

DEMOCRATIC AND POPULAR REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

UNIVERSITY OF TLEMCEM
INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

**READING STRATEGY INSTRUCTION
IN INTERACTIVE READING: THE CASE
OF FIRST-YEAR - STUDENTS AT
DJILALI LIABES UNIVERSITY (S.B.A)**

THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN
LANGUAGES IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
MAGISTER IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS AND TEFL

BY: Mrs EL MELLOUHI
NEE KIES NADIA

SUPERVISOR:
Prof. . MILIANI . M

ACADEMIC YEAR 1996 - 1997

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ABSTRACT

It is often agreed that a reading ability is a prerequisite to an effective language learning. Therefore, attempting to determine one factor contributing to a reading efficiency in English, may be essential for helping learners achieve progress in reading.

The present research points at the possibility of introducing a metacognitive training in the reading process. It examines the correlation between reading strategies use and achievement in reading comprehension.

The project is based on a cognitive perspective, where reading development is conditioned by the necessity of raising learners' awareness about the interactive nature of reading, which is predicted to be a significant factor leading to an effective reading.

The introductory chapter introduces the learning situation of the case under study and analyses the variables characterizing it. From the analysis of learners' profile and needs, a description of the research tools for data collection is included. Chapter two describes the main aspects of the reading process and presents several reading strategy training studies. In chapter three, the researcher proceeds to a direct reading strategy instruction to the learners and describes its results. Finally, from the pedagogical implications, a reading programme is suggested.

To conclude, this investigation points at a new way of dealing with reading comprehension instruction in higher education. The primary goal of this instruction centres on the learner, as well as his cognitive abilities to reach an effective learning.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FL : Foreign language

SL : Second language

ESL : English as a second language

EFL : English as a foreign language

TEFL : Teaching English as a foreign language

L₁ : Learners' first language (Arabic in this case)

L₂ : Learners' second language (French in this case)

L₃ : Learners' third language (English in this case)

ESP : English for specific purposes

EOP : English for occupational purposes

EAP : English for Academic purposes

SVO : Sentence verbs object

N/ST : Number of students

Nbr : number

A.F : Absolute frequency

R.F : Relative frequency

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

One of the most important skills in language learning is learning to read. Indeed, reading is undeniably a key to language acquisition, a key to learning and, further, a key to research as it is widely recognized today. It is essential, then, to find the best way to make it accessible to learners especially for those specializing in the English language, since they will need to be autonomous in having access to the bulk of literature in English.

Yet, it is often the case that learners reaching University show a very limited ability to read systematically and with full comprehension. The fact that points at the kind of reading instruction they received before. Indeed, the way reading is instructed, either at the secondary or higher levels, denotes a poor knowledge of its nature.

It is a well-known fact that such teaching concentrates more on the text and its linguistic properties and disregards the contribution of the reader in the creation of meaning. Moreover, the cognitive and metacognitive aspects of reading are often neglected. Thus, the present work is an exploratory case study that seeks to incorporate a metacognitive training in reading comprehension ,for first-year-English degree students, in view of making their reading more systematic and more efficient.

It must be stated from the outset that the current study does not claim to describe learners' reading strategies in a detailed way, nor does it intend to identify and analyse all their reading difficulties. It only seeks to find a possible answer to their poor achievement in reading comprehension by isolating one possible cause : their lack of metacognitive awareness of the reading process.

The study approaches reading from an interactive perspective, where the reader makes use of both his lower-level processes, i.e. his bottom-up strategies, such as word and structure identification, as well as his higher-level ones, i.e. his top-down strategies, such as predictions, the use of background knowledge and inferences. Moreover, reading has to be understood as an act of creation of a particular discourse between the reader and the writer. Therefore, the work describes the main aspects of the process too.

The investigation is also based on the results of cognitive psychology and the contribution of cognitive, metacognitive and social/affective strategies in the fields of first, second and foreign language reading. From the assumption that less-successful readers may benefit from the reading strategies of successful ones, the idea of incorporating strategy training in reading instruction, is more and more supported by research in this area.

From this view of things, the present project aims at undertaking a preliminary investigation of whether learners' metacognitive awareness of the interactive aspect of the reading process, may constitute one significant factor facilitating their access to reading comprehension. In other words, does learners' awareness of reading strategies correlate positively or not with their reading achievement ? For the purpose of answering this general question, more detailed questions have to be investigated :

- (1) What is the nature of learners' reading difficulties? are they of a language or a reading nature ?
- (2) Do the learners have any reading strategies ?
- (3) Is there any awareness on their part of the reading sub-skills and strategies ?
- (4) Is a metacognitive awareness-raising, through a direct instruction in reading strategies likely to contribute to their progress in reading?

Out of these questions sprung the following hypotheses :

- (1) Learners' reading difficulties are more of a metacognitive nature than a linguistic nature, i.e. they lack appropriate awareness of reading sub-skills and strategies.
- (2) Learners are equipped with poor and inefficient reading strategies.
- (3) Learners are not aware of the reading process.
- (4) If learners' metacognitive awareness of reading was raised, through a direct instruction in reading strategies, they might make progress in reading.

The informants in this study, are twenty first-year-students at the English language department of Sidi Bel Abbes university, selected because of their major need for reading comprehension instruction at that level.

To make the results more reliable, a triangulation of research tools is used, i.e. a questionnaire, interviews and tests, are all used in a simultaneous way to collect data. Thus, learners' profile, needs and difficulties are analysed through a questionnaire at the beginning of the investigation. Pre-training and Post-training tests are used to analyse the effect of strategy training on learners' progress in reading. Moreover, Post-tests interviews and strategy grids are also used to validate the results obtained.

CHAPTER ONE

The Learning Situation Analysis

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CHAPTER ONE

The Learning Situation Analysis

1.1 Introduction

This introductory chapter presents and describes the different variables and characteristics of the learning situation of the group of subjects selected for this study. The study is limited to twenty subjects only, so that the results can be representative and reliable on the one hand, and on the other, the confusion of external factors, found in a larger group, can be avoided. The learners' profile is drawn and their needs analysed so that they are matched to the objective of the research work. Therefore, learners' age, level, motivation and interest, expectations, difficulties, and their reading background are all studied and analysed. In the last part of the chapter, the research instruments used for data collection are presented and described.

1.2 The English Language Department and its Objectives

The English language department is one among others in the foreign languages institute recently established in Djillali Liabes University of Sidi Bel Abbes. The objective of the department is to train the students holding a 'baccalaureat' in literature and foreign languages or in human sciences, to become future English teachers or graduates in English. This training is accomplished through a four-year curriculum whose content is based on language skills, literature, civilization and pedagogy notions. After graduation, students should be able to teach the language appropriately and efficiently. To this day, about four hundred students have graduated from this department. Some have been recruited by the ministry of education in primary, middle and secondary schools (both in general and technical teaching). Others, have joined different Science and Technology institutes, or institutes of an occupational nature.

Those students are teaching in E.A.P and E.O.P situations. Another minor category of those graduates has joined other institutes or universities for post graduation, either in the country or abroad.

The importance of training students at this department lies in the fact that they are expected to teach the English language and make it accessible to all types of learners in Algerian schools and institutes. Students will also contribute to the economic development of the country, by establishing the link with English-speaking foreign partners. In doing so, they will also make easier the advance of scientific research in language, literature, civilization, language learning and teaching fields. At a time where the economic development of the country is in need of technology and science development, training students in English will facilitate, without doubt, the access to scientific and technological knowledge, an access that requires, especially, the reading skill, which is the bridge, to the bulk of literature in these fields .

Those trained students will also facilitate communication with foreign communities in different fields like mass-media, literature, arts, sports, politics, economics, etc. This role is well stated here :

(...) North African learners are expected to study English as a foreign language so that they can cope with the ever-increasing amount of scientific, technical and commercial literature which is available only in English, and which they need urgently to keep abreast of the latest development in their field. They need also to participate in the production of this internationally produced literature... "

(Hemissi, 1992:23)

Therefore, learners in this case are not expected to teach English only, but to participate in the research carried out in different fields in English, and to keep informed with the up-to-date development in the world thanks to English.

Having defined the role of the department and the contribution of reading, it is reasonable to determine what status the reading comprehension module has in this department in the following section.

1.3 The Reading Comprehension Module and Its Status

One component of the English degree curriculum, is the reading comprehension course set for students in the first year only, and which is the aim of the present investigation. What is then its importance and what status does it enjoy here ?

The English degree students are trained throughout a four-year programme in the four language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. They are also taught Linguistics, Phonetics, Grammar, British, American and Third World literature, and Civilizations. In addition, they are introduced to Didactics, Psycholinguistics and T.E.F.L.

The reading skill, which is at the heart of the above cited modules, is the less practised component in the four- year curriculum , since it is programmed only for first year students for two hours per week. The coefficient of the module is completed with that of the written expression module, i.e. one and half point.

The first-year-English degree syllabus is based on a fundamentally skill-based programme. However, it must be stated from the outset that reading is a necessary tool for language acquisition, as well as a means of mastering other subjects like civilization and literature. It is a tool used to consolidate students' knowledge of language too. Indeed, without a reading ability, learners' mastery of the other subjects can only be of a poor level. We consider the module as being central to students' learning. A fact which is not apparent in the status it is given: no reading programme exists and no directives are given about its teaching and evaluation. In fact, the objective of the module is vaguely stated in the official directives of the Ministry of Higher Education

that says that the module aims at making students able to read and understand English in its written form.

The official directives set the objective of making learners able to read any piece of written English discourse, without giving directions about its teaching and without stressing the teaching of the reading sub- skills necessary to the mastery of readings. The teaching of reading is still viewed as providing students with any text, full of comprehension questions, taking for granted students' ability to read effectively. Moreover, it is often argued that at this level of education, learners no more need to be taught the reading sub-skills since they have learnt to read in French. It may also be argued that learners have been studying English for nearly five to seven years, and have, therefore, learnt how to read. However, this is a fact that cannot be taken into consideration. Indeed, learners may have acquired bad reading habits because of a bad reading instruction, lack of extra-curricular reading, like library and home reading and lack of transfer of reading strategies from their L₁, etc.

In reality, reading is said to be a life-long process. New reading sub-skills and strategies may be developed by a learner if the teaching is adequate and if his needs for reading as well as the situation where he will perform it, change. For example, the type of reading and the sub-skills used may change as the purpose for reading changes. Therefore, the learners must be shown the flexibility of reading strategies depending on their purpose for reading. For instance, reading a story is not the same as reading instructions. This, leads us, inevitably to discuss the teachers' methodology for this module in the following section.

1.4 Teachers' Methodology

It is a common belief among Teachers of reading (whether in the secondary school or in university), that reading is the easiest skill to teach because it only requires them to select any text and have students read and answer comprehension questions, i.e. reading and answering questions about content details without even

understanding the main idea of the text. These practices have prevailed among the teachers of reading comprehension at the English Language Department of Sidi Bel Abbas. Moreover, the reading course is most of the time undertaken by part-time teachers whose training has not gone deeply in language teaching methods and theories; nor do they know the current changes in language teaching and learning. They teach without any theoretical reference about the nature of the reading process. Considering learners' learning styles, cognitive abilities and needs, may be alien to them, since their own training in this skill was in the form of reinforcement of vocabulary and grammatical points. It must also be noted that the reading course is presented for learners in separation from the other language skills, without any relationship put forward for them. Nor is the usefulness of reading to the other subjects of the curriculum made clear.

In addition, the content of the course, the choice of topics and activities are given to learners without offering them the opportunity to express their preferences and desires for learning one thing or another. Moreover, no space is opened to the development of their reading sub-skills and strategies. Nor is it for the raising of their awareness of the interactive aspect of the skill and for the possibility of its transfer from their L_1 or L_2 to their L_3 . Therefore, the teaching of reading in this situation is too much monopolized by the teacher and the text content. In this way, learners are not made aware of their active participation in the creation of discourse out of the text (Widdowson, 1980). The reading course is most of the time geared towards teaching vocabulary, without any reference to the communicative nature of the reading act. In sum, teachers tend to disregard the fact that learners need to be taught how to read,

" (...) the point of the reading course should be reading, not reinforcement of oral skills, not grammatical or discourse analysis and not the acquisition of new vocabulary. "

(Eskey, 1983:130)

The above mentioned points are the major emphasis of any reading course, where there is more of language instruction at the expense of reading. Grammar, content and vocabulary are too often given priority over the reading skill acquisition. Another fact needs to be stressed here also. Reading being a skill already experienced by learners in their mother tongue and second language, it is often taken for granted by teachers that they already master the skill. They ignore the fact that good L₁ readers, are not necessarily good foreign language readers, since their competence in the two languages is not the same. Therefore, instead of encouraging skill transfer and skill awareness, they over-emphasize vocabulary learning often considered as the key to language difficulties.

It is interesting to note that those teaching practices are also found in the secondary school level. Indeed, a great number of English teachers, still influenced by traditional methods of teaching, see reading as an end-product to reach, not a process to develop. They do not teach the skill, but content. In other words, the reading comprehension course at that level, aims more at illustrating language points to develop a linguistic competence, rather than teaching reading to develop a reading proficiency. In this way, reading comprehension takes the form of a testing activity, where learners read in a random way without any systematicity in extracting meaning as it is explained here :

" Comprehension questions commonly require the learner to rummage around in the text for information, in a totally indiscriminate way (...). Reading is, thus, represented as an end in itself, an activity that has no relevance to real knowledge and experience and, therefore, no real meaning. "

(Widdowson, 1980:180)

In other words, learners are told to read in order to learn, but never taught how to read (Eskey, 1983), i.e. how to be a flexible reader and use different sub-skills and strategies according to different purposes in reading. This is so, since:

" Conventional approaches to the teaching of reading tended to obscure the fact that we read for different purposes and that different kinds are involved according to the reading task. "

(White, 1981: 88)

In this way, the learner is too much guided in reading. How then, can he display an awareness of a process he ignores? Indeed , if we refer back to the official syllabus for English at the secondary school, we will find that learners' supposed achievement at the end of basic education is stated in the following:

" They should be able to decode simple authentic texts and documents (maps, charts, forms, notices)."

(The Official Syllabus for English, 1995: 07).

As it is mentioned above, emphasis is still put on the decoding aspect of reading. Consequently, until university, learners remain tutored, unable to be autonomous readers, unaware of the cognitive processes underlying learning, in general and reading, in particular. This is so, since so far, teachers have failed in making them able to manage their learning. Very often, it is not any better at the level of university. Here too, teachers tend to ignore that at that level of proficiency, different techniques, strategies and sub-skills have to be developed in learners to make them able to respond to their new needs and new reading purposes, because,

" What may be true of reading at some particular level of proficiency may not be true at all of reading at much higher or much lower levels. "

(Eskey, 1983: 129)

Indeed, it is worth saying here, that at different levels of instruction, in different learning situations, learners are required to read for different purposes. Therefore, they

need to be shown how to cope with different readings since: " **Teaching students how to read text A or text B is not teaching them how to read.** " (Nuttal, 1982: 22).

Moreover, it is a well-established fact that a teaching that does not give opportunity for the learner to develop his learning styles and strategies is a useless teaching, " **A pedagogy that does not involve learner participation is not likely to be as effective as one that does.** " (Widdowson, 1983: 76).

If teachers, in a situation such as this one fail in equipping learners with the necessary sub-skills and strategies for reading with appropriate comprehension all types of texts, their teaching is likely to be inadequate. It is indeed a well-known fact that learners have been accustomed to the kind of teaching in which the teacher is the sole source of authority; where learners have no participation apart from answering questions. Reading is most of the time monopolized by the teacher and in such a situation, the learner is likely to develop no awareness of his reading process or his reading styles and strategies. Consequently, the reading instruction should be appropriate for his needs, preferences, level and difficulties.

All this makes it necessary to resort to an analysis of learners' profile and to the identification of their needs at the outset of any teaching in such situations. This is what is intended to be done in the following section.

1.5 Learners' Profile and Needs Analysis

Identifying learners' profile, learning background, needs level, expectations, motivation and interests is a prerequisite task in a situation where learners are to be trained through a metacognitive instruction in reading comprehension. Indeed, when training the subjects, all the variables mentioned above have to be taken into account. In this way, the learning can take place in an appropriate atmosphere and the teaching can be at the level of learners' needs and expectations. For that purpose, a questionnaire had been designed and administered to the twenty subjects selected for

the study, at the beginning of the course, i.e. at the start of the investigation. (see appendix A, the questionnaire). The questionnaire has contributed in providing the following information about learners' profile.

1.5.1 Learners' Profile

The subjects chosen for the present case study are twenty learners attending the first-year-English language degree courses at the English Department of the Foreign Languages Institute at the university of Sidi Bel Abbas. These students were observed, trained and tested during the reading comprehension lectures. They are intermediate-advanced learners coming from different secondary schools. They are sixteen adult females and only four males ranging in age between seventeen and twenty one. They have had about five to seven years of English so far. Most of them were either in the literature and foreign languages sections, whose coefficient for English is three; or in the literature and human sciences one, whose coefficient for English is two. They have, therefore, a literary background that gives much importance to languages in the secondary school. Nevertheless, only two of them have a mathematics background and have been reoriented from the Biology and Technology departments.

It has been noticed that the majority of students master fluently the French language; their second language which they have studied since the fourth year of the primary school. It is worth noting here, that for some, it is even practised outside their learning environment.

Introduced much later, in the Middle School, (i.e. in the eighth year of the Foundation School), English enjoys the status of foreign or third language for them. They have had an average of two to three hours per week of English since then. Supposedly, learners' mastery of Arabic and French is better than of English, especially in regard to the amount of exposure to the two languages -i.e. Arabic and

French-that creates a favourable environment for learning, which is not the case for English practised and learned mostly in the classroom.

The learners in this case have been accepted in the English language department for a 'licence' degree on the basis of their obtained mark for English in the 'baccalauréat' exam, the university entrance requirement. The last registered student obtained a mark of twelve out of twenty in English.

The majority of the subjects opted for the " licence " degree as a first choice. For very few among them, it was either a second or third choice from the computer orientation. Accordingly, it may be concluded that for the majority, the choice of the English degree studies was based on a preference and an interest for English. Therefore, learners here, are likely to have a high motivation for learning English.

When asked about their reading background, a large number of the learners reported that they used to read Arabic and French when younger, at home and in libraries. A fact which is said to be a determinant contributor in developing good reading habits, styles and strategies in learners, " (...) **early childhood experiences in reading are an important predictor of adult reading status.**" (Siegel, 1990: 336). Indeed, the more learners have read when children, and have been encouraged to do so by their parents or teachers, the more they are likely to develop a reading ability. Extra-curricular factors as library and home reading proved to be important variables contributing to learners' effective reading. The same point is stressed here,

" (...) The social context of students' uses of reading in their first languages and their access to texts may have a profound effect on their abilities to develop academic reading skills. "

(Grabe, 1991: 389)

However, another fact has to be taken into account. Learners who are competent readers in their native language are not necessarily so, in their second or foreign languages. This is because most of the time they fail in transferring the reading sub-skills and strategies from their L_1 or L_2 to their L_3 .

As a matter of fact, learners mentioned, in their majority, that they do not read English using the same strategies or techniques as for Arabic or French. By doing so, they make, indeed, very little link between reading in the three languages. They explain this by saying that they think the three languages are different and that English is more difficult and less familiar to them than the other two. Only few are aware that the reading is the same even if the language is different. An awareness they explain by their self-evaluation of their reading each time they read in any language. What may be concluded from that point, is that learners make very little transfer of their reading strategies because they were not made aware of this possibility during their previous reading instruction. Moreover, it may be hypothesized at that level, that they have no awareness of their reading styles and strategies even if they are somehow linguistically competent in English. This may be a disturbing evidence when we know that when younger, they used to read a lot and have surely developed reading habits and strategies.

In addition, the learners mentioned that the number of books they read per month, varies from four books to just few pages in Arabic, from two books to no reading at all in French, and from one book to no reading at all in English, i.e. they read from time to time in Arabic, read sometimes in French and rarely in English. A first conclusion to be drawn here is that the learners do not read so much as when younger. A second conclusion is that their reading of English is more recent, less practised and less mastered than their first and second language reading. This may be another possible reason for their poor and random use of reading strategies, since " we learn to read by reading. "

Another paradoxical impression appears from the learners' questionnaire and interview responses. On the one hand, they seem to be aware of their need for learning what they call " a good method for reading ". On the other hand, when expressing their expectations from the reading course, they mentioned vocabulary and grammar learning as essential and most urgent needs. Moreover, when analysing their learning styles during the first interview (see appendix C), a predominance of word-by-word reading, an over-use of dictionary and translation to L₁ and L₂ have been noticed.

In sum, the subjects seem to have a simplistic understanding of what reading and comprehension require. An understanding influenced by their language learning background. That is, either because of a lack of explicit training in reading sub-skills and strategies, or because of a lack of awareness raising of the reading process on the part of their previous language teachers and even parents.

The learners' understanding and view of reading may also be the result of a lack of awareness or reflection on their own learning process, and therefore of their reading process. However, this may not be the result of a lack of motivation on their part since all of them mentioned that they used to enjoy very much reading comprehension at school.

To conclude, the learners reported having been taught some reading sub-skills as finding the main idea of a passage and predicting its content. A fact which is, however, in contradiction with their word-by-word definition of reading. Whether they have acquired and mastered those reading sub-skills needs to be checked of course, along the present investigation.

The learners' profile, level, learning background and reading styles have been identified in this section. What is needed now is to identify and analyse their needs in the following one.

1.5.2 Learners' Needs Analysis

Identifying learners' needs in any given learning situation is a prerequisite task to resort to, so that the teaching of those learners can be more appropriate and can cater for their needs. Indeed, needs analysis is to be a guide in the selection of topics, themes, skills, language points, functions and teaching methods that learners' training requires. This can be true for any E.S.P situation. However, can one speak of specific language points or functions and not of others in a situation where English is the subject of specialism of learners and where all functions, structures or any communicative form, are to be mastered? Indeed, in a situation such as the one studied in the present work, one has to emphasize, specific needs more than others, according to learners priorities, level and difficulties.

Moreover, trying to identify and analyse learners' needs without consulting them, may be misleading for a researcher, for he is neglecting the most important factor in needs analysis: the learner, his view and awareness of his needs, his expectations, his difficulties and lacks etc. For this purpose, the learners' perception and awareness of their needs have been assessed at the beginning of the investigation. (See the questionnaire, appendix A). Of course, learners' definition of their needs may be seen as subjective (Richterich, 1973, quoted by West, 1993:04). However, the information obtained has helped in the diagnosis of difficulties and in the choice of topics that motivate them. Results of the questionnaire showed learners' poor understanding of their needs, and at the same time, they put forward their awareness of their need for a reading methodology. Their responses were varied, but they all converged towards specific points like vocabulary learning, defined as an urgent need and presented as a major source of difficulties for them.

On the whole, the twenty subjects are all aware of the importance of reading in language acquisition. (Nation and Coady, 1991; Krashen, 1995). For them, by learning how to read effectively, they will speak, write and understand language in a better way. Moreover, they see reading as a tool that will help them later in their professional

life. This awareness of the importance of reading to their future needs, will be a factor of high motivation, on the one hand, and on the other, will help in having them interested in reading strategy training.

At the start of the investigation, the three parties concerned by needs identification were asked to specify learners' needs. The head of the department, teachers and as mentioned above- the learners. (Hoadley and Maidment, 1980, quoted by West, 1993: 06). It has been noticed, however, that the three have simplistic views of the priorities of learners' needs. In fact, what they call 'needs' are the learning of vocabulary and grammar and 'being able to read any material in English'. Learners' learning needs have not been mentioned as an important criterion to be taken into account in the training. Therefore, relying only on those three parties, to define learners' needs may not always be sufficient, especially if learners' view of their needs conflict with the teachers' ones or with the objective set by the institution. The researcher in such a situation, has to match the needs expressed to the ones he has established according to a given needs analysis system.

In the field of language teaching/learning, different systems of needs analysis have been suggested (Munby, 1978); (Alderson, 1980); (Cousin et al, 1980); (Allwright, 1982); (Hutchinson and Waters, 1980-89); (Tarone and Yule, 1989), all quoted in (Dickinson, 1987: 90-91). Those systems are applicable to different learning situations. Each of them having advantages and limitations. The most comprehensible scheme that emerges from those systems is the following:

- target situation needs.
- deficiency analysis or learners' lacks.
- learners' wants or expectations.
- learning needs.

The target situation needs are what the learner needs to learn in order to function appropriately in the target situation. These needs are defined by Chambers(1980):

"The most common form of needs analysis is devoted to establishing the learners' language requirements in the occupational or academic situation they are being prepared for -target situation analysis- "

Quoted by (West, 1993:08).

Accordingly, one needs to know what the different places learners will use their English in are, so that the required language points and skills can be selected for that purpose.

Before fulfilling those target situation needs, it is necessary to determine what kind of language proficiency learners already have and what they lack, i.e. their deficiencies analysis. This is expressed below:

" The target proficiency... needs to be matched against the existing proficiency of the learner. The gap between the two may be referred to as the learners' lacks. "

(Hutchinson and Waters, 1989 : 56)

Learners' deficiencies result from what learners have not sufficiently acquired or not yet learned. They are also defined as: "**... the combined target-situation analysis and the present situation analysis.**" (Allwright, 1982: 24, quoted in Dickinson, 1987:90).

Moreover, the learners may express their preferences, for studying one specific thing or another. This is referred to as learners' wants or expectations. They are to be considered in the establishment of learners' needs.

Particularly, learners' learning needs, i.e. the kinds of language items, skills and strategies that learners need to learn in order to be able to function effectively in the target situation have to be determined too. The target situation needs, learners' lacks

and wants are often identified before their learning needs, so that it would be possible to know what exactly learners need to learn in order to reach language efficiency.

For the current study, learners' target situation is illustrated in table 1.1:

Learners' Target Situations		
Teaching	Different Economic Fields	Study
a) Schools: - primary schools - middle schools <div style="text-align: center;"> General teaching ↙ ↘ ↗ ↘ ↘ ↘ Technical teaching </div> - high schools	a) Offices	a) Post-graduation: -In the country - Abroad
	b) Banks	
	c) Touristic agencies	
	d) National and international conferences	
b) <u>Institutes</u> : - Science and Technology - Occupational		

Table 1.1. : Learners' target situation analysis.

As it appears in table 1.1., most of the learners in this case will be using their English for teaching in :

- Primary Schools, where the teaching of English is assigned for children in the forth form in place of French (for those who opt for it) since 1993,
- Middle Schools, where English is taught to learners since the second year as a third language,
- Secondary Schools during the three years study; whether for general or technical branches.

The learners will also teach English in different Science and Technology Institutes or Institutes of whatever occupational nature, where English is taught as a complementary subject facilitating students' access to any information in English about their subject of specialism.

A small part of those learners will join different economic fields in the country: offices, banks, touristic agencies, international and national conferences, where they will have to deal with foreign technical staffs in different domains of the economic, political and educational life. A smaller part of them will practise their English for higher studies, in case of a post-graduation in their country or in foreign universities.

The learners' future or long-term needs (Widdowson, 1983) being linked to the uses of English, their immediate or short-term needs (Ibid.) are centred on the four language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Moreover, they need to study all that goes with the English language systems, the English culture, literature and civilization.

The target situation helps in specifying learners' future needs, but one needs to know what they need to learn in order to fulfil those needs, i.e. their learning needs (Hutchinson and Waters, 1989). Learners' learning needs in this situation are the following:

- learning how to learn and how to develop their learning strategies,
- Learning how to manage their learning, i.e. learning to develop study skills as note taking, for example,
- Writing academic essays, dissertations and projects,
- listening to a presentation,
- Reading to get information in different forms and from different sources.

Therefore, learners' immediate needs are E.A.P Oriented. These are broadly speaking, their needs for the English language degree studies. The focus of the present

research work being on the reading skill, what are learners' needs for this component of the English language degree curriculum ?

First, the learners' target situation or long-term needs for the reading skill here are:

- to be able to use the necessary reading sub- skills,
- to be able to read and understand different types of written discourse related to any field,
- to be able to teach reading adequately.

Therefore, mastering the reading skill will make learners fulfil appropriately the above mentioned objectives. Moreover, without a reading ability, learners' access to the literature on the subjects of the curriculum will be limited. Thus, learners' immediate needs for reading are for study.

Concerning learners' wants or expectations from the reading course, they expressed their wants for learning more vocabulary and grammar, thinking that the latter are the key to successful reading. They also mentioned their preferences for themes such as culture and societies, pollution, science and technology. They mentioned figurative senses, unclear meaning, complex sentences and difficult vocabulary as main difficulties in reading. Difficulties that some attribute to a lack of reading outside school, to a bad learning at school and others to a lack of interest in reading. Very few, however, attribute those difficulties to a lack of concentration while reading.

The expressed expectations, difficulties, wants and the mentioned reading styles, will be taken into account in the present investigation. They may help in selecting what suits learners and raise their motivation. They will also help in understanding their learning styles and especially their reading styles and difficulties.

As far as learning needs in the reading skill are concerned, learners apparently need to be made aware of the necessary reading sub-skills and strategies. They need to be equipped with appropriate techniques to overcome their reading difficulties. They also need to be aware of the reading skill as far as the linguistic level, i.e. grammatical, lexical and semantic features of texts are concerned. Second, the rhetorical and discourse levels, i.e. the way ideas are linked together in a prepositional way to express a desired meaning, that is coherence and cohesion features of texts (Halliday and Hassan, 1978). Third, the cognitive and metacognitive strategies that the learners have to engage for the task of reading.

Among the reading sub-skills they need to make use of at that level are the following:

- extracting any piece of written discourse main idea,
- locating detailed information,
- summarizing texts' contents,
- note-taking,
- inferring from context,
- guessing from context,
- decoding syntactic and lexical forms,
- evaluating reading passages content.

In order to fulfil those reading sub-skills, the learners will need to use a set of reading strategies (see chapter II, section 2.6.3. for more details).

In this regard, the present work is an attempt to cater for the above mentioned learning needs. This will be undertaken through investigating the possibility of overcoming the learners' reading difficulties through making them aware of the nature of the reading skill. For that purpose, the study is focusing on the five reading sub-skills of predicting, skimming for main idea, scanning for details, inferring and guessing from context, as well as the necessary reading strategies required to be used for each reading sub-skill.

Nevertheless, a reasonable step to undertake beforehand, is to establish an empirical evidence as to what the nature of the learners reading difficulties is. Is it of a linguistic nature, caused by a poor linguistic competence? or is it of a reading nature, caused by a lack of awareness of the reading process, i.e. a lack of metacognitive knowledge about the interactive aspect of reading?

Given, first the facts that the twenty subjects of the study have been accepted for the licence degree on the basis of their good marks for English in the 'Baccalaureat' exam, second, that the majority of them has a literary background that emphasizes the intensive study of languages (and among them English) in the secondary school, third, that the learners' responses to the questionnaire, displayed a high linguistic level, a reasonable conclusion to be drawn is that they do have a certain linguistic competence in English. It may be hypothesized, therefore, that learners' difficulties in the reading skill are not of a linguistic nature; but of a reading nature, and more specifically, of a metacognitive nature. Accordingly, one may hypothesize also, that they need a metacognitive instruction in reading sub-skills and strategies. A hypothesis that needs to be confirmed of course, through the data collection and analysis in chapter three of this work.

1.6 The Research Instruments

Since any experimental investigation involves selecting a sample population (a group of learners), research tools (tests, interviews and questionnaires, observations, etc.) and analysis, a variety of research tools have been used and triangulated so that the study results could be reliable.

1.6.1 The Questionnaire and the Interviews

Questionnaires and interviews are often referred to as self-report methods (Weir and Roberts, 1994). Indeed, they are usually used to elicit from learners their attitudes towards a teaching method, for example, their linguistic behaviour, their view

of learning in general, their profile and language background, etc. (Seliger and Shohamy, 1989). Although the questionnaire is considered as a data collection tool of a soft evidence category (Mcdonough, 1995), it has helped in this case for collecting relevant information on the learners. The researcher used this kind of instrument at the beginning of this investigation, in order to pilot it with another group, during the first term of 1995. It was possible, then, to examine whether the questions were clear, well formulated and appropriately understood by the subjects. During this piloting phase, some of the questions that seemed either irrelevant or that were misunderstood by the learners, have been reformulated. Whereas others were dropped on purpose because they were irrelevant to the research questions.

The questionnaire (see appendix A) was meant to fulfil the following aims :

- to have an idea about learners' profile, language level, reading background, view of needs, expectations, motivation and preferences, i.e. it aimed at determining the kind of population involved in the study
- to have a preliminary idea of learners' reading difficulties,
- to obtain a preliminary information about their metacognitive awareness of the reading process, the reading sub-skills and reading strategies.

