questions, the following hypotheses have been put forward:

- Our ESP learners are not interested in the ESP courses provided to them and are unaware of the range of reading strategies.
- Our ESP learners perform better in reading comprehension when providing them with psychology-based themes.
- Psychology-based themes lead learners to compensate for their language weakness by using their background strategy.

Thus on the basis of this problematic and research questions, four chapters have been used in this present research. The first chapter, being a theoretical one, aims at providing a review of literature related to the field of research therefore discussing some theoretical points including ESP courses, the role of the ESP teacher as course and materials designer, collaborator for the purpose of selecting adequate reading materials.

In addition to this, an emphasis has been made on the importance of content-based syllabus in ESP teaching through the use of three teaching models provided by Brinton 1986. Each

course has different orientation towards the teaching of content and language. Starting with the sheltered-based model, its main aim is to teach the content through English as a medium of instruction, in the adjunst course on the other hand, the teacher incorporates both language and content.

As far as the theme model is concerned, English is taught through the use of general appropriate themes to the learners' needs. The final step centres around reviewing some researches' studies on the effects of using content-based approach on ESP learning on their reading, speaking and language proficiency.

The integration of content and language has several advantages on language learners. This is supposed to enable the students to learn the content as well as its associated language skills. In addition to this, it is considered as a motivational factor for learning the language as the students learn only what is relevant to their needs and interests. Moreover, it is familiarity is viewed as a motivational factor that leads to successful language acquisition allowing learners to engage in meaningful communication. They let the teachers relinquish their traditional roles. The learners, hence, are able to take responsibility for their own learning.

Nevertheless, what draws the researchers' attention over a long period of time is how this content may affect the students' reading proficiency. As a result, several studies have been conducted on the role of content-familiarity and unfamiliarity in developing reading comprehension.

It is worth noting that content-familiarity is interpreted differently among specialists. Some define it as simply what the learners

already know about any general topic as the content used in theme-based models. Others, however, relate it to the students' subject matter, i.e., they correlate it to what the students learn in their content courses. As a result, several opponent views have been emerged to explain the importance of selecting their content on the EAP/ ESP leaning process.

The second chapter, being a practical one, aims at providing a more or less clear description of the psychology department as well as the subjects' needs and lacks through the use of an exploratory action research, focusing on mainly four phases namely identifying the problem, planning, acting and finally evaluating their outcomes. Thus, data have been collected through the submission of two types of research instruments to 16 master students of Developmental Psychopathology and three ESP teachers at the psychology department at ABU BAKR BELKAID university of Tlemcen.

Thus, in the pre-training phase, two research tools have been used; namely interviews and tests. They aim at eliciting data about students' reading difficulties as far as comprehension and strategies. The training sessions have been focused principally on providing them with psychology-based themes along with raising their awareness to the range of strategies that help them approach content familiarity.

This has been, in fact, used through the application of reading courses. In the post-training phase, an achievement test has been administered to measure the students' progress. It has been supported with an interview so that to unveil the students'

perceptions towards this training in general and ESP reading courses in particular.

Based on the tools used in the present study, two approaches have been used in this investigation. The third chapter, thus, strived mostly to analyze, interpret and discuss the findings related to the hypotheses set at the onset of this dissertation.

To achieve this end, the researcher opted mainly for qualitative and quantitative data analysis for the sake of reducing the bias of using one approach. Thus, former has been used to explain data of mainly open questions. The latter, on the other hand, has focused on coding and counting and quantifying the results obtained from each test. This has been, in fact, used through the use of central tendency and standard deviation.

In addition to this, a comparison has been made between pre and post- test scores using *t-test* for the purpose of assessing the students' progress before and after the training sessions. Thus the results has revealed that the majority of the learners' post test scores are higher, this signifies that they have been aware of the effective strategies, that is to say they have been developed in mainly all the strategies put planned and acted in the training sessions. Moreover, nearly all of them have been able to relate the text to their background knowledge.

The results also suggest that though the majority of them exhibit an intermediate level of language proficiency, they have

succeeded in comprehension of the test through the application of previewing which enabled them to compensate for their weakness.

Thus, the most commonly used reading strategy among all the advanced, intermediate and weak learners' language proficiency is activating their content schemta through previewing. This confirms the hypothesis put at the onset of the dissertation stating that content familiarity leads learners to use their bachground knowledge strategy and this may enable them to compencate for their language deficiencies.

A nother one which seems to doninate the students' answers is devoting an idea for each paragraph. They believe that this enables them to further their comprehension little by little. In this end, they seem to focus on the part to have access to the whole and focusing on what they generally know rather than on the meaning of each word of each sentence.

In sum, the results desplay tha the psychology learners become able to understand the psychology-based themes by drawing up on a number of different reading strategies depending on their linguistic and cognitive ability.

The fourth chapter has been used for the sake of providing pedagogical implications and recommendations for the ESP teachers to enrich their reading courses as well as giving some remedies for helping learners compensate for their language weaknesses through the use of reading strategies mainly those of activating background knowledge.

Starting with the view that the ESP teacher is always faced with the dilemma of what content should be included in his courses, struggles to select adequate texts and investigates purposeful tasks that cater for their learners' need. Thus, for bettering the ESP teaching situation, the researcher suggests Content-Based Instruction as a supportive pedagogical approach through the application of adjunst or themes models. This has been, in fact, driven by the needs of the ESP learners to learn only the bits of information required to function efficiently in their target environments.

Moreover, this approach is supposed to be accomplished by interesting texts modified or unmodified in form basing on the current level of the students' language proficiency. As a result, they have be selected in accordance with the language objectives and the content goals required to carry out the reading activities.

As a matter of fact, this work had some delimitations which were made purposely in this present action research. The researcher, for instance, focused on matching ESP courses to psychology content courses. However, the stress was not on the severe adjunct model provided by Brinton, Snow and Wesche (1989) with the aim of teaching content and language. However, in this present research, the investigator providing reading courses through the use of the students' subject themes. The reason behind this is that the ESP teacher is not supposed to teach the students' subject courses but rather to help them approaching their required

content. Furthermore, these reading courses were based on modified materials to suit the learners' language deficiency.

However, this research limited itself to the small number of subjects, thus, due to the new educational reform namely the LMD system; there is a restriction of learners. Moreover, another limitation was related to the training sessions as they were insufficient to focus on some additional reading strategies that might be of great helpful for enhancing their reading comprehensions.

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☒
الكلمات المفتاحية:
اللغة الإنجليزية لأغراض محددة ، المحتوى الألفة، القراءة والفهم، وإستراتيجية للتوعية