Two interviews were also used in the study. Indeed, the interview is often used to validate or test a specific instruction, or a task accomplishment. In the current study, the researcher used a first interview at the start of the investigation, i.e. before strategy instruction and immediately after the reading proficiency test administration. It was of a semi-structured type₁. In short, the learners were interviewed for the following objectives :

- to determine the kind of reading strategies the learners have made use of in order to answer the proficiency test questions,
- to confirm the proficiency test results,
- to determine the degree of their metacognitive awareness of the reading process, and reading sub-skills.

The second interview used in this study (see appendix D) is a post-training interview. It is of a semi- structured type too. It was meant for collecting learners' impressions, feelings and reactions about the reading strategy training they received. Whether they were interested in the instruction. Whether they realized its importance or not, etc. This was also in the objective of validating and confirming the post-training diagnostic tests results.

1.6.2 Tests

Tests are established and are generally used to :

"... Collect data about the subjects ability in and knowledge of the language in areas such as vocabulary, grammar, reading, metalinguistic awareness and general proficiency".

(Seliger and Shohamy, 1989 : 176).

Although the learners reported their reading strategies and difficulties when answering the questionnaire, the researcher needed to have more evidence about their reading weaknesses through a reading proficiency test. Moreover, as the study involves only one group of subjects, the possibility of controlling the reliability of the study results relied on the setting of a reading proficiency test before conducting the training. This kind of test is defined as :

" [a test whose aim is] to assess the student's ability to apply in actual situations what he has learnt. (...) it is concerned with the students' current standing in relation to his future needs".

(Harrison, 1989 : 7 - 8).

In this study, the reading proficiency test₂ was meant to fulfil the following objectives :

- to assess learners' ability to make use of the reading sub-skills and strategies once they joined the first year of the English degree studies, and before strategy instruction,
- to determine the nature of learners' lacks in reading comprehension,
- to establish a baseline for assessing learners' improvement as far as the reading sub-skills and strategies are concerned, after strategy instruction.

The dependent variable being in this study, the learners' metacognitive awareness of their reading sub-skills and strategies, there is a need to determine how they actually use them before strategy instruction and whether they are aware of them.

The second type of tests used in this investigation, are a series of diagnostic tests assigned to the subjects after strategy instruction. These are also called progress or formative tests (Harrison, 1989), Whose objective is to :

" Check on students' progress in learning particular elements of the course (...).The diagnostic test tries to answer the question : how well have the students learnt this particular material ?"

(Harrison, 1989 : 6).

The diagnostic tests in this study have the following objectives :

- to assess learners' application and understanding of the reading sub-skills and strategies taught to them,
- to measure learners' progress after strategy training in the five reading sub-skills that constitute the sample of the study.

1.6.3 The Reading Strategy Training

One of the hypotheses tested in this work is that a metacognitive training in reading strategies could be a significant factor contributing to learners' improved

reading. In order to test this hypothesis and obtain empirical evidence, the researcher resorted to a reading strategy training. This type of training is advocated by a number of language researchers today. (Oxford, 1990; O'Mallet and Chamot, 1990; Cohen, 1990; Hosenfeld, 1990). Although it has not been thoroughly explored, significant results have been obtained in the area of first language reading (Brown et al, 1983; Chipman, Segal and Glaser, 1985, quoted in Grabe, 1991). Accordingly, strategy training is :

" an essential part of language education. Even the best learners can improve their strategy use through training (...) strategy training is most effective when students learn why and when specific strategies are important, how to use these strategies and how to transfer them to new situations."

(Oxford, 1990 : 12).

Indeed, the objective of strategy training is to equip learners with suitable tools during the learning process, so that they not only become more aware of their progress, but also generalize good learning behaviour to other learning tasks.

In relation to our study, the training was meant to guide learners in their reading and provide them with what is referred to by Gagne and Anderson (1985) as 'procedural knowledge,' (quoted in O'Mallet and Chamot, 1990 : 1). This procedural knowledge is the 'how to' that learners lack and are unaware of. Therefore, strategy instruction followed the assessment of learners' reading difficulties. Their need for reading sub-skills and reading strategies learning having been put forward, the next step consisted in conducting the training with learners.

The reading strategy instruction in the present investigation tried to fulfil the following objectives :

- to make learners more aware of their reading sub-skills and strategies,
- to change their established belief that reading is the result of decoding every single word; that meaning can only be recoverable from texts,

- to facilitate their reading and equip them with the necessary sub-skills and strategies so that they become autonomous readers.

Thus, the reading strategy instruction aimed at providing learners with an appropriate input consisting in a metacognitive instruction in reading comprehension.

1.6.4 Self-Report Grids

With a view of assessing the actual acquisition of the reading strategies and their appropriate use, reading strategies grids have been used. It is a well-known fact indeed, that strategy use is difficult to observe. In this introspective method, the learner simultaneously thinks about the strategies he uses, and performs the reading tasks. This technique is similar to the think- aloud protocol, very often used for eliciting learners' thought processes while performing language tasks. Through this method, the researcher has attempted to determine the extent to which the learners actually acquired and used the reading strategies.

1.7 CONCLUSION

This first chapter has tried to describe the conditions under which the learning and teaching of reading is carried out, in the situation selected for the purpose of the investigation. Parameters such as the nature of the learning situation, the objectives of learners' training, teachers' competence and methodology as far as the reading skill is concerned, the learners' characteristics, their reading difficulties, reading background and reading awareness have been identified. They are important variables in the analysis and interpretation of the study results. Moreover, learners' needs analysis has shed a light on their apparent need for a metacognitive training in reading sub-skills and strategies, seen as a possible solution to their difficulties in reading.

Those variables having been determined, the data collection tools used for testing the research hypotheses have been introduced too. The procedure in using them and the results obtained will be described in more details in chapter three.

Meanwhile, before knowing whether one can cater for those needs and obtain satisfactory results, the nature of the reading process has to be defined and a theoretical framework of reading sub-skills and strategies instruction needs to be provided in the following chapter.

NOTES

1. The interview used was of a semi-structured type. learners were asked to answer a set of pre-established questions, but were probed and encouraged to extend their ideas and further express any detail that seemed important for them. This kind of interview is generally advised by the researchers since it is at the same time guided by specific objectives to reach and can look for new sources of information.
2. The reading proficiency test text and questions are adapted from Bereksi's B.A.C collection of exam type texts (pp. 73-75).

CHAPTER TWO

Reading : An Interactive Perspective

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CHAPTER TWO

Reading : An Interactive Perspective

2.1 Introduction

The present work is seeking to answer the question of whether learners' awareness-raising of the interactive nature of the reading process, through a metacognitive instruction of reading strategies, can remedy their reading difficulties. Accordingly, in this chapter, a description of the process from an interactive perspective is presented. All the aspects involved in the interaction between a reader and a text are described. One of these aspects: reading sub-skills and strategies use, is emphasized and included in a reading strategy instruction programme. Reading strategies are underlined here, since they are seen as an essential tool for a reading achievement. Thus, several strategy training studies are also reviewed.

Before that, an historical overview of reading models that influenced reading instruction so far is presented.

2.2 An Historical Overview of Reading Models

The concept of reading and comprehension and therefore, their teaching practices have constantly changed and developed throughout the history of the reading research. The nature of the reading act has always been reconceptualized. Although research has led to conflicting views on its nature, it has contributed in gaining more insights into the process of reading and the role of the reader in it, over the last thirty years. It is essential to note that the early approaches to reading had a simplistic view of its nature. Because it was seen as a product the learner has to arrive to, by the simple decoding of print, the process necessitated no deep research into its internal nature:

"It is perhaps more accurate to speculate that until the mid 1950's and 1960's, there simply was not a strong tradition of attempting to conceptualize knowledge and theory about the reading process in the form of reading models."

(Samuels and Kamil, 1988:22)

As stated above by Samuels and Kamil, reading was seen, not as an independent act to be investigated on its own, in relation to various related variables, but as a mere product. That is why, a reader needed only to master the language and its grammar in order to read well. In other words, not only there was no attempt at identifying what goes on in the mind of a reader while he reads, but also, no definition of the psychological processes involved in the act of reading. This simplistic view of reading is often referred to as the bottom-up view of the reading process.

2.2.1 The Bottom-up Model of Reading

At the early stages of the reading research, i.e. in the beginning of this century, there was still a strong influence of the traditional teaching methods, viewing language teaching and learning as a mere task of mastering the grammar of a language. Reading was then translation-based since it was a means for mastering the literature of a target language. Indeed, identifying reading as a process was totally ignored.

It was not any different later with the behaviourists (Skinner) who viewed language learning as a matter of habit formation, wherein reading was seen as a means of reinforcement of oral language. For the behaviourists, reading by repetition was thought to produce a reading ability. It was, therefore, taught through the drilling of passages illustrating correct grammatical use. What was printed on the page, was given priority, regardless of the actual psychological processes that underlie reading. Accordingly, reading consisted in stimulating the eye with letters and words identification in a mechanical way until they became familiar.

Nevertheless, one must say that this method was far from promoting effective reading and constructing a reading competence within each learner. It has, in fact, disregarded the role of the reader, his conceptual knowledge, his cultural understanding, his individual learning styles and active participation. In other words, a learner cannot learn to read by rote all reading passages he will encounter in his life.

Similarly, the structuralists, such as Fries (1942), Lado (1961) and Bloomfield (1962), advocated the use of the linguistic method, or, what some refer to as the phonic method. This method is well explained in what follows:

" (...) the reader processes each letter as it is encountered. These letters or graphemes are matched with the phonemes of the language, which it is assumed the reader already knows. These phonemes, the minimal units of meaning in the sound system of the language, are blended together to form words. The derivation of meaning is, thus, the end process in which language is translated from one form of representation to another. "

(Nunan, 1991: 64)

In this way, reading was taught in a graded way: reading letters, then words then whole sentences, as it is illustrated in the diagram below :

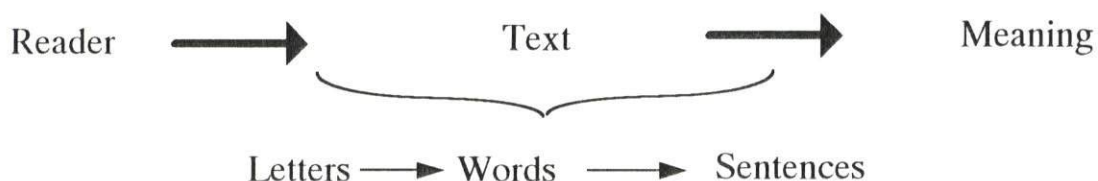


Diagram 2.1 : The Reading process (the linguistic method view of reading).

The reader, thus, decodes language in a linear way where meaning is said to be the end-product of this forward decoding. In principle, the linguistic method is based on the correspondence between English letters and their equivalent sounds, wherein the

decoding aspect of language is emphasized. In this way, learners can develop a high grammatical recognition, in which no context is provided. As a result, comprehension is laid a secondary role, since success in reading is measured against how well the graphic representation of a text is matched to its corresponding phonic realization.

One of the defenders of the linguistic method of reading, defines the reading act as follows:

"(...) it consists of grasping meaning in a language through its written representation. This definition is intended to emphasize the language itself and the graphic symbolization that represents it. "

(Lado, 1961: 62).

The above definition illustrates indeed the view of the reading act as a process of decoding print, where language, rather than meaning is emphasized. This linguistic method, very much pruned by the structuralists prevailed, in fact, for a long time, especially in beginning levels instruction. This perspective of reading is often referred to as " the bottom-up " view of the reading process, where the reader has to make use of the text's linguistic cues only to get meaning.

As a matter of fact, the pedagogical practices that resulted from this approach, led to the teaching of reading as 'a vehicle for usage' (Widdowson, 1983), i.e. a mere practice of grammar and vocabulary instruction in a graded sequence. Thus, reading passages according to Schultz (1983 : 127) consisted in :

" Simplified, structurally graded texts, using controlled vocabulary constructed specifically for classroom instruction. "

(Quoted by Young, 1989 : 755).

In such reading instruction, the reading passage is not used to teach learners what reading is and how to extract appropriate meaning. Rather, it is used as a 'dependent exemplification', to use Widdowson's terms again, i.e. the reading passage is used to

consolidate that unique purpose. Therefore, instead of using a text to exemplify how to get meaning, how to interact with the text to create a 'meaningful discourse', the reading passage is used to illustrate language systems' parts. In addition, language is not presented in its real context, i.e. in use, but is rigidly and exclusively geared towards illustrating grammatical points. Thus, the only learning that takes place is the learning of language structures, and the reading text has,

**" ... something of the character of a display case
and its value as discourse is decreased accordingly".**

(Widdowson, 1983:78).

Consequently, with the view of reading as a decoding of language items act, the reading text remains artificial; the reader engages no interaction with the text, nor does he engage his own knowledge and conceptual abilities. Furthermore, one would say, that decoding written symbols in relation to their phonological equivalents is rather a method useful at early reading instruction. Learners at an advanced level, and specifically foreign language ones, have far more needs, as far as reading is concerned, than a mere letter-by-letter or word-by-word decoding.

Most importantly, it has often been reported that learners might be able to decode all words without understanding a reading text. This fact is strengthened by the argument that a linguistic competence does not always and in all cases lead to a reading competence (Alderson, 1992). Given the view that reading is an act involving the reader's active participation in the creation of meaning, reading by decoding would be a one way reading, where meaning is thought to come solely from the text.

It is worth noting, however, that this bottom-up approach influenced and is still influencing reading instruction at intermediate and advanced levels of EFL instruction in our country. In spite of the bulk of empirical evidence collected against it, teachers do not feel any compulsion to abandon it. This, is either because of a lack of knowledge and training, or because of a strong devotion to the already established

teaching methods. This may explain the lack of systematic reading and simplistic views of the reading process on the part of the learners in the present case.

In the meantime, however, much more evidence has been collected on one of the neglected aspects of reading: higher-level processes like background knowledge and conceptual abilities. These latter have been emphasized by the top-down view of reading.

2.2.2 The Top-Down Model of Reading

The idea that reading involves more than what words individually express, and that complete meaning is not laid on the page, has taken time to mature in the mind of reading researchers and teachers. Indeed, during the period of the 1960's, two influential factors pushed forward the need for research into the reading process. The first factor was the emergence of learners' needs for English for specific purposes at advanced levels of education. The instructional programmes could no more be the standard ones given to all types of English learners. Therefore, the instructional objectives were to respond to those new needs. Henceforth, because empirical research has given new insights into the reading process, researchers view now the reading skill differently, as they focus mainly on the reader.

The second influential factor was the results of cognitive psychology research, that showed the importance of variables such as memory, attention, motivation and perception in language learning. In this respect, research into schema theory, dealing with the organization of knowledge in the brain, put forward the importance of the reader's knowledge in the act of reading.

Reading, thus, began to be seen as a complex process involving mental or cognitive processes. How information and language are processed in the reader's mind, were necessary points to investigate when researchers realized that learning does not come solely from the teacher, but is a whole complex process happening in the

mind of a learner. Such a view was confirmed by the work of Goodman (1967-69) and Smith (1971-82). Both researchers have given a new theoretical direction to the reading concept. They viewed the act of reading as a whole Psycholinguistic process, where the reader's own knowledge plays a central role. For them, the process involves selection of information, prediction, interaction, sampling and confirmation. This characterization drawn from research into L₁ reading led to a reconceptualization of the nature of reading, the role of the reader in it, as well as the importance of reading sub-skills and strategies for its mastery. Moreover, at the same period, there was some claim in favour of socio-cultural knowledge as well as background knowledge as important factors for reading achievement (Rivers, 1968).

Meanwhile, the development of research into memory showed that reading requires keeping words in memory to have global sense. Therefore, a learner reading letter-by-letter and word-by-word, would not memorize enough words to get the whole meaning. Rather, he would have lost time decoding every single item.

The Psycholinguistic perspective of reading was known as the 'top-down₁ view' of reading, where the reader's own knowledge helps him process a text content. Indeed, his higher-level processes such as memory, predictions, anticipation of the coming linguistic cues and content information are used in the reading act. Therefore, the importance of the reader's contribution with his knowledge, matched to the text, showed evidence against the bottom-up decoding perspective of reading, which, applied on its own, was a sterile one.

Goodman and Smith (1965-82) work on the reading process influenced several researchers like Eskey (1973); Saville-Troike (1973); Mackey and Mountford (1979) and Widdowson (1979). They all recognized the important contribution of the reader's activated background knowledge in the process of reading.

Similarly, Anderson (1978) characterizes reading as a 'concept-driven top-down process', where the reader makes use of his conceptual stock to understand a text

content. On the other hand, Widdowson (1979) sees the reader as ‘an active information processor’. In that, the reader’s role is not limited to a simple form decoding of language items but is extended to processing information and relating it to his background and conceptual knowledge.

Seen from this perspective, reading can be illustrated in the following diagram :

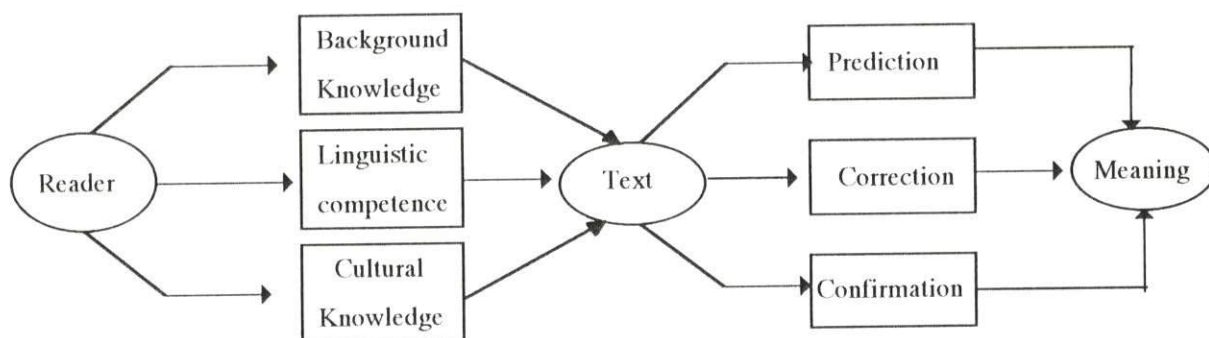


Diagram 2.2. : A Top-down model of reading.

According to diagram 2.2, the reader makes use of his background, conceptual and linguistic knowledge to sample a text. This will result in selecting a possible meaning, i.e. predictions making then correction or confirmation of those predictions. All that, leads to the final product which is meaning. Decoding is not central but one part of the process according to the Psycholinguistic view of reading.

Nevertheless, although the top-down view was sound enough, since it has directed the attention towards the reader’s experience and knowledge contribution in the act of reading, it has many drawbacks. In fact, it has often been criticized for providing an explanation for reading that cannot apply to all kinds of readers such as ESL and EFL ones. Indeed, Eskey (1979); Coady (1979) and Clarke (1979) drew the attention on the fact that ESL readers do not have the same profile and characteristics as L₁ readers, who were the subjects of Goodman’s investigation findings. In addition, the need to make use of bottom-up strategies cannot be neglected. On the other hand, higher-level processes like background and conceptual knowledge cannot, on their own, lead to

comprehension. The reader needs necessarily to make use of his bottom-up strategies as word-identification, grammar use, etc.

Finally, Stanovich (1980) rejected the assumption that only predictability and hypothesis generation and testing with background knowledge can lead to effective reading. He suggests that a more representative model would be an interactive one that uses simultaneously both bottom-up and top-down strategies. He calls this model 'an interactive compensatory model', where each level, top-down or bottom-up interacts and, where one level compensates the deficiencies of the other simultaneously. This interactive model will be described in further details in the following section.

2.2.3 The Interactive Model of Reading

As previously noted, the top-down view has tended to disregard the fact that a linguistic competence is a prerequisite for the use of higher-level processes or top-down strategies. Indeed, the drawback of the Goodman theory is that, it neither provided evidence for all kinds of contexts and purposes of a reading, nor did it take into account all the variables that interact, from the text, with the act of reading.

In this way, the interactive perspective of reading involves both top-down and bottom-up strategies. A reader unable to identify a difficult word or a difficult structure, could use his background knowledge of grammatical forms. He could, for instance, identify the grammatical category of a word and recognize its nature. He could also use his knowledge of suffixes to understand an unfamiliar word. The interaction between the reader's decoding of the text items and his use of his grammatical or linguistic knowledge, could help him get the meaning.

The interactive model of reading reconsiders the role of bottom-up skills that are essential to successful reading. Such bottom-up skills are, for example, basic word recognition and text recognition skills, i.e. what Nuttal (1982) calls 'word-attack and text-attack skills'. Therefore, the reader has first to understand what the physical

aspect of the text is to identify the topic and relate it to his background knowledge. Indeed, the process has a decoding dimension that must not be de-emphasized, since the insecure ESL or EFL reader needs grammatical and lexical forms identification before making use of his background knowledge.

Accordingly, Rumelhart (1977) and Perfetti (1981), claim that both top-down and bottom-up processing of the text constantly and simultaneously interact. This same view is expressed here :

" Developing readers must, therefore, work at perfecting both bottom-up recognition skills and top-down interpretation strategies, Good reading... can only result from a constant interaction between these processes. "

(Eskey, 1988 : 95)

This interactive aspect of reading can be seen on diagram 2.3 below :

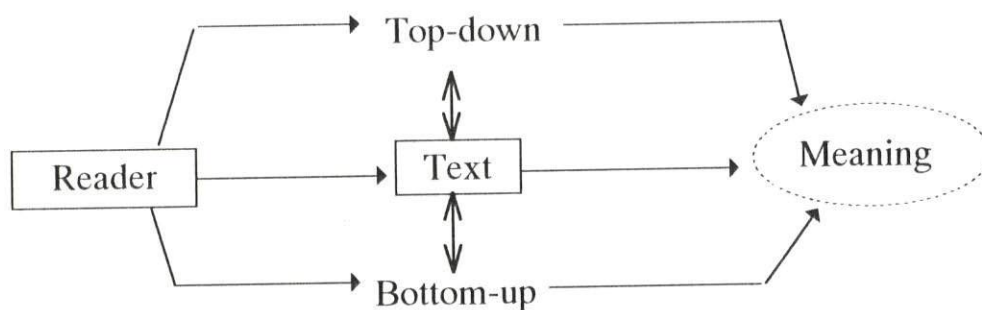


Diagram 2.3 : The Interactive perspective of the reading act.

Moreover, Eskey (1988) stresses the importance of bottom-up strategies as he sees language as a 'kind of schema too'. Learners have a linguistic knowledge that is schematically organized in their brain, and that they need to make use of, while reading,

" Successful reading is much more than simple decoding, but decoding is a cognitive process too, involving bottom-up as well as top-down skills and successful comprehension cannot be achieved without it."

(ESKEY, 1988 : 96)

It is essential to realize that what is meant by decoding₂ is not a mere word-by-word or letter-by-letter identification as it was believed in the structural perspective. Rather, it must be viewed as a whole complex process involving the use of one's knowledge too.

Therefore, reading is interactive in the sense that there is an interplay between the reader and the text. The reader tries to decode the meaning encoded by the writer₃ (Goodman 1967). Reading is also interactive in the sense that this complex process involves the reader's simultaneous interaction of both his higher-level and lower-level processes. Defenders of the bottom-up perspective assume that lower-level processes such as word recognition, have priority over higher-level processes such as the use of background knowledge. Similarly, proponents of the top-down view see higher level processes as taking priority and being more important than the decoding of print. Nevertheless, it seems more reasonable to assume that both processes interact simultaneously, one compensating the lack of the other. However, it must be pointed out that recent research into SL reading tends to emphasize the importance of bottom-up strategies. Grabe (1991) reviews several researches undertaken on this point, Pollatsek (1989); Perfetti (1990); Stanovich (1990).

Actually, an interactive model of reading appears to be the one where the reader combines both his decoding skills and strategies at a lower-level as well as his use of background and conceptual knowledge at a higher-level. It is agreed that reading cannot be successful if it relies on either alone. This may be illustrated in the diagram that follows :

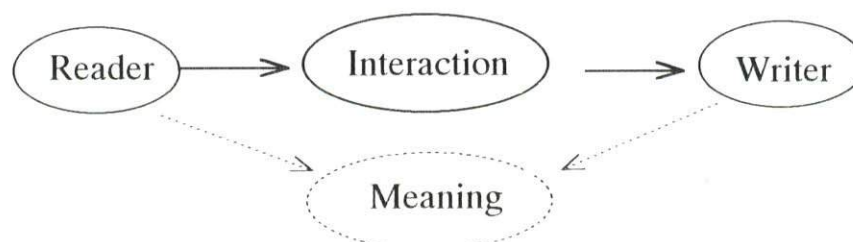


Diagram 2.4. : A Model of reading (the Interactive approach).

To sum up, it is worth saying that all the reading models mentioned earlier are a natural development of the concept and view of the reading process. They are, of course, only suggested models of a process that still remains incompletely discerned. Each model has been, throughout the history of the reading research, a step forward toward a better understanding of what reading is.

The historical overview and practice of reading models and their pedagogic implication seem to explain to a large extent, the learners' view and practice of reading. Indeed, these early approaches to reading still influence teachers' view and teaching of reading at the secondary school level.

It must be noted again that, although it remains only an assumption of what the process entails, the interactive perspective of reading appears to be the most conclusive of all, since it involves the interaction of various sub-skills and strategies at all levels. It is on this holistic perspective that the present work is based.

In the following sections, a more detailed description of the aspects of the reading process will be given in the attempt of defining it from an interactive perspective.

2.3 Aspects of the Reading Process

Defining the reading process is not an easy task since the process involves the interaction of various components and aspects used in different ways, by different readers. An effective reading has been described by researchers of the field as being rapid, guided by a purpose, interactive and flexible. In this regard, reading is a complex skill involving the interaction of various cognitive, metacognitive, linguistic and sociolinguistic elements. In this respect, research is still trying to find more evidence about its complex nature in the attempt to characterize it in a clearer way and make it easier to be acquired by learners. Indeed, the more it is possible to know about reading, the more an adequate methodology can be adapted and appropriate material can be designed. Accordingly, several researchers recognize the complex nature of the reading process :

" Reading is a multifaceted, complex skill made up of a number of psychological, physical and social elements. Just as there are many sides to knowing a language, so there are many aspects to effective mature reading. "

(Dubin, 1982:125).

Therefore, the process is not an individual act disassociated from other factors, but it involves the interaction of the reader's general information, linguistic competence, visual and mental means, as well as socio-cultural references. Viewing reading as an interactive process involves recognizing the reader's active participation too:

" Reading is a long distance discussion between a reader and an author... there is an essential interaction between language and thought in reading... the writer encodes thought as language and the reader decodes language to thought".

(Goodman, 1988 :12).

The decoding aspect of reading, according to Goodman is a meaning decoding. The reader's role is to find answers to questions about possible meaning. In this way, the reader and writer's conceptual worlds meet in a common point which is meaning. The reading act is also defined as: **" ... not a reaction to a text, but an interaction between writer and reader mediated through the text. "** (Widdowson, 1980:174).

Accordingly, the reader has not a passive role consisting in receiving information from a text as it is given to him, but he is taking part in the construction of meaning. Reading is not the product of the writer alone, but is built out of the participation of both the reader and writer. However, it is important to point at the fact that, although research has been prolific in this area, it has not shown how people learn to read. All that has been suggested are descriptions of what successful readers do when they read, Goodman (1968); Hosenfeld (1977-81); Cohen (1982). In the following sections, the main important aspects of the reading process, that research has drawn attention to, are described.

2.3.1 The Psycholinguistic Nature of Reading

Reading has been described by Goodman and Smith as a Psycholinguistic guessing game based on predictions and guesses drawn out of the reader's knowledge of the world and of the language. Indeed, as he reads, a reader is asking himself questions on the text content and on his comprehension. The process is constructive, since it generates hypotheses about meaning. Expectations, predictions, or anticipations are all checked along one's reading.

Goodman's finding (1965-66-67-68-69-76 and 1983) led him to reconceptualize the notion of decoding of print which he understands as translation of written code to meaning code. His work has shown that, in fact, readers tend to centre on meaning rather than words for comprehension. In the same line of thought, Smith (1971) describes reading emphasizing the Psycholinguistic processes associated with it. For Smith, as for Goodman, the act of reading requires the reader to make use of his mental or cognitive abilities and information and combine it to the text linguistic items in order to decode meaning, establishing the relationship between what is being communicated and the real world. For Smith, learners need to develop the ability to recognize language in its written code form, drawing inferences from their own knowledge. This flexibility, once acquired, can facilitate their access to meaning.

Goodman analysed learners' oral performance in reading comprehension, which reflected their internal processes while reading. In that, the errors they made, indicated the psychological processes underlying their act of reading. He concluded, however, that the act is influenced by social, cultural and cognitive factors such as experience, concepts, interests, lifestyles as well as cultural background. Goodman, thus, recognized that the process is a process of predictions, hypotheses testing, confirmation or rejection. As he reads, the reader samples the text looking for clues familiar to him. He predicts the coming information using his guesses and inferences from his own knowledge.

The readers' predictions will make him rely more on his own knowledge of the world than on the graphic display of the text. Therefore, the first aspect of the reading process is based on predictions, hypothesis testing, confirmation or rejection. These predictions are largely based on the reader's knowledge of the code and of the world, " **The better we are at making such predictions, the less dependent we are on the text itself.** " (Eskey, 1983 : 13).

Moreover, in case those predictions are not confirmed, the reader comes back to the previous portions of the text and reads for more comprehension. Thus, there is a constant making and remaking of hypotheses where the process is a backward one since it is a hypothesis testing process or a 'Psycholinguistic guessing game' (Goodman, 1970). This aspect of the process contradicts, in fact, with the early bottom-up view of reading (see diagram 2.1) where reading is said to be a forward process. Diagram 2.5. illustrates the hypothesis check in a backward way :

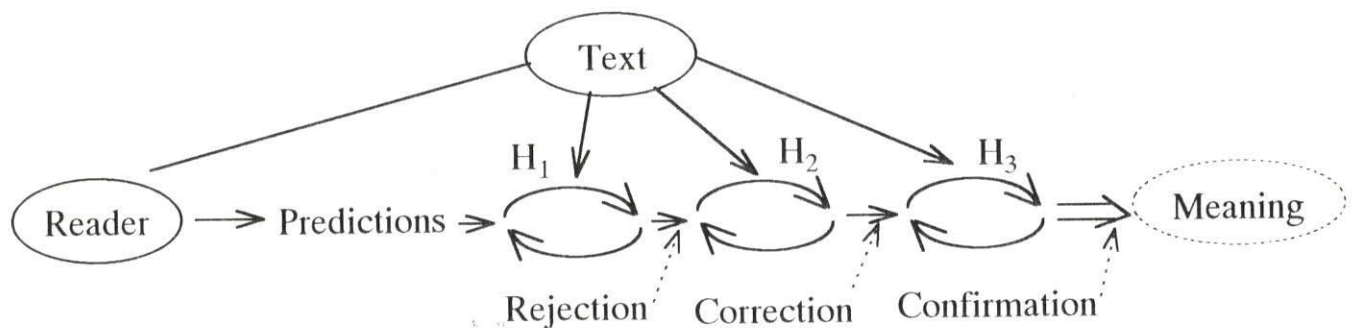


Diagram 2.5. : Hypothesis testing in the reading act.

To conclude, it is worth noting that the first aspect of reading, i.e. predictions and guesses need to be supported by appropriate knowledge, as emphasized by the Psycholinguistic perspective of reading. Knowledge, then, is another important aspect to the reading interaction.

2.3.2 Background Knowledge and Reading

The cognitive abilities that a reader uses to understand a text content, are largely dependent on his knowledge. The extent to which he will make predictions and checks them as he reads, depends mostly on the knowledge available in his brain.

The importance of the reader's activated background knowledge in the reading interaction is drawn from recent interest of cognitive psychologists in the way information or general knowledge is organized and structured in the human brain. This is widely known as the schema. Indeed, schema theory is relevant to the reading research since the ability to understand texts has been proved to largely depend on the amount of information readers can retrieve from their potential of knowledge.

Research in this area, has begun to influence reading research since the end of 1970's. Adlerson (1977-78), Adams and Collins (1979). In this perspective, Bransford et al (1972-73-79-92) provide strong empirical evidence on the importance of background knowledge in the comprehension of messages. This fact, has directed attention to a more reader-centred approach to reading instruction. According to Bransford et al, readers are said to reactivate their background knowledge depending on their ability to do so. Some readers may have the kind of knowledge required for a reading task, but fail in making use of it. Moreover, Bransford et al claim that, the ability to reactivate the appropriate background knowledge depends on the context provided by the text. The same information may be supplied by different contexts. Therefore, readers need to match the information retrieved from their potential knowledge to the context of the text. For this, they need an awareness of those aspects of reading,

"If people lack the knowledge necessary to make appropriate assumptions or inferences, most passages would presumably seem as arbitrary (...) an emphasis on the use of general knowledge to comprehend linguistic messages has important implications for

understanding why some people are better able to understand and remember information than others. "

(Bransford et al, 1992:35).

Seen from this perspective, background knowledge use in reading seems to distinguish between good and poor readers performance in reading comprehension. Indeed, learners' lack of activation of appropriate knowledge is said to be a cause leading to reading difficulties. In the same line of thought, Eskey stresses the importance of knowledge to successful reading:

" Reading is primarily a cognitive process and the key to fluent reading is not really a kind of visual gymnastics, but knowledge. "

(Eskey, 1983 : 129).

In fact, it is this knowledge that helps readers decode written information even if they do not understand every single word in a text. This knowledge is not only a linguistic one (for e.g., the knowledge of combined structures, vocabulary and word formation) but is also the knowledge of the world, concepts and socio-cultural notions. This aspect has been shown to play a major role in reading achievement by several researchers. Grabe (1991) mentions some of them : (Coady ,1979), (Hudson ,1982), (Adams, 1982), (Carrell, 1984), (Melendez and Pritchard, 1985), (Wilson and Anderson, 1986). In this respect, schema theory provides an important axiom for the importance of knowledge in reading. How the theory explains this relationship will be discussed in the following section.

2.3.2.1. Schema Theory and Reading

Among the reasons why readers fail to get appropriate comprehension is the lack of activation of appropriate schemata. Any reader has a schematic stock built out of his L₁, L₂ and L₃ experiences, that he needs to make use of while reading. It is

research into the contribution of memory in learning that opened the field to the development of the notion of schema₄ :

"... Schema Theory suggests that the knowledge we carry around in our head is organized into interrelated patterns. These are constructed from our previous experience of the experiential world and guide us as we make predictions about what we might expect to experience in a given context. "

(Nunan, 1991:68).

The following example may illustrate schema theory. If a learner reads a text about pollution, he will use what he knows about this topic. He is then, going to ask himself what type of pollution is the text dealing with? what kind of information has he on this specific type ? etc. Still according to this theory :

" (...) the process of interpretation is guided by the principle that every input is mapped against some existing schema and that all aspects of that schema must be compatible with the input information."

(Carrell and Eisterhold, 1988:76).

However, it is not always evident that all types of input can be mapped in the reader's brain in the form of schema. Indeed, nothing shows that he is going to opt for such or such information and retrieve it from his background knowledge. (Brown and Yule, 1983, quoted in Nunan, 1991 : 68).

In considering the reader's use of his background knowledge, Carrell and Eisterhold draw a distinction between formal schemata that is text properties or texts' rhetorical organization and structures, and content schemata, or general knowledge about the topic of the text. Nevertheless, it is often reported that if there is a great diversity of information on one given topic, there is no evidence that a reader will select a particular aspect of the information rather than another.

Activating appropriate knowledge requires that a reader possesses also a conceptual stock to understand a writer's message. This is one other important aspect in the reading interaction.

2.3.2.2 Conceptual Abilities

Conceptual abilities are the way a reader conceives certain truths, the notions and abstract ideas that he generalizes from a point. They are the way he conceives things and believes in them.

In this perspective and drawing on Goodman and Smith's Psycholinguistic reading model, Coady (1979) assumes the interaction of both processes bottom-up strategies and conceptual abilities with background knowledge,

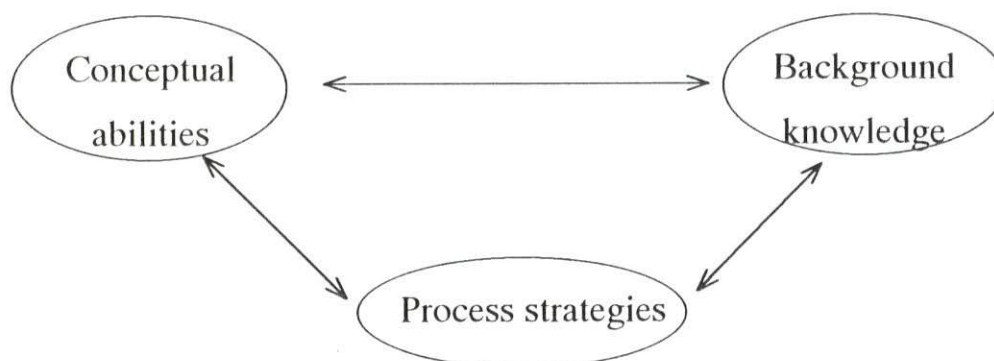


Diagram 2.6.: Coady's reading model (1979).

As it illustrated in diagram 2.6, there is an interplay between the reader's background knowledge, his conceptual abilities, i.e. his mental and intellectual abilities, as well as the necessary sub-skills and strategies required for the reading process, and referred to in this model, as process strategies.

Similarly, Widdowson (1980) sees reading as an interactive process for a discourse realization. For him, reading is:

" Operating at two different levels of mental activity, the first dealing with the immediate apprehension of

information and the second with the discrimination of this information into patterns of conceptual significance. "

(Widdowson, 1980:173)

A reader, then, checks the existence of the concepts conveyed by a writer with his own concepts. This is why a writer is described as an encoder who gives directions for meaning discovery. The reader decodes meaning using his conceptual world, knowledge and experience. The reader needs to have a conceptual potential in order to decode the writer's intended message. This interaction will result in the creation of a particular discourse shared by the reader and the writer's meeting and convergence of conceptual worlds,

" Reader and writer are engaged in an interaction in which language is used as a clue to correspondence of conceptual worlds. "

(Widdowson, 1980:175).

In other words, since both reader and writer possess conceptual notions, a reader constantly checks his concepts through the ideas expressed in the text while reading. In that, reading resembles a dialogue between interlocutors, the result of which is a creation of one common discourse or meaning,

" (...) Reading efficiency is a matter of how effective a discourse the reader can create from the text."

(Widdowson, 1980:174).

The good reader is therefore, not the one who extracts the largest amount of information from the text, but is the one who succeeds in creating a particular discourse joining his own concepts and knowledge to the writer's conveyed concepts and notions. Consequently, a text cannot have a single unitary meaning that any reader can grasp. Rather, each reader may have his own purpose, conceptual notions and knowledge, and his own way of decoding meaning. Nevertheless, this does not mean that a text can have different meanings for different readers, but that the same text can

have different interpretations of the same meaning. In this way, conceptual abilities are an aspect of the reading interaction that has not to be neglected. Of course, if learners (as is the case of our subjects) have not been made aware of this aspect, they are likely to have difficulties with texts' content.

Understanding texts' contents may be hindered also by another aspect of the reading interaction: socio-cultural notions that are part of a reader's knowledge.

2.3.2.3 Socio-cultural Notions

Since language cannot be considered without its socio-cultural context, one cannot consider the act of reading in disassociation from the socio-cultural notions necessary for a reader to understand a text's content. Socio-cultural knowledge is schematically organized in a reader's brain too. He needs to make use of it whenever it is necessary. In this respect, Eskey (1993) sees the act of reading as three-dimensional: an individual act, a Psycholinguistic process and a form of socio-cultural behaviour, in which culture affects reading. Indeed, the socio-cultural dimension plays an important role in the comprehension of culturally loaded texts.

There are occasions where the linguistic competence, reading sub-skills and reading strategies are not sufficient without the appropriate understanding of the socio-cultural features of a text. Since 'Schemata are culturally determined' (Eskey, 1993) schema activation and use depend on a cultural knowledge especially for FL texts. If one takes for example, the case of the learners in the present investigation, who are Arabic-native speakers, they may have difficulties understanding a text about Halloween's day in the United States of America. They do not have in their cultural stock, the notions about this day, which is culturally alien to them, if they are not provided with some clarifications.

If a reader lacks the appropriate Cultural knowledge, he can misinterpret a text and fail to get meaning. For this reason, several research findings have pointed at the

importance of cultural knowledge in ESL and EFL reading. (Anderson, 1979; Johnson, 1981; Carrell, 1981; Hudson, 1982).

In the same line of thought, it is argued that,

" Cross-cultural experimentation demonstrates that reading comprehension is a function of cultural background knowledge. If readers possess the schemata assumed by the writer, they understand what is stated and effortlessly make the inferences intended. "

(Steffensen and Joag-Dev, 1992:60).

Therefore, both readers and writers must share the same socio-cultural notions so that comprehension occurs. For example:

" The study of American texts and American literacy practices can fruitfully be reconceptualized as the study of the product and practices of one particular discourse community."

(Eskey, 1993:31)

Thus, by studying culturally determined texts, a reader is studying about the cultural behaviour of the society or community that produces such literary texts. Therefore, he needs to have some notions about the culture of the writers he reads.

Moreover, another point has to be taken, into account in the consideration of the socio-cultural aspect of reading; what are the social conditions or contexts in which a text has been written ? how are these conditions going to influence a reader's understanding? what role do they play in the writer's intended meaning?

Similarly, one must consider the social context of the reader's interpretation of a particular text. The social contexts in which a text is written and is read, are important elements the learners' attention needs to be directed to, especially in a case such as the one studied here, where English is taught and learned within a foreign socio-cultural context.

2.3.3 Reading and Purpose

One cannot study the reading interaction without considering the reader's purpose in reading. Indeed, the first determinant factor of a reading act is purpose. In that, a reader is always guided by a purpose when approaching a text. This purpose is central to the reading interaction since it determines the choice of the material read, the topic and the amount of information to be extracted. His purpose in reading makes a reader opt for such information and not for another, read only a part or the whole of the text, read rapidly or with precise concentration. Therefore, the reader's purpose makes him select his reading rate and reading style appropriately. Seen from this perspective, reading is defined as:

" ...a series of activities which presuppose different levels of knowledge, different needs and different purposes."

(Eskey, 1983: 129)

Indeed, L₁ readers, for example, cannot be truly compared to L₂ or L₃ ones. Reading differs because of different backgrounds and different needs. Therefore, it presupposes different purposes. Thus, reading is a process of selection mainly guided by a purpose. Moreover, one of the characteristics of mature reading is that a reader reads for other purposes than for language improvement. In that, **" The language is merely the means of achieving a non-linguistic purpose"** (Nuttal, 1982: 19).

On the conceptual level, a reader's most urgent purpose is often to enhance or reinforce his own knowledge about a given topic, idea or concept:

" (the reader's real purpose in reading) is not simply to engage in an interaction but to derive from this interaction something which sustains or extends his conceptual world."

(Widdowson, 1980: 180)

The more one reads the more he is likely to extend his own knowledge about a given area of knowledge. Most of the time, learners are not shown how to discover meaning that completes or suits or reinforces their own conceptual world. According to Widdowson, this is the real purpose of any reading. The reader seeks ways to find a meaning that will answer his reading purpose. This will provide, 'a heuristic means to an epistemological purpose' (Ibid.).

On a more practical level, the reader's actual reasons for reading are first to obtain information from a written text. This information could be cognitive or intellectual, referential or factual, affective or emotional (White, 1981). Indeed, a reader may read for intellectual reasons to increase his knowledge and widen his views and ideas. He may also read referential material as for the instructions for a machine use. He may read for pleasure too, for example literature reading. Thus, different styles are required to extract information. In other words, the purpose of reading determines the way one reads, and indeed, "**It is the ability to switch styles accordingly to purpose which makes for efficient reading**" (Ibid. : 188) Accordingly, this necessarily requires a reader to identify his purpose in reading before he reads, in order to select the appropriate reading sub-skills and strategies,

" We need a framework of a reason for reading so that we can decide how detailed our understanding must be"

(Nuttal, 1982: 03).

One must point out here, that among the reasons why most linguistically competent learners fail to read with full comprehension, is that they lose time reading every single detail. This is so, because they have never been shown that they can select the appropriate reading sub-skills and strategies. Nevertheless, another factor is essential for a good reading and it is the syntactic dimension.

2.3.4 The Syntactic Dimension in Reading

It has been mentioned above that the focus of interest in the reading research shifting to the importance of background knowledge and the reader's cognitive abilities, has caused a revolution in the view of reading. However, this position has tended to de-emphasize the role of the syntactic components in the reading process (Berman, 1992).

Indeed, the perceptual and decoding dimension of reading has been for a long time disregarded. However, in the case of foreign language readers ,who most of the time are 'insecure readers', an ability to 'hold in the bottom ' (Eskey, 1988), appears necessary if the reading process is to be viewed from an interactive perspective,

" In this view, good readers are both good decoders and good interpreters of texts (...) simple language decoding has a major role to play in the process... good reading is a more language-structured affair than the guessing-game metaphor seems to imply."

(Eskey, 1988: 94)

Accordingly, it seems reasonable to assume that to know the language of a text is an integral part of its understanding. Lexical and grammatical form recognition is essential in foreign language reading. Moreover, cohesive devices such as cause and effect connectors like: as, therefore, and especially in the relationship between sentences have been found to cause difficulty to foreign language readers according to Cooper (1992).

In a study undertaken by Guarino and Perkins (1986) empirical evidence has been found to suggest that when a reader is aware of a word's form class, i.e. the word's morphemes or structure units such as suffixes or prefixes, he can more easily have access to reading. Indeed, the more a reader is aware of the syntactic forms, the more he can exploit for instance the redundancy in the representation of words in a text. This helps him make predictions and anticipations of the coming linguistic cues. He

can also understand the meaning of unfamiliar words if he already knows a word's form class.

Therefore, knowledge of form (Eskey, 1988) is essential. Readers must be aware of the lexical, semantic, syntactic and rhetorical features of foreign language texts. In this same line of thought, it is claimed that:

" Syntactic factors (...) warrant attention in both the research and teaching of EFL reading, for the unravelling of parts of sentences and correct perception of their grammatical and rhetorical interrelations are important components of reading fluency in general".

(Berman, 1992: 139).

The syntactic elements identification is, therefore, one essential part of a successful reading and can be translated into useful reading strategies.

The major components of the reading process have been reviewed so far. It is often assumed that they constitute what may be called 'the interactive metaphor'.

2.4 The Interactive Metaphor

The reading process has been described in the previous sections from an interactive perspective. Seen from this holistic view, it involves a text, a purpose and lower-level processes, i.e. the reader's linguistic decoding, as well as his higher-level processes : his background knowledge, conceptual abilities and socio-cultural notions that help him situate the text in its real context. The end-product, after the interaction, would be comprehension or meaning, see diagram 2.7:

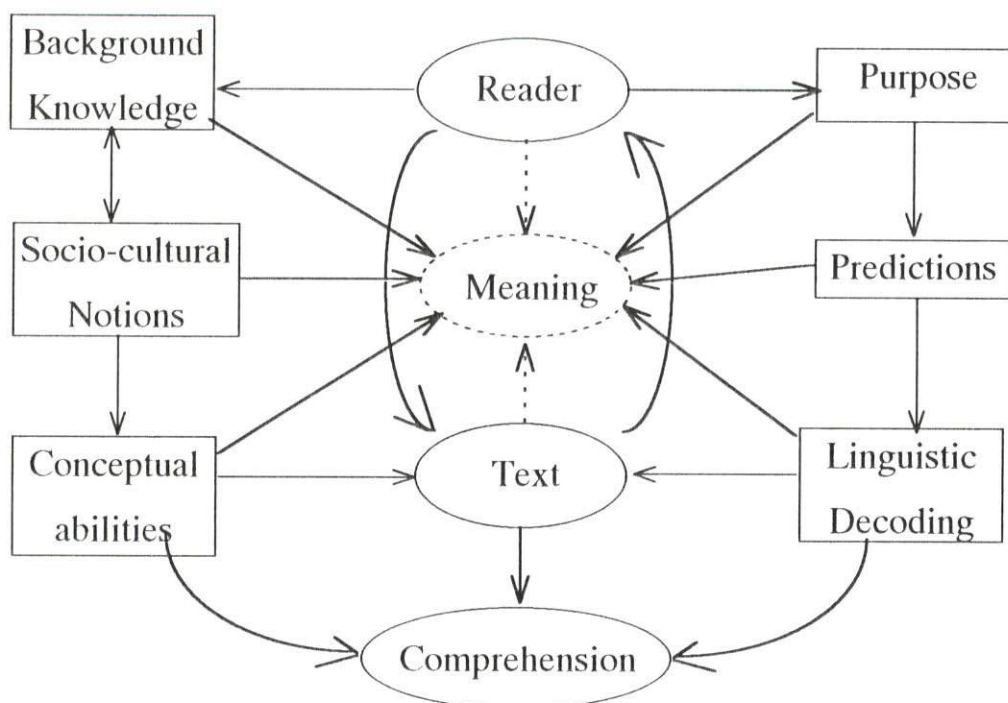


Diagram 2.7. : The Interaction of the reading process components.

As it is illustrated in diagram 2.7. above, the reader is first guided by his purpose when approaching any text. A purpose that will make him anticipate information contained in the text and predict its content. The text -the piece of written discourse- requires from the learner a linguistic decoding. At the same time, the reader will make use of his background knowledge and conceptual abilities. If needs be, he will resort to use his socio-cultural notions in order to situate the text in its context.

As a matter of fact, getting meaning is the result of the simultaneous interaction of those components of the reading process. Thus, it seems to be a process of several negotiations of meaning between the reader and the text. Consequently, the text does not hold its complete meaning. Rather, it is what the reader makes of it that produces meaning and, hence, comprehension.

Seen from this perspective, reading appears to be a Psycholinguistic interaction of linguistic, psychological and socio-cultural knowledge, all matched to the text content.

It is therefore, a multidimensional act that may, however, be hindered by several factors.

2.5 Deficiencies in Reading Comprehension

There are instances where there is a short-coming in the learner's reading process caused by a deficiency at the level of one of its components. In this case, meaning is to be distorted and will lead inevitably to failure. This is referred to as "**the short-circuit hypothesis**", (Clarke, 1988). In that, the reader may be hindered by a difficult or unknown word or idea and fails to get meaning. Many kinds of deficiencies short-circuit a reader's comprehension of foreign language texts. The deficiency may be linguistic as it may be a knowledge deficiency or a skill deficiency. In those cases, the reader may resort to specific strategies such as guessing or using imagery to overcome his reading difficulties. However, he may also be lacking the appropriate strategies. Therefore we think strategy deficiencies may be included here.

Indeed, foreign language learners' reading process may be hindered by language difficulties in case they meet a difficult structure or an unknown word or a set of difficult vocabulary :

" Foreign language readers' comprehension is liable to be impaired by shifts in SVO ordering, for where the typical expectations of the reader, certainly in foreign language are violated, his fluency may be disrupted and hence, comprehension hindered ".

(Berman, 1992: 141).

Similarly, Clarke points at the possibility of reading difficulties caused by complex language, but also unfamiliar context, which makes readers resort to poor reading. An unfamiliar context may be a difficult or unknown concept or idea as the concept of ideology for example. Indeed, as it has been mentioned above, an appropriate knowledge is a prerequisite for reading comprehension:

" A reader's failure to activate an appropriate schema (formal on content) during reading results in various degrees of non-comprehension ".

(Carrell and Eisterhold, 1988: 80)

From this regard, a reader may fail either because he does not opt for the appropriate schema or because he does not have any knowledge of the information contained in the text. Moreover, Carrell suggests that reading difficulties may be caused by two kinds of deficiencies:

" two different but potentially related types of skill deficiencies may cause the knowledge-based processing in ESL reading: linguistic deficiencies and skills deficiencies ".

(Carrell, 1988: 107)

Consequently, when the reader is faced with language difficulties, they may be compensated by his higher-level processes as predictions or guesses and inferences. However, the reader may not be equipped with the required reading sub-skills to overcome his difficulties both at the level of text processing and at the level of knowledge use.

Therefore, reading strategies distinguish, in fact, between poor and good readers. While the latter resort to strategies such as guessing from context, identifying grammatical category of words, etc. poor readers are easily discouraged by any kind of difficulty coming across their reading. Accordingly, we suggest that strategy deficiencies are to be considered in learners' reading difficulties (see diagram 2.8).

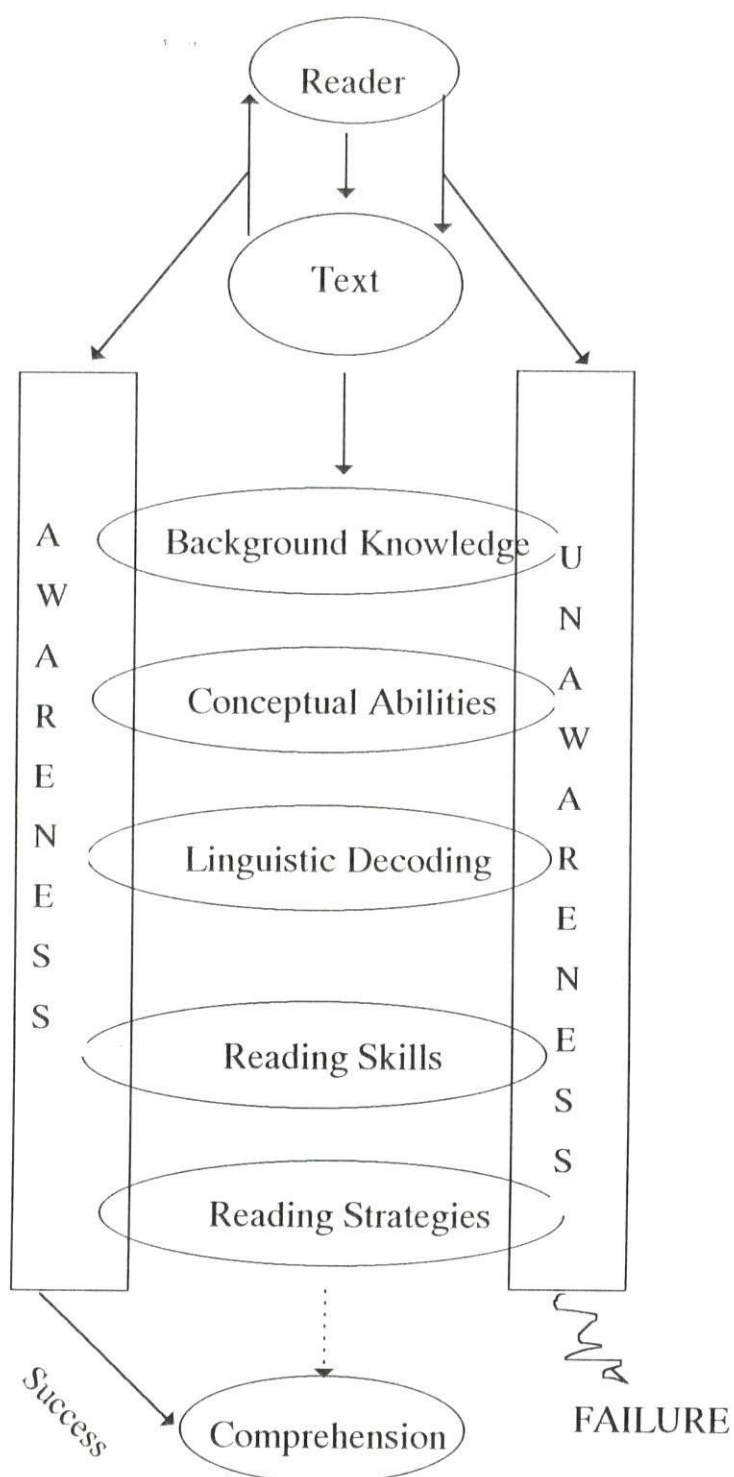


Diagram 2.8 : Deficiencies in reading comprehension.

In this way, reading strategies may help learners use their reading sub-skills appropriately in order to compensate the linguistic deficiencies. Those reading sub-skills whether text-based or knowledge-based are essential for an effective reading.

It is worth noting here, that the reasons why the learners in this case have difficulties to get appropriate meaning, although they are intermediate-advanced learners, might be that they lack appropriate awareness of the interactive nature of reading. They ignore the different aspects central to this interaction between the reader and the text. Moreover, they lack appropriate sub-skills and strategies to overcome their reading difficulties. They seem to over-rely on decoding skills rather than on knowledge-based skills, and are hence, "knowledge-biased" (Carrell, 1988).

Drawing from the above mentioned ideas, one may hypothesize that the learners' deficiencies in reading, here, are at the level of sub-skills and strategies, i.e. more of a metacognitive nature than of a linguistic one. This inevitably leads to the discussion of the importance of metacognitive knowledge and the necessity to raise learners' awareness of it in the area of reading comprehension.

2.6 Metacognitive Knowledge and Reading Comprehension

Having reviewed the essential aspects of the reading process, the next step consists in attempting to make learners aware of them. Indeed, viewing the reading act as an interactive process, implies the teaching of specific reading sub-skills and reading strategies that may be used by learners to enhance their comprehension. In that, a metacognitive knowledge appears to be a necessity for the learners since it would contribute to enlarging their awareness of the aspects of reading. In this sense,

" Early research revealed... that increased awareness enabled learners to break free from long established habits and begin to experiment with a wider range of strategies. This resulted in greater flexibility in their use of reading as a learning skill".

(Augstein and Thomas, 1992: 250)

Today, metacognitive knowledge is more and more considered as essential in recent research findings. It is claimed that learners' cognitive knowledge is an important factor contributing to their successful learning in general and reading in particular. In that, metacognitive knowledge is:

" Generally described as a complex of associated phenomenon related to knowledge about and the regulation of the domain of cognition. Metacognition is considered by some writers as central to learning " .

(Wenden, 1986 : 573)

It is often claimed that the more learners are aware of their metacognition, i.e. metacognitive knowledge, the more they can use efficient strategies and control their learning. Metacognition is the regulation of cognition, i.e. learners use special tricks or techniques to help themselves remember, store, solve a problem or accomplish a task, etc. In other words, metacognitive knowledge is what learners think and know about their own way of learning or performing a task. In sum, it is their own way of regulating, monitoring and evaluating their learning efficiency.

Brown and Baker (1984), quoted in (Wenden, 1986) also define metacognition as the self-regulation of cognition. On the other hand, cognition is **"the mental process involved in knowing, learning and understanding things "(The BBC English Dictionary, 1922: 214).**

Today metacognition is a concept very much used by L₂ researchers who seek to gain more insights into how people learn and how they plan learning so as to remedy less successful learners' difficulties. This is so, since the field of cognitive psychology has in recent years directed the attention to the cognitive processes involved when one learns ,one's learning behaviour, styles, differences, the way one approaches language learning tasks, the way one processes information and remembers it or the way one overcomes difficulties. This has shed an important light on learners' learning processes especially the successful ones. Several studies have compared between good and poor

learners and their results have designated metacognition as an essential variable distinguishing between successful and unsuccessful learners (Wenden, 1986). Indeed, good learners are said to possess a metacognitive awareness that helps them manage their learning. In this sense, it is argued here, that :

" Students without metacognitive knowledge are essentially learners without directions or opportunity to plan their learning, monitor their progress or review their accomplishment".

(O'Mallet and Chamot, 1990: 08)

However, learners are not always aware of this knowledge as it seems to be the case for these learners. Therefore, the need to bring their awareness to it, is essential. From this perspective, one would consider metacognitive knowledge as an integral part of learners' prerequisite knowledge for reading achievement.

Moreover, evidence obtained from research carried out on the cognitive processes involved in the learning act , suggests that less successful learners may benefit from successful ones' strategies and can be instructed in using similar behaviours to better their learning. The study of learners' learning or mental processes is referred to as the area of learning strategies which has since the last decade developed into a new area of investigation for language learning and teaching.

2.6.1 Learning Strategies

How do people manage to learn languages is a necessary issue to investigate so that teachers and curriculum planners would be able to intervene at the level of learners' learning difficulties and draw special instructional programmes on the model of successful learners' learning behaviour. This recent interest in learning strategies is the result of a new trend in second language acquisition and its application, that emphasizes the learner as the most important factor in learning. The field of learning strategies seeks in fact, to answer the following questions:

- how do learners learn?
- what ways are used by successful learners to make their learning easier?
- do all learners possess learning strategies?
- are learners conscious/unconscious of their strategies?
- are learning strategies transferable to several tasks?
- can learning strategies be taught?, etc.

As far as the present work is concerned, the researcher seeks to find evidence for the question of whether raising learners' awareness of their reading process, through a metacognitive instruction in reading strategies can better their reading or not. Before discussing this point any further, it is essential to review first, some researchers' definitions of learning strategies. A number of them sees the latter as an articulated plan for solving problems, without being a problem solving itself, i.e. learners use specific tricks to facilitate their learning (McDonough, 1995). They are seen as a tool used to solve learning problems. They are also defined as steps that learners take to help themselves learn:

" Learning strategies are specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, more enjoyable, more self- directed, more effective and more transferable to new situations ".

(Oxford, 1990 : 08)

Indeed, when using specific strategies, the learner is reflecting on his own learning and is managing to make it more accessible. Moreover, Seliger (1983) defines them as:

" Superordinate, abstract, constant and long-term cognitive processes. These are general cognitive mechanisms employed by all learners regardless of language background, age or acquisitional contexts ".

(Quoted by Dubin and Olshtein, 1988 : 71).

If these definitions were to be discussed, one would notice that the first ones do not specify whether these strategies are similarly used by all learners or whether they are abstract or not. Indeed, recent research findings suggest that not all learners make use of the same strategies and in the same way. Furthermore, not all learners are aware of them. In fact, Seliger' definition of learning strategies seems to neglect the factor of awareness that is important for learners, so that they manage more easily their learning strategies. It is essential to note also, that learning strategies are mental processes not easily observable, but can develop as learning develops. They are the mental behaviours that the learners use to organize their learning and help themselves keep, retrieve and use information or solve language learning difficulties, (O'Mallet and Chamot, 1990). For example, a learner would use specific strategies for learning vocabulary such as imagery use and associating ideas, so that he may be able to remember and store new vocabulary.

It is generally agreed that learning strategies include cognitive, metacognitive and social/affective strategies. Cognitive strategies are strategies used by learners according to the task they are provided with in order to handle the information they need, (Chamot ,1990). Metacognitive strategies, on the other hand, are higher-order executive skills (O'Mallet and Chamot, 1990), in which the learner is involved in planning monitoring and evaluating his own learning. In this type of strategies, learners organize and manage processes by establishing strategies to solve learning problems. Finally social/affective strategies are strategies that learners use to help themselves learn, by interacting with others, like peers or teachers. They are also used to control their own affective state (Chamot, 1990).

On the whole, learning strategies are effective ways of solving language problems and managing, systematizing and evaluating learning. However, not all learners are aware of their importance and need to be guided in making use of them, through what is called strategy training.

2.6.2 Strategy Training

Research carried in the field of learning strategies put forward the profile of the successful language learner who makes use of a set of strategies to enhance his learning. This has brought into the mind the possibility of making less-effective learners benefit from these strategies. This line of thought was largely confirmed by both the work of Stern (1975) and Rubin (1975). This early work suggested already that what competent learners did to process information or facilitate learning, can be made accessible to less effective learners who do not make use of appropriate strategies or are not aware of them. Indeed, one cannot definitely assume that only successful learners do have strategies. However, unsuccessful ones seem to be unaware of them or unable to make use of them systematically and appropriately as it appears to be the case of the learners in this study. In this sense, it is argued that:

" ... learners either have difficulty in identifying what techniques they use to learn other tasks or have few strategic processes for doing so "

(O'Mallet and Chamot, 1990 : 07).

In this regard, Wenden (1986) distinguishes between strategies actually used and strategic knowledge. Learners may use a set of strategies on their own, either effective or less effective, however, their strategic knowledge may be limited. Moreover, it is claimed that, **" even the best learners can improve their strategy use through training "**. (Oxford, 1990:12). It is at that level, that it appears necessary to intervene with strategy training, so that learners' strategic knowledge increases and allows them to be more aware of those strategies, and at the same time to evaluate their importance and utility. This appears to be what learners need in this situation: to be made aware of their cognitive processes, of the nature of their learning tasks and especially the reading one, through their training in the appropriate use of reading sub-skills and strategies. In the same token, it is assumed that:

" Learners need to learn how to learn (...) learners who receive strategy training generally learn better than those who do not ".

(Oxford, 1990:201)

Similarly, Nunan (1991) advocates the integration of what he calls 'Learning how to learn tasks', the benefit being that:

" Learners become aware not only of their own preferred ways of learning but also of the fact that there are choices not only, in what to learn but also in how to learn ".

(Nunan, 1991 : 181).

It is, therefore, a fairly accepted idea that strategy training can promote learning (O'Mallet and Chamot, 1987-90; Cohen, 1990; Oxford, 1990; and Oxford and Nyikos, 1993).

Nevertheless, some researchers like Swan (1990) argue that training learners in comprehension strategies such as predicting or guessing, are unnecessary, taking for granted the fact that learners already possess those strategies. However, it is not so evident especially for foreign language learners. In that, learners may be good predictors or good guessers, but unable to use these skills to understand a reading passage, simply because they are unable to transfer them or determine when it is appropriate to use them. This may be hindered by learners' lack of awareness of how language works in all situations or in all types of discourse. It may also be caused by a lack of self-confidence in their own strategies.

Some other researchers also argue that native readers are not always conscious of their reading strategies and that, consequently, foreign language learners will not benefit from strategy training and awareness raising. Nevertheless, it is a well-established fact that L_1 readers cannot be assimilated to L_3 readers. The degree of

consciousness of the reading process may not influence a native reader as it can for a non-native one since they do not face the same kind of reading difficulties. One must note, however, that whether reading sub-skills and strategies are transferred automatically from L_1 to L_2 or L_3 , or if good L_1 readers are good L_3 readers (Alderson, 1992), is a question not yet put in evidence by research.

When learners lack appropriate awareness of their reading process, a direct instruction in reading sub-skills and strategies, appears to be necessary, since metacognitive awareness is often the gap between success and failure. Learners may have developed an ability for reading well since their early reading experiences, however, it is their lack of awareness of the reading process itself that may hinder this ability in the foreign language reading, and therefore, inhibit transfer.

In this perspective, Young (1989) reviews several researches carried out in the area of reading strategy instruction and calls for 'a systematic approach for foreign language reading instruction', where much emphasis is placed on the teaching of specific reading strategies to foreign language readers. Among these are : Enaggio (1984); Phillips(1984) ; Schultz (1984) ; Melendez and Pritchard (1985); Lee and Ballman (1987), all supported the idea that foreign language reading instruction should be enhanced by developing learners' reading strategies or instructing poor readers in appropriately using them: "**reading may need to be developed, via overt training in reading strategies which focus on comprehension processes**" (Lee and Ballman, 1987 : 196).

In the area of L_2 reading research, a number of researchers already advocate the use of strategies for comprehension as a result of their investigation of the strategies good readers use. From this bulk of research, 'a strategies-oriented information processing approach to reading instruction' ,where strategy training in reading is emphasized, appears to be the most appropriate for a case such as the one investigated in this work. This view is supported by a number of reading researchers who obtained significant results out of experiments involving students' instruction in reading

comprehension strategies. (Phillips, 1984; Schultz, 1984; Swaffar, 1984; Barnett, 1988; and Hosenfeld, 1981-84-92).

It is fairly accepted that all readers make use of different sorts of reading strategies. Some are common to all types of readers and others are idiosyncratic. The problem lies in the wrong or inappropriate use of strategies. In fact, strategies seem to be latent within learners and need to be developed through a metacognitive instruction,

What is intended by reading strategy training is to make learners aware of what is involved in reading as an interactive process. Those strategies would help readers compensate their lack of self-confidence in reading a foreign language. In this regard, Schultz (1984) urges teachers to instruct learners in comprehension strategies such as contextual guessing and tolerance of uncertainty. Similarly, Kern (1989) claims that it is often less successful readers who benefit the most from reading instruction. He advanced his conclusion after conducting reading strategy training with L₂ readers.

He found that,

" this had a strong positive effect on L₂ readers comprehension gain scores (...) the subjects who gained more from strategy instruction are those who had the greatest difficulty in reading L₂".

(Kern, 1989 : 13).

In the same token, Hump-Lyons (1985) reported successful scores of students who were taught a text-strategic approach, compared to students taught in a traditional way. Similarly, McLaughlin, (1987), quoted in (O'Mallet and Chamot, 1990) applied strategies to reading instruction in an ESL context and obtained positive results. Likewise, Anderson and Pearson (1984); Samuels and Kamil (1984); Pearson (1985), obtained significant results " from reading strategy instruction in reading comprehension. Research carried by Garner (1987); Padron and Waxman (1988); Nist and Mealy (1991), (see Grabe, 1991), showed evidence to suggest that the more

efficient learners are, the more they make use of reading strategies. Therefore, there seems to be a correlation between effective reading and the use of reading strategies.

Nevertheless, there are a number of researchers who consider this point differently. In that, McDonough (1995) points at the fact that it is often reported that both good and poor readers make use of the same reading strategies, but the difference between the two lies in the frequency of use of these strategies (OldShavsky, 1976-77). On the other hand, he reports Hosenfeld's (1982) finding about the differences in kinds of strategies poor and good readers use. Similarly, Stavans and Oded (1993) report research claiming that: less-successful learners use the same kind of strategies as the successful ones but, their performance on reading comprehension is low due to other factors.

Therefore, there seems to be a disagreement on the part of researchers on the reading behaviour of good and poor readers. Is the difference lying in the use of strategies, or is the problem for successful readers lying elsewhere? Indeed, more research needs to be undertaken in this area to clarify this point. However, the difference may be in the amount of metacognitive awareness of poor readers of their own strategies, and in their inability to make use of them appropriately.

It must be noted that, the first significant work undertaken in the area of investigating readers' reading strategies and instructing poor ones in using them, was that of Hosenfeld (1977-92). Hosenfeld makes a link between problem-solving in mathematics and reading in English as a foreign language. He resorted to introspective and retrospective methods for unveiling the strategies learners use while reading. She concluded that strategies consist of:

" two categories of operations: what students do when they read in a relative uninterrupted manner (their 'non-stop' reading behaviour) and what they do when they come to unknown words (their 'interrupted' reading behaviour)".

(Hosenfeld, 1992 : 232).

Hosenfeld's work has tried to gain more insights into learners' reading strategies and has identified and categorized some of these problem-solving kinds of strategies. The following ones used by successful and unsuccessful readers, both at the top-down and bottom-up levels, were reported :

	Successful Readers	Poor Readers
R	- keep meaning in mind while reading	- read word-by-word
E	- read in broad phrases rather than word-	- can't keep the meaning of
A	by-word	sentences decoded in mind
D	- skip unnecessary words or details	- Rarely skip unnecessary
I	- guess from context the meaning of	words
N	unknown words	- over-use the dictionary
G	- identify grammatical category of words	- have a poor self-concept as
	- infer meaning from titles, subtitles and	readers
S	illustrations	
T	- self-evaluate their reading	
R	- follow with a proposed solution to a	
A	problem	
T	- use sentence level and passage level	
E	contexts	
G	- re-read	
I	- attend to grammar	
E	- sound out a word	
S	- recognize cognates	

Table 2.1 : Successful and unsuccessful readers' strategies.

The above mentioned strategies have been categorized by Hosenfeld into three kinds of reading strategies :

Type of strategies	Example
- Linguistic	- attending to grammar - recognizing cognates, etc.
- Semantic	- keeping meaning in mind - checking and evaluating guesses - checking hypotheses, etc.
- Paralinguistic	- using graphic information - orthographic cues, etc.

Table 2.2 : Kinds of reading strategies, (Hosenfeld ,1977 - 92).

It is worth noting that, these strategies cannot lead to effective reading. Therefore, Hosenfeld attempted to know whether unsuccessful readers may benefit from the reading behaviour of successful ones, through a strategy instruction. The result was that almost all the strategies were not only learned but also appropriately applied since marked improvement was noticed.

Similarly, Grabe (1991) sees metacognitive knowledge and skills monitoring as among the important factors of effective reading. He summarizes Barnett (1989); Cohen (1990) and Anderson's (1991) lists of reading strategies in what follows:

- recognizing the most important information in a text,
- adjusting one's reading rate according to purpose,
- using context to understand a misunderstood part of a text,
- skimming portions of a text,
- previewing headings, pictures and summaries,
- scanning for specific information using search strategies,
- self-questioning,
- using word-structure knowledge to guess meaning,
- underlining,
- summarizing information read.

Golinkoff (1976) compared poor and good readers' reading comprehension processes and concluded that good readers:

- have rapid and accurate word recognition,
- have automatic decoding skills,
- read in phrase-like units,
- are flexible,
- vary their eye movements,
- use contextual information efficiently,
- pay attention to information relevant to their purpose,
- ignore information that has no utility for the task,
- process the least amount of information compatible with the task.

In the same perspective, Swaffar (1984) describes the following reading strategies used by good readers:

- focusing on the information structure of the text,
- previewing a text,
- weighing information,
- identifying authors' view point,
- identifying textual references as chronology or sequence of events.

According to Barnhardt (1986) proficient L₂ readers:

- make appropriate decisions from the beginning of a passage,
- identify what is important and what is not,
- process text rapidly,
- are aware of understanding or not having understood.

Young (1989 : 760) reviews the above cited authors' findings in the area of reading strategies and supports their claim for a strategies oriented approach to reading instruction. This same view is supported by Palinscar and Brown (1984), Pressley, Johnson, Symons, McGoldnic and Kurita (1989), Carrell, Pharis and Liberto (1989); Pressley and Vye (1990); Nist and Mealy (1991) and Arms and Byrns (1992), (see Grabe, 1991).

From a close examination of all the reading strategies reported above, one would note that some strategies are common to all readers, like the use of context to guess meaning, drawing inferences from existing elements in the text, reading in broad phrases, evaluating reading, focusing on information relevant to the reading purposes, etc. These strategies help learners organize their reading and better overcome difficulties, compensate their lacks and become more aware of the processes entailed in reading. They have, therefore, been selected to constitute a part of a reading strategies inventory.

2.6.3 The Reading Strategies Inventory

Drawing on, first, from the interactive perspective of the reading process and the description of its major components in the above sections. Second, from the different reading strategies reported by second and foreign language reading researchers, then focusing on learners' needs in this case, a reading strategies inventory has been elaborated for the purpose of establishing a guideline for strategy assessment and training to test the research hypotheses.

The five reading sub-skills selected for the study, are: predicting, skimming for main idea, scanning for details, inferring and guessing from context. They have been selected since they are the most common reading sub-skills needed by the learners, and they illustrate some of the reading process characteristics. Indeed, the reading process involving predictions and guessing (Goodman and Smith, 1971) and the use of background knowledge, the sub-skills of predicting, inferring and guessing from context have been selected. Moreover, reading being always guided by a purpose (Widdowson, 1979; Eskey, 1983), there is a need to adjust the reading rate according to this purpose. Therefore, a reader either uses a quick and rapid reading, i.e. skims the text, or uses a slow and detailed one, i.e. he scans for detailed information.

Actually, sub-skills are defined as, "**the ability expertness or proficiency**" (Oxford, 1990:06). They are also referred to as, "**the various modes of language performance**" (Mcdonough, 1995 : 05). Therefore, what is meant by reading sub-skills in this study are the different tasks involved while reading a text and processing information.

The reading strategies mostly mentioned in the above reviewed works, have been grouped according to their relevance, importance and appropriateness. They have been classified under O'Mallet and Chamot (1990) scheme of learning strategies. In that, the strategies are sub-divided into cognitive, metacognitive and social / affective reading strategies . Those strategies are grouped and selected to perform the major

reading sub-skills the learners need to make use of for study purposes and that are part of the reading process components.

Of course, each of the five reading sub-skills has been matched to the appropriate cognitive, metacognitive and social / affective reading strategies for the learner to use. This classification will be used as a guide or an inventory for the strategy training sessions that will be conducted with the learners, (see table 2.3). This is in the objective of assessing whether this metacognitive awareness-raising with reading sub-skills and strategies, may enhance their reading and better it, or not.

R E A D I N G S U B - S K I L L S

Reading strategies	Predicting	Skimming for main idea	Scanning for details	Inferring	Guessing from context
Cognitive reading strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Elaborating expectations 2. Confirming expectations 3. Correcting expectations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Elaborating 2. Summarizing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Elaborating 2. Re sourcing 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Elaborating auditory representation 2. Translation 3. Recognizing cognates 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Elaborating 2. Deduction 3. Imagery use 4. Inferring 5. Transfer 6. Associating cognates
Metacognitive reading strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advance organization 2. Planning ahead 3. Self-management 4. Self-evaluation 5. Self-monitoring 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reading with a purpose 2. Adjusting style to purpose 3. Finding key words 4. Skipping unknown words 5. Ignoring unnecessary details 6. Self-evaluation 7. Self-management 8. Self-monitoring 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Selective attention 2. Re-reading 3. Self-management 4. Self-evaluation 5. Self-monitoring 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using titles, subtitles 2. Using linguistic knowledge 3. Self-management 4. Self-evaluation 5. Self-monitoring 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-management 2. Self-monitoring 3. Self-evaluation
Social/affective reading strategies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-talk 2. Asking peers 3. Asking teacher 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-talk 2. Asking peers 3. Asking teacher 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-talk 2. Asking peers 3. Asking teacher 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-talk 2. Asking peers 3. Asking teacher 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-talk 2. Asking peers 3. Asking teacher

Table 2.3 : The Reading strategies inventory (adapted from O'Malley and Chamot (1990):

Hosenfeld (1992))

It must be noted that the table is only a suggestion for a strategy training inventory and is by no way unalterable. It includes the most common reading strategies mentioned by researchers among them (O'Mallet and Chamot, 1990; Hosenfeld, 1977-79-81-92). These strategies may enhance the reading process as it is illustrated on Diagram 2.9.

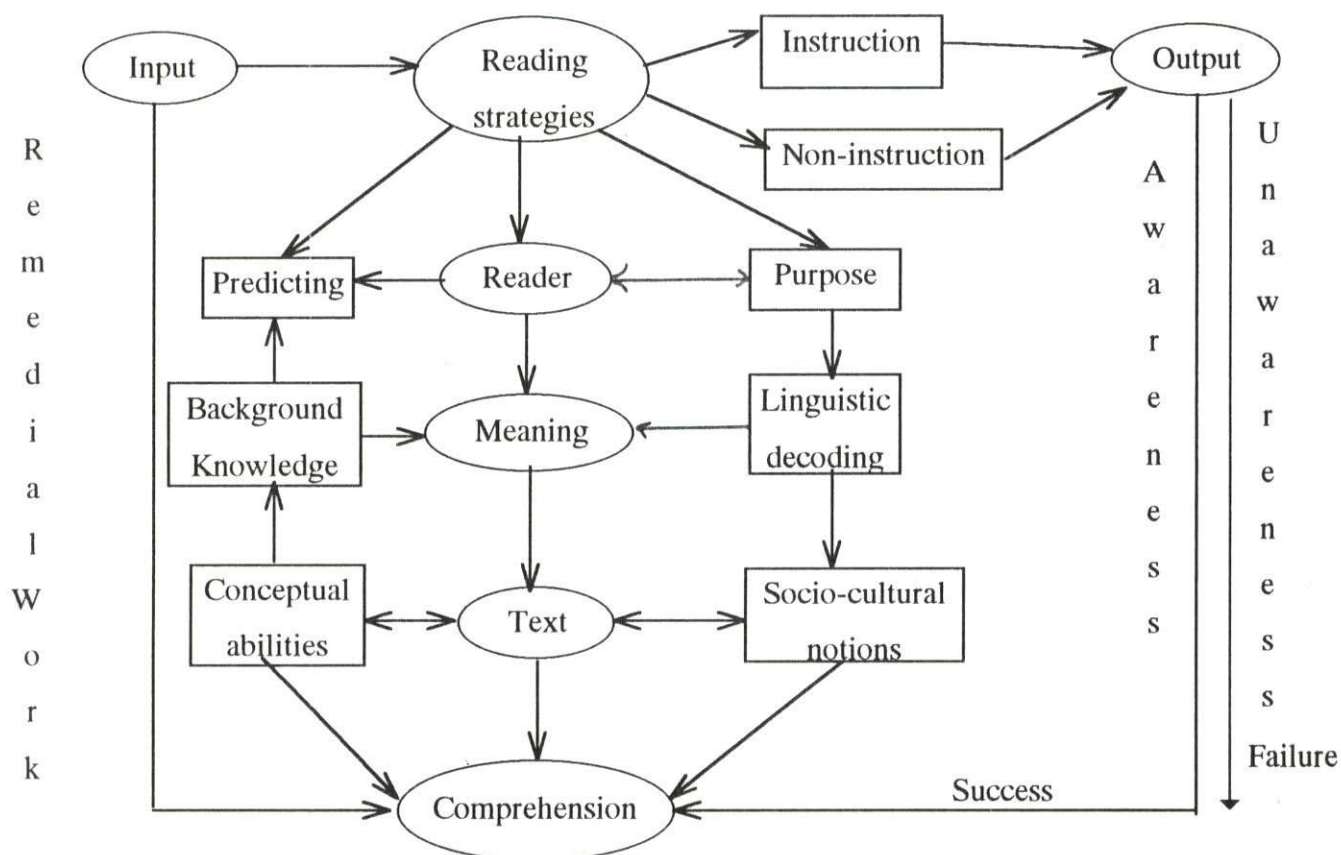


Diagram 2.9. : The Interactive reading process perspective integrating strategy instruction.

As it has already been mentioned in section 2.4. above, and as illustrated by Diagram 2.9, the reading act is a complex process involving the simultaneous interaction of various components as, the reader's reading purpose, predictions, linguistic decoding, socio-cultural notions, background knowledge and conceptual abilities. All these elements simultaneously interact with the Text content. This interaction having as objective: meaning finding.

Accordingly, the way reading strategies may contribute in the interaction is seen as follows: if the teacher's input provides the learners with a direct instruction about reading strategies, the output will be their metacognitive awareness and their success in reading comprehension. However, if the teacher's input does not provide learners with a metacognitive instruction in reading strategies, the output will be an unawareness of the reading process on their part, and consequently, they would fail to understand. Therefore, remedial work has to compensate the failure so that learners can achieve comprehension. This is the hypothesis the present investigation is aiming at testing, in the following chapter.

2.7 Conclusion

This theoretical chapter has tried to cover the vast area of the reading process models and the new approaches that characterize it. Two major approaches were discussed : the bottom-up one that sees reading as a decoding of linguistic items process, and the top-down one that sees it as a process of meaning decoding. Applied on its own, each of the two approaches has its own strengths and weaknesses. However, a third approach, the interactive one, assumes the importance of the interaction of both bottom-up and top-down processes. Nevertheless, it must be noted that, some researchers today, support the claim that bottom-up processes may have priority over top-down ones sometimes. Accordingly, the researcher hypothesizes, in this work, that it might be more advantageous for a learner to make him able to use both processes for reading comprehension. This may be achieved by teaching him specific reading strategies. Therefore, the chapter has also covered some of the studies carried out in the area of reading strategies and strategy instruction. That reading strategies can be taught to poor readers to enhance their comprehension, is an idea supported by several empirical studies reported in this chapter. However, there is a need to establish if it would be possible to obtain similar results with the learners in this study. This question will be answered in the following chapter with the data collection results and analysis.

NOTES

1. The top-down explanation of reading, has been the foundation for further research into L₂ and L₃ reading.
2. See glossary.
3. This is referred to by Carrell and Eisterhold (1983) as a 'silent dialogue'.
4. It is true that schema theory has helped direct the attention to prior knowledge use in reading comprehension, and has emphasized the importance of providing pre-reading activities to facilitate comprehension. However, the theory is still a vague concept for cognitive psychologists, who have not yet established enough evidence about it. Moreover, the shortcoming of this theory is that it does not provide clear evidence about which information is going to be selected by the reader and on which basis.
5. Evenmore, Clarke (1988) claims that reading difficulties of this kind provide insights into even good readers' reading behaviour. He further argues that there might be no 'good' and 'poor' readers, but merely poor and good reading behaviours. Nevertheless, he seems to disregard several research findings about good or successful readers' strategies. (Hosenfeld 77-92); (Cohen, 1990); characterizing the behaviour of such readers who succeed to overcome reading difficulties by resorting to a set of strategies.

CHAPTER THREE

Reading Strategy Training Results

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CHAPTER THREE

Reading Strategy Training Results

3.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, a theoretical framework has been established about the nature of the reading act as a whole complex interactive process, involving the participation of the reader both at the bottom-up and top-down levels, whereas this chapter attempts to collect data on learners difficulties in this area and describe their metacognitive training in reading sub-skills and reading strategies.

The first point to be examined is the description of the three phases of data collection: the pre-training, the training and the post-training phases. The second point is the analysis of the results obtained from each phase, and hence, verification of the research hypotheses.

It must be noted that a triangulation of the research tools is used all along the data collection phases in order to cross check the results and validate them. In that, a questionnaire, two interviews, tests and self-report grids are used in the objective of obtaining empirical evidence about the research problematic.

3.2 Data Collection Procedure

The data collection tools described in chapter one (refer back to section 1.6) have been used for collecting data during three distinct phases:

- (a) Before learners were instructed in reading strategies, i.e. the pre- training phase,
- (b) the reading strategy instruction phase or the training phase,
- (c) After the instruction was completed, i.e. the post-training phase.

3.2.1 The Pre-Training Phase

The aim of this phase ,which can be considered as a diagnostic phase ,was to find out what the subjects' current level of proficiency in language and in reading was, especially in the five reading sub-skills selected for the study. By the same token, it tried to identify their lacks and difficulties in this area.

The first step in the pre-training phase consisted in the questionnaire. It was administered to learners when they entered the course, at the beginning of the academic year, i.e. at the start of the investigation. The subjects were allowed to answer in their L1, L2 or L3, but all opted for English, may be to show their ability to use it₁. The questionnaire included a set of eighteen questions divided into five rubrics as follows :

Rubric one that included questions 1 and 2, was intended for gathering general information about the subjects. It included six open questions aiming at determining their characteristics, i.e. their age range, their first and second languages, their socio-cultural environment, the amount of exposure to English they have had so far, etc. This was in the objective of having an idea about their language learning back ground and the degree of their motivation about learning English.

In rubric two that included questions 7,8 and 9 there were three open questions that aimed at determining learners' view and awareness of their needs, their wants and preferences as far as the reading course is concerned. The researcher has taken those expressed views into account when designing the reading strategy instruction programme. This was in the attempt of having the learners' full attention and motivation during the training.

Rubric three that included questions 10,11 and 12, aimed at establishing the learners' reading background both at school and outside it. This was in order to determine the kind of reading instruction they have had so far, their curricular and

extra-curricular reading activities as early as their first experience with reading₂.

Rubric four that included questions 13 and 14, was used so as to determine the learners' degree of actual transfer of reading sub-skills and strategies from their L1 and L2 to their L3, and their awareness of this possibility too. It also sought to determine their reading styles.

Finally, rubric five that included questions 15,16,17 and 18, sought to have an idea about the learners' reading difficulties type and their awareness of them. It also attempted to identify their reading strategies.

The second step in this phase, consisted in assessing the subjects' actual reading ability and strategies as far as the five reading sub-skills , that constitute the sample of the study, are concerned. This assessment was in the form of a reading proficiency test administered to the learners during the second session. This step is determinant indeed, since:

" One of the soundest reasons to assess students' learning strategies is so you can provide training on how to improve those strategies."

(Oxford, 1990 : 200).

The reading proficiency test consisted of an argumentative₃ type one, and a set of comprehension questions. Learners had to answer them in one hour. In fact, the argumentative type of text is often said to be one source of difficulty for learners. The test selected was of an intermediate level difficulty, designed for 'terminale' students' level, since the subjects have been 'terminale' students few months ago. The topic of the text: Media Technology and Development, is included in the third year secondary school syllabus for English. Thus, the learners were familiar with the topic.

The pre-reading question assessed the reading sub-skill of predicting. It was meant for reactivating learners' background knowledge about the topic. It also checked their ability to use it in order to predict the text content.

Section one of the test included a set of seven comprehension questions. The first three questions aimed at assessing the learners' ability to skim for the general and main ideas with the help of key words. Learners had to skim and make inferences about the writer's identity. They also had to skim for the writer's main argument. Question four assessed learners' ability to scan for details and follow the points of an argument. Question five, in which the reading sub-skill of guessing from context was assessed, aimed at testing learners' ability to use linguistic and grammatical knowledge to guess the information implicitly stated. Question six assessed learners' ability to elaborate by associating the text information or topic to their personal knowledge. Thus, the reading sub-skill of inferring was assessed through questions six and two. The last question of this section, was meant to assess learners' ability to summarize and synthesize the information gained through reading, which are strategies related to the skimming reading sub-skill.

In section two of the test, questions one and two from vocabulary and language practice were meant to assess learners' ability to guess vocabulary meaning from context and to infer by the use of cognates. Thus, the reading sub-skill of inferring and guessing from context were also, tested in both questions. Nevertheless questions three and four aimed at assessing learners' ability to use bottom-up strategies such as the use of reference words, for performing the reading sub-skill of scanning for details. Finally, section three of the test was meant to assess learners' ability to recognize organizational patterns of argumentative texts. It was related to questions three and four in section one.

The last step in this initial phase was an interview (see appendix c) that immediately followed the reading proficiency test. The learners were first given fifteen minutes break, then the interview was conducted individually with them, during five minutes each. While each learner was being interviewed, the others were asked to re-examine their respective answers and the kind of strategies they used to answer the questions of the test⁴. This interview included three parts :

Part A sought to determine learners' general reading behaviour, i.e. the way they approach an English text. This is in the objective of determining their reading styles. Part B sought to elicit from learners the strategies they used in order to perform the test questions to determine learners' reading strategies, their knowledge of the reading sub- skills and their metacognitive awareness of them. It tried to determine whether learners actually made use of the sub-skills and strategies or not. This part also was meant for determining whether the learners are aware that the same strategies or the same given sub-skill could be used to answer two different questions, in the attempt to know if they actually made any transfer of reading strategies and sub-skills to different tasks. The last question of Part B asked learners about the difficulties they found while performing the test in the objective of determining the degree of their awareness of them. This would allow the researcher to assess their metacognitive level too.

Part C of the interview included two rating scales ranked from 0 to 10, meant for measuring the learners' metacognitive awareness, according to their comments. Of course, learners were allowed to comment using either their L1, L2, or L3. They felt free to report any impression, feeling or whatever sprung out of their reflections. This phase preceded the training phase and allowed the researcher to compare results according to learners' reading ability before and after strategy instruction.

3.2.2 The Training Phase

Once learners' reading level was determined, the next step consisted in improving this level through raising learners' metacognitive awareness about their reading sub-skills and strategies and helping them systematize their reading. To reach those objectives, strategy instruction was conducted. This instruction is in this study, the treatment of the group and represents the independent variable aiming at bringing a remedy to learners' reading difficulties. Nevertheless, since this work aims at testing the effectiveness of awareness-raising, through reading strategies training on learners' achievement in reading comprehension, two important issues were met by the researcher :

First, is strategy instruction better when it is separate or when it is integrated? (See O'Malley and Charnot, 1990), i.e. is strategy instruction more effective when it is a separate subject, to which whole sessions are devoted? or is it better when it is part of the course? Defenders of the first opinion claim that if strategies were presented to learners as a separate skill in itself, they would concentrate more, since those strategies may be generalized to all learning tasks (Derry and Murphy, 1986; Jones et al, 1987), quoted in the same source above.

On the other hand, other researchers support the view that strategy instruction needs to be integrated with language instruction, they argue that in this way, learners may learn and experience the immediate application of strategies. Indeed, if strategy instruction is integrated with the language course, strategies are learned in context and are better remembered and acquired (Wenden, 1986, O'Malley and Chamot, 1990, Oxford, 1990). Accordingly, in the current study, the researcher has resorted to an integrated strategy instruction so that the learners learn the strategies in context and better apply them. Moreover, being at this level of their instruction, learners are supposed to possess a metacognitive stock already. What they need is to be aware of it. In order to learn how to manage systematise and integrate it to different reading comprehension tasks.

The second issue that faced the researcher was whether the training has to be direct or embedded (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990)? In fact, the difference between the two is that when strategies are presented directly, the teacher informs the learners about the value and the purpose of this training. On the other hand, when the instruction is embedded, the teacher provides learners with activities that are meant to elicit the use of the strategies instructed to them, without informing them of the importance and usefulness of such teaching practice (Ibid). A direct instruction in reading strategies has been opted for in the present investigation. Indeed, the learners lack appropriate awareness of these strategies, and awareness is often the gap between, success and failure. Learners may have developed a successful ability for reading so far, but still lack appropriate awareness. In that, it is often assumed that consciousness

is an essential part of learning (Mc Laughlin, Rossman and Mc Leod, 1983; Brumfit and Widdowson, 1984; Spolsky, 1984, quoted in O'Mallet and Chamot, 1990). Accordingly, the reading strategies were presented to learners through an integrated and direct instruction, aiming at raising their metacognitive awareness of the reading sub-skills and strategies.

On the whole, the instruction was given to the learners in a sequence adopted from different frameworks for strategy instruction. These frameworks are established by (Jones and al, 1987; O'Mallet and Chamot, 1988; Weinstein and Underwood, 1985 and Hosenfeld, 1981)⁵, (see O'Mallet and Chamot, 1990). They focus either on first language, second language or foreign language learners. The different stages of this instruction were as follows:

The first stage consisted in the above described pre-training phase (see section 3.2.1 above). Learners needs for reading comprehension were identified, their reading difficulties and actual use of the sub-skills and strategies, assessed. The second stage consisted in developing learners' awareness of the reading process components. Their role and importance in the reading act were discussed with learners. The third stage was the presentation phase, in which the strategies were presented and named.

The researcher, (who was conducting the training too) explained how each strategy is used and when to use it, in relation to the five reading skills. In addition, the learners were asked to remember whether they already know those strategies or use them while reading in their L1 or L2. Exemplification of the use of the strategies was done with the reading proficiency test text, and questions. Thus, the reading strategies were presented each with its definition (see appendix I). The reading strategies that constitute the strategy inventory used for strategy instruction were a sum of cognitive, metacognitive and social / affective strategies adapted from O'Mallet and Chamot (1990) and Hosenfeld (79-92). In all, the reading strategies were presented, named, defined and explained to learners and the difficult terminology simplified. Moreover, they were also illustrated through the reading proficiency test questions.

Finally, the last stage of strategy instruction consisted in relating each reading sub-skill to the cognitive, metacognitive and social / affective reading strategies, that can be used to perform it. In this way, learners were shown which strategy (ies) to use for which sub- skills, when and how (see chapter four, section 4.2.1).

It must be noted that there are reading strategies that are specific to a reading skill, whereas others are equally used for all the sub-skills. For example, the cognitive strategy of elaborating has to be used each time one reads. Metacognitive strategies such as self-evaluation, self-monitoring and self-management are used for any reading too. Nevertheless, the scheme of reading sub-skills and strategies is by no means conclusive. Consequently, this important phase led to the next step in the data collection and that is testing learners understanding and application of the strategies after strategy instruction.

3.2.3 The Post-Training Phase

This phase consisted, first of achievement or diagnostic tests. They were administered to the subjects in order to test their progress in reading and performing the five reading sub-skills after strategy instruction. Each reading sub-skill was tested with three different reading passages (Appendix E). In other words, the learners had to read and perform different tasks related to the reading sub-skills. Sometimes, the same reading passage was used to test the learners' performance on two different sub-skills.

The learners first read the passages and accomplished the tasks alternatively. Then, their answers were each time collected. Finally, collective correction followed each task. Moreover, instruction was reinforced and the strategies were illustrated and explained again. These reading tasks are the post-training tests that aim at measuring learners' progress in reading as far as the use of the reading sub-skills is concerned, i.e. on a macro-level. On the micro-level, i.e. on the metacognitive level, the researcher

attempted to assess learners' actual use of the strategies as they performed reading tasks. This was achieved through the self-report grids.

The grids are the second step in the post-training phase data collection. The learners were initially provided with two reading passages and then asked to read and answer comprehension questions related to the five reading sub-skills. They had also to think simultaneously of the strategies they were using and put a cross near the strategy used among the ones listed in the grid. This can be considered as a simultaneous introspection where learners read and report the strategies they used in order to answer the comprehension questions. Of course, this method would appear too demanding from the learners' view point, since they accomplished several tasks at the same time. However, they have been accustomed, during the training, to think while reading. Therefore, the method posed no problem.

It is essential to note that, attention was focused not on learners' performance in the questions but on their appropriate report of the strategies used. This was done with a view to elicit from learners their actual application of the reading strategies, to perform each reading sub-skill. Nevertheless, since strategy application is difficult to observe, the grids have been an attempt to unveil the subjects' actual use of them. They were also used to assess whether their progress in reading comprehension was due to their application of the strategies or not.

The grid (see appendix H) includes cognitive, metacognitive and social / affective reading strategies. They have been listed in a random way, and more simply formulated. In addition, some of the reading strategies, learners used before strategy instruction, and that may be considered as less affective strategies, have been inserted in the grid too. The objective behind this procedure is to assess learners' awareness of their appropriate use when performing each reading sub-skill. If the strategies had been named and organized it would have been very easy for learners' to report them. In this case, assessing their actual use would have been more difficult. Consequently, the learners had to select the appropriate strategy because they were aware of its use.

Moreover, the less effective strategies such as over relying on the dictionary, reading word-by-word and translating, were inserted in the grid, so that it would be possible to determine whether the learners were still sticking to their old strategies or not.

Finally, the last step in the post-training data collection was the semi-structured interview conducted individually with learners. It aimed at confirming both the diagnostic tests scores and the reading strategies grids results,(see appendix D).The interview included a set of eight questions.

Question one sought to determine learners' reaction and response to the strategy training, i.e. whether they enjoyed it and found it relevant to their learning needs, or whether it was a boring and difficult instruction for them.

With question two, the researcher attempted to unveil learners' self-evaluation of their progress in reading after strategy instruction. It aimed at confirming the post-training tests results.

Question three of the interview sought to determine whether learners still had difficulties with the reading sub-skills in spite of the strategy training. Its ultimate objective was to evaluate the extent to which the training had been successful.

The following question aimed at determining the degree of learners' metacognitive awareness after awareness-raising. It also aimed at finding the extent to which they realized the contribution of the reading strategies to their reading and comprehension.

Question five aimed at determining whether learners actually perceived progress between their reading before strategy training and after it.

Question six sought to assess learners' degree of transfer of the sub-skills and strategies from their L3 to their L1 and L2.

In relation to question seven, the researcher tried to know whether the strategy training programme included some unnecessary parts that might have been dropped. Finally, question eight sought to know what learners still wanted to learn and still needed to understand. This is because, in fact, needs analysis has to be longitudinal (Zaki, 1993), i.e. Learners' needs must be analysed at the beginning of the instruction, in the middle of it since new needs may appear for learners, and at the end, to assess

progress and fix new objectives.

In all, and to sum up the data collection phases, it is worth recapitulating the different stages that were used. Diagram 3.1 below illustrates them :

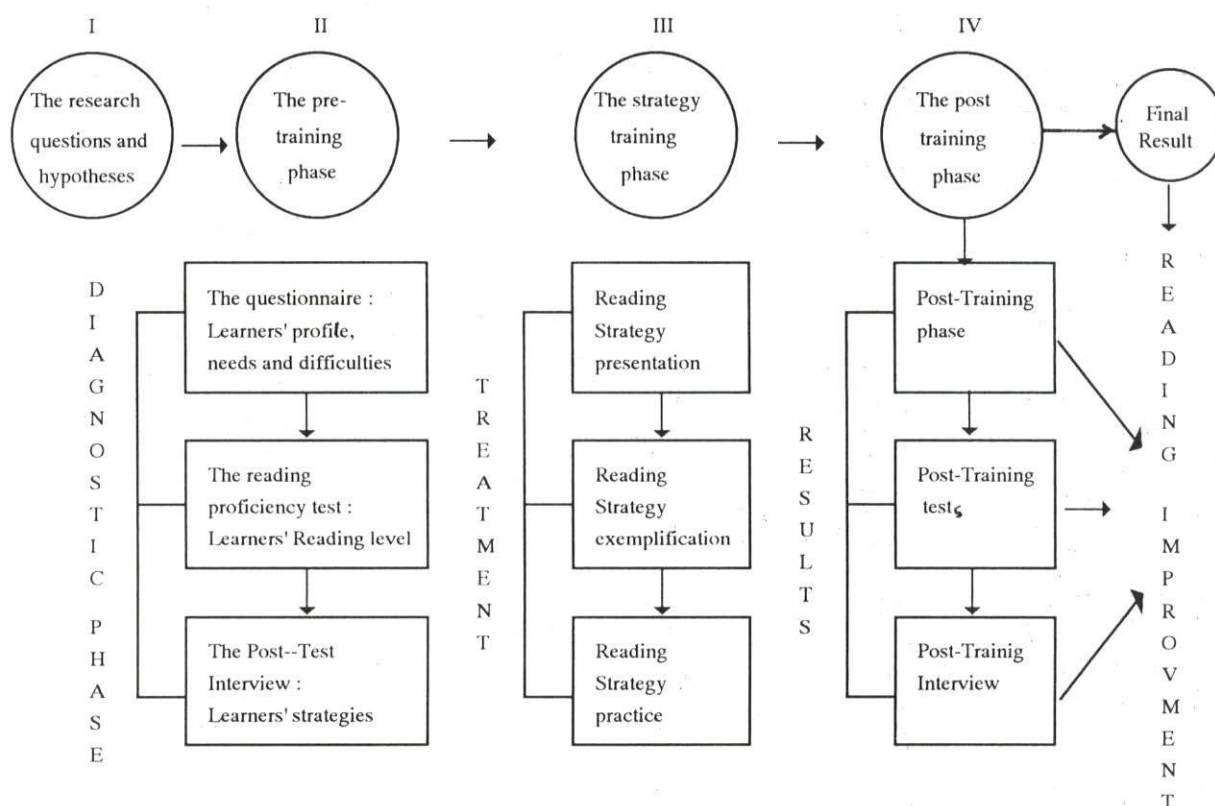


Diagram 3.1 : The different steps of the data collection.

3.3 Results and Discussion

In this section, the results of each step undertaken will be given and discussed. The question motivating the current study is whether learners' metacognitive awareness of reading sub-skills and reading strategies correlate positively or not with their progress in reading. Using the instruments and the procedure described earlier, data collection centred on the following points:

- (1) Learners' reading difficulties
- (2) Learners' awareness of reading sub-skills and strategies:
 - a-Before strategy instruction,

b-After strategy instruction.

(3) Learners' progress in reading after strategy instruction.

Those points will be analysed all along the analysis of the pre-training phase results.

3.3.1 The Pre-Training Phase Results

This phase includes the three diagnostic steps: the questionnaire , the reading proficiency test and the post-test interview, each step leading to the other.

3.3.1.1 The Questionnaire Results

The analysis of the questionnaire results yielded important information about the subjects involved in the study. Sections one and two answers helped draw the learners' profile, determine their level in English, their needs and expectations. (Analyses of the two sections are given in chapter one section 1.5.1 and 1.5.2). The learners' expressed needs, wants and views of reading difficulties, have directed the attention towards the degree of their current level in reading comprehension. They have also pointed out at the fact that they display a certain awareness that is often said to be a positive factor facilitating learning. In this same context, learner awareness is defined as:

"What the learner perceive learning a language to be like and what they compare it with. How they view the process of teaching and what they can tell us about being on the receiving ends of tests".

(Mc donough, 1995:14).

This awareness is important in the sense that it may make progress accessible to learners. Indeed, the more learners are aware of their needs , problems and learning processes, the more, they will make use of appropriate learning strategies and hence, make progress.

As a matter of fact, through answers seven and eight, learners expressed their need and want for more vocabulary and grammar learning. They also asked for what they call 'a method for reading well'. Therefore, they see their reading difficulties as mainly caused by a lack of vocabulary and grammar that stand as barriers to their comprehension. Their conception of meaning lying in the knowledge of the formal aspect of language is put forward by their answers. At the same time, they show an awareness of the need for a methodology in reading. A methodology that, in fact, might be understood as appropriate reading sub-skills and strategies for finding meaning.

For question ten of the questionnaire, the great majority of the learners reported that they used to enjoy the reading comprehension course at the secondary school. Their answers shed light on the type of experience learners have previously had with reading. The learners said that the course was an opportunity for them to share and discuss ideas on different topics with their teachers. Therefore, one would be inclined to believe that if the learners do have reading difficulties, it is not because they have been demotivated by the reading course at the secondary school.

For question eleven, in which learners were asked to mention, in a list of reading sub-skills the ones they have been taught before, the answers are as follows:

Reading sub-skills	Number of learners /20
Predicting	04
Skimming	17
Scanning	02
Inferring	03
Guessing from context	02

Table 3.1 : Reading sub-skills taught in the secondary school according to learners.

It may be reasonable to think then, that learners were not taught those reading sub-skills at the secondary school. As far as the reading sub-skill of skimming is concerned, the learners might confuse between being asked to find a general or main idea and being actually taught how to find it. The same can be inferred about the other sub-skills. Accordingly, one may conclude that the subjects' previous instruction in reading has failed so far in equipping them with the adequate means for reading in a systematic and appropriate way.

As a matter of fact, and still in the attempt to unveil the subjects' previous experience with reading, the analysis of question twelve showed that seventeen of them used to read a lot when younger at home. But, only half of them used to read in the library. The remaining others neither read at home, nor in the library. These results suggest two points: first, that the majority of the subjects do have an early extra-curricular experience with reading, i.e. they used to read outside school. This experience may be a good factor of reading proficiency at later stages (Siegel, 1990).

Accordingly, if the learners have a poor reading in English, it may be attributed to their lack of transfer of reading sub-skills and strategies, either from L1 to English, or from L2 to English. It may even be wondered whether they possess such reading sub-skills and strategies in their L1 and L2.

The second point that can be made, is that learners who did have no reading outside school, when children, neither had the necessary reading proficiency in their L1 and L2, nor could they make the transfer too. This last assumption is, in fact, reinforced by the results of question thirteen for which the greatest majority of learners reported that they did not read English using the same techniques as for their L1 and L2. Indeed, because English is a foreign language, students tend to see every word as a barrier to their comprehension. Consequently, and as already mentioned in chapter one, learners in their majority make no transfer of reading sub-skills and strategies developed in L1 and L2. A fact that can be one possible cause of their poor reading level.

Analysis of the subjects' answers to question fourteen, made it possible to determine some of their reading styles. The majority reported that the best way, for them, to understand a text, was knowing the grammar and understanding all words. Very few mentioned knowing how to find important information (skimming and scanning) and knowing the topic of the text (elaborating). When asked to mention other ways, they wrote knowing vocabulary and knowing the author of the text.

In the light of the answers obtained from the questionnaire, one might be tempted to conclude at that level, that learners approach a reading text more from a bottom-up decoding perspective, i.e. focusing on vocabulary and grammar, than from a top-down one, i.e. focusing on their previous knowledge on the same topic. This view of reading influences their reading performance. Indeed, it has often been found that the way learners conceive and internalize the reading process, influences their reading behaviour, (Olge, 1974, Delawater, 1975, Dank, 1975). In this case, learners conceive reading and comprehension as a decoding of language items and as a matter of vocabulary and grammar understanding. Therefore, the only strategy they use is word-by-word reading.

Consistent with the above mentioned conclusions are the answers obtained about learners' difficulties. Indeed, the majority reported having difficulties with unclear meaning (inability to make inferences and guesses), difficult vocabulary (no deduction and no skipping strategies) and with complex sentences (inability to recognize the relationship between sentences). Thus, learners were aware of their difficulties at the linguistic level only. But, at the same time, they were conscious that they needed to learn how to make their reading more systematic.

Moreover, nine of the learners attributed their reading difficulties to a bad learning at school, i.e. they have not been taught adequate reading sub-skills. Eight of them explained the difficulties by a lack of interest in reading and a lack of concentration. Finally, thirteen of the learners said that it was because of a lack of reading outside school and difficulties with the language too. In sum, these answers suggest that they

showed an awareness of their difficulties.

The researcher still sought to identify the subjects' reading styles and strategies through the last two questions of the questionnaire. As a result, they reported the following strategies they made use of, when coming across difficult vocabulary:

- (a) The cognitive strategies of resourcing and reading,
- (b) The social strategies of asking their teacher or their friends.

Five of them, however, gave no answer, may be because they could not verbalize their strategies, or did not have any.

Finally, the subjects also mentioned the following solutions to use in order to help a poor reader, as an answer to question eighteen that indirectly sought to unveil their reading strategies:

- Using a dictionary,
- Reading aloud,
- Reading extensively,
- Teaching him all vocabulary,
- Making him listen to news on radio and T.V,
- Asking him to communicate in English,
- Making him listen to English songs,
- Translating into L1,
- Explaining word-by-word,
- Pronouncing well.

These suggested solutions display learners' simplistic view of what reading entails. Learners, therefore, are either equipped with a limited range and number of strategies, or their reading strategies are latent in their cognition and need to be developed.

It is to be noted, however, that the solutions they mentioned, are in their majority, unproductive of meaning. On the other hand, the learners who gave no answer to this question, have a priori no strategies to use in front of complex vocabulary and are easily discouraged when reading. This fact inevitably leads to their ineffective reading.

Nevertheless, a minority showed a slightly better awareness of their reading since they suggested to give a poor reader a method for reading or 'showing his own method for reading'. The phrase 'a method for reading' has often been repeated in the questionnaire responses. It suggests that some of the learners know what they need.

This point joins in fact, the one made in chapter one, section 1.5.2. Indeed, it may appear paradoxical, but the learners display an awareness of both their needs and difficulties, but not of their reading strategies. This suggests that they reflect on their difficulties and that they have a metacognitive predisposition that is essential to learning.

Based on the obtained results, the following conclusions may be drawn from the first step in the pre-training phase data collection:

- (1) Learners display a certain linguistic competence,
- (2) They show a high motivation and interest for reading English,
- (3) They view their difficulties as being caused by a lack of grammar and vocabulary,
- (4) They view their needs as being what they call: 'a method for reading well'
- (5) They make little transfer of reading sub-skills and strategies from their L1 and L2 to their L3,
- (6) They have a word-by-word approach to reading,
- (7) They are confused when using reading sub-skills.

The questionnaire has thus given an idea about some of learners' reading difficulties and actual strategies. Given those results, it is logical to wonder whether their reading problems were caused by linguistic difficulties, i.e. they were of a linguistic nature, or were caused by a lack of appropriate knowledge of the reading sub-skills and strategies. The researcher hypothesized that the learners' reading difficulties are situated more at the metacognitive level, than at the linguistic one. This hypothesis needed, of course to be substantiated by empirical evidence from the next step in the data collection : the reading proficiency test.

3.3.1.2 The Reading Proficiency Test Results

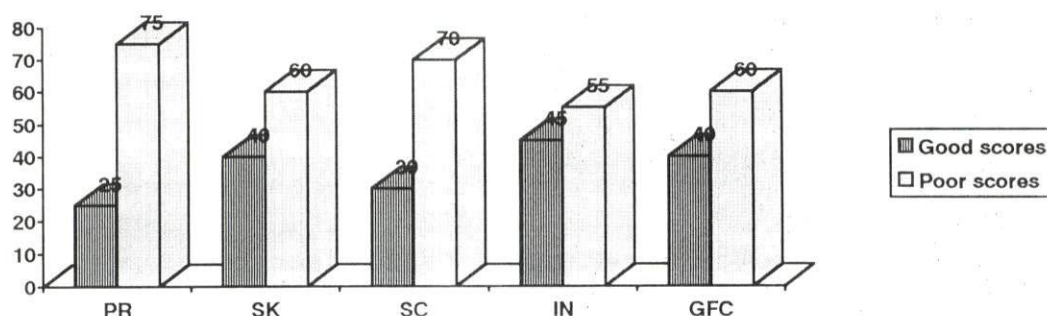
The reading proficiency test responses were analysed to assess the learners' reading level, their linguistic ability, and their ability to use the five reading sub-skills that constitute the sample of the study, (See appendix B). It is worth mentioning the procedure used for scoring learners' performance on the test questions. The learners obtained a good score depending on :

- (1) The extent to which they understood the tasks related to each reading sub-skill,
- (2) The extent to which they performed successfully in the reading sub-skills and provided a good answer.

The number of subjects who answered correctly for each reading sub-skill, in all the test items, was counted. Then, it was possible to determine, among the twenty subjects tested, the number of those who performed successfully, and the number of those who performed poorly on the sub-skills and failed in finding the required information. The number obtained for each sub-skill was then added, and translated into percentages. The results obtained were consistent with the initial predictions, as they are illustrated in table 3.2, and bar-graph 3.1 :

Reading sub-skills Learners' Performance	Predicting (PR)		Skimming (SK)		Scanning (SC)		Inferring (IN)		Guessing from (GC) context	
	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF
Good Scores	05	25%	08	40%	06	30%	09	45%	08	40%
Poor Scores	15	75%	12	60%	14	70%	11	55%	12	60%

Table 3.2 : Learners' reading performance before strategy instruction.



Bar-Graph 3.1 : Percentages of learners' reading performance before strategy instruction.

As is illustrated in table 3.2 and bar-graph 3.1, most of the twenty subjects were not successful in using the five reading sub-skills. Accordingly, a separate analysis was conducted for each reading sub-skill result. Thus, for predicting tested through the pre-reading question, only five of the subjects, i.e. 25%, could make appropriate and approximate predictions about the content of the text before reading it.

For skimming, assessed through questions one, two, three and seven of section one (see appendix B) only eight of the subjects, i.e. 40% of them could find the main idea. Some of the subjects used successfully the sub-skill in some questions, but failed in others. Thus, for question one and question seven that are related, the students could not make the relationship. They could sometimes extract the main idea, but proposed too general or too detailed titles. This suggests that the learners are not aware of which sub-skill to perform for which reading task. Consequently, one can state that the answers in which, their metacognitive awareness is limited, have been randomly given.

As far as scanning for details is concerned, it was noticed that the subjects could not find easily details. In fact, only six of them, i.e. 30%, could find detailed information. When the required information is formulated differently in the text, learners lack appropriate tools for systematically finding it.

For inferring, it was noticed that the subjects had difficulties for reactivating their back ground knowledge and relating it to the text . This is suggested by their answers to questions two and six of section one, where nine of them, i.e. 45%, could make appropriate inferencing for question two, but failed in their majority for question six.

Finally, for guessing from context, the subjects could guess the meaning of some vocabulary but generally failed for the rest. Thus, eight of them, i.e. 40%, could make appropriate guesses.

Accordingly, if the reading proficiency test results are to be interpreted, one would find that the learners had more difficulty with the two sub-skills of predicting and scanning. Considering the lowest percentages for both, it is possible to see that learners found it difficult to predict before reading the text. This might be because they thought that meaning is always recoverable from the text content. Moreover, because of an apparent confusion between scanning and skimming, learners sometimes found it difficult to locate details. Sometimes they were unable to distinguish between the general and the specific.

The next two poorly performed sub-skills were skimming and guessing from context. In fact, students are unable to extract the main idea because they not only have difficulties to summarize and synthesize the information read, but also to keep meaning in mind as they read. Therefore, they proposed either too general or too detailed ideas, as the general idea of a passage. This also shows their limited understanding of the text. On the other hand, learners did not use context to guess meaning since their word-by-word reading impeded them from believing that context can provide meaning better than words. That is why they, most of the time, translated words in their mind but did not guess from context.

Nevertheless, for inferring, results are not so poor as for the other sub-skills. Nearly half of the students, i.e. 45%, of them could use this sub-skill successfully in spite of their weakness in guessing. This may be explained by the fact that the learners

sometimes guess and infer using their idiosyncratic knowledge, but do not think that the text content may provide possibilities for guessing.

On the whole, one can state that the subjects performed poorly on the five reading sub-skills. A result that supports the earlier claim, in that, learners have reading difficulties that might be caused by a lack of appropriate reading skill awareness. Moreover, considering this performance, one may suppose that those poor results are due to their poor linguistic competence. However, as it was mentioned earlier in this chapter, all the subjects have been accepted for the English studies on the basis of their good marks for English in the 'baccalaureat' exam. In addition, the majority of them have a literature background and are supposed to have had enough language practice so far. Needless to say that the subjects also displayed a certain linguistic ability through their answers for the questionnaire items. Therefore, the linguistic competence variable is not to be considered as a direct cause to the subjects' poor reading performance on the test items. For this reason, the researcher may suggest that learners have a certain linguistic competence which does not necessary lead to a reading competence (Alderson, 1992).

This point led the researcher to hypothesize that learners' poor reading performance is due to their low metacognitive awareness of the reading sub-skill and strategies. Nevertheless, the reading proficiency test results, needed to be cross-checked by a post-test or a pre-training interview:

3.3.1.3 The Post-Test Interview Results

Through the learners' responses to the first interview (see appendix C) the results of the reading proficiency test and the questionnaire were confirmed. Indeed, learners' answers to part A of the interview, yielded the following results about their general reading behaviour :

Learners' General Reading Behaviour	Category	AF	RF
-Rarely translates; guesses contextually	++++	00/20	0%
-Translates; guesses contextually	+++	02/20	10%
-Translates; guesses non-contextually	++	05/20	25%
-Translates rarely guesses	+	13/20	65%

Table 3.3 : Learners' general reading behaviour, adapted from Hosenfeld et al (1981).

As it is shown on table 3.3, none of the twenty subjects can be included in the first category, i.e. a reader that rarely translates and that guesses contextually. This type of reader is a successful one according to Hosenfeld et al (1981). Only two of the subjects, i.e. 10% of them can be included in the second category of readers who translate and guess contextually, that is a category of learners that are slightly better readers. Five of them, i.e. 25%, translated and guessed non-contextually. Thus, they can be considered as poor readers according to Hosenfeld et al (1981). Finally, thirteen out of twenty, i.e. 65 % of the subjects have a reading behaviour that can be considered as very poor since they reported that they translated very often but rarely guessed as they read.

It may be concluded, therefore, that the majority of the subjects used the cognitive strategy of translating the L3 to their L1 or L2, and that they rarely used context to guess as they read. This point joins the reading proficiency test results about learners' poor reading performance on the sub-skills. On the other hand, learners' answers to questions two and three of part B of the interview, showed that very few students

mentioned appropriate reading strategies for performing the five sub-skills in the reading proficiency test. These few learners showed a slight awareness of the reading sub-skills but did not know how and when to use them. They were indeed, the ones that performed successfully in the test, as they reported knowing the sub-skills, but were still confused when using them.

Learners mentioned using the following strategies for answering the pre-reading question: using titles, pictures, their own knowledge of the writer and repeated words. On the opposite, the poor scorers reported using details, word-by-word reading, and explaining difficult words. Thus, their unproductive reading springs from their over-reliance on details and word-by-word explanation for making predictions .

As far as skimming is concerned, the good learners' mentioned using key words, repeated vocabulary and reading the first sentence of each paragraph. Nevertheless, the poor scorers, reported using word- by- word reading, translating into L1 and L2 to find the general idea. They also mentioned that they sometimes confuse between extracting the main idea and finding specific information.

30% of the learners who answered correctly for the scanning questions, reported going from the general to the specific, re-reading and using context. The others who poorly performed reported using the dictionary, re-reading, word- by-word reading, using cognates and main ideas.

Concerning inferring and guessing from context questions, the good scores learners reported using context, using cognates, and using grammar to guess or infer. Whereas the poor scorers reported again using word-by-word reading and translating into L1 or L2.

For question four of part B, the learners mentioned that they used the same techniques for reading and answering the questions of section one. They said that they did not make the relationship between questions one and seven, between questions

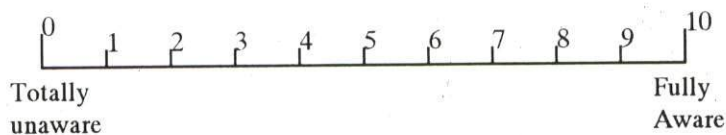
three and four and section III questions. This confirms the assumption made before, in that, learners are not aware of the appropriate use of the reading sub-skills. As a matter of fact, they said that they did not know that they may use their own knowledge and elaborate for reading. It has also been noticed that even good scorers randomly used the reading sub-skills.

The subjects also reported using the following strategies for answering section two questions : finding opposites, using a dictionary and using context. They said that usually, they had difficulties to read when they found difficult and unfamiliar vocabulary that discouraged them to carry on reading until they get meaning. Therefore, the researcher can state that they are not equipped with such strategies as: skipping and deduction.

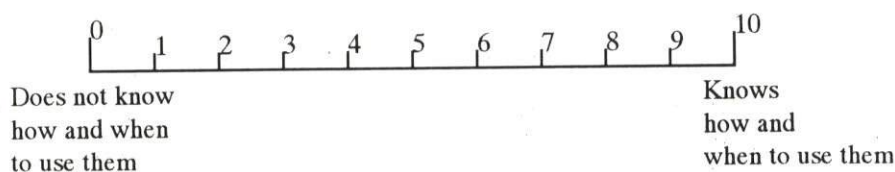
For question six of the interview, learners reported having used key words from the text to find its argumentative type. Again, a paradoxical point was noticed. Although learners could find the argumentative type of the text, they could not scan and find the main and supporting arguments of the writer. Hence, the difficulty of using the sub-skills of skimming and scanning.

It must also be noted that, on the whole, learners did at no time mention using metacognitive reading strategies such as self-management and self-evaluation. This shows again, their lack of metacognitive awareness. When asked about the difficulties they found while performing the test, learners mentioned again vocabulary difficulties and difficulty of finding the required information. Thus, they also feel they lack a systematic reading. Such answers join the ones obtained from the questionnaire and the test performance.

Finally, the researcher could assess the learners' degree of awareness in relation to the reading sub-skills and strategies while they answered the interview questions. Such an awareness varies from zero to four in the following scale, adapted from Nunan (1990 : 131) :



Similarly, the degree of their knowledge of the appropriate use of the sub-skills, i.e. their metacognitive awareness, varies from zero to three in the following scale:



These findings suggest that learners badly performed on the reading proficiency test because they have a low metacognitive awareness of the reading process. This may also be due to a bad reading background, especially at the secondary school, where the teaching of reading concentrates more on 'declarative knowledge' (Anderson, 1985) i.e. events, dates, people, ect. than on procedural knowledge (Ibid), i.e. how to perform reading tasks. This is clear in the official syllabus for English at the level of the secondary school. Indeed, in the ministerial recommendations, there is no reference or advocating of the teaching of particular reading sub-skills and strategies. Emphasis is rather put on the teaching of grammatical and semantic points through reading. Systematic meaning finding is not taught to learners. The official directives neither stress awareness-raising about the reading process, nor the teaching of appropriate reading sub-skills. This is what may be understood from the objective of the reading comprehension phase of the 3^e AS level stated here:

".....to read and understand various kinds of authentic texts (narrative, descriptive, argumentative) of intermediate difficulty; to exploit various documents and technical and scientific literature, to use reference books efficiently "

(The Official Syllabus for English, 1995:07).

Thus, the metacognitive aspect of reading is totally absent from the directives where only the ends are specified, but not the means. In all, the conclusions drawn out of the interview results confirmed the initial predictions, in that, learners are not really aware of their reading strategies because they have a word-by-word centred view of reading, (Devine, 1988). They show a text-based reading behaviour (Carrell, 1988) since they over-rely on bottom-up text processing strategies for reading. They view comprehension as the result of text decoding.

It is to be noted that the reading strategies very often reported by the subjects, approximate the ones described by Hosenfeld (1979). These strategies characterize unsuccessful readers according to him, and they are:

- Reading the text by decoding it,
- Inability to keep the meaning of sentences decoded in mind as they read,
- Reading word-by-word,
- Rarely skipping words,
- Using very often the dictionary,
- Rarely evaluating their reading.

On the whole, the pre-training phase data analysis, not only yielded the following results that are consistent with the initial predictions, but also confirmed the first hypothesis of the research : learners' reading difficulties are more of a reading nature, than of a language nature. The results are :

- Learners view reading as a decoding of linguistic items process,
- They display no systematic reading,
- They are unaware of their reading strategies,
- They make use of ineffective ones,
- Their metacognitive awareness of reading sub-skills is very low.

The obtained results led the researcher to ask another question of the study: whether it was possible to better learners' reading level through raising their awareness of some reading sub-skills and strategies?

The researcher then, hypothesized that it would be possible to develop learners' reading ability through instructing them in reading sub-skills and strategies. Indeed, making learners aware of them was predicted to be a positive factor contributing to their effective reading. This was tested in the following steps of the data collection.

3.3.2 The Training Phase

It is essential to note that the few subjects that successfully performed in some tasks like in skimming for main idea and scanning for details, were not so successful in others like predicting, guessing from context, so that all the twenty subjects received the same strategy instruction. This phase aims in fact, at making learners more aware of their reading process, since,

"Ineffective language learners should have top-priority for strategy training and they should be encouraged to believe that their difficulties are due to a lack of strategies rather than the lack of aptitude".

(Chamot, 1990: 302).

This is the objective that strategy training aims at fulfilling. In order to make it more effective, the training was conducted in the first term of the academic year (1995-96), for one and a half hour per week, during twelve weeks, that is a total number of eighteen hours⁷. One would be tempted to assume that learners linguistic competence would not have changed so much during this period to be considered a serious variable responsible for learners' good performance in the post-training tests. Moreover, it is often said that strategy training depends primarily on learners' motivation, attention and linguistic competence. All these variables characterized learners in the beginning of the courses and contributed in facilitating this phase. It must also be noted that during the training, good scorers showed a quicker learning and a better understanding of the instruction presented to them. Whereas, it took the

poor scorers more time and more explanation to learn the strategies. In this training phase, the subjects received strategy instruction and at the same time, they were asked to think about their reading process and verbalize what they did each time they performed a reading task. This activity allowed them to be more reflective on their learning. After the instruction of the strategies was completed, learners were tested.

3.3.3 The Post-Training Phase Results

In this section, the results of the reading sub-skills and strategies instruction will be given and discussed both on the macro and micro levels. The analysis will also include the post-training interview results.

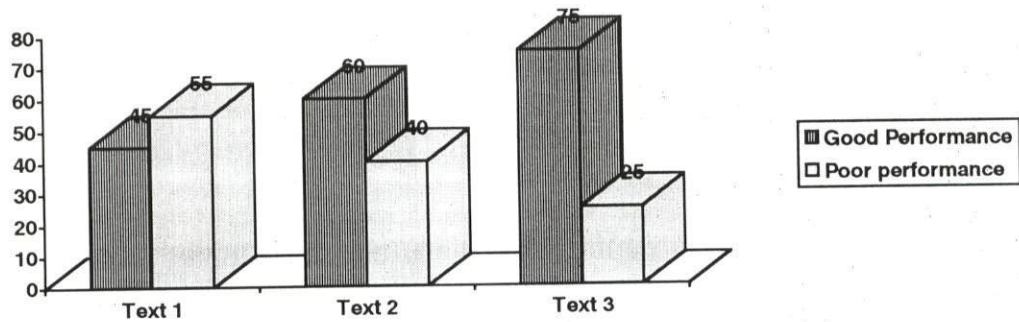
3.3.3.1 The Macro-Level Results

After the training, a series of diagnostic tests was conducted with the learners. (See procedure section 3.2.3, and appendix F, for more details). A separate analysis was conducted about learners performance on each reading sub-skill. This constitutes the post-training results on the macro level.

First, for the predicting reading skill, the subjects' performance after strategy instruction was as follows: for the first task (see appendix F), nine out of twenty, i.e. 45% of the learners could make appropriate predictions. The rest were too far from the text topic. Correction followed immediately the first task and the reading strategies used for this sub-skill were re-explained and re-illustrated. In the second task, twelve out of twenty, i.e. 60% of them made appropriate predictions the others failed because they concentrated on the title only. For the third task, the number of students who could make appropriate predictions increased to fifteen out of twenty, i.e. 75% of the subjects. The rest of them failed because they still stuck to the meaning of words. These results are illustrated on table 3.4 and bar-graph 3.2 :

Sub-skill	Performance	Task 1		Task 2		Task 3	
		AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF
Predicting	Good performance	09	45%	12	60%	15	75%
	Poor Performance	11	55%	08	40%	05	25%

Table 3.4 : Learners' performance in 'predicting' after strategy instruction.

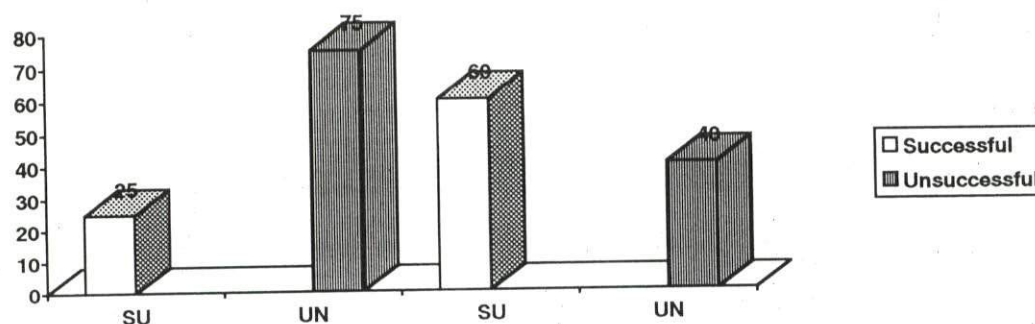


Bar-Graph 3.2 : Good and poor performance in 'predicting'.

Therefore, the number of learners who successfully performed on the reading sub-skill of predicting, increased from task one to task three. As compared to the reading proficiency test results, the percentage of learners who could perform the sub-skill increased as it is illustrated in table 3.5 and bar-graph 3.3 :

Learners' Performance Reading sub-Skill	Before Strategy Instruction				After Strategy Instruction			
	Successful		Unsuccessful		Successful		Unsuccessful	
	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF
Predicting	05	25%	15	75%	12	60%	08	40%

Table 3.5 : Learners' performance in 'predicting' before and after strategy instruction.



Bar-Graph 3.3 : Learners' progress in 'predicting' after strategy instruction.

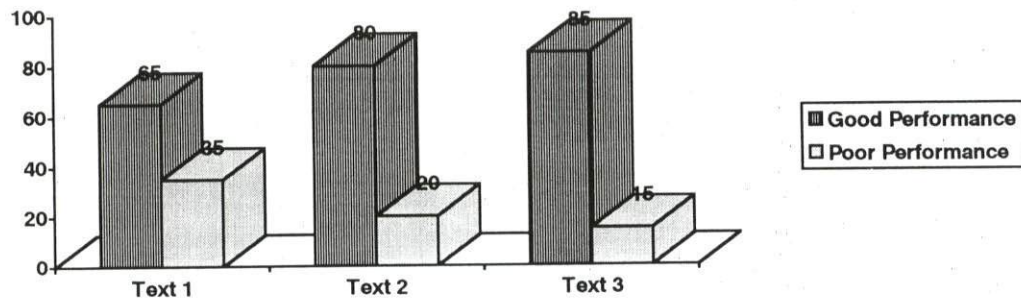
After considering the above results, one would be tempted to think that the learners' progress is due to the readability of the texts given for the tests. But, all of the three passages are of an intermediate level. Moreover, one is inclined to believe that it is because learners did not apply the strategies appropriately that they were not so successful for the first tasks. Indeed, progress was noticed after correction and reinforcement of instruction.

Second, and concerning the reading sub-skill of skimming for the main idea, the learners performed as follows : thirteen out of twenty, i.e. 65% of the subjects performed successfully for the first task. Those who failed, mentioned that they read only the first sentence of paragraph one of the reading passage and that they were still confused when using the strategies. However, good scorers could use key words, the first sentence of each paragraph, etc. They were not discouraged by the complexity of the vocabulary. For the second task, sixteen out of twenty, i.e. 80% of them, performed successfully the sub-skill and found the appropriate answer. They used the strategies taught to them and in addition, they located key words and related them to the main idea. They reported having selected them not only because they were repeated in the text, but also because they were important to the general meaning. This suggests that they started to reactivate their latent strategies. Finally, for the third task, seventeen out of twenty, i.e. 85%, performed successfully. This time, their reading was quicker and more systematic as compared to their reading before strategy instruction. Therefore, there is a marked progress between task one, task two and task

three performances. These results are well illustrated in table 3.6 and bar-graph 3.4 :

Sub-skill	Performance	Task 1		Task 2		Task 3	
		AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF
Skimming	Good performance	13	65%	16	80%	17	85%
	poor performance	07	35%	04	20%	03	15%

Table 3.6 : Learners' performance in 'skimming' after strategy instruction.

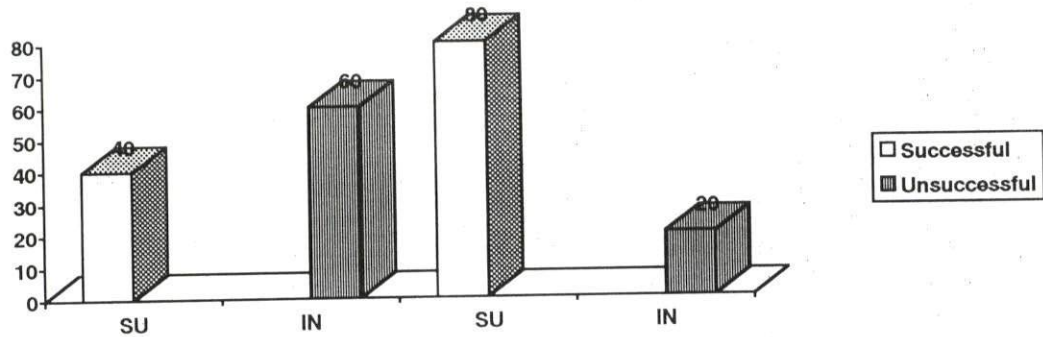


Bar-Graph 3.4 : Good and poor performance in 'skimming'.

If these results are to be compared with the ones obtained in the reading proficiency test, a marked progress will be noticed as it is shown in table 3.7 and bar-graph 3.5 :

Learners' Performance Reading sub-Skill	Before Strategy Instruction				After Strategy Instruction			
	Successful		Unsuccessful		Successful		Unsuccessful	
	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF
Skimming	08	40%	12	60%	16	80%	04	20%

Table 3.7 : Learners' performance in 'skimming' before and after strategy instruction.

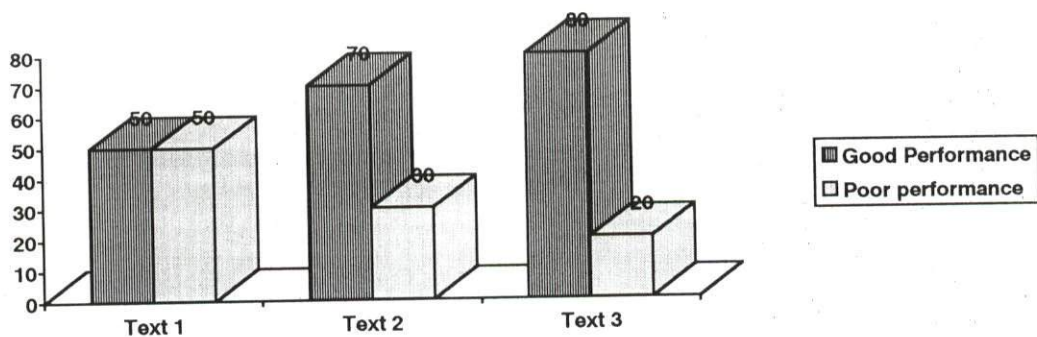


Bar-graph 3.5 : Learners' progress in 'skimming' after strategy instruction.

Third, for 'scanning', ten out of the twenty subjects successfully performed the sub-skill. For the first task, 50% of them could locate details. For the second task, fourteen out of twenty (70 %) performed successfully. Sixteen out of twenty (80%) did so for the third task. However, the ones who poorly performed the task still stuck to their word-by-word reading and still confused between skimming for the general idea and scanning for details. Results stated in table 3.8 and bar-graph 3.6 show that the number of learners who successfully performed the sub-skill, increased from task one and task two to task three :

Sub-skill	Performance	Task 1		Task 2		Task 3	
		AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF
Scanning	Good performance	10	50 %	14	70 %	16	80 %
	Poor Performance	10	50 %	06	30 %	04	20 %

Table 3.8 : Learners performance in 'scanning' after strategy instruction.

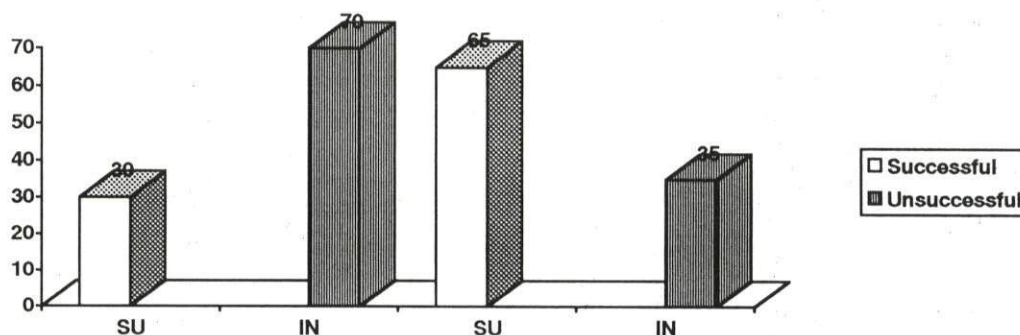


Bar-Graph 3.6 : Good and poor performance in 'scanning'.

Consequently, and as for the two preceding sub-skills, statistical results suggest that learners made progress after strategy instruction, when compared to the reading proficiency test results for this sub-skill. Table 3.9 and bar-graph 3.7, show it :

Learners' Performance Reading sub-Skill	Before strategy Instruction				After Strategy Instruction			
	Successful		Unsuccessful		Successful		Unsuccessful	
	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF
S c a n n i n g	06	30 %	14	70 %	13	65 %	07	35 %

Table 3.9 : Learners' performance in 'scanning' before and after strategy instruction.

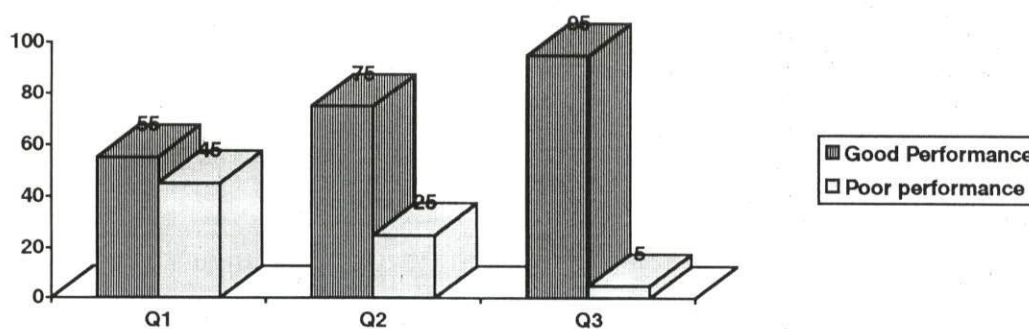


Bar-Graph 3.7 : Learners' progress in 'scanning' after strategy instruction.

Fourth, for 'inferring' , eleven learners (55%) could make appropriate inferences for the first task. For the second task, the number of learners who inferred successfully increased to fifteen out of twenty (75%), to reach finally the number of nineteen out of twenty (95%) of them for the third task. As for the other sub-skills, there is a clear progress, in reference to the statistical results, from task one to task two and task three, as it is illustrated in table 3.10 and bar-graph 3.8 :

Sub-skill	Performance	Task 1		Task 2		Task 3	
		AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF
Inferring	Good performance	11	55 %	15	75 %	19	95 %
	Poor Performance	09	45 %	05	25 %	01	05 %

Table 3.10 : Learners' performance in 'inferring' after strategy instruction.

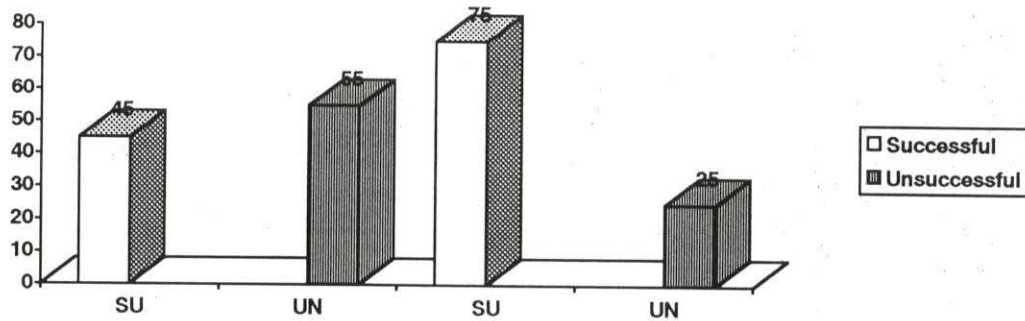


Bar-graph 3.8 : Good and poor performance in 'inferring'.

Again, as compared to the reading proficiency test results, both the scores and the progress were better. See table 3.11 and bar-graph 3.9 :

Learners' Performance Reading sub-Skill	Before Strategy Instruction				After Strategy Instruction			
	Successful		Unsuccessful		Successful		Unsuccessful	
	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF
I n f e r r i n g	09	45 %	11	55 %	15	75 %	05	25 %

Table 3.11 : Learners' performance in 'inferring' before and after strategy instruction.



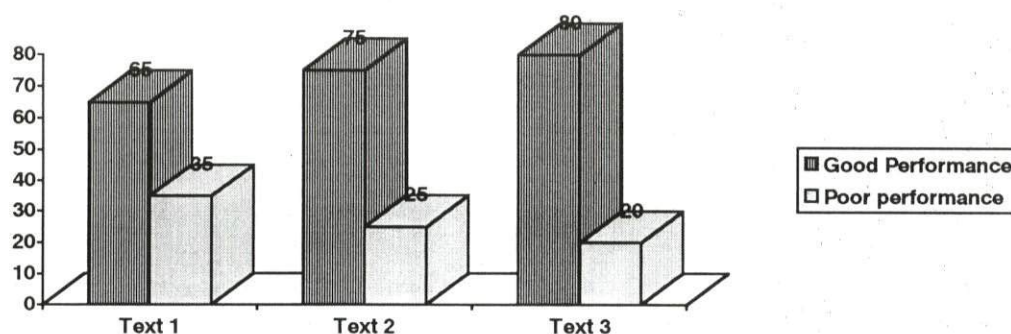
Bar-Graph 3.9 : Learners' progress in 'inferring' after strategy instruction .

It is worth noting that, in relation to the reading proficiency test results on 'inferring' , nearly half of the subjects could use this sub-skill. The results also suggest that learners made use of the cognitive strategies of imagery using and associating ideas before that, but they were not conscious about them. Now they can develop those strategies since they are more aware of them.

Fifth and last, after the learners were instructed in using context as an aid to comprehension, they performed on the reading tasks related to this sub-skill (see appendixF) as follows : thirteen out of twenty (65%) successfully guessed from context for the first task. Whereas the others failed because they were mistaken by the word 'communicable' that they understood as communication in reference to mass-media. Some of the learners, in fact mentioned that they thought of communication and media. Thus, they have made use of the cognitive strategy of elaborating from prior knowledge, but could not guess from context, since they concentrated just on the word itself. For the second task, fifteen out of twenty, (75%), could guess the meaning of a number of unfamiliar words in a poem. However, the remaining could not, because they did not use all context and tried to understand the meaning of the words by relating them to their stock of vocabulary . Finally for the last task, sixteen out of twenty (80%) could successfully guess the meaning of the vocabulary out of its context. The others, however, gave just approximate answers .These results are shown in table 3.12 and bar-graph 3.10 :

Sub-skill	Performance	Task 1		Task 2		Task 3	
		AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF
Guessing From Context	Good performance	13	65 %	15	75 %	16	80 %
	Poor Performance	07	35 %	05	25 %	04	20 %

Table 3.12 : Learners' performance in 'guessing from context' after strategy instruction.

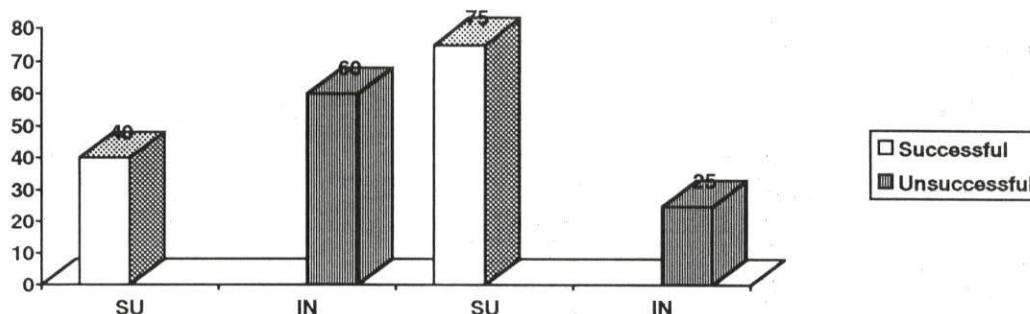


Bar-Graph 3.10 : Good and poor performance in 'guessing from context' after strategy instruction.

Similarly to the other reading sub-skills, learners showed marked improvement in using this sub-skill after strategy instruction. As compared to the reading proficiency test results, progress is, indeed, noticed. This is illustrated in table 3.13 and bar-graph 3.11 :

Learners' Performance Reading sub-Skill	Before Strategy Instruction				After Strategy Instruction			
	Successful		Unsuccessful		Successful		Unsuccessful	
	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF
Guessing From Context	08	40 %	12	60 %	15	75 %	05	25 %

Table 3.13 : Learners' performance in 'guessing from context' before and after strategy instruction.



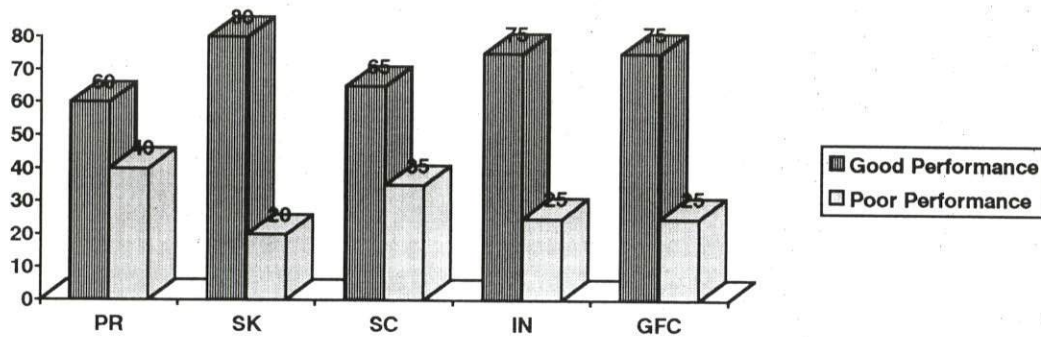
Bar-Graph 3.11 : Learners' progress in 'guessing from context' after strategy instruction.

Therefore, and based on the analysis of the results obtained out of learners' performance on each reading sub-skill after strategy instruction, one would be tempted to conclude, without further analysis, that there is much statistical support for the initial predictions. Indeed, after learners received strategy instruction, a greater ability to find meaning was noticed. They became more self-reliant and more self-critical of their reading process. That is why they started to reflect on their learning in general and on their reading in particular. Moreover, as learners were asked to explain how they arrived to the answers they gave, they described their metacognitive strategies as self-monitoring, self-evaluation and planning, instead of the mere justification from the text. One conclusion, may, thus, be drawn here : learners no more consider the text as the only holder of meaning. Rather, they start considering their actual participation in the reading interaction.

As a matter of fact, for the five reading sub-skills, a noticeable progress is made. See table 3.14 and bar-graph 3.12, then refer back to table 3.2 and bar-graph 3.1 in section 3.3.1.2 :

Reading skills	Predicting (PR)		Skimming (SK)		Scanning (SC)		Inferring (IN)		Guessing from context (GFC)	
	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF
Learners' performance										
Good scores	12	60%	16	80%	13	65%	15	75%	15	75%
Poor scores	08	40%	04	20%	07	35%	05	25%	05	25%

Table 3.14 : Learners' performance in the five reading sub-skills after strategy instruction.



Bar-graph 3.12 : Good and poor performance in the five reading sub-skills after strategy instruction.

Nevertheless, there is still a need to check whether this progress is really due to their actual use of reading strategies. Therefore, the analysis of the micro level results, which will be given in the next section, would help shed some light.

3.3.3.2 The Micro Level Results

In the objective of obtaining evidence about the subjects' actual application of the reading strategies instructed to them, learners had to perform on two more reading texts. (See appendix G for the tasks used).

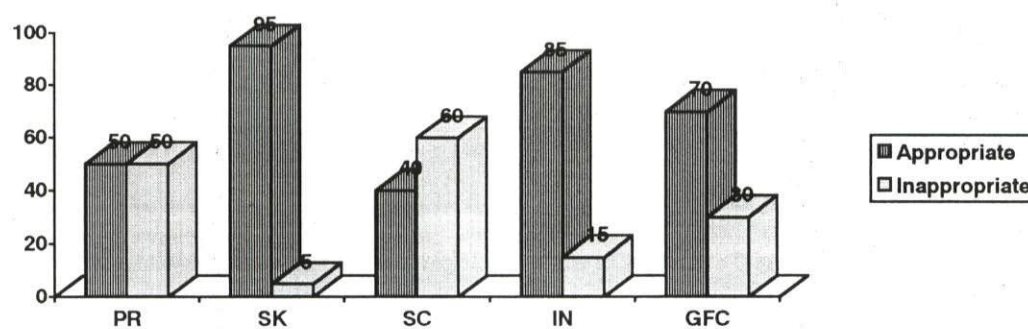
Alternatively, for each text, learners read and tried to answer the five questions. At the same time, they mentioned the reading strategies they made use of among the

ones listed in the strategies grid, in which each question referred to a reading sub-skill, (see appendixH).

As a matter of fact, the learner who succeeded in mentioning the greatest number of correct and appropriate reading strategies for each question, was considered as a good performer. Then, scores were added and translated into percentages. The obtained results are displayed in tables 3.16,3.17 and bar-graphs 3.13 and 3.14 :

Texts Performance Reading Sub-Skills	Text 1 :L.May Alcott			
	Successful		Unsuccessful	
	AF	RF	AF	RF
Predicting	10	50%	10	50%
Skimming	19	95%	01	05%
Scanning	08	40%	12	60%
Inferring	17	85%	03	15%
Guessing from context	14	70%	06	30%

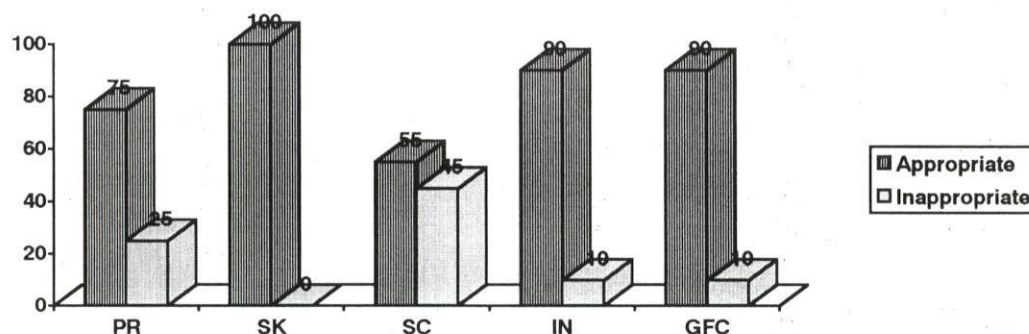
Table 3.15 : Learners' selection of the reading strategies from the grid in text One.



Bar-graph 3.13 : Appropriate and inappropriate selection of the strategies for text One.

Texts Performance	Text Two :A Newspaper Reporter			
	Successful		Unsuccessful	
	AF	RF	AF	RF
Predicting	15	75%	05	25%
Skimming	20	100%	00	00%
Scanning	11	55%	09	45%
Inferring	18	90%	02	10%
Guessing from context	18	90%	02	10%

Table 3.16 : Learners' selection of the reading strategies from the grid in text Two.



Bar-graph 3.14 : Appropriate and inappropriate selection of the strategies for text Two.

These results, suggest the following : first, learners, in their majority appropriately applied the reading strategies. Learners were more able to mention which strategy (ies) they used for each question. They succeeded not only in finding which sub-skill is required for answering each question, but were also able to report the appropriate strategies used to perform it. This is in spite of the fact that the strategies were listed in a scrambled way in the strategies grid (see appendixH). Moreover, only two subjects still made use of their old strategies, i.e. word-by-word reading, translating into L₁ and L₂ and over-using the dictionary.

On the whole, learners mostly made use of cognitive strategies such as elaborating, deduction and imagery use. In addition, they used metacognitive strategies

such as keeping meaning in mind while reading, self-evaluation and self-management. Thus, they moved from seeking meaning directly from the text, to making use of their background knowledge, either lexical, grammatical or cultural. They kept the purpose of the questions in mind as they read and self-evaluated their reading. Furthermore, learners limited their use of the dictionary and tried to use context instead, for finding the meaning of difficult vocabulary.

All in all, it was noticed that for 'scanning', eleven out of the twenty learners failed in mentioning appropriate strategies from the grid. This result confirms their confusion between 'skimming' and 'scanning', although they made progress in using the two sub-skills.

It would be appropriate to note that if the strategies they actually use are to be compared with the ones they made use of, before strategy instruction, one would notice that the learners have acquired the repertoire of strategies taught to them and have enriched their metacognitive stock of strategies. This might have led to their progress in the performance of the reading sub-skills. The difference in the strategies used by learners is illustrated in table 3.17:

Type of Strategy	Learners' Reading Strategies	
	Before strategy Instruction	After Strategy Instruction
Cognitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - translating - over-using the dictionary - using cognates - going from the general to the specific 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - elaborating - summarizing - deduction - using context - imagery use - keeping meaning and purpose in mind - associating ideas
Metacognitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Re - reading - reading aloud 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self - evaluation - self - management.
Social affective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> asking teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self - talk -asking teacher or peers

Table 3.17 : Learners' reading strategies before and after strategy instruction.

Nevertheless, in order to confirm the results yielded by the data collection both on the macro and micro levels, a final interview was administered to the subjects (see appendix D). This is a post-training interview that gave the following information:

3.3.3.3 The Post-Training Interview Results

For question one of the interview , all the twenty subjects said that they found the reading strategy instruction useful and helpful. They reported that the strategies helped them read better and overcome their reading difficulties. They added that now, they feel they have acquired tools to use when reading. For example, when coming across a difficult word, they no more see it as a barrier to comprehension or resort to the dictionary. Instead, they either use its context and guess its meaning, skip it if unimportant, or use their grammatical knowledge to determine its category. Four of them, however, said that although the strategies were useful and helpful, they sometimes found it hard to remember them. This number is, in fact, approximate to the percentage of the learners who poorly performed on the reading sub-skills in the post-training tests. On the other hand, none of the subjects found the strategy instruction uninteresting. One would be inclined to believe, accordingly that learners have been motivated and interested by the strategy instruction since they understood its relevance for their reading tasks.

For question two, eighteen out of twenty of the subjects mentioned that they have made progress in reading, thanks to the instruction they received. The other two mentioned that they were still confused when using the strategies. They think they needed more practice because sometimes, they were less concentrated than usually.

For question three, where learners were asked to identify the sub-skill they still had problems with, sixteen of them gave no answer. Whereas four said that they were still confusing between 'scanning' and 'skimming'. This answer joins again the results obtained and discussed above for 'scanning'.

As far as question four is concerned, the majority of the learners mentioned the strategies of elaborating, deduction, imagery-using and using context. They also mentioned the metacognitive strategies of self-evaluation and self-management that helped them a lot. Thus, learners benefited from the strategies related to the use of their background knowledge and the ones that helped them plan their reading.

For question five : 'what difference do you see between your reading now and before?', learners responses were varied. They could not only explain the difference and verbalize their thoughts, but self-evaluated their progress as well. This suggests, however, that they became more aware of their reading progress. The strategies mostly used are reported in table 3.18 :

Learners' Reading Behaviour Before Strategy Instruction	Learners' Reading Behaviour After Strategy Instruction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'My reading was disorganized.' - 'I did not know when and how to use the sub-skills' - 'I was unconscious of them' - 'I used some strategies without knowing their name.' - 'I was afraid when approaching a text in English.' - 'Vocabulary was a barrier.' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 'I pay more attention to the way I read a text.' - 'My reading is more organized ' - 'I use my knowledge.' - 'I reflect on my reading ' - 'I can rely on strategies ' - 'I feel I can control my reading ' - 'I can use the strategies even outside the course ' - 'Strategies have made my understanding easier ' - 'I can read any material ' - 'I have tools for facing any difficulty.'

Table 3.18 : Learners' reading behaviour before and after strategy instruction.

As a result, learners were better able to perceive the difference between their reading before and after strategy instruction. In that, they easily evaluated their progress. Moreover, their answers suggest that now, they realize the possibility of transferring both the reading sub-skills and strategies to other subjects. They concentrated more and felt much more self-confident. That is why, their role as readers is no longer seen as a vague behaviour. All that, points to the increase of their

metacognitive awareness of the reading process. Indeed, on a scale of ten points, where zero refers to the learners' total unawareness of the reading sub-skills and strategies, and ten to a full awareness, the majority ranked from six to nine points according to their answers to the interview questions.

For question six, of the interview, seventeen of the subjects answered that they think the same sub-skills and strategies can be used for reading Arabic and French. It must be noted here, that nearly the same question was asked to them in the questionnaire (see appendix A). But , all of them gave a negative answer. For the present, however, learners realized the possibility of transfer.

For question seven, eighteen of the learners answered that nothing in the course seemed unnecessary for them. While the remaining two stated that the strategies have been over-emphasized.

Finally, for question eight, it is worth noting that learners asked for the following elements to be included in the reading comprehension course :

Suggestions	Learners' wants
a- elements you do not master	-English idioms -Dictionary and library skills.
b- elements you still need to learn	
c- themes or activities that interest you.	-Poetry -writing summaries -Extensive reading.

Table 3.19 : Learners' wants after strategy instruction.

Thus, and contrary to learners' previously expressed wants and needs for a methodology in reading, more vocabulary and grammar their wants and needs are directed towards additional elements to learn that are related to the reading skill. In

that, how to use a dictionary, how to find a book in the library, learning idioms and reading literature. Consequently, they display a more mature reading behaviour and feel they have the required tools for reading any material now, since they asked for extensive reading tasks.

To conclude, it was noticed through learners' responses to the post-training interview, that they were better able to determine their progress in terms of reading English texts. They displayed an awareness of their reading behaviour that they did not show before strategy instruction. Therefore, learners' attitude towards reading English changed, not only to be more self-directed, but also more autonomous.

3.4 General Commentary

The results obtained from the data collection and discussed in the above sections seem to answer the research questions and confirm the stated hypotheses. Indeed, as far as the first question of the present work is concerned, in that, whether learners' reading difficulties are of a language nature or of a reading nature, results suggest the following : learners have difficulties that are more of a reading nature, related to their lack of metacognitive awareness of the reading process and the reading strategies, than of a language nature. This is confirming, hypothesis one of the research.

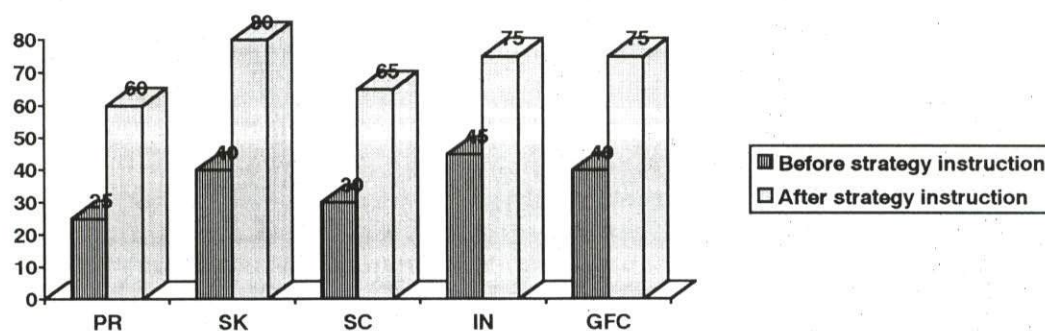
Results yielded by the pre-training phase data collection answered the second question of the research, which is whether learners are equipped with any reading strategies or not. As a matter of fact, before they received strategy instruction, learners displayed ineffective reading strategies such as word-by-word reading, an over-use of the dictionary, and very often translating into L₁ or L₂. Therefore, they poorly performed, in their majority on the reading proficiency test. The post-test interview confirmed this assumption and answered question three of the study : whether learners were aware of the reading sub-skills and strategies or not.

Indeed, analysis of the results obtained from both the reading proficiency test and the first interview suggest that learners show a limited awareness of the reading sub-skills and strategies. A result that might be due to a bad reading background, especially in relation to their secondary school instruction, to a lack of transfer of the reading sub-skills and strategies from their L_1 and L_2 to their L_3 , or even to a total absence of the reading sub-skills and strategies in their L_1 and L_2 because of a lack of awareness of the reading process.

Those results led the researcher to investigate the fourth and last question of the research work. In that, whether a metacognitive awareness-raising, through a direct instruction in the reading sub-skills and strategies would contribute to learners' better achievement in reading. Finally, the post-training test results suggest that hypothesis four may be confirmed. Indeed, statistical results shown in tables 3.20, 3.21 and bar graphs 3.15 and 3.16, join the predictions made :

Reading sub-skills Learners' Performance	Predicting (PR)		Skimming (SK)		Scanning (SC)		Inferring (IN)		Guessing from (GFC) context	
	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF
	Before strategy instruction	05	25%	08	40%	06	30%	09	45%	08
After strategy instruction	12	60%	16	80%	13	65%	15	75%	15	75%

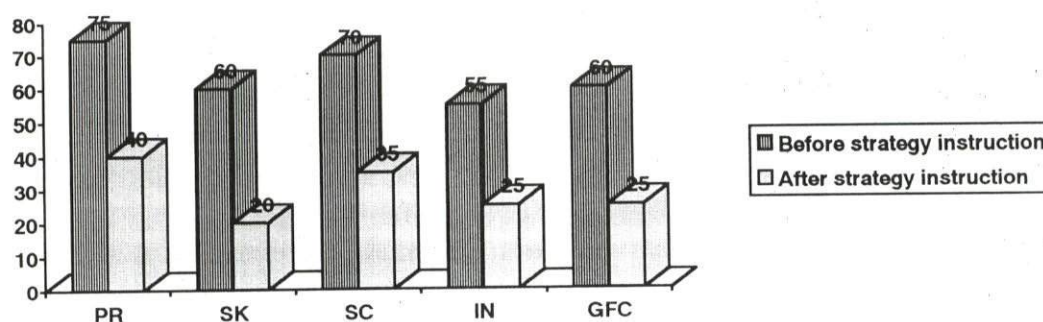
Table 3.20 : Percentages of learners' good performance before and after strategy instruction.



Bar-graph 3.15 : Good scores before and after strategy instruction.

Reading sub-skills Learners' Performance	Predicting (PR)		Skimming (SK)		Scanning (SC)		Inferring (IN)		Guessing from (GFC) context	
	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF	AF	RF
	Before Strategy instruction	15	75%	12	60%	14	70%	11	55%	12
After Strategy Instruction	08	40%	04	20%	07	35%	05	25%	05	25%

Table 3.21 : Percentages of learners' poor performance before and after strategy instruction.



Bar graph 3.16 : Poor scores before and after strategy instruction.

On the one hand, and as it can be seen on the tables and bar-graphs on page 128, the percentages of good performances increased after strategy instruction as compared to their performance before. Indeed, the percentages of the poor performances were largely superior to the good performances ones. On the other hand, the performance of poor scorers before strategy instruction increased after it, to be largely inferior to the good scorers ones. Thus, there is much statistical support for the research general question.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has concentrated on learners' use and awareness of some of the sub-skills and strategies necessary for an effective reading. Data collection has, in fact, unveiled a poor reading ability, an unawareness of appropriate reading sub-skills and a limited and ineffective stock of reading strategies, that learners were equipped with.

Therefore, the strategy training programme tried to remedy learners' difficulties. All along the analysis of the results, the researcher attempted to present statistical evidence suggesting that for EFL advanced learners, a metacognitive awareness of the interactive aspect of reading may constitute one significant access to reading and comprehension.

The difference in percentages of learners' performance before and after strategy instruction, points to a progress in reading. Indeed, when the subjects were made more aware of their role as readers, they were more able to use appropriate reading sub-skills and strategies. Moreover, unlike the passive unproductive role they had when reading before, the learners now relied more on their own knowledge, their own point of view for the interpretation of an English text. Accordingly, they start to have a more active and interactive role with the text and are better able to reflect on their reading in order, to manage it and make it more systematic and hence, more effective.

NOTES

1. This may be an indicator of their high motivation for learning and using English on the one hand, and on the other, it may show that they have an ability to use it.
2. Research shows that learners' early experiences with reading are an important determinant of their reading status at later stages, (Siegel, 1993).
3. The study did not include analysing learners' performance on different types of texts, since this would have enlarged it. However, it would be interesting to measure and analyse the correlation between the type of the text and learners' use of reading strategies in future studies.
4. The researcher used note-taking to report learners' comments to the interviews' questions. It is to be noted, however, that the interviews could not have been tape-recorded since this would have impressed learners and even annoyed them. On the other hand, hiding the tape- recorder would have distorted the quality of the sound.
5. See (O'Mallet and Chamot, 1990 : 159).
6. An assumption sprung out of this research : a linguistic competence does not lead necessarily to a reading competence, whereas the other does. This is a hypothesis that needs, of course, to be substantiated by further research in the future.
7. The strategy training sessions have been presented to learners in the beginning of the academic year. They may in no way, be themselves the reading comprehension course that includes far more other reading activities and programmes than the mere reading strategy instruction.
8. The type of questions used to test this skill, i.e. the multiple choice questions, have

very often been criticized by language testers. Royer (1990) quoted in Freedle and Kostin (1993) for example, criticized it as being primarily a test of reasoning rather than a test of comprehension. Indeed, learners may answer with intuition, inference or simply by chance. This fact does not show necessarily their comprehension. The researcher being aware of this point, asked the learners to justify their choice when giving their answers for this type of tasks.

CHAPTER FOUR

Suggestions and Recommendations

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CHAPTER FOUR

Suggestions and Recommendations

4.1 Introduction

In this last chapter, some suggestions about the reading instruction at an advanced level are intended to be given. Broadly speaking, the first step towards an effective and appropriate learner training in this area, is seen as being the adequate teacher training. In that, awareness-raising about the reading process, the reading interaction and the range of possible reading strategies that may be used to enhance reading comprehension, are viewed as essential both for teachers and learners.

The chapter also suggests some components that may constitute part of a didactic unit, namely study skills, textual analysis, the integration of language skills, into the reading course and extensive reading tasks that may contribute to foster learners' reading efficiency and autonomy. Finally, other practical suggestions are given, as to the choice of the reading material to be used and the selection of reading activities.

4.2 Raising The Skill Awareness

In the attempt to bring some change in reading instruction at the level of the first year-English degree, it would seem appropriate to start with raising the skill awareness, both among the trainers and the trainees, i.e. teachers and learners. Indeed, it is believed that among the factors causing reading difficulties is the lack of awareness of the nature of the reading process.

4.2.1 Teacher Training

Teacher training in this case is an issue important to deal with since the learners will themselves become teachers and, hence, themselves trainers. Therefore, if

reading has to be taught in a systematic way, from an interactive and cognitive perspective, it would be necessary that teachers be more aware of those aspects and reconceptualize their notion of reading and its instruction. In this view of things, teacher training has to reach the objective of 'methodological competence' Thomas (1987), i.e. a teacher of reading needs to be equipped with an appropriate competence as to the choice and use of an adequate methodology for teaching it. Teachers need also to be more aware of the theoretical aspects behind each methodology so as to adopt, adapt or reject it.

Without doubt, being aware of the interactive nature of the reading process will help teachers in their choice of a specific methodology : whether text-based, i.e. where the instruction centres on the text and its linguistic properties, like grammar and vocabulary study, strategy-based ,where the instruction emphasizes the teaching of specific reading strategies for reading improvement, knowledge-based, where the teacher puts forward the text content as an aim to reach in the reading course. Thus, he uses such questions as when, who, why, where, etc. A combination of all would be more appropriate since it would cater for learners' needs in dealing with the text form and content, using appropriate strategies. Accordingly a teacher of reading has to be aware of not only teaching theories, but also learning theories, that would be the basis of such instruction.

Raising the skill awareness among the teachers of reading both at the secondary and university levels is of paramount importance, since it is often the case that they almost ignore all about the theoretical aspect of reading. Consequently, in-service and pre-service training are essential. In fact, in-service training is done during the 'licence' studies, while pre-service training is done on the field, after the graduation, by the local inspector.

As a matter of fact, if reading is to be taught from a 'strategies oriented approach', it is a prerequisite that teachers be trained in cognitive psychology and its implications to teaching. What is the nature of the reading process ? how does it operate in the mind

of the learner ? what is the role of the reader in this interaction ? and what special sub-skills and strategies could he make use of while reading ? are all necessary questions the teacher of reading has to be made aware of. To this end, in-service training has to include all those aspects mentioned above in students' training sessions in T.E.F.L, in the fourth year of the English degree.

On the other hand, teachers at the secondary school level may benefit from a similar training, through a local pre-service training. This latter concerns teachers who have both completed their training and still view reading instruction as text explanation and vocabulary and grammar practice. This training could be achieved through recycling seminars, organized at the level of the university for both university and high school teachers. In this way, the gap could be bridged between the two levels. Inspector demonstration classes could also make teachers more aware of their role as teachers of reading, in the attempt of avoiding a random teaching detached from learners' needs and cognitive potentialities.

Moreover, pedagogic sessions could be included in teachers' timetables, for instance, they may have two hours per week for a period of three months. This would recycle their knowledge, improve their teaching techniques and make them aware of the new trends, as well as theories in language teaching / learning in general and reading in particular.

More specifically, the way the reading course is viewed for such a case, is learner-centred rather than teacher-centred (Nunan, 1991). Thus, the teacher's role necessarily changes. He has no longer the role of absolute holder of knowledge but has to be a guide, a co-ordinator, an observer and an assessor. He has, mainly, to be an instrument rather than an authority. His role is to allow learners more freedom and ease to develop their learning styles, preferences and interest. Consequently, learners have not to be dependent on his teaching. Rather, they should be made more responsible for their learning and more aware of their needs and difficulties. And indeed,

" These changes strengthen teachers' role making them more varied and more creative. Their status is no longer based on hierarchical authority, but on the quality and importance of their relationship with learners".

(Oxford, 1990 : 11).

In all, teachers have to be aware that giving a reading course to students, in such a case, does require many tasks on their part :

- to identify their learners' needs, profile and background at the beginning of the course through a questionnaire,
- to diagnose learners' lacks in the area of reading comprehension, through reading proficiency tests,
- to identify their learners' reading styles and strategies in view of developing them, through introspective and retrospective methods,
- to raise learners' awareness about their thinking and reading processes, i.e. to provide them with a metacognitive instruction,
- to select reading activities and material that motivate and interest them, (activities such as group work tasks, activities that would involve the expression of their own points of view and opinions, for example :
 - Read and discuss,
 - Read and imagine the end,
 - Read and narrate a similar experience that you lived,
 - Read and characterize the persons described, etc.
- to involve them in the choice and selection of texts, topics and activities,
- to emphasize reading sub-skills practice along with language practice,
- to continually evaluate their learners' progress and needs, through diagnostic tests,
- to develop their learners' autonomy, by equipping them with necessary reading sub-skills and reading strategies to deal with any text.

All these tasks that should be undertaken by the teacher of reading lead us to discuss learner training.

4.2.2 Learner Training

Having established the role of the teacher of reading in such a case, it is now essential to detail it in what is referred to as 'learner training'. Indeed, teachers should before and foremost try to fulfil the objective of making learners strategic, skilled, effective and autonomous readers. In view of this, teachers have to provide learners with an instruction in reading strategies and inform them about the value of some reading tasks and activities, (a framework of this training has already been given in chapter three, section 3.2.2).

Nevertheless, if learners are to be instructed in using reading strategies while reading to enhance their comprehension, the teacher has to identify learners' existing strategies and determine the degree of their awareness of them. This can be achieved through different strategy assessment techniques₁ such as :

- interviews, through pre-established strategies grids,
- think-aloud procedures or self- observation protocols,
- self-report grids after or while task-accomplishment₂,
- learners may also be asked to mention the strategies they usually make use of while performing specific reading tasks, either in their L₁ or L₂.

It is to be noted that learners may think aloud and describe their strategies, either orally, through group discussions or through writing and transcribing their ideas in diaries, as it is advocated here :

" Diaries or journals are forms of self-report which allow learners to record their thoughts, feelings, achievements and problems as well as their impressions of teachers(...). This can help them become more aware of their whole range of strategies".

(Oxford, 1990 : 189).

The teacher may also encourage learners to keep a record of the reading activities they prefer (Nunan, 1991). Learners may keep a record of their progress or difficulties in such diaries too. Indeed, diary analysis may be very instructive for teachers since it informs them about the preferences of their learners and their learning styles. Thus, they would be more able to respond to their needs and preferences. An example of a self-report grid used to unveil learners' reading strategies is the following:

* Say how often you use the strategies mentioned below			
List of reading strategies simply formulated	Always	Sometimes	Never
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reading word-by-word - reading first sentence of each paragraph - reading in broad phrases - locating key words - associating text content to previous knowledge - checking comprehension - guessing meaning from context - asking questions to peers, teacher or to yourself - translating into Arabic or French, etc. 			

In this way, learners will become observers of their own learning and progress. They will also seek ways to overcome their difficulties, and teachers will be more sensible to their learning styles and cognitive abilities.

After the identification of learners' strategies, teachers may intervene with strategy instruction, either to develop the good learners' own strategies or to help the poor ones learn new ones₃. In this context, Oxford (1990) suggests eight steps in conducting strategy instruction :

1. determine the learners' needs and the time available,
2. select strategies well,
3. consider integration of strategy training,
4. consider motivational issues,
5. prepare material and activities,
6. conduct completely informed training,
7. evaluate the strategy training,
8. revise the strategy training.

Table 4.1. : Steps in strategy training (Oxford, 1990).

The way these steps are suggested to be used is a spiral way rather than a linear one. In that, determining learners' needs in terms of reading strategies may be undertaken by a teacher even after the training is completed. Therefore, new strategies may be included or specific ones reinforced and hence, new activities and techniques selected.

The cognitive, metacognitive and social / affective strategies suggested to be used for strategy instruction, in this case, are given in appendix I. These strategies may be matched to reading sub-skills as for the five sub-skills selected for the present study. Of course, strategy instruction may include other sub-skills like summarizing, critical reading, etc. The researcher suggests the following strategies for the metacognitive instruction :

- For the predicting sub-skill, the following strategies are suggested to be used to predict the content of a text or its continuation, through sampling it quickly :

The Predicting sub-skill	
Category	Reading Strategies
Cognitive	- Elaborating - Resourcing - Anticipating information - Correcting expectations - Confirming expectations
Metacognitive	- Planning ahead - Self- evaluation - Self- management - Self- monitoring
Social and affective	- Questioning for clarification (teacher or peers) - Self-talk.

Table 4.2. : The reading strategies used in 'predicting'.

These strategies may be translated into the following tasks for example :

Task 1 : The teacher provides learners with a reading text for e.g. : Acid Rain, and some illustrations, then asks them the following :

- (1) Read the text title first. What words are familiar to you ? (elaborating)
- (2) Does the topic remind you of something you know ? (elaborating)
- (3) What information do you have on the same topic ? (elaborating)

Task 2 : Try to predict the text ideas and content. Help yourself with the illustrations given, either pictures, table, diagrams or graphs, etc. (Resourcing)

Task 3 : Survey the text quickly, then fill in the table. You may ask your teacher or friends when necessary :

Before Reading	While Reading	After Reading
- Things you expect to find in the text : ----- ----- e.g. : Acid Rain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> causes results famous cases (anticipating, planning head)	- Try to confirm your expectations ----- or correct them ----- ----- (correcting or confirming expectations)	- Evaluate your reading - Were your expectations correct ? ----- Near to the content ? ----- Add new information to your knowledge of the topic ----- (self-evaluation)

-For the skimming sub-skill, the following strategies may be used :

The Skimming Sub-Skill	
Category	Reading strategies
Cognitive	- elaborating - summarizing - skipping unknown words or unnecessary parts - advance organization
Metacognitive	- planning ahead - self-management - self-evaluation - self-monitoring - reading with purpose
Social and affective	- Questioning for clarification - self-talk.

Table 4.3. : The Reading strategies used in 'skimming' .

These strategies may be practised through the following task, for e.g. :

Task : Learners are provided with a text and asked the following :

- (1) Read the text and find the main idea it discusses.
- (2) Do you know anything about this idea ? (elaborating)
- (3) What information can you skip ? (skipping unnecessary parts)
- (4) What information seems most important for you ? (skipping)
why ? does it fit your reading purpose ? (reading with purpose)
- (5) What are the key words of the text ? (locating key words)
- (6) Match the following ideas with the paragraph each idea summarizes. (summarizing)
- (7) Now discuss the general idea of the text with your friends and teacher (questioning for clarification, self-evaluation)
 - a)- is your general idea appropriate ?
 - b)- did you use the appropriate reading strategies ?(self-monitoring)

-As far as the scanning for details sub-skill is concerned, the reader uses a more focused reading than for 'skimming'. Thus, he may use the following strategies :

The Scanning sub-skill	
Category	Reading strategies
Cognitive	- elaborating - re-reading
Metacognitive	- reading with purpose - selective attention - self-management - self-evaluation - self-monitoring
Social and affective	- self-talk. -questioning

Table 4.4. : The Reading strategies used in 'scanning'.

To make them practise these strategies, learners may be provided with the following tasks :

Task₁ : Learners are provided with a passage relating a story. For e.g. : School Boy Tyranny. The teacher may ask the following questions :

- (1) what does the word tyranny remind you of ? (elaborating)
- (2) Read the text paying attention to the information needed only (Reading with purpose, selective attention).
- (3) Keep the details you need to find in mind while reading (Reading with purpose in mind)
- (4) Evaluate your answer (self- evaluation)
- (5) Ask your friends (questioning)

Task₂ : Teacher may ask learners to establish the causes and results of A.I.D.S disease on people's life through reading several material like newspaper articles, medical magazines, etc. Then, they are asked to read and scan the causes and results of this disease. The following activity may be used :

Type of material	Reading purpose	Strategies Used
Newspaper articles Books Medical magazines, etc.	Getting specific information on A.I.D.S causes and results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - using what is already known about the topic to scan the causes and results; - reading the material several times, - ignoring details not concerning causes and results, - evaluating the findings : are the facts found causes or results ?, etc.

Furthermore, in order to make inferences about implied or unclear meaning, or what is covertly or indirectly said, the following strategies may be used :

The Inferring sub-skill	
Category	Reading strategies
Cognitive	- elaborating -recognizing cognates -transfer - translation - deduction - inferring - imagery use
Metacognitive	- self-evaluation - self-monitoring - self-management
Social and affective	- self-talk. -questioning

Table 4.5. : The Reading strategies used in 'inferring'.

The teacher may exploit these strategies in the following directions :

- (1) As you read the text, you may ask questions about facts that are not explained in the text; facts that are not mentioned in the text or facts that suggest an idea (s).
- (2) As you perform the tasks, try to infer implied meaning by thinking of what you already know about robots, for example. (elaborating).
- (3) Make a logical relationship between facts (inferring).
- (4) Link the information given to images you know (imagery use).
- (5) Ask yourself questions about the information given and its purpose (questioning).
- (6) Teacher provides learners with a reading passage and a number of inferred ideas, then he asks them to tick the appropriate answer in this way :

Ideas	Ideas that can be inferred from the text	Ideas that can be inferred to be false	Ideas that are not implied
(1)			
(2)			
(3)			

(adapted from Reading and Thinking in English, 1980).

In this way, learners may make use of elaborating to determine what ideas are implied, relating the ideas expressed to their knowledge. They may make use of deduction and infer from the linguistic features of the text. They may translate into their L₁ or L₂ to better understand what is implied.

Finally, for guessing items or words or ideas' meaning through the context in which they are written, either at the sentence or paragraph levels, the following strategies may be used :

The sub-skill of Guessing from Context	
Category	Reading strategies
Cognitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - elaboration - translation - repetition - anticipation - recognizing cognates - re-reading -transfer - imagery use - auditory representation - deduction
Metacognitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self-evaluation - self-monitoring - self-management
Social and affective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self-talk. -questioning

Table 4.6. : The Reading strategies used in 'guessing from context'.

The following task is suggested to be used :

Task : the teacher provides learners with a number of sentences. He asks them to guess the meaning of some underlined words, then mention what has helped them to guess, as it is shown in this example :

Sentences	Meaning of words	Context that helped me guess
e.g. : 'Americans do not think that dogs are <u>edible</u> . The idea of eating dogs horrifies us'.	edible = that can be eaten	The sentence : 'the idea of eating dogs' helped me guess, because it is a paraphrase of dogs are edible.

Learners may elaborate through the context of words that may be familiar to them. They may re-read to discover context clues, such as paraphrasing. They may make use of imagery to assist comprehension. They may also use the linguistic features of words, i.e. the morphological information such as prefixes, etc. Learners can better organize their reading in this way. Since,

'When teachers provide learners with learning tools that they can use outside of class, they can make more effective use of the learning, opportunities that they encounter'.

(Chamot, 1990 : 82).

Moreover, teachers have to guide their learners and provide them with a variety of alternatives and strategies for reading well. The learners, then, may select the ones that best suit them and best work for them. In addition, learner training has to include encouraging learners to self-assess their own progress, difficulties, etc. An example of such an assessment is illustrated in the following :

Type of activity	Performance	Possible causes of difficulty
Evaluating text content	Good / bad / average	-Difficult vocabulary - Unclear questions
Main idea finding.	Good / bad / average	- difficult vocabulary - Unknown topic - Difficulty to summarize all text in one sentence, etc.

More importantly, one should bear in mind at every stage of reading instruction, that :

'Learners are not mere sponges acquiring the new language by osmosis alone. They are thinking, reflective beings who consciously apply mental strategies to learning situations, both in the classroom and outside it'.

(Chamot, 1990 : 82)

This point leads to the discussion of the importance of developing learners' reading and learning autonomy in such a case. Indeed, since reading instruction aims at enabling learners to study and learn any material in English, reading can be seen as a learning skill. A skill that allows learning to be more effective. Systematic reading development can, thus, also promote learner autonomy. In fact, the extent to which a reading course can be successful is related to the degree of learners' autonomy in reading. This latter would facilitate their studies all along the next three years of the English degree and even after.

It is to be noted that learners' autonomy starts when learners are more aware of language and their learning. Thus learners need to ' learn how to learn'. They also need to be more responsible for their learning and prepare themselves for future situations that require independent and autonomous use of the reading skill. It is a well-known fact also that developing autonomy within learners, is a step forward

towards individualized learning. By the same token, the key to autonomy is responsibility. In this view of things, strategy instruction is a non-negligible part in learner autonomy development. Moreover, the teacher has to allow learners to make choices about what they want to learn, to encourage them to fix their own learning objectives and self-evaluate their progress or failure.

With these points in mind, it is essential to note that a reading course has not to centre only on strategy instruction, but may also include different components, that will be given through the following samples of a didactic unit.

4.3 Samples of a Didactic Unit

The way a reading course is viewed for such a case, is first and foremost, learner-centred, i.e. based on learners' needs, preferences, interests and reading styles. Second, it has to focus on learners' reading efficiency through developing their study skills and textual analysis, by integrating the other language skills to reading and by assigning extensive reading activities to learners, outside the reading class.

4.3.1 Study Skills

Study skills are essential for learners, especially at advanced levels. However, they are very often missing within them. As far as the reading skill is concerned, they need to be equipped with library skills in order to look for or make use of bibliographical references in a systematic way. The following library skills are suggested to be taught to learners :

- looking for bibliographical information in different sources,
- reading and using a library catalogue,
- using encyclopaedias,
- finding a book in a library,
- reading research reports,
- establishing the relevance of a book for the information required,

- knowing the parts of a textbook,
- note-taking, etc.

For example, in order to establish the relevance of a book for the information a learner needs, he may use the following :

-the title, the blurb, biographical information about the author, summary and table of content, running titles, preliminary material : foreword, preface, introduction, non-verbal material, like illustrations, diagrams, tables, etc.

(Nuttal, 1982).

- Learners may also be asked to read the table of content of a given book and preview its content. They may be asked the following questions :

- a) How many parts or chapters is the book divided into?
- b) What is the relationship of each part with its sub-heading, according to you?
- c) What type of information is provided in each part according to the titles and sub-titles ?

4.3.1.1 Dictionary Skills

Another important study skill learners need is using a dictionary. Indeed, understanding what is a headword or an entry, what are derivatives, compounds, idioms, etc. may save time for them. Learners may be helped by the following :

When looking up a word in the dictionary, first :

- decide what part of speech it is,
- study its context and the information it gives you about it,
- select the meaning in the dictionary that fits the context,
- pay attention to words with several meaning, i.e. homonyms of the word,
- consider the word stress and pronunciation; etc.

As a practice task, learners may be given a list of words in context and asked to check their meaning in a dictionary. Selecting the appropriate meaning in a short time

being the objective. They may also be given a list of words and asked to check their plural in the dictionary. For e.g. : analysis- nucleus- criteria, etc.

4.3.1.2 Vocabulary and Reading Sub-Skills :

It is undeniable that, learners need to master vocabulary skills too. What Nuttal (1982) calls 'word- attack skills ', are essential for an effective reading. Consequently learning how to deal with unfamiliar vocabulary may be a way to overcome a number of reading difficulties for a learner. In that, looking in the context for clues to its general sense, identifying its grammatical category, studying its morphological information, are among the techniques that learners may learn to use. For example, in identifying prefixes and suffixes, learners have to know the meaning of the prefix and the meaning of the word :

e.g. : disorganized, 'dis' means the opposite so, the word means : not organized.

Sometimes, context clues may help define the word. These clues are for e.g. :

X is called.....

X is referred to as.....

X signifies.....

X can be defined as.....,etc.

Words are sometimes explained with examples using the following :

- For example.....
- As an example.....
- For instance..... ,etc.

Learners may perform the following task with a list of words to explain :

Words	Meaning	Context clue that helped me guess the meaning

Learners may also be supplied with several short passages each containing the same words but with different meanings. They should read and match each word with the relevant definition (Nuttal, 1982)

Last but not least, there are many sub-skills in reading comprehension that learners must master too. The present study has concentrated on five of them, but there are others such as :

- main idea and supporting ideas finding,
- summarizing and synthesizing information,
- distinguishing facts from opinion,
- understanding the author's message,
- evaluating text content or critical reading,
- writing summaries, etc.

Of course, those sub-skills may be matched to appropriate cognitive and metacognitive strategies for reading comprehension.

4.3.2 Textual Analysis

Another important component of a reading course is textual analysis. It is a well-established fact that the ability to read efficiently depends as much on bottom-up skills, or textual properties knowledge, as on top-down ones (Eskey, 1988; Grabe, 88-91). From this view of things, teaching students how to deal with the formal properties of texts, i.e. texts 'organization, cohesion and coherence is of primary importance. Accordingly, a reading course has to accustom learners with such reading tasks as recognizing discourse markers. For example :

Task₁ : learners are provided with several reading passages containing such discourse markers and are asked to determine the type of discourse marker used to link sentences.

Task₂ : learners are provided with a gap filling and are asked to fill in the gaps with the suitable discourse marker. Examples of such discourse markers are the following :

- sequencing : first, then, next, at this point, in conclusion, finally, etc.
- generalization : in general, generally, etc.
- referring : in this respect, in that connection concerning this, ignoring this, etc.
- focusing : let us consider, in this part we shall deal with, etc.
- specifying : namely, that is to say, etc.
- re-expressing : to put it another way, to say it differently, etc.
- evidence : it is clear that this refers to, etc.

Such discourse markers would help learners establish the relationship between sentences and determine the type of context clue of difficult parts of the text. To make them practise these points, the following may be given :

- identifying the relationship between sentences, whether cause / effect, comparison, contrast, etc.
- identifying cohesive devices, such as the ones used for reference and substitution. For e.g. : Reference words such as : he- they- their- it, etc.

The teacher may also provide learners with a gap filling to illustrate the relationship between words and their substitutions. Additionally, the teacher may use a reading passage and some underlined reference words to be linked to the ones they refer to or substitute.

Another kind of cohesive devices are lexical cohesion such as synonyms given in the same sentence or paragraph, metaphors, etc.

- For using context clues like definition, substitution and paraphrase, The following tasks may be given to learners :

Task₁ : Teacher provides learners with a passage with unfamiliar words. Then he asks them to find the words' definitions in the text.

Task₂ : Learners are provided with reading passages and some difficult words and are asked to find such context clues as : synonyms, summary, comparison, exemplification, generalization, etc.

-For understanding logical transitions, the teacher may teach the following : conclusion from; According to the information given above, etc.

-For recognizing texts' functions, learners may be provided with a passage and asked about the rhetorical structure of texts through the following activity :

Type of text	Type of discourse	Rhetorical structure
Newspaper article	argumentative	- definition use - comparison and contrast of ideas - giving arguments - examples giving, etc.
Story Telling	narrative	-use of past tense -use of time sequencers -use of time indicators -chronological sequence of events.

Examples of such functions are : defining, classifying, generalizing, naming, describing, reporting, speculating, warning, instructing, suggesting, etc. (Additional activities are given in section 4.4.2).

4.3.3 Integrating Language Skills to Reading Instruction

Common sense dictates that reading cannot be taught in isolation from the other language skills. There is indeed, a kind of constant interplay between writing, reading, speaking and listening in the reading course, that the teacher has to exploit :

" It would seem appropriate that reading instruction be taught in a content-centred integrated skills curriculum. Content provides learners with motivation and purposeful activities; the integration of skills reinforces learning ".

(Grabe, 1991 : 336).

To put it another way, there is a mutual relationship between language skills, that reading may provide the opportunity to develop. As a matter of fact, opportunities to practise speaking and listening may be given to learners all along the reading course,

during group discussions about learners' strategies, opinion-giving on text content, ideas sharing and restating orally the events of a story read.

As far as writing is concerned, the skill is closely related to reading. In that, through learning about identifying texts' textual properties, learners learn to reinforce their writing skill too. Through reading different types of texts, they learn to recognize writing styles. Therefore, the reading course is a way leading to the development of writing at the same time. In this area, the following activities are suggested :

Activity One : Teacher provides learners with a reading passage and asks them to read it and then rewrite it using their own words. The activity has a two-fold objective : first, to check learners' comprehension through their writing, second, to make them practise paraphrasing which is one sub-skill of writing.

Activity two : Teacher provides learners with a long reading text and asks them to read and summarize it. Here, again, there are two objectives to fulfil : first, to check learners' comprehension, second to make them practise summarizing in its written form, and it is a cognitive strategy too.

Activity Three : At the end of the reading session, learners are asked to write a small paragraph expressing their reaction to the passage read or imagine a continuation of a story read or write an essay on the model of a text. The objective being the use of the reading text as a model for teaching writing.

4.3.4 Extensive Reading

Extensive reading is to be included in any reading programme to fulfil the following objectives :

- to make learners practise all the sub-skills and strategies learned in the reading course,

- to strengthen learners' reading ability and develop it,
- to help them become more autonomous readers,
- to allow readers to progress at their own speed and rate,
- to develop learners' stock of vocabulary and make them experience the language in several forms and contexts.

What is suggested is to use the extensive reading activity at the end of the course₄, i.e. after learners show mastery and command of both linguistic forms, reading sub-skills and reading strategies. The extensive reading material has to be a selection of authentic texts to be chosen according to students' needs, interests and preferences. Of course, the choice has to involve learners too. As an example, a selection of American short stories may be used. Moreover, the activity may be done in groups of four, since group work promotes better exchange, share and competition. The following extensive reading sheet may be used :

<p>Read and then complete the following :</p> <p>-Type of material read :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -short story - novel -newspaper or magazine article <p>-Title :-----</p> <p>-Author :-----</p> <p>- Topic :-----</p> <p>- The most important information : -----</p> <p>-Summary :-----</p> <p>-----</p> <p>-Writer's message :-----</p> <p>-----</p> <p>* In case it is an article :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The author's arguments :----- - I agree with----- - I disagree with-----
--

In case the material chosen is a short story or a novel₅ the following reading sheet is suggested :

Read then answer the questions :

1. What is the story's central theme ?
2. Who are the main characters ?
3. What is their contribution in the story ?
4. What is the author's intended message ?
5. What symbols can you find in the story?
6. Find a suitable proverb to illustrate the message.
7. Write a short summary of the story.

The extensive reading task may be followed by an oral presentation of the work. Thus, language skills may be integrated too. In that, reading the material, writing a small report about it, exposing it orally, and giving the opportunity for others to listen and ask questions.

4.4 Practical Suggestions

In the above sections, some of the points to consider in a reading instruction in such a case were suggested in a broad way. In this section, suggestions of a more practical nature are given as to the type of texts that may be used as well as the type of activities.

4.4.1 Types of Texts

It is often assumed by researchers that using authentic texts is more appropriate for reading comprehension courses at advanced levels. Indeed, such texts offer the possibility of practising texts' properties and to experience the authenticity of messages (Young, 1989). In addition, the choice of texts is primarily the task of teachers, but has to be done in accordance with learners' choice too. Consequently, learners may be asked to bring their own selections.

It is important to consider some essential criteria for text selection. In that, linguistic complexity, length, degree of interest, are to be considered in any text according to the objectives of the lesson. To put it another way, there should be a

variety in the choice of texts and topics, that have to be relevant to learners' interests and motivation. Furthermore, texts have to be accessible to learners, close to their conceptual world. Nevertheless, even culturally alien topics such as Halloween's day in the U.S.A, or Indians' rites in marriages may be used. Teachers may use them to teach such strategies as guessing from context, inferring, predicting and critical reading.

As a matter of fact, Nuttal (1982) suggests three criteria for text selection : readability, suitability of content and exploitability. Therefore, broadly speaking teachers have to take the following points into account for text selection :

- texts must attract learners' interest and motivation,
- they have to provide opportunity for reading instruction,
- they are to be lexically and grammatically accessible,
- they have to reactivate learners' background knowledge or inform them about new cultural facts.

Equally important, texts' length depends on the objective of the reading lesson. Whether for strategy instruction, sub-skills practice or textual analysis. In this respect, short reading passages may be used for strategies and sub-skills instruction and practice. However, for textual analysis, that focuses on texts' properties, organizational patterns, function, etc. longer texts would be more appropriate.

4.4.2 Types of Activities

In view of what has been said in the above sections, a variety of reading activities may be used for both bottom-up and top-down reading sub-skills development. Among these activities the following are suggested :

First, for the predicting sub-skill development, learners may be asked to :

Task 1 : - read the first and last sentence of the text and predict its content.

- use key words and repeated words to predict the text topic.

Task 2 : Learners are provided with a text, its title and a number of statements and these Questions :

- a) Survey quickly the text and predict its content by selecting, among the statements given, the ones that may be found in it.
- b) Read entirely the text and check the answers.

Task 3 : Learners are provided with different passages and their summaries and asked:
-survey quickly the passage, predict its content, then match it to its corresponding summary.

Task 4 : Learners read a text and anticipate its continuation.

Task 5: Learners are provided with a list of books' titles and are asked to predict the content of the books, each according to its title.

These tasks have a major objective which is to develop learners' sense of expectancy. Another type of predicting activity may be used as follows :

Topic	Pre-Reading	Post-reading
things you know----- ----- -----	Things you are not sure of-- ----- -----	things you did know ----- ----- -----
	things you would like to know ----- -----	things you have learned ----- -----

Other predicting activities may be practised in groups as follows :

The teacher provides learners with a text about a given topic :

- group one should ask questions about the text content before reading it,
- group two tries to anticipate the answers,
- group three reads the text and checks group two answers.

These activities aim at making learners anticipate, make hypotheses and confirm their expectations.

For some of the activities related to reading with a purpose in mind or purposive reading, the learner has to use his skimming, scanning and skipping sub-skills. The following examples may be used :

Task₁ : Learners are provided with several texts narrating the biography of different writers and asked :

- a) Read the passage and find what each writer was famous for.
- b) Find what common and divergent points exist between the writers.
- c) State the elements in each text that seem unnecessary and that you skipped while reading.

As far as extracting main idea is concerned, the following activity may be used:

- Learners are provided with a short reading passage and asked :

- a) Propose a title to the passage.
- b) Find the main idea or what the text deals with or discusses.
- c) Select in the following ideas, the one that best summarizes the text.

It is to be noted that the same task may be used with different types of texts. For example, narrative descriptive, argumentative, expository, etc.

The teacher may provide the following activities related to scanning for details :

Task₁ : Learners are provided with a series of magazines and newspaper articles and are asked to collect information on a specific topic.

Task₂: Learners are provided with short passages on the same topic and are asked to find the difference between them.

Moreover, texts' structures may be exploited through the following :

Task₁ : Text mapping₆ for narrative and expository texts for example :

Question : Read and diagram the ideas and key words of the text according to their relationship.

Task₂ : Learners are provided with a text, in which some sentences whose meaning is alien to the text are inserted. Learners are asked to read and find these sentences.

Task₃ : Learners may be asked to find the kind of relationship between sentences by introducing a cohesive device such as because, therefore, consequently, etc.

Task₄ : The scrambled text with scrambled paragraphs. Learners are asked to unscramble the paragraphs and reorganize the text.

In the activities related to guessing from context and inferring, learners may be provided with a passage on a familiar topic, in which anomalous words are inserted. Learners should spot them when they do not make sense in context. Close passages may also be used to develop learners' inferring strategies. The following questions may be used :

- a) What evidence is there for the following statements in the passage ?
- b) What is implied by such or such information ?,etc.

As far as text analysis is concerned, the tasks that follow are suggested to be used:

Task₁ : Recognizing functions of linking words in a passage.

Task₂ : Recognizing signposts functions, e.g. : read the text and find important and less important information.

Task₃ : Recognizing the function of cohesive devices in a text. Learners are provided with a set of sentences and asked to find the kind of relationship that links the sentences e.g. (Causal, comparison, contrast, etc.).

Finally, word identification activities are also suggested through the tasks below:

Task₁ : Learners are provided with many sentences with underlined words and asked:

- a) select among the following words, the one that is closest in meaning to the underlined one.
- b) Justify your choice.

Task₂ : Learners are asked to read a passage and underline the difficult words or unfamiliar vocabulary. Then, they have to complete the following :

Word	Grammatical Category	Context	Probable meaning

To conclude, these are some of the reading activities that may be used in the reading course for developing learners' reading sub-skills and strategies, towards an effective reading. The teacher's task is to promote thinking along with reading too. It is to be noted that, the activities are only suggestions drawn out of reading textbooks, and personal experience with reading instruction.

4.5 Conclusion

In view of what has been suggested in this last chapter, it is essential to note that reading instruction needs to be supported by a metacognitive instruction in reading sub-skills and reading strategies. The teacher's task is, therefore, two-fold : to gather enough information about learners' needs, difficulties, reading styles and strategies and to bring a consequent instruction, towards learners' reading efficiency.

In this sense, the metacognitive instruction is seen only as a part of what a reading programme may include. To put it another way, the reading course has not to be only content-based, or text and structure-based or sub-skills and strategies-based. Rather, it has to be a combination of all these. At different points in time of the course, however, emphasis has to be placed on one of these aspects, either content, language or the reading process, according to the pre-established objective.

NOTES

1. This is referred to by Hosenfeld (1992) as 'introspective' and 'retrospective' methods,(see glossary).
2. See oxford (1990); O'Mallet and Chamot (1990) and Hosenfeld (1992) for more details about strategy assessment and identification techniques.
3. It is to be noted that, recent research has pointed at the individual differences in strategy use, in spite of the fact that there are learning strategies that are common to all individuals. However, this implies that any strategy training may constrain learners' use of individual strategies (MC donough, 1995). The researcher was aware of this aspect and has, therefore, sought to develop learners' own strategies by identifying them and tried to better their use of them and make it more systematic.
4. In this research work, an extensive reading activity was used at the end of the programme. It showed satisfactory results, since it reflected students' understanding and application of the strategy instruction they received.
5. The extensive reading activity with novels and short stories may be an early introduction to literature courses, students will have in their second, third and fourth years of the English degree.
6. The text mapping activity may also be used to teach the rhetorical features of texts.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

In the current study the researcher has been primarily interested in finding some evidence for the correlation between learners' awareness of the reading process and effective reading. Raising learners' awareness about some reading strategies was predicted to be a significant factor contributing to their reading efficiency.

Initially, it was possible to determine learners' need for a metacognitive training in reading comprehension, after the analysis of their profile, needs and reading level. On the whole, and as hypothesized, the subjects were equipped with poor and inefficient reading strategies like word-by-word reading, translating to L₂ or over-using the dictionary. Even if they made use of some strategies in their L₁, or L₂, they were unable to make the transfer.

The next step of the research was the review of several reading models and successful reading strategy training studies. Conclusion from the various models reviewed, pointed at the interactive process as involving the interaction of both the text and its textual properties with the reader and his cognitive abilities. From this view of things, an approximate reading process scheme was established and matched to some cognitive, metacognitive, social and affective reading strategies used for specific reading sub-skills. The result was a reading strategy instruction inventory, used as a guide for the strategy training.

In fact, results of studies undertaken in the field of cognitive psychology and reading research pointed at the positive contribution of this type of instruction on learners' successful achievement in reading comprehension. Although some researchers reject this type of instruction, arguing that it would inhibit learners' natural

use of their cognitive processes, the results obtained with the different post-training tests, in this study, support the first claim and confirm the hypothesis that awareness-raising may help learners develop their stock of reading strategies, make it more systematic, and, hence, more operational. Therefore, the instruction learners received tried to provide them with some insights into not only the reading process, but also their individual reading styles and cognitive abilities, such as background knowledge use, inference making, association of ideas and deductive thinking.

As a matter of fact, comparison of the results obtained suggested improved performance in reading comprehension after the training. Moreover, learners expressed their satisfaction after the learning of new strategies, as they were more able to control their reading and overcome their difficulties. A reasonable conclusion, then, was that awareness-raising through strategy training may offer a productive alternative for promoting reading development. This is what is suggested for the reading comprehension course in the last part of the work.

To conclude, it is undeniably true that much more research is needed in the area of reading strategies and strategy instruction. Nevertheless, having some evidence about what an effective reading behaviour is, it is to be hoped that unsuccessful readers may benefit from this knowledge.

Ultimately, it would be beneficial for learners if their metacognitive awareness helps them to successfully and autonomously approach any reading text. Within this context, it must be noted that, not all sides of the problem have been explored in this work. Thus, some interesting questions remain unanswered. Such questions as, to what extent can the transfer of reading strategies from learners' L_1 , or L_2 to their L_3 lead to an effective reading ? what is actually a successful reading ? what strategies learners use in order to help themselves in reading ? do all learners possess reading strategies? what is the effect of the type of discourse on reading strategy choice? What is the

relationship between the type of tests used in reading comprehension and learners' performance ? and do specific reading tests engender specific reading strategies on the part of learners ? finally, would reading strategy awareness lead to effective learning strategies use in listening, speaking and writing ? Indeed, all these questions are worth being substantiated by further research.

GLOSSARY

Background Knowledge : All the information, one has gathered in his brain about everything and on different topics.

Bottom-up Processing : A mental processing used by the learner in the attempt of extracting meaning from texts by reading word-by-word and using grammatical features of texts.

Cognitive : That is related to the mental processes of learning like comprehension, retention or acquisition.

Decoding : Under the bottom-up view of reading, it is the decoding of language items. Under the top-down view, it is meaning decoding.

Epistemological : Related to knowledge and cognitive abilities.

Heuristic : Facts related to past experiences.

Idiosyncratic : Characteristic to the individual.

Introspective Thinking : Thinking and verbalizing thoughts while accomplishing tasks.

Metacognitive : That is used in thinking or planning learning processes.

Retrospective Thinking : Thinking and describing strategies used after task accomplishment.

Target Language : The language the learner aims at learning.

Top-down processing : A mental processing in which the learner uses his background knowledge and conceptual abilities.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A : The questionnaire

Appendix B: The Reading Proficiency Test

Appendix C: The Post-Proficiency Test Interview Guide

Appendix D: The Post-Training Interview Guide

Appendix E: Texts Used in The Post-Training Tests

Appendix F: Post-Training Tests and Tasks at the Macro Level

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Appendix H: The Reading Strategies Grid

Appendix I : The Strategies Used for the Reading Strategy Training

Appendix A : THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear student

The following questionnaire which is submitted to you aims at collecting information about you and at making your learning easier and our teaching more appropriate to your needs, preferences and expectations. Will you please complete it and be as clear as possible. (You can use any language you want).

Thank you for your collaboration.

General Information About the Student :

1. Age: 2. Sex: 3. Nationality:.....
4. Branch of secondary school studies:.....
5. For how many years have you been studying English now ?
.....
6. Is the " Licence d'anglais " your first choice or is it a computer orientation ?
.....
.....

The Student's Needs, Expectation, Preferences:

7. Why do you need the reading skill?
.....
.....
8. What do you want to learn in the reading comprehension course?
.....
.....
9. What kind of topics or themes do you prefer to read in this course?
.....
.....

The Student and Reading Comprehension Before University:

10. Did you enjoy reading comprehension at the secondary school?

- Yes - No

- Say why

.....
.....

11. What have you been taught in reading comprehension before ?

a- How to find general ideas

b- How to find a precise information

c- How to guess unclear meaning

d- How to use you knowledge of the world to understand the text

e- How to guess from context of the sentence

f- Others - Which ones.....

g- None

12- When younger did you use to read outside school ?

- Yes - No

- At home: -Yes - No

- In the library: - Yes - No

The Student's Reading Style :

13. Do you read English the same way as you read:

- Arabic

- French

- Say why :

14. What is according to you the best way to understand a text?

a- Understanding all words

b- Knowing the grammar

c- Knowing the topic

d- Translating

e- Knowing how to find important information

f- Others - Which ones?.....

The Student's Reading Difficulties :

15. What difficulties do you find when reading an English text ?

- a- Vocabulary
- b- Complex sentences
- c- Hidden meaning
- d- Knowing the relationship between sentences
- e- None
- f- Others - Which ones

16. To which causes do you attribute these difficulties ?

- a- Bad learning at school
- b- Lack of reading outside school
- c- Lack of interest in reading
- d- Others - Which ones ?

17. When you are reading and you come across something you don't understand, what do you do?

.....

18. How would you help someone who has difficulties with reading ?

.....

.....

**Appendix B : THE READING PROFICIENCY
TEST**

A World of Limitless Possibilities

Advances in communication will affect the way people interact. For example, technology enables us to be in touch with each other more. The only reason I can now live in Sri Lanka permanently is satellite communications that enable me to pick up my telephone and be in touch with any of my friends almost immediately. It takes me longer to dial the number than to complete the call.

But for some people, advances in communications mean a reduction in contact with others. We have kids who interact with their computers and not with other kids. In some of his books Isaac Assimov has described a world in which humans literally couldn't bear to be in each other presence; they communicated through TV screens. That would be a pathological society and I could see that happening. In fact, I am quite sure that there are already quite a few pathological computer hackers.

I am keen on the use of technology for education, particularly the development of the electronic tutor. This device would make it possible to teach almost any thing; you could program it, and it could talk to you and teach you a language. It could even check your pronunciation. The possibilities are limitless. You could multiply the number of teachers in the world a million fold. These machines would be rugged and cheap and work twenty four hours a day. They could start an educational revolution.

A.C. CLARKE

U.S. News and World Report

The Pre-reading question

- Read the text title and try to find what the text will speak about.

I. Comprehension questions :

1. What is the main idea discussed in the text ?
2. Who is speaking in the text according to you ?
3. Which idea or point of view does he agree with or defend ?
4. What are his arguments ?
5. Are the people who communicate only through TV screens real or imaginary? (according to the text)
6. In which sense can development in technology be negative for children ?

7. Propose a suitable title for the text.

II. Vocabulary and Language Practice

1. Find the synonyms of the following words:

- Affect =
- Enable =
- Tutor =
- Interact =

2. Explain the following expressions:

- A reduction in contact with others :
- I am keen on :

3. " This device " : what is the device referred to here ?

4. " The possibilities are limitless " : which possibilities are referred to here ?

5. " They could start an educational revolution " : to whom does the word " they " refer to, here ?

III. Type of text

In this text, the writer is:

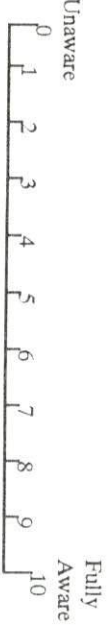
- Describing
- Defending an opinion, giving an argument
- Narrating
- Comparing
- Giving causes and results

**APPENDIX C :THE POST-PROFICIENCY TEST
INTERVIEW GUIDE**

<p>6 - What about section three what elements in the text helped you find the answer?</p>	<p>-----</p> <p>-----</p> <p>-----</p> <p>-----</p>
<p>7 - What special difficulties did you find while doing the test ?</p>	<p>-----</p> <p>-----</p> <p>-----</p> <p>-----</p>
<p>C - Learners' metacognitive knowledge in reading comprehension</p> <p>8 - degree of awareness of reading sub-skills and strategies while reading</p> <p>9 - Degree of knowledge of how and when to use the reading sub-skills and strategies.</p>	<p>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p> <p>Totally Unaware Fully Aware</p> <p>0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p> <p>Does not know how and when Knows how and when</p>

**APPENDIX D : THE POST- TRAINING
INTERVIEW GUIDE**

Questions	Learners' comments					
1 - How did you find learning about reading strategies ? - Say why.	a - useful and helpful b - difficult c - uninteresting	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="1295 1471 1343 1644">Yes</th> <th data-bbox="1295 1650 1343 1818">No</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="1171 1471 1295 1644"></td> <td data-bbox="1171 1650 1295 1818"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Yes	No		
Yes	No					
2 - Do you think you have made progress in reading thanks to strategies ?	Yes	No				
3 - What is the sub-skill you think you still have problems with ? -Say why ?	----- ----- ----- ----- -----					
4 - Which strategies were the most useful to you ?	----- ----- ----- ----- -----					
5 - What difference do you see between your reading now and before ? - Degree of metacognitive awareness of reading sub-skills and reading strategies	----- ----- ----- ----- -----					



<p>6 - Do you think these same reading strategies can be used equally for reading Arabic and French ?</p> <p>- Why ?</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>-----</p> <p>-----</p>	<p>No</p> <p>-----</p> <p>-----</p>
<p>7 - Is there something you were taught in this course you think was unnecessary ?</p> <p>- explain :</p>	<p>yes</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>8 - What other elements do you wish me to include in this reading course ?</p> <p>a - elements you do not master and would like to know</p> <p>b - elements you think you still need to learn</p> <p>c - themes or activities that interest you.</p>	<p>a - -----</p> <p>b - -----</p> <p>c - -----</p>	<p>-----</p> <p>-----</p> <p>-----</p>

**APPENDIX E : TEXTS USED IN THE POST-
TRAINING TESTS**

TIME MANAGEMENT

People commonly complain that they never have enough time to accomplish tasks. The hours and minutes seem to slip away before many planned chores get done. According to time management experts, the main reason for this is that most people fail to set priorities about what to do first. They get tied down by trivial, time-consuming matters and never complete the important ones.

One simple solution often used by those at the top is to keep lists of tasks to be accomplished daily. These lists order jobs from most essential to least essential and are checked regularly through the day to assess progress. Not only is this an effective way to manage time, but also it serves to give individuals a much deserved sense of satisfaction over their achievements. People who do not keep lists often face the end of the work day with uncertainty over the significance of their accomplishments, which over time can contribute to serious problems in mental and physical health.

From TOEFL Practice Tests Texts.

GARBOLOGY

A professor of anthropology at the University of Tucson has created an entirely new field of science called garbology. William Rathje and his students have been studying the garbage left for collection in front of Tucson homes since 1973. With the help of the local sanitation company, they have inspected and categorized some 120 tons of garbage and have arrived at some interesting conclusions.

One result is that middle-income families waste more food than lower or upper-income families. Another fact is that poor families pay more for their food and household items than wealthy families because they cannot afford to buy it in bulk. Finally, the overall waste figure is down to 15 percent, about half the figure from the first quarter of this century. This can be attributed to modern methods of refrigeration, transportation, processing, and packaging.

From TOEFL Practice Tests Texts.

JAPAN AND THE U.S.A : DIFFERENT AND ALIKE

At first glance, Japan astonishes and fascinates the Americans because it seems so different. All that characterizes the United States -racial and ethnic variety, newness, vast territory, and individualism -is absent in Japan. Instead, one encounters an ancient and homogeneous population, traditions that emphasize the importance of groups and communal needs, with a rich panoply of highly elaborate rites and ceremonies that cover every aspect of daily living from drinking tea to saying hello.

Where Americans pride themselves on a studied informality and openness, the Japanese employ formality and complexity. If Americans value time, the Japanese treasure space. While Americans have always enjoyed a sense of continental scale, employing metaphors of size to describe both the natural environment and industrial production, Japan has exerted its genius on the diminutive and the miniature. It seems appropriate for America to produce the world's largest airplanes while Japan creates cameras and transistors.

Yet these two cultures, so apparently opposite in almost every way, have always possessed a strange affinity for each other. Like their descendant, 19th century American visitors found the world of Japanese art, philosophy, ceremonies and social life to be comely. One reason is its very comprehensiveness. Japan is filled in culture, with few imprecisions or empty space. Little has been left to chance; nothing has been too small to escape attention.

Opposites supposedly attract, but there is more to it than that. Japan and America share, to different degrees, some large experiences, and broad skills which have created a certain kind of sympathy.

Neil Harris in The San Francisco Chronicle.
From Bereksi's B.A.C Collection (pp. 90, 91).

EUTHANASIA

It is a strong belief among certain groups of people that the medical community should take every possible step to keep a person alive, without regard for the quality of that person's life. But other people argue, just as strongly, that patients who are facing a life of pain and encumbrance on others have the right to decide for themselves whether or not to continue with life-prolonging medications and therapies.

The question, however, is really far more difficult than just the issue of a terminally ill patient of sound mind who directs the physician not to continue with any treatment that does not in any way cure the disease but only helps to draw out a painful death. When the quality of life has disintegrated, when there is no hope of reprieve, when there is intense and ever-present pain, does the patient have the right to be put to death? the patient in this case is not asking the physician to discontinue treatment but instead is requesting the physician, the supposed protector of life, to purposefully bring a life to a close.

From TOEFL Practice Tests Texts.

A CHINESE POEM

" The purpose of a fish trap is to catch fish,
and when the fish are caught, the trap is forgotten..
The purpose of a rabbit snare is to catch rabbits.
When the rabbits are caught, the snare is forgotten.
The purpose of words is to convey ideas.
When the ideas are grasped, the words are forgotten.
Where can I find a man who has forgotten words?
He is the one I would like to talk to."

Chuang Zzu, 4th - 3rd C.B.CE

Forum; vol. 32; N° 3; July 1994.

A NEWSPAPER REPORTER REPORTS ABOUT HIMSELF

I'm a newspaper reporter. I don't have much money, but I meet a lot of interesting people. Some are rich, others are poor. One or two are dishonest, but the others tell the truth most of the time. On the whole, I like my job and i'am good at it. I type fast. I have a good memory. I don't talk a lot, but I'm a good listener. I'm probably the best listener in the entire city, and I look stupid. I have a very stupid face. People look at me, and then they explain to me things very slowly. Other reporters ask people a lot of questions and make them angry, but I just look stupid and soon I am getting a lot of information: many uninteresting opinions, many irrelevant facts, but always a little interesting news for my column.

I have a method for getting news from the ordinary man in the street. Let me give you an example. Yesterday afternoon I needed information about recreation for poor elderly people in the city. I went to the park, sat on a bench in the sun, and waited. Soon an old lady came and sat next to me. She carried two large paper bags and an old handbag. I sat quietly beside her for about ten minutes then I unwrapped a chocolate bar noisily, and I offered her a piece of my chocolate. After that, she told me about herself. She doesn't have any real home. She and two friends sleep in the bus station. On warm days she comes to the park with her few belongings in two paper bags. Later, we went to a restaurant for a cup of coffee and a sandwich. I paid, of course, I didn't take any notes. I asked her a few questions about recreation, but she wasn't interested in that. She needed money and a place to she said. She told me a lot about the bus station. I gave her a dollar and some change. Finally, I left her in the park, went back to the office, and typed some notes for my column.

From Reading, Thinking, Writing by N. Lawrance.

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT

Louisa May Alcott, an American author best known for her children's books *Little Women*, *Little Men*, and *Jo's Boys*, was profoundly influenced by her family, particularly her father. She was the daughter of Bronson Alcott, a well-known teacher, intellectual, and free thinker who advocated abolitionism, women's rights, and vegetarianism long before they were popular. He was called a man of unparalleled intellect by his friend Ralph Waldo Emerson. Bronson Alcott instilled in his daughter his lofty and spiritual values and in return was idolized by his daughter. Louisa used her father as a model for the impractical yet serenely wise and adored father in *Little Women*, and with the success of this novel she was able to provide for her family, giving her father the financial security that until then he had never experienced.

From TOEFL Practice Tests Texts.

SHOPPING BASKET PSYCHOLOGY

I felt hostility flowing from the woman standing behind me in the supermarket check-out line. She rocked back and forth on her heels impatiently and drummed on her hand bag. She was glaring into my basket. I quickly surveyed my selections to see what could be generating such hostility. Let's see : Two bottles of champagne, a chunk of Roquefort, a lovely avocado, a bottle of capers. Three limes, a pound of shrimp and a quart of Perrier water. It was a mixed bag to be sure.

Still looking down into her cart and shuddered: three gallons of milk, six leaves of bread, ten pounds of hamburger, four chickens, a mountain of baby food jars, two racks of soft drinks, cakes and pies. Studying the content of her basket, I could easily visualize her life style and all the hard work that goes into raising a young family.

Since that encounter, I have become more aware of what a grocery list reveals. For example, yesterday, I stood behind an individual who obviously was not into being the perfect housewife. While her little boy begged unsuccessfully for a cookie, she unpacked shampoo, hair conditioner, fingernail-polish remover, cotton balls and two movie magazines. I could see her starving family facing the bare shopping bag.

The next time you are stuck behind someone in the supermarket, try my little game and you' ll know a lot about people's life style. If body language can tell a stranger a lot about one's personality, so can the fruits of your shopping expedition.

Text adapted from Effective Reading
Greenall and Swan, 1988; (pp. 56-57).

THE CASE OF THE BROKEN CHAIR

Some time ago I discovered that one of the chairs in my front hall had a broken leg. I didn't foresee any great difficulty in getting it mended, as there are a whole lot of antique shops in the Pimlico Road which is three minutes walk from my flat, so I set forth one morning carrying the chair with me. I went into the first shop confidently expecting a friendly reception, with a kindly man saying, 'What a charming chair, yes that's quite a simple job, when would you want it back?'

I was quite wrong. The man I approached wouldn't look at it. I wasn't too concerned; after all, it was only the first try and there are many more shops on both sides of the road. The reaction at the second shop, though slightly politer, was just the same, and at the third and the fourth. So I decided that my approach must be wrong.

I entered the fifth shop with some confidence because I had concocted a plan. I placed the chair gently on the floor so as not to disturb the damaged leg and said 'Would you like to buy a chair?' The rather fierce proprietor looked it over carefully and said, 'Yes, not a bad little chair, how much do you want for it?' '£20,' I said. 'OK,' he said, 'I'll give you £20.' 'It's got a slightly broken leg,' I said. 'Yes, I saw that, it's nothing, don't worry about it'.

Everything was going to plan and I was getting excited. 'What will you do with it?' I asked. 'Oh, it will be very saleable once the repair is done, I like the bit of old green velvet on the top, I shall leave that, yes, very saleable.' 'I'll buy it,' I said. 'What d'ye mean? You've just sold it to me,' he said. 'Yes I know but I've changed my mind; as a matter of fact it is what I'm looking for -I've got a pair to it at home, I'll give you 27 quid for it.' 'You must be crazy,' he said; then suddenly the penny dropped and he smiled and said, 'I know what you want, you want me to mend you chair.' 'You're plumb right,' I said.

'And what would you have done if I had walked in and said "Would you mend this chair for me?"' 'I wouldn't have done it,' he said, 'We don't do repairs, not enough money in it and too much of a nuisance, but I'll mend this for you, shall we say a fiver?' He was a very nice man and thought the whole episode rather funny.

From Effective Reading;
Greenall and Swan, 1988.

**APPENDIX F : POST-TRAINING TESTS AND
TASKS AT THE MACRO LEVEL**

A- Predicting

Text One : Time Management

Task₁ : Read the passage and its title and try to predict what the paragraph following the passage most probably discusses.

Text two : The Case of the Broken Chair

Task₂ : Read the title and try to predict what the text will speak about.

Text three : Shopping Basket Psychology

Task₃ : Read the title and the two paragraphs and try to predict the content of the last paragraph.

B- Skimming

Text One : Garbology

Task₁ : Read the passage and select among the following ideas the one that best summarizes it :

- a) The creation of a new science.
- b) The job of an anthropology professor.
- c) Results from work in the field of garbology.
- d) Methods of handling food products.

Text Two : Japan and the U.S.A Different and Alike.

Task₂ : Read the first sentence of each paragraph and find the general idea the text discusses.

Text Three : Euthanasia

Task₃ : Read the passage and say which of the following statements best applies to the idea presented in it.

- a) The author firmly states his opinion on the right to die.
- b) The question of a patient's right to die is rarely faced by physicians.
- c) All people are in agreement as to a patient's right to die.
- d) Putting a patient to death is more serious than allowing a patient to die.

C - Scanning

Text one : Garbology

Task₁ : read the passage again and find why do the poor pay more for their food than the rich.

Text two : Time Management

Task₂ : read the passage again and find what solution to time management the passage gives.

Text three : Euthanasia.

Task₃ : read again the passage and find in what situation the author suggests that a patient might have the right to be put to death.

D - Inferring

Text : The Case of the Broken Chair

Task : Read the text and answer the following questions :

Question one : Do you think the chair is of a high quality ? Why ?

Question two : Why did M^r Hornby want to sell the chair ?

Question three : Do antique shops often do furniture repair ? Justify your answer.

E - Guessing from Context

Task₁ : read the following sentence and try to guess the meaning of the underlined words from the context.

Sentence : The rise in deadly communicable diseases is of increasing concern among health professionals.

Task₂ : (I bid, Task 1.)

Sentence : " Unlike most birds, the brown trasher does not tolerate nests of other birds near its own.

Task₃ : Read the translated Chinese poem and guess the meaning of the underlined words from the context in which they are written.

**Appendix G : Post- Training Tests and Tasks at
the Micro Level**

Text One : A Newspaper Reporter Reports About Himself.

Questions :

- (1) Read the text and try to predict the text content.
- (2) Read the text and find what the passage is about.
- (3) What in the text shows that the reporter is clever ?
- (4) Why did he unwrap the chocolate bar noisily ?
- (5) Why did the old lady speak to the reporter about herself ?

Text Two : Louiza May Alcott

Questions :

- (1) What does the passage mainly discuss ?
- (2) Was L.M.Alcott a famous poet too ?
- (3) Was her father a famous personality ?
- (4) was he a rich man ?
- (5) In your opinion what will the paragraph following the passage deal with ?

APPENDIX H : THE READING STRATEGIES
GRID

- Cognitive strategies
- Metacognitive strategies
- Affective strategies

- Social strategies
- Learner's strategies before strategy instruction

questions	Question one	Question two	Question three	Question four	Question five
Reading strategies					
1. I used a dictionary					
2. I kept meaning in my mind as I read					
3. I read the first sentence of each paragraph					
4. I used my knowledge of the topic					
5. I translated into Arabic / French					
6. I spoke to myself					
7. I used images from my mind					
8. I guessed from titles and subtitles					
9. I read several times					
10. I looked for key words					
11. I made hypotheses about possible meaning					
12. I guessed content before reading					
13. I organized my reading					
14. I ignored unnecessary details					
15. I checked if my guesses were correct					
16. I used my knowledge of grammar					
17. I read word-by-word					
18. I asked myself questions about the text					
19. I summarized information in my mind					
20. I ignored difficult words					
21. I paid attention only to information relevant to my reading purpose					
22. I used context					
23. I asked my friends or my teacher					

**APPENDIX I : THE STRATEGIES USED FOR
THE READING STRATEGY
TRAINING.**

Type of strategies	Reading strategies	Definitions
C O G N I T I V E	1. Resourcing	Using written sources for more comprehension, like dictionaries, encyclopaedias, titles, subtitles, illustrations, etc.
	2. Summarizing	Making a mental, oral or written summary of information gained through reading, like keeping meaning in mind while reading.
	3. Deduction	Applying rules to understand or produce language; using linguistic knowledge; identifying grammatical category of words, for example.
	4. Imagery	Using visual images (either mental or actual) to understand or remember new information, or to make a mental representation of a problem, i.e. associating ideas.
	5. Auditory representation	Playing back in one's mind the sound of a word, phrase or fact in order to assist comprehension and recall.
	6. Elaboration	Relating new information to prior knowledge.
	7. Transfer	Using what is known about language in L ₁ to assist comprehension in L ₂ or L ₃ .
	8. Inferring	Using information in the text to guess meaning, predict outcomes or complete missing parts.
	9. Translation	Using L ₁ or L ₂ to assist comprehension.
	10. Repetition	Overt practice and silent rehearsal.
	11. Skipping	Ignoring unknown or unnecessary words; ignoring details irrelevant to the reading purpose; extracting key words.
	12. Re-reading	Reading again previous misunderstood or important parts of a text.
	13. Using cognates	Recognizing words that have the same meaning as the difficult word in the same paragraph or sentence; recognizing words that have the same meaning in another language.
	14. Anticipating information to come	Making hypotheses about possible meaning.

Type of strategies	Reading strategies	Definitions
M E T A C O G N I T I V E	15. Advance organization or / planning ahead	Previewing the main ideas and concepts of the material to be learned; reading the first sentence of each paragraph.
	16. Selective attention	Attending to or scanning key words.
	17. Self-monitoring	Checking one's comprehension during reading; checking if guesses are correct; formulating questions while reading.
	18. Self-evaluation	Judging how well one has accomplished the reading task
	19. Self-management	Seeking or arranging the conditions of a good reading.
	20. Reading with purpose	Adjusting reading style or speed to purpose; fixing objectives for reading
Social and Affective	21. Self-talk	Reducing anxiety by using mental techniques that make one feel competent to do the learning task.
	22. Questioning for clarification	Asking teacher or peers and eliciting from them additional explanation; rephrasing examples for verification.